

PURLEY PARISH NEWS

APRIL 2007



LET US FIX OUR EYES ON JESUS,
THE AUTHOR AND PERFECTER OF OUR FAITH,
WHO FOR THE JOY SET BEFORE HIM
ENDURED THE CROSS, SCORNING ITS SHAME,
AND SAT DOWN AT THE RIGHT HAND
OF THE THRONES OF GOD
Hebrews 12:2

35P

For the Church & Community of
PURLEY ON THAMES



ST. MARY THE VIRGIN

PURLEY ON THAMES

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CHURCHWARDENS

John Rothery
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BAPTISMS, WEDDINGS AND FUNERALS

All enquiries should be made to the Rector

www.stmarythevirgin.fsnet.co.uk

FROM THE RECTOR

Dear friends,

NEW LIFE

The warm spell of weather we had in the early part of March brought many signs of new life all around us: birds singing in the garden and gathering material for their nests, flowers opening to display their glorious colours, bumble bees and butterflies making their early flights after the winter and inevitably those large wasps searching for a place to begin a nest. It is an amazing world to live in, and we need to hear and heed the warnings given to us about looking after it!

GOOD NEWS

Last autumn we had the prospect of drought before us, but we all know that we had a higher than average winter rainfall which means that that the hosepipe ban has been lifted at last. We take the availability of water for granted, and it is only when it is in short supply that we begin to give it a second thought. Thousands of people in the world today have no access to clean water for drinking. They may have to trudge miles to find any water at all, and when they do it certainly won't be drinkable, and then it has to be carried back to where

they live. Having to water garden pots with a watering became a burden for us last summer, and perhaps like me you got fed up with it after carrying 20 pounds of water around for a few minutes! Water is a gift of God upon which we are highly dependent. Be thankful for it – even if it doesn't come in even amounts!

AND EVEN BETTER NEWS

E even when things look black
A and we don't know what to do
S suddenly a shaft of light appears
T the tables are turned and
E everything is changed –
R rejoice, the Lord is risen!

THEN AND NOW

The Christian Faith is unashamedly historical. It is based on events that happened. But its message is infinitely more than the memory of ancient happenings. It does not have quick answers to all of life's problems today, but at its centre is the message about the resurrection of Jesus, which addresses an event that will come to everyone sooner or later. Jesus shared that event in His own death on the cross with all its pain and isolation. But the all-pervading power of death was broken on the third day when He rose from the grave! For many people the process of death is pain-free, but in those who are left behind, the wounds take a long time to begin to heal. The real sting of death is not dying, but dying unforgiven and without Christ. He turns none away, but sadly many people turn away from Him by choice. To die without Him is a fearful prospect. To die with Him is to pass safely through death, just as He did!

I pray that the knowledge of Jesus risen from the dead and alive today will bring joy to you during this Easter season.

Roger Howell

www.christianity.org.uk

PARISH REGISTERS

FUNERALS

| | |
|----------|--|
| 23 Feb | Mary Joanna Williams aged 67 years (Burial) |
| 27 Feb | Keith Michael Bumstead aged 61 years (Cremation) |
| 12 March | Albert Reginald Marshall aged 82 years (Burial) |

BRADFIELD DEANERY

The next United Deanery Service will be held on Sunday 29 April at 6pm in St. Mark's Church, Englefield. All are welcome!

A MESSAGE FROM THE NEW BISHOP OF OXFORD

In his letter to the clergy John Pritchard who is to be the next Bishop of Oxford, says that his emphases in the diocese will be:

- Mission and sensitive evangelism... every agenda paper in the diocese needs to have mission as its watermark...The opposite of looking out is not looking in, but looking lost!
- ...to be a pastor the pastors
- ...committed to "restoring the sacred centre" in our Church and ministries. I long for a rich, energising spirituality to flood through our churches, and through us all.
- ...to teach the faith and make this Christian story accessible and attractive to huge numbers of people looking for a story to live by, one that makes sense of their lives.
- ...to be a channel of hope for the diocese, seeking as much as lies in me, to hold us together around the compelling attractive figure of Jesus Christ.

PURLEY PLAYERS **HE'S IN THE CUPBOARD**

A comedy by Mike Sole

Friday 27 April and Saturday 28 April.

Tickets: contact 941 5244 or 984 2563
cost £9 (£7 concessions) to include a glass of wine.

All proceeds to BIBS Babies in Buscot Special Care.

YOU KNOW YOU ARE LIVING IN 2007 WHEN...

1. You accidentally enter your password on the microwave.
2. You haven't played solitaire with real cards in years.
3. You have a list of 16 phone numbers to reach your family of 4.
4. You e-mail the person who works at the desk next to you.
5. You know people's email addresses before their home addresses.
6. Your reason for not staying in touch with various friends and family is that they don't have e-mail addresses.
7. You pull up in your own driveway and use your mobile to see if anyone is home to help you carry in the shopping.
8. Every advert on television has a web site at the bottom of the screen.
9. Leaving the house without your mobile, which you didn't have the first 20 or 30 (or 60) years of your life, is now a cause for panic and you turn around to go and get it.
10. You get up in the morning and go on line before getting your coffee.

CHURCH SERVICES

| | | |
|---------------|---------|------------------|
| 8 April | 10.30am | Family Communion |
| Easter Sunday | 6.00pm | Easter Praise |
| 15 April | 9.30am | Family Communion |
| | 11.15am | Morning Worship |
| | 6.00pm | Evening Worship |
| 22 April | 9.30am | Family Worship |
| | 11.15am | Holy Communion |
| 29 April | 9.30am | Family Worship |
| | 11.15am | Holy Communion |
| 6 May | 9.30am | Family Worship |
| | 11.15am | Holy Communion |
| | 6.00pm | Holy Communion |



Mon 23 April

Tue 12 June

Tue 24 July

Mon 10 September

Tue 30 October

Mon 10 December

Over the past couple of years Christians in Purley from many churches have come together regularly to give thanks to God for our village, and to pray - for individuals, families, schools, groups, activities, places and even the parish council and the councillors!

Do feel welcome to come along to St Mary's on the following dates - even if you haven't before, or aren't too sure about prayer. We start at 8pm and are finished by 9pm. If you can't manage it but want us to pray for you, or a situation you are concerned about, just drop us a note or an email.

Sally Robertson
962 5978
sally.a.robertson@ntlworld.com
Melyn, Colyton Way
(on the corner next to the shop)

Chris Rayers
942 1880
c.rayers@talk21.com
9 Allison Gardens

ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING

The Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM) for St Mary's Church will be held on Tuesday 24 April at 8pm in the church hall. All are welcome, but you must be on the Electoral Roll to take part in any voting.

VILLA MAY - OLIVA NOVA - COSTA BLANCA - SPAIN



Set in the foothills above the orange groves on San Pere (private) hill, a superb, old style detached large Spanish villa with fantastic views and a lovely big pool. It offers very comfortable accommodation in a prestigious and tranquil location – Sleeps 10.



<http://www.ownersrentals.com/property/1071.html>

Laurie and Maggie May - Home 945 3223 - Mobile 07778 847635

PURLEY ON THAMES PARISH COUNCIL



The next Farmers Market will be held at the Barn on the 14 April. Future agreed dates in 2007 are 12 May, 9 June, 14 July & 11 August.

West Berkshire travel tokens are being issued much earlier than usual this year. By the time this magazine is distributed we will have already opened the Parish Office for distribution on 3 & 4 April. If you missed those days there is still a chance on Thursday 12 April between 10am to 4pm. After then they will still be available from a number of points including Pangbourne Library. Letters have been sent to those known to be receiving them but if anyone has any questions please contact the Concessionary Fares Team on 01635 519800. There will be a colour change in the tokens this year but existing tokens will continue to be accepted by operators until 31 July 2007. Tokens are of course only issued to those who have not yet taken up the option of a free bus pass and the opportunity to switch to this in future is still available.

Nominations for election to the Parish Council will have closed on 4 April and if there are sufficient candidates, the election will be held on 3 May at the same time as the District Council election. If there is a shortfall of candidates a further election may be called for the Parish Council may be given the powers to co-opt. Anyone interested on serving on the Council either now or in the future are invited to contact the Clerk for further information.

The final meeting of the retiring Council will be held on 26 April with the first meeting of the new one on 17 May. As usual, members of the public are welcome to attend. A full list of meetings for the Council year 2007/2008 will be published when agreed.

The Annual Parish Meeting will be held in the Barn on Tuesday 17 April with doors opening at 8pm. This is the opportunity for parishioners to hear from the Council on activity over the last year and an outline of future plans. We would also urge anyone with local queries or questions to attend this forum as there will be a panel session, which should be informative. On the evening information will

also be available on a parking study in Purley carried out on behalf of West Berkshire Council. It is also hoped that both the Police and Wardens will be in attendance, which will give people the chance to raise any concerns. However in the meantime please continue to report any anti-social behaviour, or low-level crime, to the Police on the non-emergency telephone number 0845 8 505 505. Your assistance is required to ensure these matters are dealt with. Please do not leave it to someone else. The Wardens can be contacted on 0118 945 5286 or by e-mail westberks.wardens@sovereign.org.uk



Two sets of cycle racks have recently been installed at the Goosecroft Recreation Ground, positioned near the barn and tennis courts. Please make use of this new facility when attending the Farmers Market, sporting events or other activities.

Finally, it is with regret that we advise of the death of Reg Marshall who in three spells served on this Council for about 40 years including a lengthy spell as Chairman from 1981 to 2000. A number of past & present councillors together with other local friends and relatives were able to attend his recent funeral at St Mary's. Our thoughts are with his widow, Jean.

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

Neighbourhood Wardens: 945 5286
westberks.wardens@sovereign.org.uk

Purley on Thames Parish Council

Parish Office

Goosecroft Lane

off Beech Road

Purley on Thames

Reading

RG8 8DR

Tel/fax: 0118 984 4507

E-mail: clerk@purleypc.wanadoo.co.uk

www.purleyonthames.net



Pretty garden apartment in SIESTA MAR 1, CALAN PORTER, MENORCA. Well equipped for 5 people. This is the apartment featured in the brochures because it's in the best position. Overlooking mature gardens, pools and children's playground.

See it at www.daltonsholidays.com - Ad No 004356.

Winter GOLF or summer bliss! This new town house is situated adjacent to the PIENSA GOLF COMPLEX. This is a stunning area only 15 mins from LA MANGA in beautiful Mar Menor, South-Eastern SPAIN. A 2-bedroom townhouse that sleeps 6 comfortably. Shared pool, roof terrace, own garden, overlooking orange groves, the sea and golf course.

See it at www.daltonsholiday.com - Ad No 013265.



Elizabeth Grosvenor - 984 4564 or 07974 019198 - lizzygrosvenor@aol.com



BUCKNELL'S MEADOW CYCLE TRACK

Just to let you know that we have selected a contractor to build the cycle track at the far end of Bucknell's Meadow and we've been given a grant from the Lottery towards it. Now we're looking for a group of youngsters who can help finalise the design and be involved in promoting and maintaining it once it is up and running. If you're at all interested, please contact me as soon as possible.

Also, I'd really like to hear from you if you have any worries about the project at all as we are keen to deal with these if at all possible.

Sally Robertson

(Chairman of the Recreation Committee for Purley on Thames Parish Council)

Tel 962 5978 email:sally.a.robertson@ntlworld.com



Recently I seem to be dealing with more and more disputes between neighbours. It is a shame when for one reason or another people find that they are not able to get along with the people they live near to. Maybe it is difficult to make the time to empathise with others when we are all so busy, but I would ask that when possible you think of others when going about your every day business. It might just be thinking about where you park your car when you arrive home from work, or the volume of your television or hi-fi. I would also say that, if something that a neighbour is doing is annoying you, tell them. Don't let it fester until you get too worked up about it and do something rash. It might be that your neighbour didn't realise that they were doing something that annoyed you. If you feel for whatever reason that the relationship between you and a neighbour has deteriorated to such an extent that it effects your day to day living then please contact Thames Valley Police who can advise you on mediation services.

This last month I have also been involved in three raids on houses in Tilehurst and Calcot that have been used to grow cannabis. The people living near to the houses saw lots of unusual activity taking place but didn't call the Police. Whilst I would not advocate spying on your neighbours, if we all paid more attention to what was going on in our neighbourhood, and reported suspicious activity to the Police then there is the possibility that it will deter criminals from committing crimes and assist us in catching them. There is only one of me but with members of the public supplying information, we can all make a difference.

I have been receiving complaints from members of the public with regards people cycling on pavements. I know that the roads are getting busier all the time so I understand that it can be quite daunting to cycle on the roads nowadays, but I would ask that if you do cycle on the pavement, show some consideration by slowing down whilst passing pedestrians or dismount and push your bike when you get near.

In Upper Basildon, I have been contacted by the Head teacher of Basildon Primary School, as she is concerned about vehicles when children are dropped off and collected from school. I recently spent the morning up there to see the

problem for myself (surprisingly it didn't seem that bad whilst I was there), and have written a letter to all parents advising that it is not acceptable to park causing an obstruction or to park outside the school entrance. I am sure that this is a problem at most schools and would again ask people to be considerate of others.

I have also been attempting to resolve the long-term problem of motorbikes in and around Sulham Woods. I recently had a meeting with representatives from West Berkshire Council and Sulham Estates, and am also in contact with the Forestry Commission. I hope that in the coming months you will start to notice a reduction in incidents of motorbikes there.

If you wish to contact me you can either send an email to matthew.allen@thamesvalley.pnn.police.uk, call into Pangbourne Police Station, or phone 08458 505 505 (24 hour non emergency no.) and leave a message for me. As ever if you see a crime in progress don't hesitate to dial 999 and ask for the Police.

*P.C. 5110 ALLEN
Pangbourne Police Station*

READERS' LETTERS

Warren Page is concerned that readers may be accepting opinions aired in these pages as fact without giving thought to alternative views. Moreover, he is surprised at the lack of readers' letters published – which I must add is because I don't get many – and so has sent me the following to help stir up some action!

Take last month's outpourings on global warming. Not many would deny its existence but there are however, many who would take issue over the causes. Just remember that the media-led mantra, which indicts mankind as the evil spirit behind global warming, is pushed because, (a) we British seem to thrive on self flagellation and (b) it improves their circulation. By and large, we believe what we read.

Remember also that governments love to latch on to any issue upon which they will be able to raise taxes. Experience may tell you that any "green" taxes that are raised will not be spent in the search for a greener environment but will, like many other revenue raisers, disappear into the Chancellor's spending money pot. For example, does anyone really believe that road pricing revenues will go towards improving our road system?

An example of media-mantra. Think of all the column inches expended on not leaving your TV set on standby, so as to "reduce your carbon footprint". There's another dreadful cliché beloved of the green police. Ever worked out how much power *standby* consumes? My TV set is rated at 1 watt on standby. Given that it is on standby for about six hours a day on average, it inflates my electricity bill by all of 6p a quarter. Six pence! I'm a wicked man.

I shan't be at all surprised if some future chancellor applies a 10% increase to my household electricity bill to save the environment from standby.

There are many scientists worldwide who, whilst acknowledging man's contribution to global warming, are convinced that our part in this trend is insignificant. Although they, like most of us, feel that we should do what we can to protect our environment, they also feel that much greater forces are involved in climate change; forces that we cannot control.

Our major, if not virtually our only, source of warming is the sun. Over untold millennia, its heating value has risen and fallen, sometimes quite drastically, giving us ice ages and eras of intense warming. Hard to blame that on the exhaust outpourings of my medium sized family car or my TV set.

I am not suggesting we should bury our heads in the sand, but I would advise caution and the application of a little serious thought about what we are told by certain self-interested parties, be they politicians, newspapers, or television pundits. At least we can put the last of these three on standby.

Warren Page

MESSAGE FROM HOME FARM

Because of work at the lock and the necessary diversion of the footpath, the Environment Agency, in their infinite wisdom, have placed a wonderful non-slip board over one side of the cattle grids to aid with the path. Do they think that our Aberdeen Angus cattle are daft? - Well we've got news for them... they're NOT!

If the number of phone calls we've received over the past few weeks, informing us that there is an Angus running up and down Mapledurham Drive isn't enough evidence then take a look at the piles of you-know-what on the road! - and they say that dog-fouling is a problem. Needless to say, by the time we've donned wellies and run across the field to deal with the escapee it has returned to the family-fold. Add to this the little calf who has learnt that 'the grass is greener' and pushes its way into Bucknell's Meadow on a regular basis, the cattle are certainly having fun!

It is a great shame that Purley Park Football Club are no longer able to play home matches in the meadow and are having to rent pitches from Reading Council. This thriving club has drawn the community together and it is disappointing that their league now state that whilst the pitch is good, the associated facilities are lacking. Wouldn't it be wonderful if the Parish Council in collaboration with the club could find a solution so that Bucknell's Meadow could be more utilised for the village.

Having been kept clean and tidy by community spirit and pride; sadly since the departure of the football club the meadow is quickly filling with rubbish and suffering vandalism. Such is the case in other areas of the village....I refer in particular to burnt out vehicles.

I feel sure that the culprits for this anti-social behaviour are known and the only way forward is for the community to take responsibility and work against such behaviour.

PURLEY HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY

A.G.M.

The 29th Annual General Meeting of the Society was held on Wednesday, 21 February and the existing Committee was re-elected to serve for another year. The meeting was well attended and after the official business had been completed there was a short break for tea and biscuits. This was followed by a very interesting talk and slide show on "Birds of Uganda" by Nancy Massie.



TALKS

On Wednesday, 21 March, Mr John Graham gave us a very interesting illustrated talk on perennial plants. A wide variety of plants were also for sale in the interval.

SPRING SHOW

This will take place on Saturday, 14 April in Purley Memorial Hall and will be open to the public from 2.30 pm until 4 pm. Tea and biscuits will be available. Even if you are unable to enter, please try and come along to support the participants.

PLANT SALE

This will be held on Saturday, 12 May in the Memorial Hall Car Park starting at 9.30am until 11am (approx.). Bedding plants and various other plants will be available. Please try and come along and support the Society as this helps us financially.

TRADING STORE

The Store is open Saturday & Sunday from 10am until 11am. Membership of the Society, costing only £1.50 for a year is tremendous value and you can buy items at the Store (in Purley Memorial Hall car park) at lower prices than most other sources. Further savings can be made on garden purchases at Collins of Pangbourne, BSB garden Machinery, Sulham Lane for new mowers, Englefield Garden Centre, Glenville Nursery, Bradfield Southend and Newington Nurseries, 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. We stock peat free compost (New Horizon and John Innes) at the Store, also bird food, bird tables and feeders.

HELPERS FOR TRADING STORE

We need several more people to help run the Store, as some of our helpers are unable to continue. If you feel you can help out, please have a word with Margaret Rolfe on 941 7247

I hope you have a successful gardening season.

Marion Dabbs



SUMMER VISIT TO THE RHS GARDEN, WISLEY - 1 JULY 2007

"A unique and enchanting place throughout the seasons" Wisley has, for more than 100 years, been Britain's best-loved garden, with 249 acres offering a fascinating blend of the beautiful with practical and innovative design and cultivation techniques.

For many, it is the beauty and tranquillity of the garden that captures the imagination, with its richly planted borders, luscious rose gardens and the exotica of the glasshouses.

In the trial fields, the finest of the new flowers and vegetables are identified from countless introductions. Elsewhere in the garden, cultivation techniques are tried and tested and a series of model gardens provides answers to the needs of plants in a variety of conditions and circumstances.

The new Bicentenary Glasshouse and Learning Centre will be newly opened in June; it will be fascinating to see the glasshouse in its formative year and how it will develop in the future. Wisley is a garden that never stands still, with many other new additions complementing its existing horticultural attractions.

This day out will offer countless opportunities to gather new ideas and inspiration.

Chinese Pavilion

Alpine Meadows and Rock Garden

Model Gardens

Wild Garden, Pinetum and Arboretum

The Wisley Plant Centre offers the opportunity to buy a little treasure to enhance your garden. The Wisley shop offers the finest choice of horticultural books and gifts. The cost of this trip will be £12 per PHS member. Full details and application form are available in the PHS Trading store beside the Memorial Hall, latest date for applications, Sunday 14 May.

GUIDED WALK EXPLORING THE HIDDEN GARDENS OF THE CITY OF LONDON WITH JOHN GARROD - TUESDAY 10 JULY

A guided walk has been arranged with John Garrod. John, who spoke to the Society last October, is a City of London Guide and a London Blue Badge guide. London has held a lifelong fascination for John and he has acquired a specialised knowledge of the City of London's gardens.

This walk would be gentle, with lots of stops for John to point out things of interest and there will be several opportunities to sit for short periods. In the whole day, we would cover approximately 2 miles.

The walk will start at 11am Blackfriars station there will be an hour's lunch break, probably at The Waterside Café at the Barbican. If it is a fine day, people can sit outside on the lakeside terrace. Those who bring their own lunch can eat them there. John aims to finish the walk at St Paul's at approximately 3.30pm, where a cup of tea or coffee could be purchased in the Crypt Café.

Full details and application forms are in the PHS Trading store, latest date for application is Sunday 20 May.



MIRAMAR DE MARINA GOLF APARTMENT

New holiday apartment in Southern Spain available for rental £225-395 p/w. 2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, terrace overlooking golf course and sea, air-con, communal pool, private parking.

Contact Val and Rick Jones Tel: 9623793 for more information or see www.mojacar-miramar.com

MEET OUR EXTENDED SCHOOLS MANAGER



Sue Guy is the Extended Schools Manager for the Tilehurst & Purley cluster, based at Denefield School. Sue is working with the Partnership schools on the Government's Extended Schools Initiative to encourage access for all to a wide range of out of school hours' activities that meet the needs of schools and families. Luckily, Purley C.E. (Controlled) Infants School is one of the seven schools in the Partnership so will benefit from any activities held across the cluster.



Sue is responsible for developing the Partnership's out of school hours' opportunities for pupils, their families and the wider community. She explains: "This is a wonderful opportunity to involve families in discussions and improve our extended services to target local needs. We plan to introduce family learning activities to help support parents/carers with their child's development. We would like to help children reach their potential and develop valuable life skills. We hope our out of school hours activities will help children improve their self esteem, as well as their results and potentially their job prospects. The key to the success of this initiative, is talking to pupils and parents/carers to find out their needs. It is vital that any new activities we introduce will be reliable, affordable and cost effective in the longer term."

Sue Guy has been consulting with pupils, parents, teachers and governors to ascertain local need. She plans to improve existing services, as well as implement additional activities or signpost families to nearby alternative services.

The Partnership are about to launch their first newsletter and are calling themselves 'Inspire4Life'.

Look out for posters at the Purley Infants School and on the Parish Council notice boards for future activities, such as the adult numeracy sessions currently on offer, as well as others about to be announced!

If you have any questions or suggestions, Sue can be contacted on 0118 941 3458.

PANGBOURNE BOWLS CLUB

Pangbourne Bowls Club will be getting underway with the new season soon, and for those of you interested in possibly joining the club, there is an Open Day on Saturday 21 April at 2pm. This is an ideal opportunity for anyone interested in the game to come along to the pavilion in Pangbourne Recreation Ground and talk with any of the committee or other club members about membership and what is involved and hopefully we will be able to arrange coaching as soon as the green is fit to be used. A few trail ends rolling up some woods will soon get you hooked!

For those unable to make 21 April, don't be put off as there will be lots of activity down at the green in the early part of the season as it is being prepared for a full season of bowls. Thursday evenings are usually devoted to welcoming newcomers and one of our club coaches will be on hand on these evenings.

If you are already an established player (male or female) and want to play in Pangbourne, then it will interest you to know that we run several teams (both friendly and competitive) both at weekends and also on some weekdays. Any club member will be able to put you in contact with one of the team captains.

We always look forward to welcoming back all of our current members on 21 April, hopefully along with some new players as well.

Nigel Cabeldu
Secretary, Pangbourne Bowls Club



Pangbourne Rotary Club
**PAINTINGS
EXHIBITION**

Pangbourne Village Hall

100 local artists - paintings for sale
- catering for all tastes and pockets -

Preview evening Friday 20 April
admission is by ticket only - £3.50

Available from Clive Williams on 01491 671631
dchwilliams@tiscali.co.uk

General Admission Saturday 21 April - £1

All monies raised will be donated to local charities

NEW CUSTOMER SERVICES OFFICE AT SAINSBURY'S, CALCOT



On 19 March 2007, West Berkshire Council opened a new Customer Services office in the Sainsbury's store at Calcot.

Our innovative partnership with Sainsbury's has provided an office located on the first floor in the Sainsbury's store, opposite the Cafe. The first floor location is served by a lift as well as stairs and the office is open between:

8.30am and 6pm Monday to Friday

8.30am and 1pm Saturday

We are offering our full range of services at this new location and this initiative has been very well received so far. We hope that many West Berkshire residents will find this a convenient location and will make good use of this new facility.

STRAWBERRY TEAS IN THE GARDEN

This event is being planned again for June this year – watch this space for details

Cherry Acre, Purley Village. Acre garden with flower borders, rose walkway, vegetable garden, wildflower meadow, mini orchard, and more. Children's areas and fun activities. Relax with a Cream Tea and other strawberry related food from 1.30pm. In aid of St Mary's Church. Nicki Woodward 984 2112

PROJECT PURLEY

PURLEY THROUGH THE AGES

Project Purley has attracted a considerable number of new members in recent years, so it was entirely appropriate that the meeting on 16 February should be devoted to Jean Debney's talk on *Purley through the ages*. Her comprehensive knowledge of the village's history was first demonstrated in a similar talk given as part of the programme of Millennium Lectures in 2000, and offers an overview of the changes that have occurred in Purley during a period of almost one thousand years.

Jean's lecture was backed up by a series of 77 slides, several maps and a table laden with reference books and family card indexes, so it became clear that the audience would need to pay rapt attention if we were not to miss any significant piece of information. As it was, Jean's meticulous preparation meant that she covered the period from 1086 to the present day in just under sixty minutes, so this review only has the space to highlight the most important events and dates.

Purley – the name means "snipe or bittern found in a woodland clearing" – existed in Saxon times as evidenced by its mention in the Domesday Book of

1086, when the village population was just 80. The area was divided into three manors identified as Purley Magna, Purley Parva and Purley La Hyde. The manors changed hands several times, but by the Middle Ages, the manorial lords had leased most of their estates to tenant farmers and copyholders. Some future members of Project Purley made an exciting discovery in St. Mary's churchyard in 1980 when they excavated several "pillow" graves, where large flints are placed alongside the skull, a custom dating from the Middle Ages.

The 1500s was a time of religious turmoil, but record keeping was becoming more extensive and accurate, so we have more evidence in the form of wills and inventories of possessions. These tell us that most Purley villagers lived in houses with just two or four rooms and that the husbandmen produced their own food, bread and ale, whilst keeping cows, sheep, pigs and poultry.

The seventeenth century was dominated by the English Civil War and we know that villagers suffered at the hands of both Royalist and Parliamentary armies as soldiers from each side seized horses, crops and other food from local inhabitants. Parish registers were destroyed too and Purley's earliest surviving registers date only from 1662. At a time when non-conformist religious groups such as the Quakers and Baptists were being formed, there is little if any evidence that anyone from Purley was joining one of these new movements.

In 1711 the Rector of Purley, William Gostwick, made a list in the parish register of those responsible for maintaining the churchyard rails, the length of which corresponded to their status in the village. Many of the same property-owning men were charged with improving the road from Reading to Wallingford (now the A329) and building a bridge over the Thames at Shillingford. Money for this came from four tollgates along the way. As transport developed, Purley Lock was built to improve navigation along the river and, in 1794, the Thames Commissioners set up a horse ferry, which crossed to the Oxford bank near the church and returned near to the Roebuck where Ferry Cottage can still be seen. Purley Lodge was built in the 1750s by John Liebenrood and the Red Lyon public house was the setting for a Court Baron held in October 1786, prior to the walking of the estate boundary. A costumed and scripted re-enactment of the Court Baron was held in the Barn in 2000 as part of the Millennium celebrations.

Ownership of land in Purley changed hands several times in the eighteenth century and the family names of St. John, Mackreth, Martindale and Storer all feature prominently in the village history. Anthony Storer MP bought Purley Magna for £15,000 in 1793 and, in his will, left another £15,000 to ensure Purley Park was built to a design by James Wyatt on the high ground overlooking the Thames Valley. Elyham House was built on the south side of the Oxford Road and, in 1914, the farm became the home of the celebrated artist, Cecil Aldin. The Barn was used as a remount stable in World War I and moved to its present site as recently as 1995.

The Great Western Railway extended its network as far as Purley in 1840, the line bisecting the parish, though few villagers could afford the fares until Tilehurst Station was opened in 1892. Before then, the post had been brought from Reading by cart, but now the mail arrived at 6.24am and was collected at

7.30pm. Purley Post Office happened to be wherever the postmaster or postmistress lived.

The first school in Purley was set up by the Rector, Charles Manesty, in 1818 for poor children. A new school was opened in 1873 for all local children aged from five to ten and this building still survives today, with of course, much modernisation.

St. Mary's Church was virtually rebuilt and restored in the 1869-70 period at a cost of £2,000. The Norman font was moved into the chancel and a new vestry and north aisle constructed. A new east window donated by Mrs. Cecily Storer in memory of her sister was installed and the lych gate was given by Caroline Sherwood as a tribute to her parents.

Purley changed dramatically in the twentieth century as a result of two world wars and the lasting effects of the industrial revolution. It was still a small village with few houses, but the old order began to break up with the sale of Purley Park in 1920. Geographical and social mobility increased as motor buses from the village to Reading were introduced, replacing the slower horse and cart. Council houses were built too in the 1930s in Glebe Road and the old blacksmith's shop at the end of Long Lane was demolished for road widening. At the beginning of World War II, evacuees arrived from London, but stayed for only a few days. Their names are nevertheless recorded in the Purley School register.

In the aftermath of the Second World War, the Purley Memorial Hall was designed and built in tribute to those local residents killed in both world wars and the community spirit was further enhanced by the founding of the Purley Park Property Owners' Association. The District Council was keen to clear the freehold sites in the large field near the church, but the River Gardens estate had become too widespread and mains water, sewerage, electricity and finally gas were provided for the area and the road improved. Local organisations, such as the Women's Institute, Mothers' Union, drama groups, Girl Guides, Brownies and indeed Project Purley itself have been formed in the last century as the village has grown in size and spirit. The only recent loss to the community has been the sale of Westbury Farm, which since the death of wine expert Bernard Theobald, means the vineyard has been cleared.

The 1991 census showed Purley to have a population of more than 5,000, a vast increase on the 80 villagers of Saxon times. It may still be considered small by some standards, but was given additional status when it was renamed Purley on Thames to distinguish it from a similarly named area in Surrey. As Jean had said right at the start of her talk, our village is indeed rich in history, and it is thanks to the enthusiasm and expertise of her and people like her that we are able to share in it.

David Downs

The next meeting of Project Purley will be held in the Barn off Beech Road, Purley on Thames on Friday, 20 April commencing at 8pm. The speaker will be our lock-keeper, George Fielder, and his talk is entitled *A working life on the River*.

SHAKESPEARE IN THE BARN

The Rain or Shine Theatre Company will be presenting *Twelfth Night* at The Barn on Friday, 8 June at 7.30pm. All profits this year will be donated to Macmillan Care Nurses. The event has proved to be very popular in recent years – indeed last year's performance was a sell-out – so if you would like more information or want to reserve tickets (£10 adults, £7.50 concessions), please contact David Downs on 0118 942 4167.

FLOWER FESTIVAL

FALKLAND ISLANDS MEMORIAL CHAPEL 5-7 MAY 2007

To commemorate the 25th anniversary of the liberation of the Falkland Islands, the Flower Guild of the Falkland Islands Memorial Chapel (FIMC) at Pangbourne College are staging a Flower Festival on Saturday 5 May to Monday 7 May, 10am to 5pm each day. Choral Evensong will take place on Sunday 6 May at 5pm. Entry and parking is free. A souvenir programme and refreshments will also be available.

At the northern end of the Chapel, the magnificent stained glass window depicts the Falkland Islands within the empty cross of Jesus Christ, surrounded by a lively sea in vibrant shades of blue, green, yellow, and grey. The theme of this year's exhibition, *and in the morning*, reflects this symbol of hope. Using the colours of the rainbow and specially chosen hymns, including *O Trinity of love and power* and the Falklands Hymn, the floral exhibits will take the visitor from the darker parts of the war experience on a spiritual walk to the lighter times of victory and hope.

The Chapel Flower Guild has a wide membership of flower arrangers from around the South East committed to creating colour, style, and texture in the chapel on a weekly basis. This exhibition reflects their dedication and the enthusiasm of their clubs, friends, and others connected with Pangbourne College.

The Chapel is located at the heart of the Pangbourne College campus. Pupils use the chapel on a regular basis for services, musical events, and quiet reflection. Together with the flower arrangers and all those involved in this exhibition they ensure that this is a 'living' memorial to those to whom the Chapel is dedicated.

Jeremy Sanders, Chairman of the FIMC Trustees and veteran of the Falklands war says, 'I have always found previous flower festivals at the Chapel very moving occasions and in view of the special anniversary I am sure this one will be even more so.'

TICKET-ONLY PREVIEW ON FRIDAY 4 MAY 7.30PM TO 9PM

You are invited to enjoy a glass of wine and canapés in the Old Library of Pangbourne College, from 7.30-8pm, before visiting the Chapel to view the Flower Festival at leisure, to the accompaniment of organ music played by Rufus Frowde.

Tickets: £8.50 (including Souvenir Programme) from (SAE please): Richard Stone, Westfield, Woodview Road, Pangbourne, Berkshire, RG8 7NJ; Tel: 0118 984 4452; E-mail: stonerca@aol.com



PANG & KENNET VALLEY COUNTRYSIDE PROJECTS



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

For further details or booking of any the events, please contact the Project Office (0118 930 5336). *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.

Tue 17 April Meadow Meadow Management Turnpike
Join us to help rake the cut grass from the wildflower meadow in Turnpike set alongside the River Lambourn. Meet outside the Riverside Community Centre at 10am. Grid ref: SU485 678

Sun 22 April 2-4pm Victorian Bradfield Tutts Clump
Join Dorcas Ward on a guided walk around the older parts of Bradfield - Rotten Row and the old village - mostly footpaths through woods and meadows. Meet at the Tutts Clump Methodist Church at 2pm. Grid ref: 587 7110. Dogs on leads. Please contact the Project office to book your place on 0118 930 5336.

Tue 24 April Footpath Work Bucklebury
Help 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

Sat 28 April 11.30am-3pm River Lambourn Fun Day
Almond Avenue Recreation Ground, Shaw, Newbury
Come along to enjoy a day out next to the River Lambourn in Newbury and have your say to make this a better place. Guided Walks – Stalls – Storytelling – Environmental Art – Refreshments – River Dipping

Please ring the Project Office 0118 930 5336 if you can help with this event.

28/29 April 11am-6pm Bradfield Bluebell Weekend Rushall Manor Farm
Come and enjoy the glorious woods full of bluebells, wood anemones, primroses and violets. The woodland at Rushall Manor Farm*, Bradfield will be open to the public for the annual bluebell weekend from 11am-6pm. Self-guided walks will be signposted and refreshments will be available. A donation of £3 per adult and £1 per child is invited in aid of Multiple Sclerosis.

Sun 29 April 9-11am Family Pond Dip and Survey Hosehill Lake LNR
Join an informal session exploring the pond and surrounding plants. The morning will start by looking at any pond wildlife like newts and diving beetles found in a survey set the previous night. You will then try and catch more by using nets. Places are limited so please book in advance. Wear sturdy shoes and old clothes. Children under 16 must be accompanied by an adult. Meet at the green gate opposite the Fox and Hounds Pub, Sunnyside, Station Road, Theale. Grid ref: SU650697

Thu 3 May 6-7.30pm Cowslips at sunset Chaddlewoth
Chaddlewoth (Berkshire Downs). A walk across recently created wild-flower grassland at cowslip time and to look for hares, red kites and barn owls. Please bring a torch as it may be dark on the way back and wear stout footwear as the ground is uneven. Please book with the office at least two days before the event. (Details of the meeting point will be given on booking.)

Tue 8 May Footpath Work Bucklebury
Help 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

Thu 10 May 11am-noon Spring Wildflower Walk Paices Wood
Come along and see the spring wildflowers at Paices Wood. Meet at Paices Wood Country Parkland (through Youngs Industrial Estate) Grid ref: SU586638. For further information about health walks contact the Health Walks Coordinator on 01635 874381 or email walking@westberks.gov.uk.

Thu 10 May 7.30-9.30pm Friends AGM The Victory Rooms Bucklebury Village
The AGM of the 'Friends of the Pang and Kennet Valleys' will be held at the Victory Rooms, Bucklebury Village; followed by a talk on Tree Archaeology by Mr Ted Green from the Ancient Tree Forum. Any items for the agenda please contact the Project Office.

Sat 12 May 11am-noon Spring Wildflower Walk Hosehill Lake LNR
Come along and see the spring wildflowers at Hosehill Lake. Meet at the green gate opposite the Fox and Hounds Pub, Sunnyside, Station Road, Theale. Grid ref: SU650697. For further information about health walks contact the Health Walks Coordinator on 01635 874381 or email walking@westberks.gov.uk.

Sun 20 May 9am-noon approx Hosehill Lake LNR 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, Sunnyside, Station Road, Theale. Grid ref: SU650697

Tue 29 May Footpath work Paices Wood
Help to make sure the woodland and lakeside footpaths are clear at Paices Wood. Meet 10.00am at Paices Wood Country Parkland (through Youngs Industrial Estate) Grid ref: SU586 638.

Fri 1 June 7.30-11pm 'Pang Valley Skittles Championship' Upper Bucklebury
Join the volunteer group for the annual 'Pang Valley Skittles Championship'. Cost £10 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 2 June 9-10.45am Woodland wander and pond dip Paices Wood
Come along for a walk through the woodland to the new dipping platform and explore what lives in the lakes. Children under 16 must be accompanied by an adult. Meet at Paices Wood Country Parkland (through Youngs Industrial Estate) Grid ref: SU586638

Tue 5 June Bradfield Glade Clearance Kings Copse
Spend the day clearing invasive Himalayan Balsam at Kings Copse to help maintain the native woodland flora. Meet at Black Barn, Rushall Manor Farm* at 10.00am or phone the Project office for details of meeting on site. Phone 0118 930 5336

Thu 14 June 9am-1pm Farm Training Event:

Creating and Managing wildflower meadows

For farmers and landowners undertaking arable reversion to species rich grassland, floristically enhanced margins and field corners. A farm walk led by local expert Sue Everett looking at establishing chalk grasslands, successes and issues and solutions on two farms which have established chalk grassland on set-aside and through CSS. Coffee and biscuits supplied. Meet at 9am at Rowdown Farm off the B4494 NGR SU445782. Telephone the Project office for more information 0118 9305336.

Sat 16 June 2pm Byways and Boardwalk Bucklebury Common

Meet at Angel's Corner, by the scout hut on Bucklebury Common (Grid Ref: SU500688) for a 3 mile ramble led by Ray Clayton exploring some of the rights of way round Bucklebury Common including the newly erected boardwalk at Osgoods Gully and the Slade. There are 3 stiles on this walk. Please contact the Project office on 0118 9305 336 to book you place.

Tue 19 June Bradfield Glade Clearance Kings Copse

Spend the day clearing invasive Himalayan Balsam at Kings Copse to help maintain the native woodland flora. Meet at Black Barn, Rushall Manor Farm* at 10.00am or phone the Project office for details of meeting on site. Phone 0118 930 5336

Tue 26 June Meadow Weed Management Turnpike

Join us to help control the docks and thistles to allow the wildflowers to flourish in Turnpike Meadow set alongside the River Lambourn. Meet outside the Riverside Community Centre at 10am. Grid ref: SU485 678

Tue 26 June 8.30-10pm Nightjars and Glowworms at dusk Bucklebury Common

Join BHCG leader Tim Culley for a late evening walk looking at heathland restoration and some of the specialised wildlife associated with the habitat, including Nightjars and Glow worms. Stout footwear is necessary. Meet at Angel's Corner, by the Scout Hut on Bucklebury Common at 8.30 p.m. Grid ref: SU 550 688.

Sun 1 July 10am-noon River Dipping Riverside Community Centre, Turnpike

Find the amazing creatures, which live in the River Lambourn. Meet outside the Community Centre at 10am. Grid ref: SU485 678

Wed 4 July 6-8.30pm Walk and BBQ Wasing

The Friends have been invited for a walk along the Kennet by kind permission of the Wasing Estate, followed by a BBQ in the picturesque setting of Shalford Lake. The walk will take in some of the issues being discussed through the Thames Rivers Restoration Trust along the river as well as the ecologically diverse gravel pits. Meet at Shalford Lake NGR SU568650

HELP WANTED

Do you have a passion for the countryside and enjoy telling others about it. If so please contact the Project office as we need new walk leaders for our very successful walks programme. All necessary training will be provided. So if you have some hidden walks that you would like to share with other members please do not hesitate to contact us at the Project office 0118 930 5336

NOTELETS FOR SALE

The 'Friends' Photo competition notelets are available from the Project Office

£2.00 for a pack of 4 or £5.00 for 3 packs.

PURLEY PATHFINDERS

A WALKING GROUP FOR LADIES

As the year moves from winter into spring, what better way of witnessing Nature's changes, than a good walk in the countryside. That's exactly what the Pathfinder ladies have been doing, and what a 'feel-good' factor we have gained.

Towards the end of February, we set out on another walk amongst the snowdrops. We passed the Victorian school and Schoolhouse, and the Mill and Mill House, just some of the 26 Grade II listed properties, which gained Conservation status to the village of Echchinswell in 1990. Soon we were leaving the village behind as we climbed up through fields to arrive beside a house set in its own dell full of snowdrops – how lovely! From here, we could look down over Echchinswell, with its church tower a prominent landmark. Emerging after a climb through a woodland strip, our view was now of Watership Down on the skyline. We mused over Richard Adams's famous story as our route took us past Nuthanger Farm where 'Fiver' and his furry friends realised they were being fattened up for the pot! Between banks of snowdrops, dotted with pale yellow primroses, we arrived at a garden where the lawn lay deep in the white of a trillion snowy droplets – a wonderful sight! Soon we were walking within the Sydmonton Estate where we passed several of Lady Lloyd Webber's polo ponies. As we took a break, we looked down upon the immaculate Watership Farm, surrounded by smooth green fields overlooked by Watership Down. Within this glorious countryside, no doubt a great inspiration to Sir Andrew, we continued until an avenue, edged with a multitude of snowdrops, took us to the last leg of our walk, which ended with a final flurry of snowdrops by the village church.

Our next walk took us to the picturesque village of Stoke Row. Starting as a tiny hamlet, it was a well-known centre for 'bodgers' who turned chair parts. Some continued right up to the 1940's, and had workshop based at The Cherry Tree and The Crooked Billet pubs. The village fits well into our theme for the year of 'Following Footsteps', as many stars of the silver screen have visited, being the location for several movies and TV programmes. We were welcomed by the 'stars' of the sky, as several Red Kites gave us an exciting display of swooping and diving. Despite the mud after recent wet weather, the Chiltern beech woods through which we passed showed many signs of the forthcoming Spring. Amongst the snowdrops, we saw primroses and daffodils in flower, and the green shoots, which promise a fine display of bluebells. Our view stretched to Didcot, where its chimneys were bathed in sunshine, and to Wittenham Clumps. We passed through farmland with its resident horses, pigs, chickens and alpacas, all of which help in their own way to keep the countryside looking beautiful. Back in Stoke Row we passed through the old Cherry Orchard to reach the Maharajah's Well. Built in 1864 in a stunning oriental style, it was the gift to the village from the Maharajah of Benares on hearing the village had no water supply. The cherries from next door were sold to help fund its upkeep, and in spring, the blossom forms a romantic backdrop. In fact, we felt we were following footsteps of romance, for The Crooked Billet was the chosen location for the wedding reception of Kate Winslet. Years before, Dick Turpin had courted the landlord's daughter. If the Well had been there then, I may have thought there is something in the water!

With the arrival of March we set off up a woodland path within The Holies on National Trust land in Streatley. How pretty it looked with little wild primroses making a splash of pale yellow as their dainty blooms scrambled over the wooded banks. We paused at a grassy strip alongside the wood to take in the view, which on this clear day, we felt was the best we have seen it. The Thames could be seen meandering its way through the valley with the hills of the



Chilterns rising up behind. We continued through the wood until another clearing led us to the 'Stone Mazes'. We have been unable to discover any history about these except that they have been here for many, many years. We enjoyed working our way to the middle of the three mazes during our break. Leaving the lovely woodland, we crossed the road to enter the grassland of Lardons Chase. We walked along the crest of the hill with ever increasing good views across the Goring Gap. We enjoyed spotting areas in which we have walked, discovering that we have, in fact, walked most of the glorious countryside, which spread out before us! We entered Lough Down to continue our view along from Cleeve Lock to South and North Stoke and on further into the Oxfordshire countryside – magnificent! We dropped down the hillside where The Bull lay waiting to welcome us, just as it had welcomed Jerome K Jerome and his friends during their famous trip in a boat along the Thames!

There have probably been many famous footsteps taken amongst the millions of footsteps, which we followed during our next walk along The Ridgeway. We began with a wooded climb taking us – it seemed – ever nearer the blue sky in which various birds of prey glided on the thermals. The green shoots of bluebells lay thick on the woodland floor in preparation for Nature's next show of beauty. We emerged into the open with a breathtaking panoramic view, shared with the skylarks, which sang for joy in the blue above. Obvious landmarks such as the Didcot chimneys and Wittenham Clumps stood out amongst views to Oxford, Culham and beyond, all so clear on this beautiful spring day. Pheasants scattered as we dropped down a stony track beside an undulating hillside, on which shadows played in the sunshine. Down in the valley we crossed an enormous field, taking a break before attempting a steep hill back up again. Through woodland in which pheasants are bred, we continued within the Well Barn estate, finally dropping back down to find our cars after our lovely, challenging walk.



Leading us up to the Easter break, we have a walk planned following footsteps of former Poet Laureate, Robert Bridges, around Yattendon and Ashampstead. We will finish the term with our Springtime Special in the form of a trip to Stratford upon Avon, following the footsteps of that other great man of words, William Shakespeare.

During the Easter holiday, if you can, do take time to get out into our beautiful countryside. I am always willing to supply ideas! I wish you all a joyous Easter.

Nicki Woodward
nicki@cherryacre.com – 984 2112



FUTURE ROTARIANS IN THE MAKING?

Just as policemen seem to be getting younger, so are Senior Citizens and some of the 100 guests who attended Pangbourne Rotary Clubs' annual Senior Citizens party looked a few years younger than many of their Rotarian hosts.

The programme of entertainment was compeered by Rotarian Peter Harris; who's jokes were older than most of the Senior Citizens; and who clearly hasn't heard of political correctness. Note to club secretary - must check if Rotary Insurance covers "offending public by lack of political correctness".

Fortunately, the band was loud, many hearing aids were turned off and more than a few glasses of sherry were consumed so most of the guests hadn't a clue what Peter was on about anyway.

The programme finished with a mass sing-a-long. When the song sheets to Mary Poppins and Sound of Music failed to materialise; without prompting or rehearsal,; the four young daughters of two Rotarian, all under 8, grabbed the microphone and proceeded to sing songs from the musicals word perfect accompanied by the band, much to the delight of the assembled senior citizens.



Future Rotarians in the making, I wonder?

The Rotary Club of Pangbourne is a Service and Community Organisation for professional people in Pangbourne, Tilehurst, Basildon, Theale, Calcot and surrounding areas.

New members are always welcome.

More information on the Rotary Club of Pangbourne can be found at www.pangbourne-rotary.org.uk or by calling 0118 326 0319

PURLEY WI

This time of year means the Annual Meeting, a new committee and a reminder of last year's activities. Not much changed on the committee, so perhaps this shows we are getting it right. We thanked the retiring members for their help and, as last year's President, Daphne Howard, was happy to reign again, we feel confident with her at the helm to guide us along calm waters.

Sadly for us, Frances Dugan is moving away, and though she has been with us for only a short time, she has left a lasting impression. We wish her and her family happy and healthy days.

Looking back on last year's programme, we were surely enriched by worthwhile speakers who gave us laughs, extended knowledge and often mind provoking subjects to consider. Thanks to Ella Petrie for a good variety of speakers.

We worked hard to provide ourselves with a memorable 70th Birthday – we are still congratulating ourselves, but it took a lot a preparation. There were outings, fish and chip suppers, garden party teas and Sybil Pryor's yearly coffee morning with proceeds going to ACWW (water wells for the third world). Trophies were given via a points system – flower table and a monthly competition (usually to complement the speaker). Winners were Ann Davis, Wendy Chapman, Edna Bint, Lesley Honnor and yours truly. This is a fun part of the evening, quite harmless but also voluntary.

Praise must always go to the Treasurer, Margaret Martin. She does provide miracles by always making the books balance, not forgetting George Critchell, our auditor – what would we do without him. Thank you.

All in all Ladies, appreciation goes to the committee for getting it all together, and to members for helping it to tick over. So, here we go again. Be Happy.

As the evening lends itself to a somewhat sombre note, we usually end up with a Beetle Drive (it's to let off steam really). Seriously though, how would you describe this game other than being wild and noisy? All good fun providing you can keep your blood pressure down!

Well done Susan Dryden for winning the Quiz set out by National Federation of Women's Institutes (60 answers correct).

Flower competition 1st Margaret Martin 2nd Sylvia Conquest

April's speaker will be Mr. Paul Whittle – Steam to Mandalay (slides). The meeting will be held at Purley Memorial Hall, Glebe Road, Purley on 11 April commencing at 7.30pm. For this meeting we decided to have an "open meeting" so, if you have a railway fanatic husband or friend, members are encouraged to bring them along.

Sylvia Conquest
941 1936

PLEASE SUPPORT YOUR LOCAL POST OFFICE

ROTARY CLUB OF PANGBOURNE

ANNUAL CHARITY DRAGON BOAT CHALLENGE



In 2001, our Club saw an opportunity to increase further its charitable fund-raising by organising a Dragon Boat Challenge beside Pangbourne Meadow, the beautiful stretch of the Thames close to where the Club meets every Monday evening. We always seek to work with and help people from Pangbourne and its surrounding districts and so we offered to organise a Dragon Boat event as part of the very popular Pangbourne Village Fete. The Meadow is an ideal spot for picnicking; so many visitors make a day of it.

The Fete is normally held in June each year and the Fete Committee readily welcomed the suggestion of the dragon boat event, since it extended the Fete's very wide scope from the many riverbank attractions and events right on the river itself. Its initial 2001 success meant that it has run in subsequent years ever since. Pangbourne Rotary combines with Henley Dragon Boat Club who supply the very necessary expertise and dragon boats. They operate at international and Olympic level.

Regular visitors to the Fete now expect to watch the river racing and join in the excitement that the dragon boats provide. This is definitely a real fun day. Ask the teams who return to take part each year! These include both companies and private teams. All are welcome, as are individuals.

In the 2002 event, we found that many individual people came to us on the day and asked if they could be part of a crew and have a race. Therefore, in subsequent years we offered this to visitors to the Fete. Because of its great success, we are offering it again this year, subject to there being sufficient time in the racing schedule.

What happens? Well, three crews, each of sixteen people, take part in each race. Each is led by their drummer beating out the racing rhythm on the big tom-tom while they paddle their dragon boat along a course of about 250 metres, racing against the other two boats. Of course, for each team we provide a qualified helmsman who steers the boat to the finish line. This is not as easy as it looks! We also supply everything the crews need such as boats, paddles and buoyancy jackets.

Eighteen teams can take part and each team is guaranteed at least three races. After a series of heats, the top teams go through to the various finals. Coveted certificates and Dragonhead prizes are awarded! It is very important for teams to register as early as possible!

Accepting all the fun, the Rotary Club of Pangbourne's main purpose is charitable fund-raising. Each year we raise funds for nominated charities. In 2007, once again, our chosen charities are Breast Cancer Campaign, Sue Ryder Care and many smaller local needs. The funds come from the entry donations received from the participating crews and individuals. However, the event also raises additional funds by teams seeking sponsorship for their own nominated causes.

Last year's net total for Charity was £8,400.

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 be delivered either 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.

Comments and opinions expressed in this magazine do not necessarily reflect the views of the Editor or the P.C.C. of St Mary's Church, Purley on Thames – publishers of Purley Parish News – nor is any endorsement of the products and services of our advertisers implied by their inclusion.

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