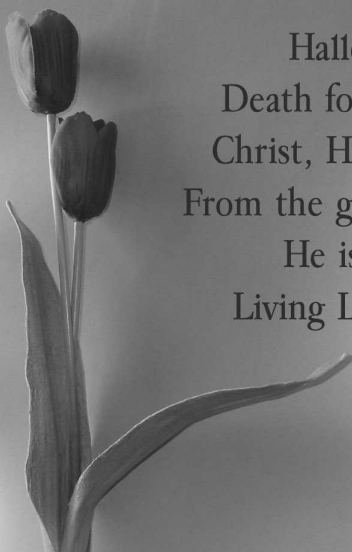


PURLEY PARISH NEWS

MARCH 2008



Hallelujah, He is risen!
Death for aye has lost his sting;
Christ, Himself the Resurrection,
From the grave "His own" will bring:
He is risen, He is risen,
Living Lord and coming King.

35p

For the Church & Community of
PURLEY ON THAMES



ST. MARY THE VIRGIN PURLEY ON THAMES

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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.

We welcome all contributions to this magazine, particularly on local issues and events. Copy can be delivered either in writing or by email. Please note however, we reserve the right to edit contributions to suit space availability and to maintain consistency of style (font etc).

Most common computer file formats are accepted, with the notable exception of Microsoft Publisher – sorry! When sending articles containing images, you may need to send the images separately, to avoid file size limits.

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PRINTING

Richfield Graphics Ltd, Caversham

If you are new to the area and would like to subscribe to Purley Parish News, please contact either Steve Corrigan or Les Jamieson.

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

THIS EDITION PUBLISHED	8 MARCH
NEXT EDITION COPY DEADLINE	22 MARCH
NEXT EDITION PUBLISHED	5 APRIL

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FROM THE RECTOR

Dear Friends,

It hardly seems possible that Easter is less than three weeks away! The festivities of Christmas and New Year have only just disappeared round the corner. But here we are, once again, with the most important Christian event almost upon us – preceded by Palm Sunday when Jesus went to Jerusalem for the last time; Maundy Thursday when He shared His last meal with His friends; and Good Friday when He was nailed to the Cross – not because He was a criminal but because He was offering Himself as a sacrifice to God for all people.

The last thing the disciples expected, when they made their way back to where they were staying in Jerusalem from the place where Jesus was crucified, was that they would see Him again. But that is just what happened according to the New Testament record. The cave where He was buried and which was closed by a slab of rock and guarded by the soldiers, was empty. Jesus' body was no longer there, and not surprisingly the disciples were bewildered and frightened. When the women told them that Jesus was alive, their reaction was – "Nonsense!" Such a thing could not possibly be true. They had seen Jesus die and that was that. The end!

If this is a made-up story, it is interesting, but it has nothing much to say to us, and can have no effect upon our lives. It deserves no deep consideration, and we can leave it in the past where it belongs.

But what if the record is true?

What if the body of Jesus was not stolen, as some have suggested?

What if He had really been raised to life again?

Then surely it warrants our attention as the unique event it claims to be!

So what can we do?

We could read one of the Gospel accounts of His death and resurrection and let it speak for itself. It claims to be an eye-witness account, and that is just how it reads. The writers saw how Jesus was nailed to the Cross. They saw the soldier thrust his spear into Jesus' side to make sure He was really dead. They saw where He was buried, and when they visited the grave on the Sunday morning, they saw that it was empty! And then – they saw Jesus alive for themselves!

Many down the ages have tried to find explanations for this event, but none of them fits the evidence we are given – except one, and that is that the grave was empty because the power of God had brought Jesus back to life! Jesus had raised others to life – Lazarus, Jairus' daughter, and the widow of Nain's son, but this was different. They all lived for a few more years, but then died. The resurrection of Jesus means that He was raised to life, and is alive for evermore!

This is what makes the Christian Faith unique. We don't have a dead leader, but a living Lord! The heart of the Christian Faith is not about "church", but Christ – discovering that He is real, and that we can know Him in our daily lives. The church bit is the gathering together of those who have made the same discovery

that the first disciples made. They want to be together, learn more about Him and experience His presence and power in their lives.

Jesus came into the world for everyone. He laid down His life for everyone. He rose again so that all may know Him and the gift of His presence. But as with every gift, a response is needed on our part.

We invite you to come to church during Holy Week and Easter, and may it be an eye-opener for you.

Roger Howell

PARISH REGISTER

FUNERAL

25 Jan Jean Sanders-Overy Aged 75 years (Cremation at Reading)

CHURCH SERVICES

9 March	9.30am	Family Worship
	11.15am	Holy Communion with prayer for healing
16 March	9.30am	Family Communion
Palm Sunday	11.15am	Morning Worship
	6.00pm	Evening Worship
20 March	8.00pm	Holy Communion
Maundy Thursday		
21 March	10.00am	Procession of Witness in Pangbourne
Good Friday	2.00pm	The Last Hour
23 March	10.30am	Family Communion
Easter Day	6.00pm	Easter Praise
30 March	9.30am	Family Worship
	11.15am	Holy Communion

ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING

The Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM) for St Mary's Church will be held on Tuesday 8 April at 8pm in the church. During this meeting, we shall elect the churchwardens for the coming year, 3 representatives to serve on the Bradfield Deanery Synod, and one member to serve on the Parochial Church Council. Anyone may attend this meeting, but in order to take part in the voting, your name must be on the Electoral Roll, which is being revised during up to 18 March. Application forms are available from Matt Slingsby, Tel 961 5585.

RETIREMENT OF ROGER HOWELL – SUNDAY 20 APRIL

As you may be aware, after 17 years of service in this parish and 40 years of Christian Ministry, Roger and Jean Howell are leaving us.

After ministering in the Parish of St Saviour's Battersea Park, London (1967-1971), Roger and Jean served in a parish in Crawley, West Sussex for 5 years. From there they moved to Pendeen and Sancreed near Penzance, Cornwall for a further 5 years. In 1981, they began a 10-year ministry in Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire from where they joined us in 1991.

Roger's last church services here in Purley will be held on Sunday 20 April:

- 10.30am All age family thanksgiving and communion service with coffee and cakes served afterwards.
- 6pm Thanksgiving evening celebration with wine and nibbles served afterwards.

Do please come and join us to give thanks for Roger and Jean Howell's faithful ministry among us and to wish them well in their retirement.

We look forward to seeing you.

Debbie Corrigan & Mary Barrett
Church Wardens

WHAT PSALM 23 IS REALLY ALL ABOUT

The Lord is my Shepherd	that's relationship!
I shall not want	that's supply!
He maketh me to lie down in green pastures	that's rest!
He leadeth me beside still waters	that's refreshment!
He restoreth my soul	that's healing!
He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness	that's guidance!
For His name's sake	that's purpose!
Yea though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death	that's testing!
I will fear no evil	that's protection!
For thou art with me	that's faithfulness!
Thy rod and Thy staff they comfort me	that's discipline!
Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies	that's hope!
Thou anointest my head with oil	that's consecration!
My cup runneth over	that's abundance!
Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life	that's blessing!
And I will dwell in the house of the Lord	that's security!
Forever	that's eternity!

NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH

Thames Valley Police has a new Neighbourhood Watch Co-Ordinator for the West Berkshire area and if you are interested in starting up a new scheme or joining and existing one then please contact Debbie Morton on 08458 505505.

DON PASQUALE

(sung in English)

HARDWICK HOUSE - WHITCHURCH ON THAMES

SATURDAY 19 JULY 2008 AT 7.00PM

By Kind permission of Sir Julian Rose, Garden Opera Company is delighted to be performing in the stunning garden setting of Hardwick House at Whitchurch on Thames.

The opera sparkles with wit and the most enchanting music and is well suited to Garden Opera's company of talented young professionals. Whether an opera lover or absolute newcomer you'll enjoy the entertaining, intimate and approachable style.

Why not make up a group of friends and bring a picnic to enjoy on the stunning lawns to the side of Hardwick House. Gardens open at 5pm. Seating is provided for the performance.

Tickets: £27 (Numbers limited, pre-booking essential)

Box Office: 0118 984 4959/2437

Tickets also available at Warmingham, 4 High Street, Goring

In the case of extremely inclement weather this performance may not take place. Please note all tickets are non-refundable.

www.gardenopera.co.uk

www.warmingham.com

PURLEY W.I.

A New Year And A New Set Of Reporters For The Institute News

January had us enjoying an evening of fun and games conducted by the members themselves, Committee taking the night off to enjoy the entertainment. Barbara Ayres conducted us through a new to us Parcel Game of stealing from each other which raised a great deal of laughter and at times slightly out of control!! This was followed by a light supper during which we calmed down and played a Quiz on the London Underground which needed a lot of concentration but non the less very amusing- We finished the evening by a repeat parcel game, knowing how our ladies enjoy a challenge this game will no doubt become a favourite... Incidentally two of us took a copy of the quiz into RBH to help occupy Sylvia Conquest not only did it amuse her but the whole ward joined in including the nursing staff... February

After last month's games we reverted back to some normality with a talk and slides by Miriam Williams on Glass Engraving with some lovely pictures of work created by famous artists together with a few samples of Miriam's own work. Unfortunately, this evening was tinged with sadness at the news of the passing of two of our members, Sylvia Conquest and Ann Moxham with over 35 years of membership between them. Our condolences go out to their families. On

12 March we have our Annual Meeting to which I hope as many members as possible will attend, remember you have to vote for your new Committee for the coming WI year.

On 9 April we have Kate Bradford Interpreting Body Language — that should raise a few laughs-Visitors are very welcome 7.30 kick off at Purley Memorial Hall Glebe Road, Parley.

FARMERS' MARKET

A note for your diaries the next market will be 8 March with fresh, wholesome foods and many craft items just waiting for you, plus of course the WI Tea/Coffee and homemade cake Bar will be open. Make your purchases and come and sit awhile for a chat and enjoy.

"GUSTO" SYLVIA CONQUEST 1935 - 2008

On starting this I looked up Gusto in the dictionary "ENJOYMENT" — "ZEST" it said — need I write any more I thought as these two words conjure up Sylvia, to us, her W.I., she was always a joy even during her bad times she wore her smile and was as ready as ever with a merry quip and laughter.

"ZEST" well Sylvia had more zest than anyone I have met always busy working at her charity shops, rushing off to attend her hobby classes, singing in her choir, typing up her column in this Purley News to name but a few. On planning our special evenings at the Institute we knew Sylvia would always come up with something. Christmas was a particular joy to her, our parties always have a theme; "The Circus" comes to mind, Sylvia came as the "Human Cannon Ball" and just this Christmas "Tramps Supper and Barn Dance" there she was dancing the night away dressed as a "Bag Lady cum femme fatale" with cigarette ends hanging round her hat!!!!

Along life's road you sometimes come across someone very special who leave their unforgettable mark and Sylvia Conquest was that "someone". God Bless you dear friend.

Sylvia requested – no insisted – the following verse be read with "GUSTO" at her thanksgiving service.

"Life should not be a journey to the grave with the intention of arriving safely in an attractive and well preserved body -but rather to skid in sideways - chocolate in one hand, wine in the other, body thoroughly used up and totally worn out - and screaming WHA HOO! WHAT A RIDE!!!!

Daphne Howard

QUIZ NIGHT

A Quiz Night is being held on Saturday 29 March in St Marys Church. Please arrive by 7pm for a 7.15pm start. The price is £7 to include a Fish'n'Chip supper, or £5-50 for Sausage and chips.

Tickets available from Sheridan Williams on 941 1788, or Sara Lang on 954 8052

PURLEY HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY

A.G.M.

The 30th Annual General Meeting of the Society was held on Wednesday 20 February. Unfortunately, Bob Hawkins has had to resign as Trading Secretary after 35 years due to ill health. On behalf of the Society, I would like to thank Bob very much for all his work and help during those years. This does mean that we need someone else to take on this important job. If you think you can help us out, could you please contact our Secretary, John Murphy on 941 9185. At present, our Chairman is carrying out this work with some assistance from Committee members, but this is only a temporary arrangement. The meeting was well attended and after the official business had been completed, there was a short break for tea etc, followed by a very interesting talk by one of our members, Ben Viljeon on Purley Hall and other landscapes.



TRADING

The Trading Store in Purley Memorial Hall car park reopened on Saturday, 2 February and will remain open every Saturday and Sunday between 10am and 11am until the last Sunday in October. Membership subscriptions for 2008 are now due and at £1.50 for a year is tremendous value, and can be renewed at the Trading Store or at the evening talk in March. You can buy items at the Store at lower prices than most other sources and further savings can be made on garden purchases at Collins of Pangbourne, Englefield Garden Centre, Glenville Nursery, Bradfield Southend and Newington Nurseries on the A329 road north of Shillingford and new mowers at BSB Garden Machinery, Sulham Lane. 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 have a wide selection of goods to meet all your gardening requirements, including peat free compost, bird tables and food, etc. Suttons Seeds catalogues are also available. New members are always welcome.

COACH TRIPS

We are hoping to organize coach trips this summer to Bowood House, Hampton Court Flower Show, The Peto Garden, Ilford Manor and Lady Farm Gardens, Chelwood. Details are available at the Trading Store or the evening talk on Wednesday, 19 March.

SPRING SHOW

This will be held on Saturday, 5 April in Purley Memorial Hall. Schedules are available at the Trading Store.

PLANT SALE

This will take place on Saturday, 10 May from 9.30 to 11.30am in Purley Memorial Hall car park.

Happy gardening.



Marion Dabbs
942 2349

GARDEN TRIPS FOR GARDENERS

EARLY SUMMER VISIT TO BOWOOD HOUSE AND GARDENS

RHODODENDRON WALKS - SATURDAY 17 MAY 2008

"A spectacular stroll through breathtaking vistas of colour and beauty"

Bowood House, a Georgian stately house and family home, full of historical treasures which, combined, gives a unique charm felt by everyone who visits. While much has changed over time, the beauty of the house and gardens has not. Lying within 'Capability' Brown's glorious parklands, Bowood House perfectly captures a bygone age.

Enjoy the peace of this very English scene; Bowood boasts parkland that has grown to encompass a woodland cascade, a pinetum and arboretum as well as the formality of flower-filled terraces.

Located 2 miles from Bowood House is a special woodland oasis covering over 60 acres and, at the time of our visit, the rhododendrons and azaleas should be at their spectacular best. Recently the rhododendron walks have been the subject of a most exciting and significant find – the discovery of a long lost Victorian garden that contained hardy hybrids dating back to the 1850s, when the garden was first planted. Many of these species originate directly from the Himalayas, but were long-believed to have been extinct.

This trip includes entrance to the House, Gardens and Rhododendron walks and a one-course lunch in the Bowood Restaurant,

The cost will be £22.00 per PHS member

Full details and application form are available in the PHS Trading store beside the Memorial Hall, latest date for applications, Sunday 13 April.

GARDEN TALKS WITH PURLEY HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY

CONTAINERS AND HANGING BASKETS

We have pleasure in welcoming back Mr Bob Aggiss to give a talk on Wednesday March 19 at 8pm

It is that time of year when we are thinking of making up our hanging baskets and filling our containers. Do they always look there best all season long? Do you need fresh ideas in planting? Bob has ideas in plenty and knows about planting and care.

Bob Aggiss has given talks to the Society many times in the past, always enjoyable and entertaining but importantly always very informative.

Gardening in Caversham, Bob is an accredited judge of the National Chrysanthemum Society and the National Vegetable Society and a general judge of other flowers.

The talk will be held in the Memorial Hall, Glebe Road and the doors are open at 7.30pm.

All residents of Purley and Neighbouring Parishes are welcome.

SINGING FOR THE BRAIN

You may have read in February's edition of Purley Parish News about the Phoenix Choir Concert in Newbury on 1 March to raise money for the Singing for the Brain scheme in West Berkshire.

Started in Newbury five years ago by Chreanne Montgomery-Smith, the local Alzheimer's Support and Development Officer, the scheme is spreading rapidly. It is proving to be a valuable source of support, comfort and pleasure to dementia sufferers and their carers, whilst also stimulating their brain activity and memories through music. Whilst participating in this beneficial therapeutic activity in a sociable atmosphere, many rewarding friendships have been formed.

Following the initial three years' work in Newbury, several new groups were formed, including our own group in Purley. We meet in the Extension Church Hall on Monday mornings for about an hour and a half. An average attendance of 35, is made up of about a third dementia sufferers (the 'clients'), a third their own individual carers (family/friends/professionals) and a third volunteer helpers. Without this help from our volunteers, who greet people with tea, coffee, smiles and a friendly chat, we could not function. They include local people, WI and Church members, members of U3A and some singers from local societies.

The weekly sessions include some simple therapeutic exercises, both physical and vocal. A mixture of tongue-twisters and a variety of rounds, folk songs, popular "oldies" and songs from musicals, help stimulate short- and long-term memory. Various approaches are used through well-known, and some lesser-known, songs. There is no pressure on anyone to sing and it's fine just to listen. However, people usually find themselves joining in - because it's also fun!

In May this year we celebrate our second birthday, so this seems a good moment to remind people in the village of our work. We welcome dementia sufferers and their carers and we meet for three 10-week terms a year. There is no cost although we do ask for a small voluntary contribution for refreshments. This terms runs until 17 March.

We are very grateful for the support given to the group by the Church and especially the Rector, Roger Howell, who has been a regular attendee.

If you would like further information about 'Singing for the Brain', please contact me on 0118 984 2259 or email jsouthall@compuserve.com

Janet M Southall

PROJECT PURLEY

At the opening of the meeting on 15 February there was a minutes silence in memory of Sylvia Conquest who's funeral was today. A collection was taken to support 'Water Aid' in her memory and raised £40 even though many members had been at her funeral. Sylvia was a founding member of Project Purley and her bubbling personality will be sorely missed.

The main item was a talk by Corrie Starling from Mapledurham who gave us a fascinating review of milling in general and Mapledurham Mill in particular. He explained how mills were introduced by the Romans and were an essential

component of mediaeval life as without a mill, grain could not be turned into bread and other foodstuffs for both humans and animals. Although the miller was a tenant of the lord of the manor he was often better off and more secure. Minor and sometimes major crimes were often overlooked as the village could not be without its miller and a fine was about the most severe penalty that could be imposed.

The mill at Mapledurham was recorded in Domesday and, with a short break has been in continuous use since then. The present buildings date mainly from the 14th and 15th centuries although parts have to be replaced from time to time as it is almost exclusively made of wood. Metal can generate a spark and a spark plus air infiltrated by flour dust is potentially highly explosive. The lord of Purley funded a bridge across the river in the 14th century so grain could be brought from farms on the south bank of the river. The point being that with a relatively flat river like the Thames, mills had to be well spaced out and therefore served large areas of territory.

The plague and fire of London in the 17th century drove out many of the wealthy citizens of the city to country retreats and they created a profitable market for the produce of the mill. When they began to drift back and the population of London exploded in the 18th century a wharf and barn were constructed on the island in 1777 and vast quantities of agricultural products of all sorts were shipped downriver by barge. It was when the London market began to be served by produce from America that the decline in milling began and Mapledurham is now left as the last operational mill in the Thames.

Corrie described how the milling process worked and pointed out that at times the mill had four sets of stones all driven from water wheels controlled by sluice gates. The wheel is an undershot wheel which means that while it is not quite as efficient as an overshot one, it is not so liable to be unusable in times of drought or scarcity of water. Their biggest problem is usually too much water.

He showed us the different grades of flour produced and invited members to get a feel for the different types with their fingers and also to taste some of the products made by his wife's company which are usually on sale at the Purley Farmer's Markets – delicious!!!

Afterwards he did a roaring trade selling products to the members

Our next meeting is our AGM which starts at 7.30 pm on Friday 14 March at the Barn. This will be followed by a talk about cricket in Purley (and elsewhere) entitled 'Bats, Balls and Biscuits' by Martin Bishop. All are welcome.

John Chapman

PIANO FOR SALE

Looking for a good home is a very nice Berry of London piano. It is dark wood with an attractive inlaid panel and in overall good condition. Offers welcome.

984 2055

MEN ONLY BREAKFAST

SATURDAY 29 MARCH 8.30 FOR 9AM, ST MARY'S CHURCH HALL

WHAT IS THERE TO HOPE FOR?

Do you fancy a good meal to start the day? Plus a chance to think, discuss and ask questions about Easter and other issues related to life, the universe and everything.

No need for tickets, just turn up and enjoy the coffee.

More info: Simon Robertson simon.robertson@ntlworld.com 962 5978

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

BUS ROUTE 28

Dear Sir

I would like to draw your readers' attention to one aspect of the changes to local buses [since 25 February] Monday to Friday **only**.

Because of speeding up the service to Reading with route 16, there would have been no through buses between Purley and Tilehurst Triangle. This is partially remedied by five buses a day on route 28, which leaves Knowsley Road (Warley Rise) at 0901, 1041, 1221, 1401 and 1541, turning left onto the Oxford Road and then left up the **whole** of Long Lane to the Triangle, Asda and on to Friar Street. Four of these go on to the Royal Berkshire Hospital; although the first one has a change at Friar Street where the connecting bus will be waiting.

As West Berkshire and Reading Borough Councils will grant aid this service, it will be important that **we use it or lose it!** If enough use is made, the service could become hourly.

Yours sincerely
D Bolam

PURLEY PLAYERS

Next production will be a farce
written by Anne Gawthorpe & Lesley Brown

DON'T GET YOUR VICARS IN A TWIST

at The Barn, Purley on Thames at 7.30pm
on Friday 25 April and Saturday 26 April 2008
Tickets £7 & £5 (concession) Tel: 0118 941 5244
See you there

VALUE FOR MONEY?

Do we get value for money from our contributions to the West Berks coffers and from other public service providers?

During last summer (and maybe prior to that), a number of street signs were replaced by others which were identical except for the West Berks logo appended to one end. I watched the working crew take several out of the ground in the Brading Way/Chestnut Grove area, and took the opportunity to examine the discarded ones both before and after removal. They were all solidly implanted, clear to read and in no way disfigured. At a conservative estimate, they must have had at least another ten to twenty years of life left in them. Enquiry elicited no satisfactory response.

A couple of weeks ago, there were two holes in the road opposite the shop in Colyton Way; both about eighteen inches long by nine inches wide. One was two or three inches deep; the other slightly less- And they were about three inches apart, no more. In my ignorance, I assumed that the Council's men would cut out the total patch to make a lasting repair. Silly me. Three weeks ago, one of these holes was filled with tarmac, the other one left. A week later the other one was done. Neither hole was cut away to where the tarmac was solid, which would have helped to make a lasting repair. So we've had two visits instead of one, and what was done will surely necessitate more visits in the near future. Could this be *jobs for the boys* if done by council employees, or more *money in the till* for outside contractors? Or am I an unreconstructed cynic?

Now to Thames Water and the latest flooding in Wintringham Way and Chestnut Grove. I live nearby and naturally took an interest in its progress. Water was pouring off the fields and into the roads and down the drains. In my naivety, I asked the workmen where the water was being pumped to. "Up the hill and back into the river by Pangbourne" was the reply. Again in my naivety, I said that surely meant that the same water would come back down past Purley, into the fields, into the roads, into the drains, through the pumps, back to Pangbourne, back down to Purley, ad infinitum. At that stage, the chap I was talking to had something else urgent to attend to.

Is it just me, or do other readers feel that something is wrong in the way that we are governed locally... or even nationally come to that? This is not a political question, it's just about value for money, our money.

W. G. Page

THE HAND OF FRIENDSHIP

Is there anyone who would like to meet new friends, and spend a pleasant afternoon in friendly company? The Hand of Friendship is a group that meets every Tuesday afternoon from 2pm to 4pm in St Mary's Church Hall. We welcome new members, of any age, for a chat, tea and cakes; we have a small raffle. We look forward to seeing you soon.

Babs Waring 942 8844 - Gladys Morris 942 3610

Pray for Purley

After an encouraging prayer time over cornflakes, toast and bacon butties in February, our next meeting is on **16 March** at **7.30pm** at St Mary's (after the evening service).

All are welcome - you don't have to be a member of St Mary's or even a regular churchgoer. 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; or you can hand prayer requests in at the Farmers' Market (in confidence or anonymously if preferred).

Future dates/formats are:

Wednesday 16 April at 10.30am

Friday 16 May at 8pm (including fish & chips)

For more information please contact either of us below

Nan Craig	Tel: 942 8266	4 St Mary's Avenue	nan.craig@btinternet.com
Chris Rayers	Tel: 942 1880	9 Allison Gardens	c.rayers@talk21.com

MESSAGE FROM HOME FARM

We have a new problem in Purley, a plague of rats. They have been growing in numbers for some time, however since the summer flood many have taken up residence on higher ground. Returning home the other evening, anybody might have thought I had had a few too many as I swerved to and fro across Purley Village, but my attempts to flatten an enormous rat was to no avail. Not that we have a shortage of cats in the village. The large multi-coloured collection of lap-cats may be able to catch the odd songbird but are no match for these well-fed rodents.

Of course they have many places to hide, but the introduction of the black "Dalek" compost bins provides ideal accommodation. Not only are they dry and warm, but have a regular supply of fresh food placed in the top. Up at the allotments any root crops still in the ground, parsnips etc are being systematically devastated with many runs ending in the compost heaps.

Now when the new waste collection system is introduced later this year, all compostable waste will be collected free of charge, which in turn will increase the recycled waste percentage. No doubt it will cost thousands and thousands of pounds to do so, but it will put ticks in plenty of government statistic boxes and just maybe reduce the homes our village rats have made. Mind you, the best way of sorting out the rats would be to bring in some terriers but that would be illegal, thanks to the Government.

Tim Metcalfe

VILLAGE LUNCH

AN EVENT FOR ALL THE COMMUNITY!

Friday 15 February from 12 noon

February is a short month (even with the extra day!) but it can drag on a bit as we await the forthcoming springtime. To add a touch of sparkle to the month, why not join fellow members of the community for lunch? Invite neighbours and friends along and let's put a bit of 'Spring' in our step in February!

There will be a choice of food with soups, jacket potatoes, cakes and drinks.
There will also be a raffle.

Tickets for lunch will cost just £5 adults / £2.50 child

Lunch will be held in St Mary's Church Hall, and proceeds will be donated to the church. Buy or reserve yours by contacting Nicki Woodward 984 2112, nicki@cherryacre.com , or collect from Cherry Acre, Purley Village.

PURLEY JUBILEE FOOTBALL CLUB

As the league season moves towards its climax, a number of the teams are challenging for honours in their respective divisions.

The Under-13s are poised to win Division 2 of the South Chiltern Minor League. They have won all 10 of their league games to date, scoring 75 goals, and need just one more win to clinch the title.

Also unbeaten for the fifteen games they have played this season are the Under-8 team playing in Division 3 of the Hicks Development League.

The Under-10 team playing in Hicks Division 2 are fighting it out with three other clubs for top spot. There's four games to go and only three points separating the leading teams.

The Under-10 team playing in Hicks Division 5 have hit a purple patch since Christmas, winning all 4 of their games and scoring 23 goals. They're sitting second in their league.

The Under-14 team are third in East Berkshire Division 2, having won 10 of their 14 matches and looking to challenge for one of the two promotion places.

The Development Squad sessions for Reception and Year 1 children continue to run on a Sunday morning from 10.00-11.00 on the lower field at the recreation ground at Goosecroft Lane (off Beech Road). New players are always very welcome at these sessions.

If you would like to know more about playing football with Purley Jubilee, please ring Andy Perryman on 0118 943 1047 or visit our website at www.purleyjubilee.co.uk.

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.

CHRISTIAN AID WEEK 11-17 MAY 2008

TIME FOR ACTION ON CLIMATE CHANGE

As sea levels rise in coastal Bangladesh, saltwater is contaminating the water supply of riverbank and coastal communities. These communities also face losing homes to rapidly increasing river erosion.



The changing climate is poised to reverse decades of development. Forget making poverty history; poverty is set to become permanent unless we address climate change as a matter of urgency.

Your donations this Christian Aid Week will help communities in the developing world to cope with the effects of climate change. But money in itself is not enough. We

also need to act. We can all use our influence on politicians and business leaders in the rich world – who are the ones making many of the key decisions affecting poor countries. Global warming is not just a distant forecast. It's already happening now, and poor people are the ones who are being hit the hardest.

Campaigning works. Previous campaigns have delivered real change on issues such as debt and fair trade. We need to take action on climate change now, before it is too late.

Find out more about Christian Aid's Climate Changed campaign, and sign up to take further action, by visiting www.christianaid.org.uk/climate.

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UK registered charity number 1105851
Company number 5171525

If you are able to help with the door-to-door collection for this year's Christian Aid Week, please contact Matt & Pam Slingsby on 961 5585.

PURLEY PATHFINDERS

A WALKING GROUP FOR LADIES

On our recent walks we have enjoyed sharing in Nature's enthusiasm as it marches on into Springtime. The weather has been kind to us, adding to our enjoyment. Our 2008 walks follow the theme of 'Village Life', and our last walk in January began in Sonning Common from where undulating fields took us, eventually, alongside Well House. We took a short breather, giving us the opportunity to admire this lovely house with its thatched barn, and swathes of early snowdrops at its entrance. Down a lane we spotted several red kites perched in a tree. As we approached they majestically took flight, flapping their large wings to take them up to join their mates, whistling to them from the sky above. As we continued beneath their aerial acrobatics, a muntjac deer crossed our path to disappear under the fence of Crowsley Park, owned by the Baskerville family in the late 1800's. We entered the Park's imposing gates, with the menacing heads of dogs biting spears perched on the gateposts. It is thought



that these were one of the inspirations for 'The Hounds of the Baskivilles', created in 1902 by Arthur Conan Doyle who lived nearby and often visited the family. It was, therefore, with some amusement that we were greeted by a Hound – luckily a very friendly Basset Hound! Along the sweeping drive we came in front of the mansion, still bearing the coat of arms and crest of the Baskerville family. It was a grand sight, framed by a fine Cedar of Lebanon,

and a giant Redwood, originating from the Sierra Nevada mountains where they can grow to 300 feet. As we continued through the parkland we could imagine its grandeur in times past when it was graced with seven avenues of trees radiating from the house. Sadly only one of these remains intact, but several fine trees are still dotted around, remnants of the past. We chose a circle of sweet chestnut trees in which to take our break, giving us a close look at their interesting trunks. Now owned by the BBC Monitoring Service, we noticed the large high frequency receivers installed in the Park in 1981, sharing an area with a herd of White Park Cattle. We left the Park to cross undulating arable fields back to The Bird in Hand where we enjoyed lunch.

While the rest of the country was being lashed by high winds, rain and blizzards, we set out from Moulsoford beneath a bright sun shining from a deep blue sky! We entered the Well Barn Estate where pheasants strutted triumphantly on this first day of February, having survived the 'shoot'. Partridges ran on either side, while red kites swooped above our heads and down in the valley. Here in the beautiful remote depths of the Berkshire Downs, we were aware of the wildlife all around us. Intermittent hedgerows form a safe haven amongst the vast fields. Little birds flocked from one hedgerow to another, and a deer scrambled for

shelter. Across this open landscape we gained extensive views, and with the sun warming our faces, we soaked up the amazing 'feel-good factor' the experience provided. On the way back we passed the splendid sight of a flock of gulls clambering around a tractor at work in a field. A nostalgic scene on which to end our wonderful walk in English countryside at its best!

Our next walk began in the village of Woolhampton where we met at the 400 year old Rowbarge which would have catered for river traffic after the Kennet & Avon was built between 1715 & 1723. Despite a dull start, as we made our way along the canal our surroundings brightened our aspect, and soon the sun came out. We crossed from one bank to the other, passing striking black and white locks, and colourful canal boats, to eventually leave the canal at Midgham. Up

on the hillside the landmark spire of Midgham Church was our next goal, and we climbed towards it. This took longer than expected as distractions on the way caused us to pause several times – the swathes of snowdrops, the sweet donkey, the clumps of early daffodils, and the pair of friendly pot-bellied pigs! Finally reaching the Church gates, we noted the plaque announcing the areas' mention in the Domesday Book. Sadly the Church was locked, but we soaked up the unbelievably warm February sunshine as we enjoyed the snowdrops, crocuses and daffodils dotted throughout the churchyard. Over the hedge we took in the expansive view across the Kennet Valley towards Watership Down. The spire of



Brimpton Church nestled above the valley floor on the opposite hillside. Rumour has it that the Church at Midgham had been built in 1869 as a twin of Brimpton Church so that two sisters could stand in the towers and wave to each other across the valley! Leaving this idyllic spot we entered Midgham Park to follow ancient tracks across rough, unspoilt pasture land where underground streams bubbled to the surface after a night of rain. We passed Midgham House, dating from the 13th century when it was held by the Erley family for over 450 years. It still holds rooms known as 'The Duke's Rooms', reminiscent of the 1700's when the Duke of Cumberland, son of George 11, stayed here under the care of his tutor, Stephen Poyntz. We left the Park alongside the lovely East Gate House and a magnificent hornbeam tree. Our way was now straightforward between meadows and woodland back to Woolhampton and the Rowbarge where we enjoyed lunch.

On a bright, frosty morning we arrived in Ecchinswell, a lovely Hampshire village, designated a conservation area in 1990. It has 26 Grade II listed buildings and we began by passing some of them in the form of the Victorian School, the Schoolhouse, and the Mill House sitting astride the pretty Ecchinswell Brook. We climbed out of the village to gain ever increasingly good views across to Watership Down. As we passed Nuthanger Farm we walked between banks of snowdrops, interspersed with primroses and crocuses. We reached a garden which resembled a ski slope, so thick was the covering of snowdrops – fabulous! Soon we were walking in the Sydmonton Court Estate, passing Watership Farm, home of Lady Lloyd Webber's Polo School. We continued through inspirational

countryside, eventually to walk down an avenue bordered with thick swathes of snowdrops. A marvellous end to our lovely walk.

We took advantage of the half-term to meet for a social event at Welford Park. The snowdrop filled woods never cease to amaze. With the gentle River Lambourne meandering through the grounds, it proved a peaceful place to wander, and we all enjoyed the refreshments on offer in the tea room.

Our February 'snowdrop walks' will end in Swyncombe, then in March we will greet the Springtime with a primrose walk in The Holies, a daffodil walk at Woodcote, and a Chiltern beech wood walk at Stonor. We will also be walking in Upper Woothampton and Beenham where we will picnic 'with' the Beenham Wolves. (Must remember not to wear my red hat that day, and pork sandwiches will definitely be off the menu!) Actually these mighty animals are much misunderstood, as I'm sure we will discover during a talk by one of the Trust's members.



Mozart Requiem

Friday 14 March, St Catherine's Church, Tilehurst

Saturday 15 March, St Mary's Church, Burghfield

Performances start at 8pm

Tickets: £5 for Adults/£4 for Senior Citizens & Children

obtainable in advance by telephoning: 983 3049

SPRINGTIME IN THE GARDEN

In the garden at Cherry Acre, Purley Village (opposite Purley Infant School), this popular event for all the family will be held on Friday 4 April, 11am-4pm, and on Sunday 6 April, 1.30-5pm.

Several Areas each with their own Surprises!

Plenty of Activities for the Children

Spring Flowers including:
Primroses, Cowslips, Fritillary etc

DRINKS & CAKES

EXCELLENT PLANT STALL

ENTRY by DONATION to St Mary's Church

Please walk if possible, or park sensibly in village



PURLEY ON THAMES PARISH COUNCIL



The next Farmers Market will be held at the Barn on 8 March and on the second Saturday morning of each month thereafter. If you are able to walk to this, please do so, to leave the limited number of parking spaces for those less able.

By the time this article appears the new bus services will have started with the more direct route no. 16 replacing the nos. 31 and 38 to Purley and Reading. The link with Tilehurst has been retained by the revised no. 28 service which will run down Knowsley Road and return via Oxford Road and the lower part of Long Lane. This limited service is supported by both Reading Borough Council and West Berkshire Council and details are available from Reading Transport on their website. We are trying to obtain some timetables to make them available locally.

I have been advised that there were three formal objections to the Purley parking proposals although I understand one of these may be withdrawn following further discussion. The remaining two will need to be considered by WBC before the scheme can be implemented.

At the January Parish Council meeting, Anne Bolland was co-opted to fill the vacancy caused by the resignation of Tim Whitaker. We will now have to consider another vacancy following the resignation of Alex Stott for personal reasons. Anyone interested in serving should contact me, or the Chairman, for further information.

Despite his resignation, Alex Stott has agreed to continue in his voluntary role of Allotment Manager, which is much appreciated. He tells me that as he still has a small waiting list existing tenants will be expected to carry out their obligation to cultivate the plots throughout the season. He is available on 0118 941 9186 (or e-mail vastott@aol.com) for any enquiries.

For those eligible, who have not yet decided to switch to the new national bus pass available from April, we will again be issuing travel tokens from the office and the agreed dates are shown below:

Tuesday 1 April	noon to 4pm
Wednesday 2 April	noon to 4pm
Thursday 10 April	10am to 4pm

WBC will be writing direct to all concerned and also providing another opportunity to consider switching.

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

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

By the time that you read this, West Berkshire Council (WBC) Highways department will have completed their consultation period for the proposed parking restrictions, which should then be swiftly implemented. Most people that I have spoken to regard them as sensible, even though there was some confusion as to their extent.

Whilst we are talking Highways, the Parish Council and many residents are concerned about the surface condition of some of our more important roads. We have worked with WBC to include them in their maintenance programme, but we have to bear in mind that they have to look after 2000 miles of road in West Berkshire, with a very small budget. However, we are hopeful that New Hill will get attention this year, and that A329 Oxford Road in the east of the parish, and Long Lane will be improved too, in the foreseeable future.

Sticking with transport, we, with the help of our District Councillors, have been working to optimise bus routes from the village. Reading buses plan to modify routes from 25 February. The good news is that they have bowed to the long sought-after more direct route into Reading for No. 31, but as a consequence their proposal lost us a route serving Long Lane and Tilehurst Triangle, which is a valued service for a number of people. I am glad to say that, following negotiations, there will now be a (No. 28) Community Link service to/through Tilehurst, in addition. A good final result for Purley.

The 2007/8 council year finishes at the end of March, and we provide a report to the village at the Parish Assembly in April – more details next month.

After several years of invaluable community service on the Council, Alex Stott plans to stand down now. He will be missed for his willingness, enthusiasm and humour and I want to thank him for his efforts. I am pleased to say that he has kindly agreed to continue to manage the allotments on our behalf. We will be seeking another person to join the council from May. If you are interested, please contact either myself or the Clerk for more information. It is one of the best ways to make a contribution to your community.

Rick Jones, Chairman - 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
www.sovereign.org.uk/wardens

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www.purleyonthames.net

PRICE INCREASE

The PCC at St Mary's church has approved an increase in the price for the Purley Parish News for 2008, to 40p an issue (or £4 for an annual subscription). This will take effect from the April edition, when annual subscriptions become due. This is the first increase in about six years. Advertising rates will also be revised.

ADULT COMPUTER COURSE

Starting Tuesday 18 March 2008 from 7-9pm at Denefield School, Long Lane, Tilehurst.

A 3-week taster course for adults which is suitable for complete beginners. Learn how to switch on the computer, use the mouse, play simple games, make cards, insert photographs and more. £18 for 3 weeks. Concessions apply. A six week follow on course is available. In partnership with West Berkshire Council and part funded by Denefield School's Technology College budget. Book a place with Sue Guy now!



FAMILY FOODY FUN DAY

9 April 2008 at Denefield School, Long Lane, Tilehurst, Reading.

Join in the Family Foody Fun **Art & Craft** event on 9 April 2008 any time from 10am-noon. Come along to this food themed activity. Make a picture using pasta shapes and win a prize! This free drop in session is being run by the Family Information Service (FIS). The activity is suitable for parents and carers with children aged under 11. All materials are provided. It is also an opportunity to find out how your family can benefit from the FIS. They have a wealth of information available! Contact Sue Guy for further details or simply pop in!

Kids in the Kitchen Family Cookery session on 9 April 2008 from 2.30-4.30pm.

A free one-off cookery session for you and your child! Cook a delicious two course meal: lamb and apricot burgers, tantalising salsa and filo fruit tarts. Have fun with your kids in the kitchen, learn how to cook healthy, child friendly food and develop new cookery skills. Open to families with children in Year 4 upwards. Ingredients not included. Book a place with Sue Guy now! Childcare available on request.

KOOL CLUB

The after school club based at Denefield School has places for 5-13 year old children. It provides a safe and fun environment for children to socialise, play and participate in a variety of activities after school until 6.00pm each evening. Activities include a quiet corner for homework, as well as art and craft, board games, outdoor activities and much more! Children are collected from each school by walking bus and pupils from Purley Infants can be collected by car. The Club also offers holiday care, from Monday to Friday from 8.00am-6.00pm when a broader range of activities is available during the holidays. Please ring Cheryl Paxford on 07773 340113 or email koolclub@hotmail.co.uk.

For more information or to register for an activity, please contact Sue Guy.

*Sue Guy, Extended Schools Manager
Inspire4Life, Tilehurst & Purley Cluster
www.inspire4life.org.uk 972 8978
sguy@denefield.org.uk*

VILLAGE WALKS

SUNDAY 27 APRIL

An event for all the community

Celebrate St George in England's green and pleasant land

A choice of two walks, followed by Soup & Cakes (nominal charge)

Walk One: 2 hours (slight uphill) meet at 1.45pm for 2pm start

Walk Two: 1 hour (level) meet at 2.45pm for a 3pm start

Any queries to Nicki Woodward 984 2112, nicki@cherryacre.com

POLICE COMMUNITY SUPPORT OFFICERS

HOW DO THEY MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN WEST BERKSHIRE?

Communities are benefiting from an increase in the uniformed presence on their streets as the number of Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) grows across West Berkshire. Their introduction has been one of hot debate, opinion has been divided and there has been a great deal of media coverage; yet there is still confusion about their role and powers.

Superintendent Chris Shead, Local Area Commander at West Berkshire police, said: "A common misconception is that PCSOs are being used as a replacement for police officers and I would like to reassure people that this is not the case.

"PCSOs are part of policing teams in this area and they provide crucial support to their police officer colleagues. They also work closely with staff, like neighbourhood wardens, from local councils and housing associations."

Thames Valley Police employ nearly 500 PCSOs across the Force area. All kinds of people, of different ages and backgrounds, enjoy getting out on the streets of their community; meeting the residents and business people and finding ways to improve their quality of life.

Their job is designed to allow them to spend around 80 per cent of their time patrolling and, although they cannot arrest people, they have other powers which allow them to deal with lower-level crime, such as vandalism, which affects peoples' lives but is very time consuming. This, in turn, frees up the police officers they support and enables them to focus on solving crime and tackling priority offenders.

If you haven't met your local PCSO yet, keep an eye on the local press and publications for details of any events they may be organising. Or simply stop them on the street and say hello! You can also find out more about policing in your area at www.thamesvalley.police.uk.

LOCK CAFÉ

Mapledurham lock's café will be open Good Friday, Saturday, Easter Sunday and Easter Monday, and then at weekends thereafter. See you there!