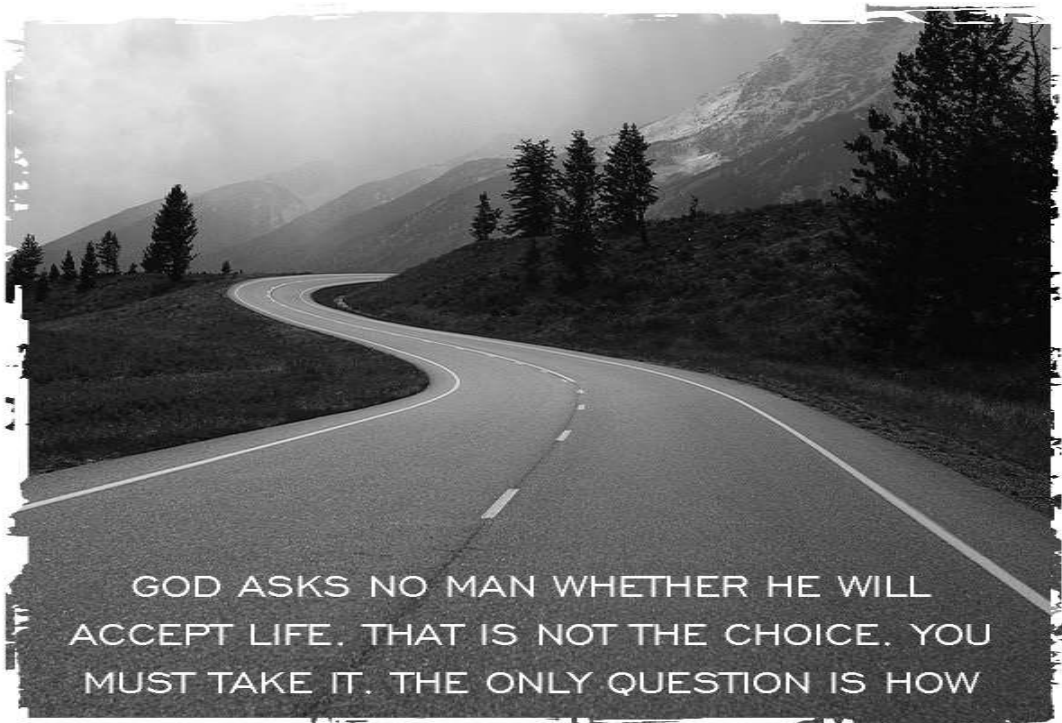


PURLEY PARISH NEWS



GOD ASKS NO MAN WHETHER HE WILL
ACCEPT LIFE. THAT IS NOT THE CHOICE. YOU
MUST TAKE IT. THE ONLY QUESTION IS HOW

For the Church & Community of
PURLEY ON THAMES



St Mary the Virgin

Purley on Thames

www.stmaryspurley.org.uk

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BAPTISMS, WEDDINGS AND FUNERALS

All enquiries to the Curate

This magazine is published on the first Saturday of each month (except August). The price of each issue is 40p with a discounted annual subscription price of £4 for eleven issues.

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

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PRINTING

Richfield Graphics Ltd, Caversham

COVER IMAGE

© Davy Kurnia, CrossDaily.com

All contributions to this magazine are welcome, 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 email size restrictions.

THIS EDITION PUBLISHED	6 SEPTEMBER
NEXT EDITION COPY DEADLINE	20 SEPTEMBER
NEXT EDITION PUBLISHED	4 OCTOBER

PARISH REGISTER

BAPTISM

22 June Elizabeth Rose Jones

FUNERALS

10 July Johanna Starling, aged 77 (cremation)
11 July John Smith, aged 74 (cremation)
16 July Raymond Boynton, aged 81 (cremation)
22 July Michael Geary, aged 51 (cremation)
15 August Christopher Starr, aged 61 (cremation)

FROM THE LOCAL MINISTER

As a frequent traveller on Cross-Country Trains, there is comfort in the familiarity of the announcements. There is the familiar list of stations at which we will call before we reach Reading, the familiar menu with which one can be tempted from the onboard shop, and even after a while the familiarity of the voices making these announcements. It is a real shock when a new voice finds something novel to say about our route or about the items which one has tasted (or rejected) many times before.

There are times on these journeys when change is welcome. A cheery aside part way through an announcement can bring a smile to the face of the passengers with whom one is sharing several hours. On the other hand, a change to the normal sequence of stations is generally unwelcome, as it has occasionally been the herald of a problem, which has lengthened the journey by several long hours!

Yes, you're right, I am writing this on a train. There haven't been any shocks so far on this journey other than the pleasant one that the sun is splitting the sky in a week where it has rained a lot and the forecasters promised a lot more for today.

On the surface, church is sometimes like these train journeys. There is the familiar liturgy of the service, with hymns, prayers, readings, the sermon, the Peace, the walk to the altar to receive bread and wine, and even the notices as familiar landmarks on the journey. You can even look round and, just like on a train, see which of your fellow-passengers are nodding off. Yet hopefully each sermon brings something new, at least provoking a new thought if not a new smile.

And yet it is only on the surface that church is like these train journeys. For what really matters in church is not how we follow the familiar in the service, but how we are open to what God would do with us today through the Holy Spirit. Open to the healing he will bring, to the challenge he will offer, to his still, small voice which will say something quite specific to us. Open primarily to how he wants us to be, and then through being changed open to doing what he wants us to do. That is unique to each one.

I have been reminded of that in our 9.30 services in August. In the past month we have explored different forms of church service, and we have experienced

afresh the presence of God with us. I loved the comment of one of the congregation at one of these services. He wasn't at all sure that he should approve of a service like that, but he was just enjoying himself so much - and surely one of the things the Spirit brings is joy!

The first Sunday of October is Harvest Sunday, with just one morning service at 10.30. It is also when we will be celebrating Back to Church Sunday, when we hope that some who haven't been for a while will come to see what church is like. If you haven't been for a while, mark it in your diary and come along - we hope that it will be different, and that you will enjoy it. If you know someone who hasn't been for a while, you have a week or two to think and pray about how best to invite them to come with you.

We look forward to seeing you there.

Andrew

CHURCH SERVICES

7 September	9.30am	Family Worship
	11.15am	Holy Communion
	6.00pm	Holy Communion
14 September	9.30am	Family Worship
	11.15am	Holy Communion
21 September	9.30am	Family Communion
	11.15am	Holy Communion
	6.00pm	Evening Worship
28 September	9.30am	Family Worship
	11.15am	Holy Communion
5 October	10.30am	Harvest Celebration
	6.00pm	Holy Communion
13 October	9.30am	Family Worship
	11.15am	Holy Communion
	3.00pm	Community Memorial Service (see below)

COMMUNITY MEMORIAL SERVICE

Sunday 12 October 2008 at 3pm
St Mary the Virgin, Purley on Thames

You are warmly invited to join us for this annual
service of thanksgiving and remembrance
for all who have suffered bereavement

We hope that you will stay for refreshments afterwards

PURLEY HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY



COACH TRIPS, ETC

On Saturday 17 May, 29 members of the Society had a most enjoyable trip to Bowood House in Wiltshire. We were very lucky with the weather, although cloudy, but no rain. On Tuesday 22 July, 42 members visited the Peto Garden at Ilford Manor. The owner of the house gave us a very interesting tour of the garden, including the outdoor theatre where the director explained details of the opera being performed that evening. After lunch at the Hunters Rest Inn, we drove on to the Lady Farm Gardens, Chelwood for another interesting garden and a welcome cup of tea. Everyone appeared to enjoy these two totally different gardens and we were blessed with lovely weather. I would like to thank John Murphy for making all the arrangements for these trips. Unfortunately, the visit to Hampton Court Flower Show had to be cancelled due to the small number of people interested. On Wednesday 30 July some members visited the Ball Colegrave open evening at Adderbury. The display of various plants in so many shades was wonderful, including vegetables. Our thanks are due to Jim Armstrong for organizing this.

LATE SUMMER SHOW

This will be held in Purley Memorial Hall, Glebe Road on Saturday 6 September. The Show opens to the public at 2.30pm to 4pm with presentation of trophies at 3.45pm. Entry to the Show is free. Tea and biscuits will be available.

TRADING

The Shed in the Memorial Hall car park is open every Saturday and Sunday from 10am to 11am until the end of October. Membership of the Society is only £1.50 for a year. Bulbs and potato order forms will be available in the Shed in September. You may download the types of seed potatoes available by visiting www.purleyonthames.net online notice board or Purley Groups.

A crucifix and chain was found at the Trading Shed some months ago. Although a notice was put up in the Store soon after it was found, it has not been claimed. I hope the owner will see this note and collect it from John Murphy on 941 9185.

I hope you have all had a successful gardening year.

Marion Dabbs
942 2349

INSPIRE4LIFE - STORY SACKS

Come along to Denefield Day Nursery on the first and third Friday of each month between 9.15-10.15am for this story time loan scheme for families with under 5's. Each bag contains books, toys and ideas for family activities. Enjoy a coffee and relax while your children play in this wonderful child-friendly environment. Your child can also take part in a regular art & craft activity with the other children. A small registration fee applies. For more information contact Sue Hale on 0118 972 8978 or simply turn up!

Pray for Purley

Summer time often provides an opportunity to recharge batteries ready for the long haul through harvest-time/autumn up to Christmas. As we pray we can also be refreshed, looking to God to show his power in the situations we bring to him, and thanking him for all his goodness.

Our next get-together (with one another and with God) is on Tuesday 16 September, 8pm at St Mary's. All are welcome, whether or not you've been before.

Future dates:

Sat 18 Oct	8.00am at St Mary's (breakfast – NB: Not 16 Oct!)
Sun 16 Nov	7.15pm at St Mary's

For more information, please contact either of us below:

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

WEST BERKS SCRABBLE CLUB (PURLEY BASED)

Now that we are into September it means that the Scrabble Club commences the Thursday afternoon meetings once again. We have had our three-month summer break and are refreshed and eager to establish once again our Thursday commitment to our games of Scrabble.

The Club also meet on Tuesday evenings.

People of all abilities are made most welcome. So, if you play Scrabble, or have in the past played, and like the idea of joining a club – not only to pursue the word game but to meet and socialise with local people - then why not come along and join us.

We meet in The Barn, Goosecroft Lane, (off Beech Road), Purley, on:

Tuesday evenings- 7.15-10pm & Thursday afternoons - 2-5pm.

For further information please speak to Ian or Elizabeth on: 9845045.

JANET FOSKETT SCHOOL OF DANCING

BALLET CLASSES

Classes are held for children from the age of 2 ½ up to 21! Most classes are held in Whitchurch on Thames, with some extra classes at St Mary's Purley.

In the autumn I will have vacancies in the 'tiny tot' class held on a Monday at Whitchurch. This is for children from 2½ to 4 yrs of age. Please contact me should you be interested in your child attending.

PILATES

A safe, corrective form of exercise working on posture and core stability. Classes are held at Purley (during the day) and Whitchurch (in the evening) for those with some experience. However, I do teach on a *one-to-one* basis, and would be happy to start a beginner's class should there be enough interest.

01635 863891

Janet Foskett - Dance and Pilates Teacher

PURLEY WI

Our last speaker before the summer break was Corry Starling, the assistant miller at Mapledurham Mill. In his excellent talk we were guided through the history of the ancient mill, listed in the Domesday Book, and the links to Mapledurham House and the family history. He gave us a vivid picture of the mill that has provided large amounts of essential flour over the centuries, its role in helping to supply London during the plague and supplying flour to feed the huge numbers of workers rebuilding London following the Great Fire. Together with a brief resume of the technical details of running and maintaining the mill and tales from the filming of *The Eagle has Landed*, Corry's talk was much enjoyed by all.

No meeting in August, but our annual Fish and Chip supper was very well attended by members. Unfortunately the weather prevented us from dining al fresco, and only a few hardened (perhaps misguided) souls went on the traditional, somewhat shortened, pre-supper walk! However our hostess did a grand job accommodating us all indoors and we had a good evening – thanks to all who helped.

A few of our members had a lovely sunny day for a trip to Silchester, including an excellent guided tour, a walk round the ramparts and a splendid lunch and once again, thank you to those who organise these great trips.

COMPETITIONS

Flower of the month: Dorothy Viljoen

Old Wedding Photo: 1st Marion Maybank

2nd Lesley Honnor

3rd Kath Devine

Our next meeting will be on Wednesday 10 September at 7.30pm at The Memorial Hall, Glebe Road. The speaker will be Mr Neil Somerville on *Mysteries of the Mind*, and the competition will be Relaxation Tips. As always guests and visitors very welcome.

Next Farmers' Market: Saturday 13 September.

Marion Maybank



W.A.D.S Next Production

A Murder Mystery Evening

Was it love that inspired a philanderer like Richard Myers to marry, or the prospect of a fast track career and guaranteed seat on the board of directors of a prestigious city firm? Does his subservient wife, Helen, who allows herself to be controlled by others suspect her husband's infidelity, resulting in nervous and forgetful behaviour. Or does the fear of abject humiliation haunt her, should Richard ever discover the sordid details of her own murky background.



Since their marriage the only visitor to their home has been Helen's younger, jealous sister, Angela (*why does she visit so often?*). As a result, Helen decides to invite her dear neighbour Betty and an old school friend, Gabby, around for a special evening, an evening with a difference – she has also invited a fortune teller! But Helen's party takes a turn for the worse when Madam Rosa, the fortune teller, is found dead. Witness the crime, examine the evidence, reveal the murderer at WADS next production – a murder, mystery evening :

Bad Fortune

Performances - 9, 10 & 11 October in Woodcote Village Hall
Advance tickets only – tickets **not** available at door
£12 to include 2 course Ploughman's Supper
Box Office : 01491 680556

GARDEN TALKS IN PURLEY

PURLEY HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY WELCOMES GILL FRANKLIN TO GIVE A TALK ON WEDNESDAY 15 OCTOBER AT 8PM APPLES AND PEARS – A TASTY HOBBY

Gill Franklin moved from London about 30 years ago and purchased Cross Lanes Fruit Farm, a small orchard in Mapledurham, as a hobby. The orchard now grows over 60 different varieties of apples, pears & plums, specialising in many 'old English' favourites.

This talk will largely be based on the practical side of growing apples and pears. However, you will have chances to sample the fruits and Gill will also be bringing along the tasty results of her work (bagged coxs or mixed apples) for members to purchase, so bring along your loose change.

This talk will be part of a double whammy in Purley, for Gill will also be speaking to the Project Purley Meeting held on Friday 21 November at the Barn (off Beech Road). At this talk Gill will be relating the history of apples and the Cross Lanes Orchard. Both talks will be extremely interesting and, I am sure, will get those juices flowing. It will be well worth attending both.

The PHS 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

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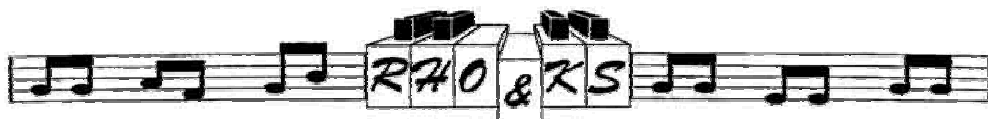
Venues Include:

Burghfield Common, Calcot, Mortimer,
Pangbourne, Purley-on-Thames, Theale,
Tidmarsh, Tilehurst, Upper Basildon
and many others!



Enrol now for September!

Monks Lane Campus 01635 845000
or visit www.newbury-college.ac.uk



READING HOME ORGAN & KEYBOARD SOCIETY

Our next concert is at 8pm on Tuesday 9 September 2008 at
Tidmarsh Village Hall, Pangbourne Road, Reading RG8 8ES.

Our guest artist this month is David Lingwood, a well known artist on the organ
circuit and he will be playing music for all tastes.

Tickets are £6.50 or £4.25 for members including refreshments.
Further information can be obtained from Secretary Molly West on 942 7062.



PANGBOURNE & DISTRICT VOLUNTEER CENTRE

If you need help with transport, or know of anyone else who does, please call 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 ON THAMES PARISH COUNCIL



NOTICE BOARD

Chairman: Rick Jones

Vice Chairman: Rick Farrow

Highways & Footpaths: Paul Coombes

Recreation: Graham Rolfe (Vice-Chair – Chairman elected at the first committee)

Barn Management: Roger Woodward

New Councillor: Mr Bernard Nix

DATES OF MEETINGS

Parish Council: 9 October, 13 November, 18 December 2008, 22 January, 26 February, 2 April, 7 May 2009.

Highways & Footpaths Committee: 27 November 2008, 12 March 2009.

Recreation Committee: 18 September 2008, 8 January, 16 April 2009.

Barn Committee: 11 September, 11 December 2008, 26 March 2009.

All meetings are held in the Parish Office and are open to the public. Details of appointments to committees, working groups and outside bodies are posted on the Council website or are available from the Clerk.

See the panel below for changes to Parish Office opening hours.

COUNCIL VACANCIES

There is a vacancy on the Council following the resignation of Sally Robertson.

FARMERS' MARKET DATES

13 September, 11 October, 8 November, 13 December 2008.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Firstly, a welcome to a new councillor, and a new member of staff. We have had two vacancies on the Council recently, and I am pleased that Bernard Nix has joined us as a Councillor. Also, we have now appointed Jean Chudleigh as Assistant Clerk. This job will be combined with her existing role as Barn Manager. I wish them both a long and fruitful association with the Council.

We have been examining and have approved our Parish Council accounts for the year 2007/8, and that has prompted me here to summarise how your money is spent and managed. Our spending for the year was roughly £140,000, split

between Recreation (£27K), Highways and Footpaths (£13K), the Barn Community Centre (£20K), and *central* operating costs and capital costs of around £80K. Clearly, we pay staff, pay for services (like grounds and footpath maintenance, utilities, litter collection, etc), buy and repair equipment, and run improvement projects across all of the village facilities and parish assets. The result that we try to achieve is a safe and clean village, immaculate recreation grounds and play areas, vibrant community centre, good communications and supportive information and other services. I hope that you feel that these aims are broadly met.

Local government regulations change constantly, and we will review all our financial controls and processes in the coming few months, to ensure that we continue to spend wisely, get best value where we can, and manage the parish money safely and openly.

I am pleased to report that the Youth Club being trialled over the summer looks like being a success, and the plan is to make it a fortnightly event for youths 10-14 or so from mid-September onwards. Thanks are due to the Neighbourhood Wardens, who took the first initiative with the Council, and to the Purley Park Social Club for being such welcoming and willing hosts, and for taking this forward now.

The Villager of the Year award has reached a climax now, nominations are in and judging has been completed. Please see separate piece for the result and details.

The Recreation Committee is now looking at the possible future Recreation needs of the village. We are keen that we consider Recreation in its widest sense and we are looking for a few people, who would be interested in helping shape the Council's thinking, by serving on a Working Party that we have set up. While everything that people would like will probably not be affordable, our aim is to create a prioritised list of our requirements that we can implement as and when money becomes available. If you are interested or would like to know more please contact Graham Rolfe on 941 7247 or email him at graham.rolfe@purleyonthames.net.

Rick Jones, Chairman - Purley on Thames Parish Council

The office, located near the tennis courts, opens:
Mondays (not BH): 2pm to 7.30pm
Including an opportunity to meet Councillors
between 6.30 & 7.30pm (or by appointment)
Thursdays: 9am to 2pm

Barn Manager: Jean Chudleigh 07917 453187
Allotment Manager: Alex Stott 941 9186

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Goosecroft Lane, off Beech Road
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RG8 8DR
Tel/fax: 984 4507
E-mail: clerk@purleyonthames.net

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

www.purleyonthames.net

LETTERS

Dear Villagers

I wrote in the July edition of PPN about the change of ownership on bus route 142. Reading Transport now has the contract for this service and at a stroke increased the fares by 110%.

I am now delighted to report that from July the CEO of Reading Transport agreed a fixed price return ticket from Pangbourne to Reading of £3 on the 142 service. In addition, return tickets are now interchangeable with Thames Travel who run the 132 bus route.

Elizabeth Burn

NOW WE JUST NEED SOMEONE TO PLAY IT...!

Purley Park Trust is a *home for life* for adults with learning difficulties in Purley on Thames.

Recently, a local resident donated a TECHNICS electronic organ for use in our Clubhouse. We are planning to create a choir to sing Christmas carols; our problem is that no one is available play the organ.

Could you spare a couple of hours on a Monday afternoon (13.30-15.30) or anytime on a Friday to play the organ for us during November/December 2008? If yes, please contact the Day Care Team on 942 7608.

*Purley Park Trust
12, Huckleberry Close
Purley on Thames*



MACMILLAN COFFEE MORNING ON FOOT

SATURDAY 27 SEPTEMBER

Join a pleasant 5-mile Walk from Purley through Sulham Wood to Tidmarsh, returning beside the delightful River Pang.

Morning Coffee will be served in Tidmarsh Village Hall.

Meet at Purley Recreation Ground off Beech Road at 9.30am ready for a prompt Start at 9.45am

Minimum Donation £5 for Guided Walk. Bring change for coffee break.

Further details from Nicki Woodward: 984 2112/07768 986 799

VILLAGER OF THE YEAR AWARD

I am delighted to report that seven people were nominated to receive the award for 2008. Thanks to all those who took the trouble to fill in forms or write to us. The annual award was sponsored by the Parish Council and intended to recognise outstanding contributions to the community.

The nominations showed that there is indeed a great culture of voluntary support and care in the village, which is heart-warming to know.

The judging panel met recently to select the winner. My thanks to them for their time and help in the judging. Our decision for 2008 was really difficult, as several of the nominees had made fantastic efforts for the village in very different ways, but the selection as winner was:

Nicki Woodward

This was because of the work she does with several different groups in the village, her dedicated effort and how many people her activities touch, young and old. Many congratulations to her. The Award will be presented at a reception in late September at the Barn.

I would also like to congratulate all the nominees, who have each clearly affected and impressed residents with their contribution to the community. They were:

Martin Bishop, for his inspiration to many people, especially young people, in connection with the cricket club, and for the wonderful care of the Goosecroft Recreation Ground that he and his colleagues perform.

Charlotte Jenkins, for making the Post Office such a helpful and friendly place, and for her voluntary support of older people in the village.

George Critchell, for his service with the Horticultural Society and the memorial Hall over many years.

Brian Smith, for his long service with the Parish Council and help to many residents.

Sybil Pryor, for her support to the WI and Purley CE School, and many other activities.

Brenda Bunn, for her unstinting help to neighbouring residents in the village.

All these people set a standard for a community that is positive and supportive. I have said before how visitors have commented on this atmosphere in Purley – long may it continue.

Rick Jones, Chairman - Purley on Thames Parish Council

PURLEY PATHFINDERS - A WALKING GROUP FOR LADIES

It was actually relatively dry during Wimbledon fortnight, so we enjoyed a sunny day as we set out on our annual 'Wimbledon Strawberry Walk'. This year we met in South Stoke where the air was full of a delicious fragrant cocktail of roses and honeysuckle from the gardens of the picturesque cottages. A signpost guided us onto the Ridgeway. From the gravel track we were treated to tantalising views of the River Thames ahead. Reaching the water's edge, we took in the scene where ducks and geese bobbed about on the surface, rippled by passing boats. Through a gate the Ridgeway continued as a riverside path which cut through a jungle of grasses interspersed with a myriad of wild flowers. Meadowsweet, cransbill, comfrey and teasels added colour to the waving grass seed heads. Swifts dipped down to skim the surface of the river, and, over the river at Moulsoford, swans with their cygnets preened themselves leaving a flurry of feathers on a very posh lawn! Birdsong came from various birds hidden within the long meadow grasses. As we approached the Brunel Bridge a train whizzed across it as a boat skimmed beneath. All that was needed to complete the trio was a 'plane, but a Red Kite made a good substitute! Built in 1839, we noted the Bath Stone fascia to the four arches which give the bridge a span of 62 feet. More delightful riverside meadows led us on to Littlestoke which we reached beneath shady chestnut trees. We continued on the Ridgeway path from which we soon enjoyed splendid views of rolling hills across cornfields edged with poppies. Each field we passed was a pleasure, but the next field stood out amongst the rest with its honey - coloured barley rippling in the light breeze. On reaching North Stoke we entered the churchyard of St Mary's where we found the grave of the famous contralto, Dame Clara Butt to whom Queen Victoria said, "I have never liked the English language before, but in your mouth it is beautiful." Inside the 13th century church we used the information boards to explain the special 14th century wall paintings. We left the churchyard alongside Rectory Farm House, former home of Michael Caine, and made our way back to South Stoke. This time a route away from the river was full of wild flowers associated with chalk meadows such as field scabious, campion, birdsfoot trefoil and chicory to name a few. Across fields of golden barley, super downland views opened up. Damselflies and butterflies danced in the sunshine, while skylarks sang their beautiful song from above. Deep red roses around a cottage door welcomed us back into South Stoke from where we drove the short distance to Hildred's Fruit Farm. Here we picked juicy English strawberries to eat with our picnics, sprawled out on rugs in the sunshine. Game Set and Match!!

Our next walk took place in West Berkshire where we planned to explore some of the numerous footpaths which radiate from Bucklebury Common. With a good view of the church tower reaching up from Bucklebury village, we set off to soon plunge into the wonderful countryside to be found in the valley of the River Pang. Cornflower, mallow, knapweed and wild carrot grow happily here amongst the grasses, attracting many butterflies which added further to our enjoyment. Then, along the edge of a field of sweetcorn, we were delighted to find large groups of pyramidal orchids. This wonderful sight helped to take our minds off the next part of the walk - the woodland of Bushnell's Green where it is rumoured a grisly apparition may be seen in broad daylight!! Thankfully the

woodland was very pleasant and added variety to our surroundings as we continued through more fields of long grass with floaty seed heads and butterflies. Our view ranged from wide, open valleys, to dense woodland, to cropped fields littered with hay bales. We climbed to Jennetts Hill – a hamlet of mixed properties divided by a lovely meadow where a muntjac deer grazed, and a welcome cool plantation guarded by noisy geese! Soon we reached Bucklebury Common with its maze of footpaths through woodland, decorated with the last few blooms on the stems of foxgloves. Once through the wood we walked along a grass path between a fine avenue of oaks, planted over 400 years ago to commemorate a visit by Elizabeth I. We were humbled into insignificance beneath these mighty giants. Further on the avenue is made up of younger trees – a mere 200 years old! These were planted to celebrate the victory at Trafalgar. What historic sights these trees must have witnessed! During the D-Day Landings of 1944 American troops camped in bell tents under the oaks. A local elderly resident remembers asking them for chewing gum! He also remembers the school bus to Newbury stopping to pick up the *squatter children* who had moved with their families into the empty missen huts, although they denied being squatters as they paid rent! Beyond the Blade Bone Inn at Chapel Row we walked through a young avenue of oaks, planted to mark the new Millennium. Passing a Millennium tree-seat we headed into the woodland of Chapel Row Common to emerge between two medieval fishponds.

With the sight of deer in the field beside us we entered Bucklebury Farm Park to be greeted by sheep, llamas, donkeys and wild boar. We gathered in a shady spot to eat our picnics before making our way to our awaiting tractor and trailer. Once aboard we bounced through the fields which are home to the park's large herds of deer. We were lucky to pass close to a 3-hour-old Red Deer Calf. At

the heart of the herd we stopped while our driver told us many interesting facts about the herd which is made up of Red Deer, Sika Deer, Axis Deer, and Fallow Deer. We were then given handfuls of pellets which we hand-fed to Dumbledoor – a fine 13-year-old Red Deer stag. Leaving the peaceful scene of deer grazing or basking in the sunshine, and a 5-week-old Sika Deer feeding from its mother, our trailer bumped its way back to the Park where we treated ourselves to an ice cream from the kiosk.



As usual, our final walk of the term was our *Summertime Special* This year we set off for the Cotswolds, arriving at the Fruit Farm at Hailes under a blue, sunny sky. After morning coffee we began our walk along the historic Pilgrim's Way. We passed Hailes Church, which contains the best medieval wall paintings in Gloucestershire, and Hailes Abbey to where Pilgrims once flocked. We were able to peer over the wall to the atmospheric ruins, now managed by the National Trust. We joined the Cotswold Way to skirt the hillside, then, at a high point we paused in the midst of noisy Cotswold industry – a large flock of baaing sheep! We took in the glorious, wide, panoramic view, easily recognising the church spire at Toddington, the railway halt at Greet through which Steam Trains run on

their way to the Cheltenham Races, and the Cotswold Stone houses of Winchcombe surrounding St Peter's Church with its prominent tower. Beyond the heights of Langley Hill our distant view stretched towards the Vale of Evesham and the Malvern Hills – stunning! Eventually we joined the Gloucestershire Way to walk through meadows alongside the River Isbourne into Winchcombe. We walked between its honey-coloured houses as they gracefully curved along the *combe* – the name of this Saxon town means *valley with a bend*. We paused at the pretty Dent's Almshouses surrounded with flowers. Paid for by Emma Dent of Sudeley, they were built in 1887 to celebrate the Golden Jubilee of Queen Victoria. Winchcombe's huge *wool church* was our next stop. We marvelled at the magnificent tower topped with a huge gilded weathercock. Amongst the 40 gargoyles adorning the walls we spotted the one said to have been the model for Lewis Carroll's Mad Hatter. Inside the church a guide pulled back the protective curtains to reveal the wonderful 16th century altar cloth created by Queen Catherine of Aragon. Unfortunately time allowed only a quick look at the other treasures of this fine church.

Now we headed for Sudeley Castle down the tree-lined Vineyard Street with its gorgeous cottages. Roses and clematis reached up to cover the mellow Cotswold Stone walls and sweet porches. Entering the gates of Sudeley Castle, described as 'England's most delightful castle', we made our way along the Wardens Way to soon arrive at a pair of ornate gate posts which guided us through to the Visitors Centre where we found some shade in its garden to picnic. Tours of the Castle had been booked so, at our allotted times we followed our guide into some of the splendid private apartments of three generations of the Ashcombe and Dent-Brocklehurst families. Our informative and knowledgeable guide pointed out paintings, tapestries and furniture as we passed through one bright room to another, with stories and amusing anecdotes of life at the castle during its lively, historic past to enliven our fascinating tour. We finished in the Elephant Hall beside one of the families' favourite possessions – a large elephant made by the Art Master at Cheltenham Boys College. Famous for its cricket, the school stuffed the elephant with cricket balls, bats, stumps etc! After our tour we had plenty of *free time* to explore the award-winning gardens. Roses and clematis

pour from the roofless walls of the honey-stoned Tithe Barn, its ruined shell reflected in the Carp Pool where huge carp swim amongst the waterlilies.

The Tudor Banqueting Hall also lies in ruins. Its awesome skeleton with gothic windows form an atmospheric climbing frame for clematis and old roses. Hidden within the old castle walls lies the Knott Garden which incorporates a design taken from a dress pattern worn by Elizabeth I in a portrait which hangs in the castle. A Moorish mosaic fountain bubbles in the centre of the

neat, swirling box hedges, and at each corner Egyptian papyrus stand in four small reflective pools. In the grounds, wide grass vistas are dotted with beautifully tended topiary trees. Passing through a tunnel cut in castellated yew



hedges we found the Queen's Garden, a showcase for roses. Large poppy seed heads sit amongst huge seed heads of alliums, while clematis scramble amongst the roses, extending the flowering season. Around the Chapel in the grounds, all the flowers are white. An arbour of white roses leads the eye across a white rose-edged path on to the Chapel wall where a further arbour lies draped in yet more white roses. Symbolising a covered passage which once led from the private quarters of the castle to the Chapel, Katherine Parr and Lady Jane Grey would have walked along here. They are represented by two ivy-clad topiary figures clutching prayer books.



In the Chapel we found the tomb of Katherine Parr who lived at Sudeley castle with Thomas Seymour whom she married after the death of her husband, Henry VIII. We walked beneath a bowyer of romantic pink roses to enter the Secret Garden. Raised beds burgeon with colour in a true floral fest. Back at the castle we climbed 26 spiral steps to view the wonderful exhibitions. The *court* of Henry VIII, dressed in the costumes from the TV series *The Six Wives of Henry*

VIII, form a spectacular welcoming party! The Christening gown worn by Queen Victoria takes pride of place within one of numerous glass cases housing beautiful displays of needlework. Katherine Parr's prayer book and her letter of acceptance of marriage to Thomas Seymour are displayed, as are letters between Emma Dent and Florence Nightingale. The rail of Tudor clothes and hats was just too tempting, and soon we had dressed ourselves up to stand next to Henry VIII for a photo shoot! As the day came to an end we made our way to the restaurant, situated in what had been the Great Hall in the 1450's. Sumptuous cream teas were laid out in readiness and devoured greedily along with several cups of tea! As we wandered back to our coach there was time to pass through the Pheasantry which houses rare and endangered species. Next the Victorian Kitchen Garden was admired, being a showcase of traditional techniques nurturing old, rare and endangered varieties of vegetables. Passing along the Wildflower Walk we were treated to a tapestry of colour from English meadow flowers. Suddenly we came across tall wrought iron letters clad in climbing roses and honeysuckle, spelling out the phrase, *Happily Ever After*. We were certainly all happy with our day spent at this gem in the Cotswolds. With a wave from a giant sculpted hand, part of a collection of sculptures we had seen around the garden, we made our way back to our coach, clutching mementoes and plants purchased in the gift shop.

After the summer break our September *Village Life* themed walks resume with walks in Ufton Nervet, Sulhampstead, Clifton Hampden, Little Wittenham, Waltham St Lawrence, Baughurst and Ashford Hill. Walks are held on weekday mornings. For more details of the group, visit our website.

Nicki Woodward
nicki@cherryacre.com - www.purleypathfinders.co.uk
984 2112/07768 986799



LOTTERY FUNDED

WHACKY SCRAP RACES

FAMILY FUN

At Denefield School, Long Lane, Tilehurst

Is your family up for a challenge? How about... Making the fastest car to transport a potato head!

Learn how to design and build a variety of small-scale models based on Scrapheap Challenge. Then see if your team's vehicle can win the award!

Come along to this exciting open event from 10.30am-12.30pm on Saturday 4 October 2008. Free admission.

A free crèche is available and transport costs can be covered for those on free school meals.

This 5-year project is funded by The National Lottery through the Big Lottery Fund.

For more information or to register for these ongoing family fun sessions, please contact Sue Hale on 972 8978 or email shale@denefield.org.uk

MORE MOOR COPSE

Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire Wildlife Trust's Moor Copse Nature Reserve has recently doubled in size from 74 to 160 acres.

This diverse woodland wildlife treasure trove, appealing to walkers and natural historians alike, lies astride the River Pang and is made up of wet woodland copses and wildflower meadows. There are many reasons to visit throughout the year, although spring and summer are particularly wonderful times to come, with their carpets of woodland flowers, such as bluebells and primroses; an abundance of butterflies, moths, damselflies and dragonflies; and many birds including warblers, woodpeckers and kingfishers.

In 2006, BBOWT managed to purchase an additional 86 acres with the help of members, funding bodies (The Tubney Charitable Trust, Biffaward, Landfill Communities Fund and Heritage Lottery Fund) and local people. Now the site is being carefully restored and actively managed to recreate blooming wildflower meadows and buzzing woodland edges. Trees and hedgerows have been extensively planted, and a major project to return a cultivated field to its previous condition as a wildflower meadow has been started. From October, the reserve will be furnished with a new set of engaging interpretive signs to help visitors understand the wildlife that lives in its varied habitats.

**Berkshire
Buckinghamshire
Oxfordshire**



Please do come and visit. There is a 1.5 mile signposted Wildlife Walk and many other clear paths to walk along. Moor Copse is located on the A340, ¼ mile south of Tidmarsh (OS Sheet 175, SU 633 738). There is a link to a map on the Berks, Bucks and Oxon Wildlife Trust's website: www.bbowt.org.uk.

If you would like to find out more about Moor Copse, Louise Print-Lyons and Helen Phillips have organised a travelling exhibition this autumn. It will visit Reading Central Library (27 October - 2 November), Goring Library (10-14 November) and Pangbourne Library (17-21 November). Or, you can contact BBOWT for a reserve leaflet (01865 775476; info@bbowt.org.uk).

HAIRCUT

A teenage boy had just acquired his driver's licence and inquired of his father as to when they could discuss his use of the car.

His father said he'd make a deal with his son: "You bring your grades up from a C to a B average, study your Bible a little, and get your hair cut. Then we'll talk about the car."

The boy thought about that for a moment, decided he'd settle for the offer, and they agreed on it.

After about six weeks his father said, "Son, you've brought your grades up and I've observed that you have been studying your Bible, but I'm disappointed you haven't gotten your hair cut."

The boy said, "You know, Dad, I've been thinking about that, and I've noticed in my studies of the Bible that Samson had long hair, John the Baptist had long hair, Moses had long hair... and there's even strong evidence that Jesus had long hair."

To this his father replied, "Did you also notice they all walked everywhere they went?"

SCARECROWS WANTED!

Imagine the fun of making a life size scarecrow and seeing it joining others to decorate Pangbourne village during the October half term – with visitors to the village following the scarecrow trail!

You may want to get together with your friends from a community group or charity or just get together with family and friends to make one – either way you will need to choose a character – this year the theme is Children's Film Characters – and register it (to ensure that we do not have any duplicates)

Please email info@heartofpangbourne.org.uk

PS – don't forget to keep your choice of character a secret!

PROJECT PURLEY

OUTING TO STRATFIELD SAYE

Stratfield Saye House, the ancestral home of the Dukes of Wellington, was the venue for the summer outing by members of Project Purley. A total of 37 of us made our way in a convoy of cars out along the A.33 on a pleasantly warm morning following Tony Trendle's route map, until we arrived at the estate entrance just before 10.30am.

Once admitted and gathered together in front of the house, we were divided into three groups according to the colour-coded card we had been given in the car park. I found myself in the Orange Group, and our guide for the house tour was to be a most pleasant and knowledgeable lady wearing the name tag "Mrs Patricia Weeks." We also had an additional guide, carrying a walkie-talkie, who brought up the rear of our party, and whose function was apparently to co-ordinate the movement of visitors around the property and ensure nobody was lost or left behind.

Mrs Weeks addressed our group in the Great Hall and by way of introduction explained that the house and stable blocks were built in about 1630 by Sir William Pitt, Comptroller of the Household to James I. After the Duke of Wellington's victory over Napoleon at the Battle of Waterloo in 1815, a grateful nation, represented by Parliament, voted the sum of £600,000 for the purchase of a suitable country house and estate for the Great Duke. He chose the beautiful Carolean house and an estate which was then 5,000 acres in size and Stratfield Saye has remained the family home ever since. It is currently owned by the 8th Duke, though he lives quietly in retirement, and the day to day running of the estate is undertaken by his eldest son, Lord Douro.

Our tour of the house began in reverse order in the dining room, where the walls were hung with family portraits including that of the Great Duke's mother, who apparently told her son, "You will never make a soldier." The structure of the

PURLEY PLAYERS

will be

SOLD OUT

Evening

Barbecues R Murder

on Friday 26 & 27 September 2008

at The Barn, Purley on Thames at 7.00 for 7.30pm

Tickets £15 to include a three course dinner

from Mike Adnett (962 5760)

Come and join us

house has remained virtually unchanged over the years, but the interior has been extensively remodelled. It was only in 1948 however, we learned as we entered the servery, that it became connected to electricity.

From the servery we moved to the music room, with its piano dating from 1820, and the many tributes to Copenhagen, Wellington's favourite charger which he rode for fourteen hours at Waterloo. Then it was on to the China Room, with its display cabinets filled with so many collections of ornate crockery, and next the Lady Charles Room, named after the wife of the Great Duke's second son, Lord Charles Wellesley. This room is now the family's principal sitting room and leads to the Print Room, which is adorned with a mixture of landscape, military and sporting prints, chosen more for their symmetry than for their subject matter.

Our rapid tour continued with brief stops at The Study, once the Great Duke's bedroom, but from where Lord Douro now administrates his office staff, the Library containing over 3,000 books, many of them captured from Napoleon, and the Gallery, which looks out over the beautifully manicured lawns to the River Loddon and the country park beyond. The Gallery is perhaps the most elegant room in the whole house, as it is decorated with prints mainly of Shakespearean scenes, and a series of bronze busts, partially gilded, and which include representations of Napoleon as a Roman Emperor, King Charles I and Louis XIV of France. This room is used quite frequently by film and television companies for period dramas.

By this stage our three groups were starting to catch up with each other, and beginning to criss-cross with a speed and precision reminiscent of the Royals Signals motorcycle display team at the Royal Tournament. But the indomitable Mrs. Weeks led us through the Large and Small Drawing Rooms to the Great Hall once again, which was to be the final stop on our house tour. The Hall displays portraits of each of the eight Dukes, placed above the gallery which is supported by a range of Ionic columns, unusually made of wood. The most attractive features in the Hall however are the Roman mosaic pavements set in the floor. They date from at least 400AD and were excavated from Silchester and brought to Stratfield Saye in 1866 by the second Duke.

This brought our house tour to its conclusion. The tour had been a little confusing, as we were not able to follow the history of the house in chronological order, because the three groups had each needed to start at a different part of the building. But this barely detracted from our enjoyment, which was enhanced by a walk in the Pleasure Grounds. We were also able to visit the Wellington Exhibition, containing mementoes of the Great Duke's life as soldier and statesman, and finally to view the funeral carriage. Wellington died on 14 September 1852 at Walmer Castle aged 83, and his body was taken on 18 November on a huge and richly ornamented carriage, drawn by twelve black horses, to the funeral service in St Paul's Cathedral.

A small group of us also took the opportunity to walk through the Rose and American Gardens to view Copenhagen's grave in the Ice House Paddock. The faithful chestnut stallion enjoyed a long retirement at Stratfield, dying in 1836 aged 28 and was buried with full military honours. The Turkey oak behind his

grave has grown from an acorn planted by the Great Duke's housekeeper in 1843.

By now the Project Purley party had fragmented for lunch. Some went to the nearby Wellington Arms, but our group of Millie, Peter, Marion (1) and Marion (2) and myself decided to visit the estate gift shop, then eat in the adjacent tea room. Over a pleasant salad lunch we reflected on an excellent outing which had taught us so much about the Wellington family, their house and the Stratfield Saye estate. Our sincere thanks go to Tony Trendle for making it all possible.

SHAKESPEARE IN THE BARN

Thank you to everyone who supported the Rain or Shine Theatre Company's production of *The Winter's Tale* at The Barn on 6 June. The evening raised £700 for the West Berkshire branch of The Alzheimers Society.

SUMMER BARBEQUE

Exactly one year after the dreadful floods which devastated so much of the Thames Valley, a grey, leaden sky threatened the success of the Project Purley summer barbecue. In the event, the evening of Friday, 18 July was only slightly disfigured by rain, which veered between slight drizzle and heavy downpour during the occasion.

We were saved from the worst of the weather by the cluster of gazebos and tents pitched on the front lawn at Highveldt. These had been set up by Ben, Cliff, John and Peter during the morning and provided more than adequate shelter for the 35 members and friends who attended. The only drawback was the disinclination to circulate from table to table of guests, though this again did not prevent each of the huddled groups from engaging in animated conversation. In between the courses, timed once more with military precision (starters at 7.30 p.m, main barbecue 7.45 p.m, dessert at 8.15 p.m.) our tent discussed a range of topics.

We talked about the most enjoyable recent outings to Mapledurham House and Stratfield Saye; the incidence of car crime in the village; Marion Venner's forthcoming visit to Australia, and whether she will attempt the Sydney Harbour Bridge climb (Marion says she is thinking about it!); questioned which direction water goes round the plug hole in Australia and discussed the relative merits of the various wines on our table. We told a few jokes too, which became ever so slightly more risqué as the evening progressed, and also spoke about the new sponsorship deal which has seen the name of the supermarket *Waitrose* appear on the Reading F.C. shirts. One helpful contribution was the suggestion that a footballer having a poor game might have a *reduced* label added to the logo!

While this healthy buzz of conversation was going on round the garden, Ben and John were on duty at the grill and we were invited to queue for our main course. Best behaved of all of those waiting to be fed was Bri, the two year old dog, who sat patiently while we worked our way through the sausages, chicken legs and burgers, followed by a selection of mouth watering puddings laid out on tables at the bottom of the garden steps.

The rain stopped for a brief period to enable guests to escape the confines of the tents, Bri was able to trot around the garden and be fed various titbits, and then almost before we knew it, the evening was drawing to a close. Chairman John made a brief speech thanking Ben and Dorothy for their hospitality, Edna led us all in a chorus of *Happy Birthday* for Dorothy, (who declined to reveal her age) and Ann announced that the new Project Purley tea towels were available in green, terracotta and blue at a cost of £3 each.

Just as we were packing away cutlery and crockery and folding up chairs, some of us were fascinated by a pair of bats swooping backwards and forwards between the eaves and the branches of neighbouring trees. They were quite clearly happy and contented visitors to Highveldt, just as the rest of us had been.

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of Project Purley will be in The Barn on Friday, 19 September at 8 p.m. when Richard Benyon MP will be talking about *The Big Battlefield Bike Ride* in aid of *Help for Heroes*. As guests from other groups will be invited, Project Purley members are advised to arrive in good time to ensure a seat. Doors will be open from 7.30pm.

David Downs



1st Purley and Pangbourne Scout Group



Support your local Scout Group and their International Project which is raising funds for the Group and to support work, and Scouts and their families, in Africa and.....

Come to our Table Top Sale.....

on Saturday 18 October from 2.30-4.30pm

at The Barn, Goosecroft Lane Recreation Ground, Purley on Thames

Toys : Books : Household items : New & Used goods : etc. and refreshments available

Why not have a post-summer, pre-Christmas clear out and book a Table!!

(Tables £10 each or 2 for £15)

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