

PURLEY PARISH NEWS

CHRISTMAS

All this for us Thy love hath done;
By This to Thee our love is won;
For this our joyful songs we raise
And shout our thanks
in ceaseless praise.

ALL PRAISE TO THEE,
ETERNAL GOD



For the Church & Community of
PURLEY ON THAMES



St Mary the Virgin

Purley on Thames

www.stmaryspurley.org.uk

RECTOR

Currently in interregnum

ORDAINED LOCAL MINISTER

Rev. Andrew Mackie
12 Church Mews
0118 941 7170

CURATE

Rev. Jean Rothery
Oaklea, Tidmarsh Road, Tidmarsh
0118 984 3625

CHURCHWARDENS

Mary Barrett
0118 984 2166

Debbie Corrigan
0118 945 1895

CHURCH HALL BOOKINGS

Sara Lang
0118 954 8052

BAPTISMS, WEDDINGS AND FUNERALS

All enquiries to the Curate

COVER IMAGE

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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.

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.

EDITOR

Matt Slingsby
24 Skerritt Way, Purley on Thames,
RG8 8DD
0118 961 5585
ppn@stmaryspurley.org.uk

DISTRIBUTION

Steve Corrigan
11 Mapledurham Drive
Purley on Thames
0118 945 1895

SUBSCRIPTIONS

Les Jamieson
58a Wintringham Way
Purley on Thames
0118 941 2342

ADVERTISING

Liane Southam
1 Bakery Cottages, Reading Road,
Burghfield Common, Reading
0118 983 1165 (before 6pm please)
liane.southam@virgin.net

PRINTING

Richfield Graphics Ltd, Caversham

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 DECEMBER
NEXT EDITION COPY DEADLINE	13 DECEMBER
NEXT EDITION PUBLISHED	3 JANUARY 2009

FROM THE LOCAL MINISTER

Publication dates inevitably mean that there is a time lag between when I write this and when you read it.

I started to write this not long after Remembrance Sunday. I have mentioned in church that I have a favourite photograph from the Second World War. It is the image of a morning after the blitz, when the only thing which could be seen above the pall of smoke, which lay heavy over London, was the dome of St Paul's Cathedral. A few weeks ago, a member of the congregation told me of her childhood memory of York. Again, it was the morning after the bombing, with the sight of flames everywhere – except the Minster itself was untouched.

When I use that photograph as a sermon illustration, I usually contrast the skyline of St Paul's then with the London skyline now. It's no longer the building where Christ is worshipped that dominates the skyline, because the offices of commercial and financial institutions now dwarf it.

At Christmas, too, it's no longer Christ who dominates the season, because commercial and financial considerations come first.

In Oxford, this year council leaders have decided that it's not Christmas time, but time for a two month long *Winter Light Festival* with lights in the shape of giant lanterns rather than more traditional designs. Apparently the council leaders' spokesman thinks that having a tree – with lights – is enough to counter criticism that they are killing off Christmas.

Meanwhile on television, in the weeks running up to 25 December, the broadcasting schedules are more likely to be dominated by Father Christmas than by Jesus, as advertisers try to tempt us all into believing that theirs will be the gift to be seen with on Boxing Day.

There is one place that Christmas won't be like that. Whether you spend Christmas in Purley or travel elsewhere to spend a few days with relatives, the local church will put the birth of Jesus first. We will remember that Mary and Joseph would have been homeless had they not been given the use of a stable. We will celebrate with the shepherds, among the poorest of society at that time, their joy at being told of the birth. Later, those from among the elite of society, rulers from the East, came to mark the baby's birth. For all of them, their lives were changed by putting Jesus first.



I hope that this Christmas you will put Jesus, rather than commercial and financial matters, first, and that you will keep him first as the year goes on.

Wherever you are this Christmas, I wish you a very happy time.

Andrew

CHURCH SERVICES

7 December	9.30am	Family Worship
	11.15am	Holy Communion
	6.00pm	Holy Communion
14 December	9.30am	Family Worship
	11.15am	Holy Communion
21 December	10.30am	Family Communion
	6.00pm	Parish Carols
24 December	4.30pm	Crib Service
	11.30pm	Midnight Communion
25 December	10.30am	Christmas Communion
28 December	10.30am	Christmas Communion



Senior Citizens Tea Party

St Mary's Church will be holding their annual Tea Party
3.30-5pm Sunday 11 January 2009

*Anyone who is of retirement age, even if you can skip
the light fantastic and are still young at heart,
is very welcome to join us.*

*We will shortly be sending out invitations,
but if we miss you, please contact
Jean Rothery on 984 3625 or Sheila Adnett on 962 5760
to let us know that you will be coming.*

PURLEY HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY



TALKS

On Wednesday, 19 November we welcomed Elizabeth Farrar back to give us an interesting talk and slides on Pansies, Violas and sweet violets. Hopefully members attending will be sufficiently inspired to grow these plants. Tea, coffee and hot mince pies were served in the interval. We shall not be meeting in December and January, but the A.G.M. of the Society will take place on Wednesday, 18 February 2009 commencing at 7.45pm. After the official business has been completed we will have "Bring and Share" Refreshments. We would be grateful if everyone attending could bring a plate of finger food (enough for one person) and the Society will provide wine and fruit juice

TRADING

The Shed in the Memorial Hall car park is now closed and will re-open on the 7 February 2009. Margaret Rolfe now has Suttons Seeds Catalogues so if you would like to order seeds through the Society, please contact Margaret con 941 7247. Potato seed order forms will be available when the shed opens. You may download the types of seed potatoes available by visiting www.purleyonthames.net online notice board or Purley Groups.

SITUATION VACANT

The Society has a vacancy for a Secretary. If anyone feels they could carry out these duties for us, could you please contact Jim Armstrong on 942 1645.

On behalf of the Society I would like to wish you all a very happy Christmas and enjoyable gardening in 2009.

Marion Dabbs
942 2349

LYNNETTE MARY NOEL NICHOLSON

25 DECEMBER 1919 – 2 NOVEMBER 2008

David and I first met Lyn at the Easter Morning Service at St Mary's in 1968. We had moved into Purley as a recently married couple. Lyn made us feel very welcome, as she was busy shepherding the Purley Park Boys into their pews.

Lyn worked hard at Purley Park, which was in those days in the Big House, and was run by Col and Mrs Duncan.

At that time, Lyn was married to Lou Barnes, whom we nicknamed *The Monk* as he sang, robed in the choir, wearing sandals on his bare feet. Lyn donated the tap by the lytch gate in his memory.

For many years Lyn was Sunday School Superintendent. She loved children, although she had no children of her own. She would be seen collecting children in her T(rusty) old white van to enable them to attend Sunday School. In due course she married Rev George Nicholson, a British Israelite.

Several folk named Lyn *The Angel of Purley*. She gave shelter to several homeless souls and for those unable to cut their grass, through illness or disability, there was Lyn with her grass-cutter!

After George died, Lyn moved to Rustington, West Sussex to care for her elderly Mother and sick brother Maurice (now deceased). She was still serving others "right to the end". Indeed, when friends visited her she took great delight in treating them to a 3-course Pensioner's lunch where she had a great rapport with the staff in the restaurant.

Lyn was a very accomplished artist, and we are privileged to have one of her pictures in our hall. She painted several postcards of areas in West Sussex.

Lyn died peacefully in hospital 3 days after fracturing a leg. Her packed funeral service was held at The Parish Church, Rustington. Rest in Peace Dear Lyn. You will be missed by so many people.

Anne Bolam

PASSING THOUGHTS

One day I shall the bucket kick,
I don't know when or how.
It may be when I'm old and sick,
Or any minute now.

Then if to heaven my soul should soar
Let it be understood,
It won't be through my efforts, or
Because I have been good.

And not because to church I went
Reciting prayer galore
And not for all the hours I spent
Collecting for the poor.

And not as a reward I've won
For all my lusty labour,
And not because I've always done
My duty to my neighbour.

It won't be through the friends I've known
Who thought that I was nice,
Or through the wisdom that I've shown
In giving good advice.

My hope to reach that heavenly place
Is not through good behaviour,
But faith in the amazing grace
Of Jesus Christ my Saviour.

Lyn Nicholson

In a church packed to overflowing, and in the presence of a fully robed choir, three officiating clergy and two clergy in the congregation, Lyn Nicholson's life was celebrated and praised. The service "In Thanksgiving for the Life of..." followed her strict instructions as we sang her favourite hymns: *When morning guilds the skies, my heart awaking cries, may Jesus Christ be praised; From heaven you came, helpless babe; Alleluia, sing to Jesus, His the sceptre, his the throne; Sun of my soul, thou saviour dear, it is not night if thou be near.* Psalm 103 was read, as was Matthew 6:25-34. Two moving tributes were given expressing Lyn's gracious generosity of spirit, her kindness and hospitality, and her concerns for the poor and rejected. Her life in Purley on Thames was referred to, particularly her work at Purley Park, and her taking of people on holiday in her well known van; and her life in the WRENS during the Second World War. Her humour and poetry were recalled and the poem opposite was read out in full and was – surprisingly after its opening line – deeply moving. Her skills as an artist and maker of Christmas Cards were commended and admired. It was a lovely service for a lovely person, remembered, I am sure with affection by many people in Purley on Thames.

*David Evans
Former Rector of St Mary's church*



Christmas Concert

Friday 12 & Saturday 13 December 2008

The Barn, Goosecroft Lane off Beech Road, Purley on Thames, RG8 8DK

Performances start at 8pm

Tickets £7 for Adults – £6 for Senior Citizens & Children

For ticket sales call: 986 6947 or 950 4206

PURLEY RISE POST OFFICE & STORE

OPENING HOURS FOR CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR

Post Office:

Christmas Eve: 9am-12.30pm

Christmas Day: CLOSED

Boxing Day: CLOSED

New Years Eve: 9am-4pm

New Years Day: CLOSED



Shop:

Christmas Eve: 7am-8pm

Christmas Day: CLOSED

Boxing Day: 7am-6pm

New Years Eve: 7am-8pm

New Years Day: 7am-6pm

(Dates between Christmas & New Year – business as usual)

We have also installed PAYPOINT in the store, so you can pay for the following:

Gas	Rent	TV Licence
Electricity	Council Tax	Mail Order
Water	Telephone	Cable
Mobile top up	Bus Tickets	

There is some excellent news that the Post Office has retained the contract for the Post Office card account, so we are very happy that we will be able to continue giving you this service.

Newspapers will be delivered throughout the festive period, apart from Christmas Day. If you are away, or don't require a paper, please could you let us know as soon as possible. Boxing Day and New Year's Day the paper may arrive later than normal.

If there is anything special you require from the shop and we don't have it, please feel free to let us know. We will do our best to get it in for you. Bulk ordering is available with advance notice of 2-3 days.

This is our second Christmas at the Post Office and there have been some changes and many more to happen!! We would like to thank you all for the support and help over the year.

Wishing all our customers a very Merry Christmas & Happy New Year.

Gurmit, Ruchi & Jasria
984 3230

PURLEY ON THAMES CRICKET CLUB



ANNUAL QUIZ NIGHT

Friday 6 February 2009

The Barn, Goosecroft Lane, Beech Road, Purley on Thames
From 7pm (Quiz commencing at 7.30pm)

Tickets will be £7.50 each, and will include a meal of fish/chips, sausage/chips, or a vegetarian option. Cheap bar available...

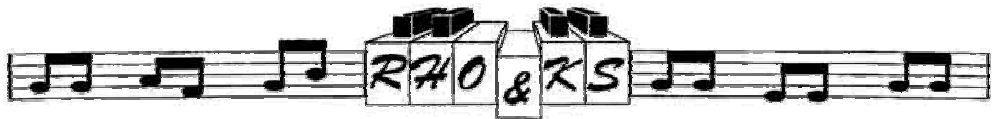
Maximum of 8 per team – either enter a whole team or join a team on the night!
Send your choice of food, with £7.50 per person entry by 31 December 2008 to:
Charlotte Bishop, 10 Cornwall Close, Tilehurst, RG31 6FS

CLUB AWARDED BT COMMUNITY CHAMPIONS GRANT

Purley on Thames Cricket Club has been awarded £450 by the BT Community Champions award scheme thanks to the voluntary work of Martin Bishop, a BT employee. Run by BT's charity programme, BT Community Champions award BT people with funding on behalf of local community groups, charities and organisations where they work on a voluntary basis.

Following the third review in 2008-09, funding has been allocated to a variety of groups who demonstrated how the award would make a difference to their groups and benefit their local community. Purley on Thames Cricket Club is one of hundreds that applied for an award during review three of the scheme and impressed judges with how they would use their grant.

The club plans to use its £450 award to purchase further coaching courses for junior coaches/managers. Martin Bishop, Chairman of Purley on Thames Cricket Club said "The BT Community Champions award scheme provides a great opportunity for community groups like ours – every contribution makes a difference. It is very positive that BT recognises the voluntary work of its staff and supports the charity sector in this way"



READING HOME ORGAN & KEYBOARD SOCIETY

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

Our guest artist this month is James Goff, a well known electronic organist on the circuit and it promises to be a really fun evening as it is our Christmas meeting and there will be festive food provided by the members. All are welcome.

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

PURLEY W.I.

In October some of our lucky W.I. ladies were given a golden opportunity to attend a live performance of *The Alan Titchmarsh Show*. The long wait in the queue proved worthwhile and our ladies were entertained with a host of well known stars such as Trinny and Suzanna, Bill Oddie and Libby Purvis, to name but a few. Well done Jill Green for organising the event, a lovely treat indeed.

Flower of the month: Winner – Angela Edwards

Competition: *An Amusing Newspaper Headline*

1st Nicki Woodward

2nd Angela Edwards

Our speaker for October was Mr Andy Hughes who gave us a brief synopsis of his life working as a worldwide freelance radio newsreader and reporter. Mr Hughes detailed the many problems that can occur when trying to ensure copy is correct and ready to go live on air. His unique approach to dealing with the unexpected 'Newsflash' using an un-rehearsed script, kept his audience entranced. It would appear that there are hidden depths to newsreaders, which include being able to read, write, add and subtract news items, whilst counting down the clock second by second and using a computer all at the same time! A brave volunteer was given the opportunity to read aloud a prepared news script, to the amusement of many. Well done Marilyn! I see a new career on the cards.



Help I think I'm going crackers!! This month (November) was *Craft Workshop* where myself, and Jan Wallbanks were given the honour to host the evening designing and making Christmas Crackers and Decorated Baubles. With our own unique range of designs to chose from there was something for everyone. Feedback seems to have been good but I don't think we will be taking out any patents on them yet, not this year anyway! Thank you to all those who helped us make this an uplifting experience.

I am pleased to advise that our Lady President, Daphne Howard, is back in the hot seat, following her excellent recovery from heart surgery. We all wish her continued good health. A big "thank you" to Edna Bint, who kept us all going during her absence.

It is said that we all have 15 minutes of fame in our lives. So rather than wait any longer this is mine... A year ago I joined Purley W.I. with no preconceptions and not knowing anyone there. In this time I have been encouraged through the W.I. to write my first ghost story, have my photographs published in the Berkshire W.I. Calendar, won the Purley Homecraft Salver for *Best in Show* at the Purley Horticultural Show, and many other *firsts* that I would probably not have otherwise experienced. Purley W.I. is one of the more successful local

W.I.'s, and to sustain this accredited success we welcome new members to come and join us in a friendly atmosphere to realise your own *first time* experience and share untapped talents with like-minded individuals.

Our next meeting is at 7.30pm on 10 December at Purley Memorial Hall and it's our *Christmas Party Dinner*. Victorian dress is optional with a theme of red/green/gold. Members remember to bring your wrapped Christmas gift. The entertainment will be.....I think I'll keep you guessing on that one, but definitely another first for me. What have I got myself into this time? 'I Say', 'I Say', 'I Say', Flanagan and Allen you don't know what you're missing!!

Finally, November Flower of the Month Winner was Pam Fisher

On behalf of the hard working (and by now exhausted) Committee of the Purley W.I. may I wish you all a Merry & Joyous Christmas.

Marion Maybank

ANECDOTES OF A LIFE OF CONTRASTS

Being rather squeamish, it was with some trepidation that I started to read the memoirs of Dr John Hofmeyr: *Anecdotes of a Life of Contrasts*. It appeared that my fears were to be borne out, as I read of Dr Hofmeyr's first surgical work. However, it was revealed, the subject of this operation was not a human, but his sister's "sleeping" doll!

I took the opportunity of a business trip to Dublin to read John's book, and noted the lady sat next to me on the plane was also attempting to read someone's memoirs – in this case a French lady, whose name I can't recall. Whereas my fellow traveller seemed to be having trouble staying awake long enough to read her book, I found John's anecdotes much more stimulating! Rather than attempt to string together his diverse tales into continuous prose, John presents a series of individual vignettes placed in approximate chronological order, which together tell the story of his life, whilst maintaining their individuality. This makes it an excellent book for reading on the move, as each story is only a page or two long and so the book can be put down at short notice – such as when you spot your suitcase on the luggage carousel – without losing the plot.

There are stories to be discovered from many aspects of Dr Hofmeyr's life, both personal and professional, and inevitably these do include details of medical incidents that have stuck in his mind. Most of these are still palatable even by someone as weak-stomached as me, but after reading what pertained to be an anecdote about lawyers on page 144, I was glad I'd declined the airplane meal!

And if you wondered whether John has "seen it all" during his lifetime, make sure you read about his trip to the Mediterranean campsite by Pamplonne beach.

Anecdotes of a Life of Contrasts is published by The Memoir Club, priced £9.95. ISBN 978-1-84104-188-9

Matt Slingsby

NAG ACTION REDUCES MOTORBIKE NUISANCE

The Pangbourne Neighbourhood Action Group (NAG) has provided an excellent example of effective partnership work after new warning signs were put up in Sulham Woods, Purley.

The signs were created in response to one of the NAG's priority issues: the problem of the anti-social use of motor vehicles.

Neighbourhood Specialist Officer, PC Matthew Allen, said: "The problem of motorbikes being ridden in Sulham Woods has been an issue for some years, causing damage to the woodlands and fields and being a nuisance to walkers and horse riders who use the area.



"In August 2007 it was adopted as a priority profile by the NAG and since then the NAG has worked with partner agencies and organisations to solve the problem.

"This partnership working, along with targeted patrolling and the seizure of motorbikes by the neighbourhood team, means we have seen a large reduction in complaints, and I am pleased to announce that the Pangbourne NAG has now decided to close this priority. We shall of course continue to patrol the area and deal with offenders to make sure that the problem does not re-occur."

David Betts, chairman of the Pangbourne NAG and West Berkshire councillor for Purley ward, said: "This is a remarkable example of the sort of progress which can only be made through partnership working.

"Through the Pangbourne NAG we have addressed the problem of the anti-social use of motor bikes and scooters in Sulham Woods by restricting access and installing a number of stiles making it more difficult to gain access to woods with a motorbike.

"The signs have been installed to advise people of the issue and what they should do if they see this activity happening in the area.

"This was brought together by the three parish councils; Purley, Tilehurst and Sulham and Tidmarsh, the landowners, the Forestry Commission and the Highways and Countryside departments of West Berkshire Council, and was coordinated by our local neighbourhood officer, PC Matthew Allen.

"Since the signs went up at the start of the month there has been a significant reduction in the number of complaints from the public.

"Nevertheless, I would urge people to continue to report incidents to the police if they do occur, you can do this via the 24-hour non-emergency number on 0845 8 505 505. Please give a time and location and as good a description of the bike and rider as possible."

Mr Betts added: 'With Christmas coming up, I would like to take this opportunity to remind parents that mini-motos, monkey bikes, scooters and trail bikes are not toys. They can only be used legally on the public highway if they are taxed and insured and ridden by someone with the correct licence and safety equipment. Neither can they be used legally off road unless you have the permission of the landowner. If they are used illegally the police have powers to seize them.'

PURLEY ON THAMES PARISH COUNCIL



NOTICE BOARD

Chairman: Rick Jones
Vice Chairman: Rick Farrow
Highways & Footpaths: Paul Coombes
Recreation: Graham Rolfe
Barn Management: Roger Woodward
New Councillor: Mr Bernard Nix

DATES OF MEETINGS

Parish Council: 18 December 2008, 22 January, 26 February, 2 April, 7 May 2009
Highways & Footpaths Committee: 12 March 2009.
Recreation Committee: 8 January, 16 April 2009.
Barn Committee: 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.

FARMERS' MARKET DATES

13 December 2008.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

The end of the calendar year looming up already! We do not 'wrap up' our year until March, of course, but like everyone else, we are piling on the clothes and wrapping up Christmas presents instead...(sorry, could not resist the pun).

A few pieces of news:

The Tilehurst Leaning Campus is still alive – a second feasibility study has been commissioned, as Long Lane School has now opted out of the project, and the campus would now combine only two schools – Denefield and Brookfields. Significant central government funding will be required for even the smaller project to succeed, and whether this is forthcoming will not be known for some time yet. We should receive progress reports again in the Spring and Autumn of 2009.

The sanitary station at Mapledurham Lock will be implemented over the winter, and the works will create some diversion of the Thames footpath in the vicinity of the lock. We will publish details when we receive them. This project has created concerns amongst a number of residents, but as I reported in October, the

Environment Agency has taken trouble to answer and reassure us that the problems envisaged will be avoided.

The Youth Club continues to be very successful, operating each alternate Monday evening from 6-8pm. Although well attended, there is room for a few more youngsters aged 9-14 to join in the fun. The Parish Council is committed to support this club for the foreseeable future. Contact Simon Jackson on 941 5733 or at Purley Park Social Club for information. As part of our interest in providing more leisure activity options in the village, you may be asked to respond to a questionnaire early next year, so that we can update that part of the Village Plan and act as the mandate for our Recreation Committee to move forward in this area. When that happens please give us your views.

We now have details of the changes in planning rules that affect so-called 'permitted development'. This really means smaller house and garden alterations that will no longer need planning permission. The rules are still quite complex, so please make sure that you still ask for advice from the planning authority before you make firm plans. The clerk or any member of our planning working party will also be pleased to give you what information we have. Two types of alteration that do happen around the village have not changed, however, and do need planning permission - hard-surfacing front gardens is not permitted (without special flood precautions), or erecting boundary fences or walls above a permitted height. Again, please take advice before contemplating these actions.

When you get around to New Year resolutions, think about raising the volunteering hand. Two very different local organisations need that hand. The after school Kool Club at Denefield need committee members to help administer the club. Also the Pangbourne Volunteer Centre needs a few more drivers to help on occasions. Contact Sue Hale (0972 8978) for Kool Club, and John Chapman (942 6999) for PVC.

Please have a very enjoyable and rewarding Christmas and New Year. Best Wishes from Purley on Thames Parish Council.

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
Clerk to Parish Council: Janet Field

Purley on Thames Parish Council
Parish Office
Goosecroft Lane, off Beech Road
Purley on Thames
Reading
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

KOOL CLUB

Please come along to the Kool Club EGM at 5.30pm on Monday 8 December 2008 in the library at Denefield School.

Your support is vital, as we urgently need new volunteers to help run the club when the existing committee stands down next month. No experience is necessary as full support will be given by myself and others!

Perhaps you are interested in marketing, fundraising or accounts for instance? Volunteering will look good on your CV and if you are thinking about returning to work it can provide valuable new experience, skills and confidence! If you would like to know more about what is involved or are able to come along, please let me know.

We look forward to receiving your support to guarantee the future of this valuable after school and holiday club.

*Sue Hale – Extended Schools Manager
Inspire4Life – Tilehurst & Purley Cluster
9728978 – www.inspire4life.org.uk*

P.S. Remember Kool Club is always there for your child (aged 4-13) on an ad hoc, flexible or regular basis!

The club is also open right up until Christmas Eve this year!

PURLEY VILLAGE YOUTH CLUB

Twice a month (2nd and 4th Mondays from 6-8pm) we meet in the back function hall of Purley Park Social Club. This is somewhere for the Purley youth to join in activities such as Pool and a variety of other games. I would like to invite all families to come and visit the club or contact me to arrange a visit and see for themselves what's happening.

We are planning to set up a youth committee (backed by the adult volunteers) to look at ideas for future of the club, linked to fundraising activities for the youths and at the same time giving something back to our local village.

Monday 22 December is the Youth Club Disco Night, with an open invitation to current members and their families, as well as newcomers. Come, visit and have some fun!

The Youth Club acknowledges the great support offered by the West Berkshire Community Wardens and Purley Parish Council, since the trial sessions in August.

*Simon "Jacko" Jackson
jacko19722002@yahoo.co.uk*

PURLEY PATHFINDERS - A WALKING GROUP FOR LADIES

Continuing our Village Life theme we met in Oxfordshire to explore three of the counties lovely villages. The first to be visited was Marsh Baldon where the village green is the oldest part of the village. All the villagers have rights to use it for haymaking and grazing their animals! The village also has a village pond inhabited by several contented ducks, no doubt well fed by the children of the village school set beside it! We moved on to Toot Baldon. Toot means 'Look Out' and when we walked past the Manor House we could see why. What should be a stunning view of Oxford's spires is sadly blotted out by an electricity sub-station, and the Cowley car factory. However, we enjoyed our surroundings as we passed through the lovely autumn colours, spotting a large herd of deer. Our final village of the walk was Nuneham Courtney. Until 1760 the village stood to the west overlooking the Thames. Earl Harcourt decided to rebuild his house and, so as not to spoil his view of the river, moved the entire village to the Oxford Road. The villagers were, evidently, quite pleased as they now had nice new, dry houses! As we scuffed our way through the fallen leaves our thoughts turned to The Seven Stars where lunch awaited. We were greeted with a lovely fire and welcoming, glowing candles.

Grateful for the sun on our faces and a blue sky above our heads, we left Pangbourne to soon climb through pleasant woodland with orange leaves at our feet. At the top of our climb we paused a while to lean on a gate. A flock of sheep grazed in their peaceful field with a backdrop of far-reaching views. Upon



reaching the grounds of Pangbourne College we stood in 2 minutes silence of remembrance on this 11th day of the 11th month. Pensively we made our way to the Falkland Memorial Chapel, opened by the Queen in 2000 to commemorate the lives and sacrifice of those who died in the South Atlantic in 1982. Firstly we explored outside the Chapel, its shape reminiscent of a ship, or hands cupped in prayer. Surrounded by billowing plants and grasses, indigenous to The Falklands, we felt the sense of protection provided by The Memorial Garden as we sat in the heart of the circle with water cascading over a relief map of the Falklands carved on slate. We admired the bronze Memorial Sculpture, three enormous, life-sized, albatrosses, sculpted by Mark

Goreth, a veteran of the campaign. They *fly* to the side of the Chapel and Mark believes they depict the courage, endurance and fragility of the campaign, and also the island's past, present and future. Poignantly we stood behind the Chapel beside the Memorial Cairn, a mound of stones constructed using 255 stones brought back from the Falklands – one for each serviceman whose life was lost in the conflict. As we entered the Chapel we were faced with their names carved on wall-mounted plaques. Kneelers have been lovingly made for each seat and 258 feature the names of those who died – 255 servicemen and 3 islanders. *Just to See His Name* on the cover of a book caused our thoughts to focus on the quote, which had ended our 2-minute silence. "When the thunder

of the guns was finally stilled in and around the Falkland Islands on 14 June 1982, 258 families were left to count the terrible cost." We stood humbly in front of the magnificent Memorial Window – the Falkland Islands within Christ's Cross, surrounded by a sea in vibrant shades of blue, green, yellow and grey. Outside, the sunshine seemed all the more sweeter as we dropped down to Tidmarsh to join the footpath beside the Pang to return to Pangbourne.

Week by week we return inspired by the beautiful scenery we have witnessed on our walks. Anne, one of our original Pathfinders, is sadly losing her sight. Now, with the help of her young Guide Dog, Wilma, she is able to get back to walking in the countryside. Unfortunately the glory of the autumn colours, the sun glistening on a river, the gracefulness of a Red Kite in flight, and a trillion other delights that we enjoy, Anne is no longer able to see for herself. As a member of Reading Association for the Blind, Anne is able to take advantage of an initiative, which provides *Walking Partners*. The Partner becomes the eyes of a blind person, describing the scenery during a walk. We chose this marvellous initiative as our charity for this year's Pathfinder Charity Walk and we were pleased to welcome Anne and Wilma to join us. Beginning at Theale, we joined the Kennet & Avon Canal and followed it closely on its varied way between lakes, through a meadow, and in and out of trees. We took a break in the garden of the Aldermaston Visitor Centre before reaching Woolhampton. From here we returned to Theale by train which, conveniently, runs parallel to the canal. Member's donations amounted to over £300, which we hope will help maintain *Walking Partners* for people such as Anne.



We end the term in festive mood with a Turkey and Tinsel walk, which will end with a Christmas lunch at a garden centre with a chance to browse in their Christmas Shop. Then we will reflect on a wonderful year of village walks after a Winter Wonderland Walk in our own village. We will gather in the church hall for a shared lunch before being entertained by some of our talented members, ending with a Christmas singalong, led by the *Pathfinders Choir!*

2009 is our Tenth Birthday Year and our walks will be our chosen favourites of the past ten years of walking. Any ladies wishing to join us are welcome to contact me.

Meanwhile, from myself and all the ladies of Purley Pathfinders, we send best wishes for a Happy Christmas and a Healthy New Year!

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

PROJECT PURLEY

OCTOBER MEETING

Dr Andrew Hutt came to talk to members of Project Purley plus a smattering of invited guests on Friday evening, 17 October. This was his second visit in three years, his first topic having been *Dovecotes*. On this occasion the title was to be *Rituals, Society and Power in and around Iron Age Berkshire*. Despite the wordiness of that title, Dr Hutt's talk was, as before, clear, precise, carefully structured, neatly illustrated and accurately summarised so that his audience had no excuse for not understanding an apparently complex subject.

He began by explaining that the earliest Iron Age dated from 800-600 BC and the latest Iron Age from 25 BC to AD 43-80. Archaeological evidence tells us about the kind of rituals that took place, and which Dr Hutt stated may find their modern day equivalent in the chanting which happens at football matches for example.

Even before the Iron Age, rituals in the Bronze Age concentrated on reverence for the Sun as a male icon, and the Moon as a female equivalent, with swords and metalwork being deposited in riverbeds to ensure safe passage to another world. Similarly Iron Age rituals were used to implore the intervention of the gods and offer solace to families. Iron Age families lived in small groups of one or two round houses, and after death, bodies and bones were deposited on settlement boundaries in the belief that reverence for ancestors was a source of protection for the living. Few actual burials took place, as many bodies were defleshed by scavenging birds and animals.

In the Middle Iron Age the ritual rebuilding of homes led to the establishment of larger communities centred around a hill fort, and burials became more frequent and also more visible. Many pits have been found in and around Berkshire, which contain not only human bones, often placed in ritualised patterns, but also include the bones of animals such as dogs, ponies and sheep which had also been interred.

The Late Bronze Age saw burial sites based on the location of *temples*, such as the one at Heathrow, away from settlements. Artefacts like helmets, shields and body armour were deposited in the Thames, and it seems from archive material that the influence of the Druids – as described by Caesar and Pliny was now increasing. There were now three principal gods to be worshipped – Mercury, Jupiter and Esus, the fertility god.

So Dr Hutt's summary explained to us that, in the Early Iron Age, burials and rituals took place at settlement level, in the Middle Iron Age they were community affairs, and in the Late Iron Age they were centrally organised by Druids.

The second half of our speaker's talk concentrated on the development of society and power in the Berkshire area. Much of the archaeological evidence for this comes from the finds of Iron Age pottery and coinage. In the Bronze and Early Iron Ages pottery was widely distributed around Poole Harbour, and social groups were spreading up towards and through Wessex. The Upper Ock community

included hill fort settlements at Ramshill, Segsbury and Uffington, where the cutting of the White Horse in the hillside is an obvious example of community spirit and power.

The River Kennet was a major social boundary and continued to be so during the Middle Iron Age when coinage became more prevalent as it spread from the Continent. Caesar's invasion in 55 BC was inconsequential, as his ships were driven back by storms and his soldiers withdraw, but his second invasion a year later in 54 BC, had a more profound effect.

This time he landed with five legions and four cavalry units, leaving three legions back at base in Gaul. His men took many Obsides (Iron Age tribal elders) as hostages, transporting them to Rome, where they were taught Roman culture and values, then returned to England to spread Roman influence as leaders of their tribes. In Berkshire this resulted in tribes developing, from 35 BC onwards, oppida or small towns such as Silchester, Dorchester, Abingdon and Forest Hills, all with the purpose of controlling areas of land. British gold coins from that era have Roman images showing the increasing status of the invaders. However maps showing the distribution of coins and the aspirations of tribes to increase their territorial boundaries show that much of the land was disputed.

Yet again Dr Hutt summarised his research by telling us that, in the Late Bronze and Early Iron Ages people in small communities worked together to create hillforts, in the Middle Iron Age hillforts were rebuilt rather than abandoned, so improving social cohesion and power, then in the Late Iron Age there was a social separation between the druids as ritual leaders, and the secular elite which had been strongly influenced by the Romans.

PURLEY PLAYERS

PRESENT

SLEEPING BEAUTY

A pantomime by Doreen Moger

Friday 30 January 2009 at 7.30pm
Saturday 31 January 2009 at 2.30 and 7.30pm

At The Barn – Purley on Thames - Refreshments available

Tickets £8 and £6 (concessions)

Available from Suzanne Harper 941 5244 and Mike Adnett 962 5760

There was warm applause and also several questions for our speaker, despite a lower than usual attendance of just twenty-five on an admittedly cold evening. Those members who stayed away missed a treat. Dr Hutt had given us a fascinating insight into a serious archaeological concept in a down to earth manner.

David Downs

NOVEMBER MEETING

On Friday 21 November Project Purley were entertained with a talk by Jill Franklin about Cross Lane Fruit Farm whose products are usually on sale at the Farmers Market at the Barn on the second Saturday of the month.

Cross Lanes Fruit Farm lies to the north of Mapledurham House, at 450 feet elevation. The original Mapledurham House was built in 1132 and the estate is mentioned in the Domesday Book, but the fruit farm was created in 1948. In the early 1900s a tract of land adjoining the Cane End Estate, lying within the foothills of the Chilterns, exchanged hands reputedly through a gambling debt and remained undeveloped until Mr John Belcher, a local builder, purchased the land, built a small two roomed house and planted a small orchard, later adding a third room to the property for apple storage. His motivation for this development was a Government initiative to grow more fruit, as a result of food shortage at the aftermath of the War. The soil on the Chilterns was poor, but they discovered between the caps of the hills, chalk, clay and flint deposits more suited for fruit trees, where in wet years the drainage would be better, and yet in periods of hot droughts, the clay content of the soil could retain water. The owners found that during these trying and variable conditions, no fruit tree was lost, by comparison to losses sustained by other orchards lying in more fertile sandy soil.

Many orchards similar to that at Mapledurham were created after the war, and it was found that 25 acres or more could just sustain a family. In those earlier years, such orchards produced 85% of their crop as Cox's Orange Pippin, however apples required cross fertilisation with other varieties and thus it was usual to interplant with such trees as Bramley or Worcester Pearmain, and with soft fruit such as blackcurrant and raspberries, when all the picking was done by hand. Soft fruit planting however became impractical, when mechanisation was later introduced.

After just two or three years, Mr Belcher passed away, and Mr Harrison, a coffee planter from Brazil, purchased the 25 acre orchard, and later still, in 1962, the orchard passed to Roger Chapman, an auctioneer who had imported the first Charolay and Simontal bulls to the UK for breeding, and who subsequently became Chairman of the Newbury Show.

Mr and Mrs Franklin, the present owners, purchased Cross Lane Fruit Farm in 1977, moving from their home in London, when a change of lifestyle was necessary through recession. They had no knowledge of fruit farming whatsoever, but saw an opportunity for a country life away from the city, and possible help with the advent of Britain's entry into the European Union. After the disappointment of one orchard sale at Chapel Row falling through, in

November 1977, their offer for Cross Lanes Fruit Farm was accepted, and they moved their home into the cramped and cold conditions of the small house. One great piece of good fortune occurred, when the two local ladies who had carried out pruning for many years for the previous owner, offered their services, and remained with the Franklins for many years.

In the late '70s and early '80s many small shopkeepers, especially greengrocers, became customers of the fruit farm, but their numbers declined rapidly with the emergence of supermarkets, who were only interested in varieties such as Golden Delicious (Golden Disaster in Jill's word), which crops 4 times greater, is very sweet in flavour, and which subsequently swept the market to the detriment of varieties such as Cox's Orange Pippin. During the last 20 years, the number of orchards in the UK has declined from 2000 to less than 400. Today, orchards such as Cross Lines survive, by producing fine varieties of apples, which are sold to the public direct and particularly through Farmers' Markets, which cause concern to the supermarkets. The Franklins grow and sell no less than 46 different varieties of apple, extending the selling season by producing early, mid and late-season varieties. Amongst these are: Cox's Orange Pippin – in 4 sizes, Ribstone Pippin – the original prior to Cox's, Gloster 69 – polished, sweet, juicy, crisp, Blenheim Orange, Spartan-American/scented/white flesh and can be stored in the refrigerator, Falstaff – a modern variety with a citrus flavour, Jester – similar to Worcester Pearmain, Gala – a variety adopted by supermarket and internationally popular, Pink Lady (coming into fashion) and Sunset – similar to Cox's but sweeter.

Cross Lanes Fruit Farm is open Wednesday to Sunday, 10am to 6pm from the end of August to January. They have a website and can be emailed, and their telephone number is 972 3167.

Tony Trendle

The December meeting of Project Purley will be our Christmas Party, which is for members only. The next open meeting will be in the Barn on Friday, 16 January when everyone is invited to bring along a piece of childhood memorabilia and be prepared to talk for a few minutes about it and the memories it evokes.

PARISH MAGAZINE DISTRIBUTORS...

We need some more distributors, either for door-to-door deliveries or to take larger bundles to those who do the deliveries. If you can help, please contact Steven Corrigan on 945 1895.

... AND DECEMBER DEADLINE

Would contributors please note the earlier copy deadline this month, which will allow me to eat my Christmas lunch safe in the knowledge that the magazine has been completed.

*Thanks,
Editor*

Pangbourne Police Area Neighbourhood News

If a vehicle is being used in a manner which causes alarm, distress or annoyance, or being driven in a manner which amounts to careless or inconsiderate driving the Police have powers to seize it in certain circumstances. I have used this power on numerous occasions in the



Pangbourne Neighbourhood and would ask you to report any such incidents.

The PCSO's are now in possession of an engraving kit. This can be used for putting post codes and names on bicycles and other property, so if stolen they can be returned to the owner. It is surprising the amount of property we have handed in to us that never goes back to its rightful owner. It can also hinder a criminal investigation when we can't trace the owner. If you can bring your property to Pangbourne Police Station or are part of a club or society that you feel would benefit from this service please contact PCSO Sue Nix.

UPCOMING PUBLIC MEETINGS

On 14 December PCSO Sue NIX will be in the mobile police station at the Greyhound Public House, Tidmarsh from 9am to 10am. Outside Streatley Primary School from 10.30am to 11.30am and at Ashampstead village green from 12pm to 1pm if you would like to talk to her about any issues you have. Sue will also be at Pangbourne Library from 11am to 12pm on 12 December if you would like to speak to her. On the 11 December Sue and other PCSO's will be carrying out a door knock during the evening in Simons Close, Purley for residents to raise any issues they have in the area.

Speeding in Upper Basildon is a priority for your local Neighbourhood Action Group and I and other members of the Neighbourhood Police Team based at Pangbourne Police Station have been carrying out enforcement on the Pangbourne Road to catch any offending motorists. It is surprising the number of people who state they didn't know what speed they were doing, or what the speed limit is.



HOW TO CONTACT US

Telephone – 0845 8 505 505 (non emergency)

Website:

http://www.thamesvalley.police.uk/bcu/berkshire_west/local-police-areas/neighbourhoods/Pangbourne

includes details of forthcoming public engagements.

LETTERS

Two more letters about the buses this month, but with a slightly different slant!

There are many more people in Purley Parish who rely on the 16 bus than just those who claim inconvenience as a result of the withdrawal of the stop at the Post Office – for example those such as myself and my wife who live on the eastern fringes.

The fact is that when the 16 service was introduced it was totally unreliable, often seriously delayed and sometimes even cancelled thus causing severe disruption, uncertainty and inconvenience throughout the day to those at this end of the parish (and, of course, to the many other passengers from other parishes).

Since the service has ceased to call at the Post Office timing has improved considerably to the point where the No 16 is at last reliable. Traffic along the Oxford road has not altered in the interim and one can only conclude that the cause of the previous problem lay elsewhere.

Finally, the suggestion by one correspondent to run a twice-hourly service from Bourne Road into Reading is just daft, as that would reduce the frequency for all those, both in and outside Purley parish, who live on the Knowsley Road/Long Lane/Dark Lane/Overdown Road loop.

It is indeed an awkward problem that has arisen, but attempting to solve it by creating a more serious one for a greater number of people is not the way forward. There is, unfortunately, rather more to Purley parish and the No 16 bus than just the Post Office stop.

M J McDonald

Has Purley forgotten John Chapman and how hard he worked to get the village a good bus service to our nearest town centre and railway station? Thank you John. We now enjoy the excellent service that Reading Buses gives us.

E Brenchley

UNTIL NEXT TIME...



**Merry Christmas
and
A Happy New Year
to all our readers
contributors and distributors
from
Purley Parish News**