

ST. MARY'S CHURCH - PURLEY ON THAMES

**

SUNDAY SERVICES

9.30 a.m. First Worship - An informal service including All Age Teaching (creche provided)

11.15 a.m. Parish Communion

6.30 p.m. Evening Worship

RECTOR Rev. Roger B. Howell,
The Rectory,
1 Westridge Avenue,
Purley on Thames
Tel: 417727

CURATE Rev. Brendan Bailey,
10 Knowsley Road,
Tilehurst
Tel: 451411

READERS Jean Rothery Wally Watkivs
Tel: 843625 Tel: 426170

CHURCHWARDENS Mary Barrett David Jordan
Tel: 842166 Tel: 415994

CHURCH ADMINISTRATOR

Jackie Benstead
Tel: 429116

CHURCH HIRINGS

Liane Southam
Tel: 428243

BAPTISMS Enquiries about baptism should be made to the Rector (417727)

WEDDINGS Enquiries about weddings should be made to Jackie Benstead (429116)

FUNERALS Enquiries about funerals should be made to the Rector (417727)

Dear Friends,

"All I want for Christmas is"

After a long and Mediterranean summer, I am aware that Autumn has suddenly surprised us with leaves turning many colours and waking up to mists and frost. With such a glorious year, it has been very easy to forget to prepare for the arrival of the change in weather. We have left many of our bedding plants, reluctant to dig them up while still in full bloom.

We spend so much of our time being concerned with what is happening in our lives here and now that we are unprepared for the things which lie ahead. I am as liable to this as anyone else.

It can often be like this when it comes to our preparations for Christmas. It seems to me that no sooner are the school holidays over than the shops start selling Christmas cards and trees. From then until Christmas Day the single focus is the things which we need to buy to make our Christmas special. The barrage of adverts on television and in the newspapers is enough to overwhelm the most determined shop-a-holic. Everything would appear to conspire to divert our attention from the real events of that first

Christmas Day.

I hope that I don't sound like a kill-joy. I am thoroughly looking forward to Christmas and all the excitement of buying presents for friends and family. I relish the prospect of turkey and all the trimmings. But it is all too easy to be caught up in the practical planning for Christmas and to forget what we are celebrating.

"Behold a virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and he shall be called Emmanuel, which means God is with us." (Isaiah 7:14)

The message of Christmas is that God did not stay remote and far off. Rather, God cared about each one of us so much that he came and lived among us. God was so keen to be part of our lives that he chose Mary, a young girl of about 15 years old to give birth to his son, Jesus. Thus the Creator God became a human being, living and working on earth through his son Jesus. I'm sure you remember the story of the child born in the stable at Bethlehem. The child was so special that shepherds and wise men came to worship him. Even the angels left heaven to give glory to God.

*"Glory to God in the highest! Peace, Goodwill towards all people!"
(Luke 2:14)*

Many of you will be reading this in the first few days of December, and perhaps at the same time starting to open the doors on Advent calendars. Perhaps you could make use of some of the time between now and Christmas to think of what God means to you. It may be that you haven't thought much about God since you were an excited youngster waiting for Christmas to come. It may be that you are aware that God is always with you in all that you do. Whatever your experience, spend a few moments thinking about how much **God cares for you**. However odd that thought may be, God cared enough about **you** to share your life as a human being and to experience the things that you live through each day.

If you have an Advent calendar, perhaps when you open the door each day you could spend a few moments thinking of the meaning of Jesus's birth for you. I promise that if you do consider this seriously, then this Christmas will become extra special for you. If you come to realise just what Jesus did for you by his life and death, then you will be well on the way to receiving the best possible Christmas present you could imagine. Not a new toy or new clothes, but a **NEW LIFE IN CHRIST!**

With my love and best wishes this Christmas,

THE LUNCH POT

This term has seen Lunch Pot very busy with regular and many new customers enjoying an appetising lunch. We've been serving delicious homemade soup, jacket potatoes, filled rolls, cakes, crisps and ice cream, but many customers admit to coming to Lunch Pot for a good natter!

If you haven't given us a try yet, or it has been a while since you have, we'd love to see you. We're open every Thursday, 12 noon - 1.00 p.m., in the Church (last one this term is 14th December when we'll be serving festive food). Bring your friends or come to make new ones. We welcome all age groups. The toys keep youngsters amused after their meal so Mum can enjoy her cup of tea!

Look forward to seeing you.

Nicki Woodward

P.S. Anyone who could help once every couple of months for about one and a half hours, please ring 413197, or see Nicki at Lunch Pot.

PURLEY HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY

Dates for next year's diary:

17 January "Pollination of Plants" by Dr. Michael Keith-Lucas

21 February AGM followed by "Canadian Rockies" with Mr. V. Scott

20 March "The Scented Garden" by Rosemary Campbell-Preston

17 April To be advised

All the events take place at 8.00 p.m. (except the AGM which begins at 7.45 p.m.) at Purley Memorial Hall.

The Trading Store is now closed for the winter months. It re-opens on Saturday, 3rd February 1996.

May I wish all our members a very happy Christmas and a prosperous New Year.

If you have any queries about the Society, I can be contacted on 624457.

Anne Stockley,

WOMEN'S INSTITUTE

At the November meeting Mrs. Jacqueline Walmsley demonstrated a selection of fresh flower and greenery arrangements suitable for Christmas, using very good and unusual foliage, some of it highly aromatic. She also had clove pomanders and dried flower arrangements, and taught us how to make dried roses. Very generously she then allowed us to raffle her works of art, and people carried off great floral trophies, to the substantial benefit of The Funds!

There was a successful Christmas Stall; a very good selection, in this extraordinary year, of Flowers of the Month, with Miss Pryor's viburnum first, and Mrs. Watts' delphinium and Mrs. I. Smith's chrysanthemum tied second; and some rather modest Christmas Decorations in the Competition, won by Sylvia Conquest, with Sybil Pryor second.

Plans were polished for the Christmas dinner, reminders given for the Christmas party arrangements, and help provided for the Oxfam shop.

Our next meeting will be the Christmas party, on Wednesday 13th December, 7.30 p.m. at the Memorial Hall - entrance £1, guests £2. Bring plate, glass, delicious finger food, and a little present for the bran tub (£1.50 at most) and one for your guest. I wonder what the entertainment will be?!

Sybil Pryor

"TEA DANCES"

The tea dances at Pangbourne Working Men's Club and Institute continue to take place every two weeks. Rosewood Hall, where the dances are held, was recently refurbished and is well appointed with comfortable seating, mellow lighting, good dance floor etc., all lending itself to the ideal setting for a tea dance.

Dancing is to the live music of "NIGHT SCENE". You need not be a 'dancer' to come in and enjoy a chat with a cup of tea or coffee and biscuit and the tasteful music and company.

The dances are held on alternate Tuesdays from 3.00 till 5.30 p.m. and are booked ahead on the 12th December and on through the Winter.

The cost is £2.50. Enquiries to 421000. A. Cullen

DISTRICT NOTES

There will be a few minor changes to the timetable of the No. 38 bus on Sundays from 4th December. Most buses will run a few minutes later than at present.

It now seems unlikely that there will be elections for the unitary Newbury Authority next May owing to the uncertainties caused by the County Council's court actions. As they are also refusing to co-operate on any matter to do with re-organisation, it makes it difficult to predict what is going to happen.

As from next year, there will be a collection of waste paper as well as the refuse service. The new scheme is being introduced in phases and Purley is in Phase 2 starting in February. Householders will be issued with a plastic box in which to put newspapers and magazines which will be collected fortnightly alongside the wheelie bins. A new paper mill has just been built in Aylesford in Kent which uses 100% re-cycled paper and this will give us the chance to improve our waste re-cycling ratio to around 14 - 17%. The Sports and Social Club are also collecting newspapers so if you do have any then why not take them up to the Beech Road Recreation Ground and dump them in the skip provided.

The Government have set Councils a stiff target for the proportion of household waste that is re-cycled and I expect Newbury to be able to achieve and even exceed the national target of 25% without the need to further separate waste at source which is both unreliable and a nuisance for householders, as well as being very expensive to collect. As an incentive, a land-fill tax is being introduced which will make it much more economic to reduce the amount of waste to be disposed of. At the moment Newbury has to deal with about 45,000 tons of refuse each year and anything we can do to reduce the amount of waste and hence the cost of disposal will be welcomed. The County Council are setting up a Material Reclamation Facility (MRF) at Smallmead and Newbury aims to send up to 10,000 tons a year to that plant which it is claimed will achieve up to 85% recycling.

Following the recent PPPOA AGM, I got the Council's Environmental Health Officers to look into the condition of 2 Colyton Way and, as a result, the owner has taken action to tidy up the site. Personally I would like to see the shack removed but the owner does have the right to repair it and leave it where it stands.

You may have noticed some new street signs appearing around the village, especially at the entrance to cul-de-sacs where we now have to put signs with a little red 'T'. There are lots more to come as I got in early with my list thanks to all of you who made suggestions.

Personally I was rather disappointed at the over-reaction of many people to the Parish Council's proposals to extend the graveyard. The proposals would have resulted in the loss of some self-seeded sycamore trees and a few laurel bushes and it is doubtful whether anyone would have been able to notice much of a difference even from the end of St. Mary's Avenue. Much of the information supplied in leaflets which were put about was wildly exaggerated and made misleading claims as to both the effect and the intent of the proposals.

Following the consultation I started in the May magazine about the siting of the bus terminus on the river estate, it was quite clear that the proposal to site it opposite the shop was universally condemned. The balance of opinion favoured the site adjacent to the pumping station and Reading Buses are looking into this with the police and the County Council.

Now that the leaves are beginning to fall, it is time to check whether your bushes and trees are obstructing people on the footpath. You should clear back to a height of at least seven or eight feet at your property line and be especially careful of any sawn off branches at eye level.

The Council has decided, in principle, to split each of the area planning committees into two. The effect will be that all our local planning applications will be heard at Calcot instead of alternating with Thatcham and we will not have to sit listening to applications from the Thatcham area before ours are heard. Hopefully this will come into action from next May.

John Chapman,
Newbury District Councillor, Purley Ward

FOR SALE

Ideal Christmas present - Sega Master System in mint condition. Still boxed, 2 controllers and 9 games.

£45.00 - Tel: 844223

CLASSIC ADDRESS

Walking along Addington Road in Reading, just near the Royal Berkshire Hospital car park, I noticed a house nameplate. Quite a splendid job, varnished wood with the name "Hamlet" printed in Gothic characters. I wondered why it should be named after Shakespeare's prince, until I saw, below, the house number - '2b'!

Wonderful! It made my morning. Peter Brown

LONG LANE PRIMARY SCHOOL

As I write this, the school is winding itself up ready for all the Christmas activities, some of which are specific to our school and others will involve working with other local schools.

A choir of children from this school are joining with other local schools to perform "Ocean World" at the Hexagon at the end of November. This major choral work will be enjoyed by a packed audience of parents and teachers. The Berkshire Young Musicians Trust have co-ordinated this exciting venture.

This year we are, again, holding a major production which will be put on by children in junior classes. Each class will contribute a part of the performance which has a central plot of a government proposal to close all local schools and build a "mega" school on the site of Elm Park - in the interests of efficiency. Inspectors are sent to each school to assess its performance and are persuaded by the quality and variety of work going on (depicted by each class) that local schools are worth supporting.

Children in our infant classes are going to perform the Russian tale of Babushka as part of our Nativity/Carol Service. The carols will be supported by our 30-strong school orchestra which has grown in number again this year and boasts an impressive range of instruments.

We are expecting a packed hall at each of the performances and will again be raising funds for "Feed the Children" and the school to help pay for the modular staging system that has been bought for the school by its Association. The new staging system allows for greater flexibility in our performances and can be stored in a small area.

By the time you read this, our School Association will have held its Christmas Fair which we hope will raise money for the staging system mentioned above.

In an age of seemingly increasing commercialisation, we are keen at this school to reinforce children's awareness of the importance to Christians of this time of year and my assemblies in December will focus on advent and preparing for the Christ child.

All at Long Lane wish you a Happy and hopefully Peaceful Christmas.

A.T. Kuhles, Headteacher

PANGBOURNE PRIMARY SCHOOL

The new school year is now well under way, with Christmas music and plays now being enthusiastically rehearsed.

As always, we received tremendous support for the Save the Children Fund Christmas Fayre, and the Harvest Sale, which will have raised a lot of much needed money for Save the Children Fund which more than ever before deserves our support. Thank you one and all for your help and for turning out in such numbers for our bonfire and fireworks party organised by the P.T.A. As usual, the P.T.A. provided a magnificently impressive, but above all, safe display with traditional and much appreciated hot food on such a cold night.

We are also very grateful indeed to the Pangbourne Village Fete Committee who have given us a good start to our fund-raising for the Year 6 visit to France next Spring. The children themselves are also helping to earn money for the trip by arranging Bring and Buy Sales and growing plants. However, we still need help to subsidise this valuable excursion into Europe. If you know of anyone who could help us to raise the money we so desperately need, please do contact the school. We need your help.

Pam Hillier-Brook, Headteacher

PURLEY MEMORIAL HALL ACTIVITIES FOR THE COMING MONTH

7th Dec.	2.15 - 4.00 p.m.	Health Visitor Clinic
13th Dec.	7.30 p.m.	Women's Institute
15th & 16th Dec.	8.00 p.m.	Thames Vale Singers Concert - Prelude to Christmas
21st Jan. '96	2.15 - 4.00 p.m.	Health Visitor Clinic

Upholstery classes are held in the Annexe on Thursday evenings, 7.30 - 9.30 p.m. Ring 843740 for details. **New Diet and Keep Fit class on Fridays 10.00 - 11.30 a.m.**

Each week during term time, Monday to Thursday, 9.15 - 11.45 a.m. : Purley Pre-School Playgroup. For further details, please telephone Sue Slade on 410778 or call in during one of the sessions.

The Committee wish everyone a very Happy Christmas break and all the best for the New Year.

Mrs. J.E. Hutchings, Hon Secretary (843809)

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Dear Editor,

Re: Graveyard Controversy

How heartily do I endorse the views expressed by Richard J.W. Hall in your November issue. (Notwithstanding our Rector's scaremongering/clarification in the same issue).

Well done Beenham, black mark Purley, I say - for what is the point of local democracy when our PCC in general or Messrs. Marshall and Chapman in particular arrogantly pay no heed to the overwhelming views and protests of their local constituents.

Please note that Woodley Council has a similar problem and are willing to purchase land in Sonning to cater for future demands for burials.

Yours faithfully,
Trevor J. Cotton

THE ARTHRITIS & RHEUMATISM COUNCIL

£550 was raised at our coffee morning and Bring and Buy Sale and the stall at the Pangbourne Christmas Market. This year our branch has sent £3,400 to headquarters for Research.

A wheelchair is available on short term loan from Mr. & Mrs. Bolam, tel. 421020. Donations to Arthritis Research or Feed the Children.

St. Mary's Church has toilet facilities for the disabled - people with disabilities will be welcome at the Christmas services and throughout the year.

Anne Bolam

ROTARY CLUB OF PANGBOURNE

The Rotary Club of Pangbourne staged its fifth mountain bike challenge event at Ufton Nervet and raised about £2,000 for The Wessex Children's Hospice and youth and future senior citizens events.

A record number of 329 riders from six counties as well as London took part. They were segregated into eight different categories ranging from under eleven year old entrants to experts. A number of lady riders also took part.

The site for the challenge was made available by Mr. David Hannington and Englefield Estates and sponsorship was provided by Mountain High.

Pangbourne Rotary plan to stage a similar event at Rushall Manor Farm, Bradfield on 12th May 1996.

The regular programme of speakers on a wide variety of topics continued. Notable among them was Mrs. Ruth Mott who featured in the BBC television series "The Victorian Kitchen" and "The Wartime Kitchen and Garden". She proved to be a very popular speaker when over 40 Rotarians, their wives and other guests met at The George, Pangbourne.

Mrs. Mott held the attention of the audience with delightful stories of her years in service and, of course, the making of the TV series. Her talk was humorous and, despite at times having had to work in hard conditions, she appears to have thoroughly enjoyed herself.

The Club meets at The George, Pangbourne every Monday evening and further details can be obtained from the Secretary, Harry Lloyd, on 842820.

******* NOTE TO ALL PURLEY PARISH NEWS
CONTRIBUTORS *******

**Please note that the copy date for the January 1996 issue is
SATURDAY, 9th DECEMBER.**

SAVE THE CHILDREN FUND

Save the Children Fund Autumn Fair

On Saturday, 14th October, Pangbourne and District Branch of Save the Children Fund held its annual Autumn Fair at Pangbourne Primary School. It was a successful morning, made more enjoyable by some live music. The sale of catalogue goods, Christmas cards and wrapping paper, cakes, white elephant etc. raised approximately £2,200. Our thanks go to Mrs. Hillier-Brook and her staff for their unfailing support and, of course, to all those who came and spent their money!

It may be of interest to our many loyal local supporters to know a little more about the way in which the money they contribute is spent. Save the Children is now 76 years old. During that time the policy of strengthening the infrastructure of the countries in which it works has proved remarkably successful. It is better to assist or instruct a village in how to build a well than to merely provide it with more buckets. It is better to train local nurses and health visitors than to supply expatriate helpers who only use the locals as interpreters. It is better to encourage the use of traditional crops than to provide a market for cash crops which cannot be used locally.

SCF does respond to immediate need in a way which strengthens people's capacity to face the future. Experience gained in the field over the years enables SCF to improve existing practices and restore essential health services. Through training consultancy and education programmes with schools, youth services and the public, it seeks to change opinions and influence decisions.

More and more of SCF's work in this country is with young people facing exceptional poverty and disadvantage. Sixteen year old "care leavers" are among this group. Immigrant groups are taught literacy and other skills, and playgroups are established in hospitals. Work with Gypsies endeavours to lessen the alienation of that group and to improve education and school attendance.

Of each pound given to SCF, 89p goes on work overseas and at home, 1p on information and education here, 8p goes on fundraising and publicity, and the remaining 2p is spent on administration. All activities are constantly reviewed to ensure that nothing is wasted or becomes unnecessary. The recent policy change on knitted blankets is an example of this. At the heart of all Save the Children's work are the rights of the child. These are always in the forefront of our activities.

PANGBOURNE & DISTRICT CARERS GROUP

Our Carers Group will soon be celebrating its Second Birthday; how quickly the time has gone. Behind one out of every five front doors there is a Carer. Because caring is a private thing, you may not realise how many people, in different circumstances, share similar needs, feelings and problems.

Carers are all ages; young people of school age through to people in their 90's. Some care for a few hours a week, others 24 hours a day, every day. Many care in their own homes; others call in on relatives or friends who could be just round the corner but might live miles away. Most get little or no help.

In all, there are estimated to be 83,000 Carers in Berkshire and nearly 7 million throughout the U.K. You aren't alone and you don't have to feel alone or fight alone. The Pangbourne and District Carers Group offers friendship, information and the chance to join with other Carers to get your collective voice heard and things improved for everyone. We also have meetings every two months when we try to get someone to speak to us on subjects of general interest. For instance, we have recently had a talk from a solicitor on the subject of Wills and making provision for dependants, a subject that causes concern for a lot of carers.

Our membership also includes people who have a personal or professional interest in our work and we value their support. If you would like to join our group, come to meetings or just receive our newsletters, please contact Anita Weare on 844348.

THE BARN YOUTH CLUB

Successful negotiations with representatives from Purley Scout group and Purley Parish Council have resulted in a new Youth Club starting at the Barn in Purley in the New Year on 14th January 1996 from 6.00 p.m. to 8.30 p.m. on a Sunday evening. This will be open to young people of all ages. A paid part-time youth worker is to be appointed (see page 25).

A meeting will be held at the Barn on Friday, 8th December, 8.00 p.m. We welcome everyone interested in supporting this exciting new project whether you are a parent, potential youth club member or volunteer, or just interested in finding out more about the project.

If you require further information, please contact Judy Lambley, Youth and Community Worker at the County River Centre, Pangbourne, tel: 843162.

December is here and I am sure we are all thinking ahead to Christmas Day. We all know the story of the baby Jesus very well. He was born in a manger in a stable. There was no room at the Inn. Despite this, the three Kings (Wise Men) came to that stable and offered their gifts of Gold, Frankincense and Myrrh to the baby Jesus who had nothing.

We thought that this gives a very good pointer to us for our theme for December. Why don't we give a gift to the children in Bosnia who have nothing? The suggested gift is: a pencil case, pencils (both coloured and lead), a rubber, a pencil sharpener etc. We understand not everybody can get out and buy these things, so please give me, Sheila Adnett (421194) or Mollie Bridge (426722) a ring and we will be very happy to collect a donation from you, however small, and buy a gift on your behalf. Alternatively, please put your gift in the usual box in the entrance hall to the Church in Purley. If you could spare the time, could you also wrap your gift and put a label "to a friend in Bosnia, With love from". Thank you.

Sheila Adnett

RECYCLING - HAVE YOU GONE GREEN?

We all know the National Lottery has been a success but it has resulted in falling income to charities. You can help to redress this trend by giving to charities this Christmas time. If you cannot give financially, then how about taking part in recycling.

In this area we have charity shops in Pangbourne, Tilehurst and Reading, and collecting skips at Tilehurst Station and supermarket car parks. The charity shops would be pleased to receive your gifts, be they small or large; of money, clothes, books and household items.

There are many ways you can help and how about supporting Causeway - working with people with learning disabilities. You can support Causeway by collecting used stamps and postcards and sending them to Stamps for Causes, 53 Primrose Close, Purley on Thames, Reading, Berkshire RG8 8DG. You may have your own ideas on how you can help support charities, not just now but throughout the year. You are needed and you can make that difference. Go for it.

Roger Darch

PANGBOURNE COLLEGE

Winter Production - Guys and Dolls

Wednesday 6th, Thursday 7th and Friday 8th December

Guys and Dolls is an everyday story of Broadway folk. Immortalised in the movie by Frank Sinatra, Marlon Brando and Jean Simmons, this Damon Runyon musical fable now hits the stage at Pangbourne's Drake Theatre. Pangbourne College's excellent Music Department under the guidance of Bob Barsby, whose orchestral and choral productions are well-known and much enjoyed by the community, has joined forces with the Drama Department ably directed by Paul Clarke - Pangbourne's Head of Drama and theatre professional.

Excellent departments attract serious pupil talent and the production affords a superb vehicle as Miss Adelaide for Sophie Chrichton, who joined the College only this term. The role of Sky Masterson, created so memorably on screen by Marlon Brando is ably played by Sixth Former Rupert Young, veteran of many Pangbourne productions. He plays against the incomparable Drummond Bowskill who steps into Frank Sinatra's shoes as Nathan Detroit. Polly Barsby demonstrates that talent runs in the family, by delivering a delicious performance as the demure Sarah Brown.

The script is a classic. A dissolute gang of New York gamblers need a venue for their illicit dice game. For the organiser, Nathan Detroit, the 'heat is on'. He must find \$1,000 by dawn. To get it, he bets partner in crime, Sky Masterson, that he cannot invite a girl of his choosing out to dinner. Sky agrees to the bet and Nathan chooses the strait-laced Sarah Brown of the Salvation Army 'Save a Soul' Mission. Much to Nathan's chagrin, Sky succeeds by promising Sarah fifteen sinners for the Mission's make or break evening meeting. Sarah is transported to Havana and has the evening of her life. Sky, ever the gentleman refuses to take advantage of a girl who has discovered cocktails and returns her safe and in love.

Meanwhile, Nathan has used the Mission for his dice game. Sarah feels used and turns her back on Sky. He honourably keeps his side of the bargain and wins the co-operation of 15 sinners in a dice game. Sarah finds him irresistible, Nathan marries his fiancée of 14 years. The two former gamblers become ardent members of the Mission band. Pure fantasy, but with such great numbers as 'Sit Down your Rockin' the Boat', 'I've Never Been in Love Before' and, of course, the great 'Guys and Dolls' it is a great evening of pure entertainment - comedy, dance and unforgettable music. Call Juliet Read-Wilson, Box Office, on 845081. Bookings are now being taken. Concessions available.

PURLEY C. OF E. INFANT SCHOOL

During the last year, Purley Infant School has developed close links with All Saints Infant School in Reading. Recently the staff from both schools attended an informative joint training day on information technology. The two schools are, in many ways, similar. Both are Church of England (controlled schools). They are very similar in size and age group.

As part of our Geography studies, the Year 2 children have exchanged schools for the day with All Saints children. The children compared the two surrounding areas and spent time in each other's school. All Saints children visited the lock, St. Mary's Church and looked at some of the interesting houses in Purley. Our children visited All Saints Church, a local park and completed a traffic census. This exchange provided real opportunities for the children to compare and contrast the areas in which they live.

Back at Purley School, the children have just completed their letters to Father Christmas. Rumour has it that he will be attending the Christmas Bazaar. Hopefully he will have time to write back as well as seeing to their requests. As I read through the letters, I am pleased to report that amongst the many requests for toys, children still remember to leave mince pies for Santa and carrots for the reindeer. They enquire after his health and ask him to remember other members of their family.

Christmas is always a special time at Purley. During the weeks leading up to the end of term, each child makes a book recording the birth of Jesus from the journey to Jerusalem to the visit of the three Kings. They learn carols for the nativity and enjoy telling their teachers how they intend to celebrate the big day. Our Christmas Play this year is "The Little Angel", a musical nativity. We will again be performing our play in St. Mary's Church, which always makes it rather special.

At the Christmas party we are having a performance of "Harry's Garden" from the Barking Dog Theatre Company. Harry's Garden aims both to entertain and educate. The audience follows the character of Harry as she transforms a rubbish dump into a prize winning garden. The children learn with Harry about the seasons, growth and wildlife. We hope this will be an enjoyable end to term.

If you wish to visit the school and see us at work or if you would like to put your child's name on our admissions list, please telephone 842384 for an appointment. Happy Christmas to you all from the staff and children at Purley C.E. Infant School.

Jeannette Goddard, Headteacher

FROM MY HISTORY NOTEBOOK

More About Purley School : Needlework and Knitting

A century ago, needlework played a large part in the curriculum of the girls of Purley School; the materials were supplied by either the Rector's or Major Storer's wife. From the age of 5 until they left school, the girls spent many afternoons sewing a variety of items: from a pocket handkerchief to towels or sheets - and even on one occasion a patchwork quilt. After completing their work, most girls received a cash prize from Major and Mrs. Storer, with sometimes an extra 6d of 1/- "for marking" or darning.

Between February and May 1878, the following items were made: for Major Storer, a nightshirt by Ellen Cox (aged thirteen)*, and day shirts by Louisa Simmonds (fourteen and a half), and Mary Bazeley (thirteen); for Mrs. Storer, chemises by Hetty Cox (nine and a half) and Annie Bazeley (nine and a half) and a nightdress by Alice Titcomb (fourteen and a half); Georgina Pocock (ten) made a frock, Fanny Kirk (nine) and Ellen Pocock (five) pinafores, and Lizzie Pocock (seven and a half) the pocket handkerchief. No prizes were given this year and one wonders why?

Eighteen months later, nine little girls received prizes of between 1/- and 3/6 - Georgina Pocock (now eleven) had made a best tablecloth for Mrs. Storer and was given 2/- plus 9d "extra for marking". The following year the prize values were increased to between 2/- to a total of 7/6; Georgina received 6/- this time, for an unspecified piece of "prize work".

By January 1883 the boys had evidently decided it was time to get in on the act which apparently caused some reaction from the girls, as the following extracts from the Log Book show:

"1 Jan - John Pocock (aged 10/12)** finished his scarf. Two more boys taught knitting this afternoon.

15 March - A pair of cuffs knitted by John Pocock stolen from the classroom.

16 March - (the Mistress) Spoke to the Rector of the theft.

2 April - Mrs. Storer discovered the theft of the cuffs and visited the school this afternoon - she was very much displeased with the choir girls for untruthfulness.

3 April - The Rector came into school this morning and also spoke to the choir girls about their untruthfulness.

4 April - John Pocock began his cuffs (?again?).

23 April - John Pocock finished his prize work.

3 July - (At Prizegiving) - "A reward of 1/- was given to John Pocock for knitting a pair of cuffs". (I wonder what he did with them?).

* Ages given in brackets are estimated from baptisms recorded in Purley Parish Registers.

** There were two John Pococks baptised in 1870 and 1872 and I do not know which one this was.

Jean Debney

(This article was first published in Purley Parish News in October 1981 and has been reproduced by kind permission of Jean Debney).

BERKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL, YOUTH AND COMMUNITY SERVICE VACANCY

Youth and Community Worker (Part-Time)

£83.26 per month (Qualified) £70.60 per month (Unqualified)

The Barn Youth Club, Purley on Thames

You will be part of a team based at the County River Centre co-ordinating the running of a 'new' open Youth Club working with young people aged 14 - 21 on Sunday evenings from 6.00 p.m. to 8.30 p.m.

Interest in young people and enthusiasm are essential. Ideally you should have some experience of youth work and some experience of managing a team of volunteers.

Berkshire County Council is an equal opportunities employer.

For further information about this post, please contact:

Judy Lambley, Youth and Community Worker, County River Centre,
Dolphin House, Whitchurch Road, Pangbourne RG8 7DA (Tel: 843162)

Closing date: 8th December 1995

THE TRIP OF A LIFETIME - THE LONDON TO SAIGON MOTOR CHALLENGE 1992 - PART 17

THURSDAY, 10TH SEPTEMBER 1992 - NO HOTEL - THE DESERT

The time is 8.00 a.m. and we are 5,700 miles from home. We didn't arrive at the hotel because of troubles with getting stuck in the sand and, when we came across a bridge which had been washed away, decided that it wasn't worth the risk dropping some 25 - 30 ft. down the side off the road into the dried up river bed and then up the other side in the pitch dark. We, therefore, camped the night.

Dust, dust and more dust in the car but dawn in the desert is a great compensation. 8.20 a.m. now and we hope we are well on our way.

Ronyang, an oasis village in the middle of the Taklamakan Desert. As we enter the village poplar lined with a rough road. A lady driving a bullock cart almost takes Stewart by surprise as she comes out of a side turning. As we leave Ronyang we see for the first time cotton pickers and also it is noticeable that as well as the usual donkey carts there is an occasional oxen.

The first 40 miles or so was fast over desert with some washboarding but 40 to 45 mph was possible. We then had a rude awakening as we went into the Altun Mountains. The road deteriorated and again for some miles we were on rock strewn river beds with the Mercedes bottoming badly and having to be towed on at least one occasion. Being towed out of the desert in sand is one thing because there is a reasonable chance it will be soft but being towed over rocks is another because of the damage it can cause.

The pass was absolutely beautiful and we met two men with a team of laden donkeys, presumably traders, and it is mind stopping to realise that this has been going on for thousands of years.

The temperature today varied from 35°C in the desert to 6°C. At 5.40 p.m. we are now travelling at a reasonable speed again, and still in the mountains. We have now done 112 miles and it looks as though we are getting to the end of the mountain area but still quite big hills ahead but dramatically we see the snowcapped tops of the Kunlun Mountains for the first time.

The washboarding was the worst we had had. We tried different methods, from planing it at 60 mph to riding the ridges of chippings in the middle of the road, to dropping down

to 15 mph.

Eventually we arrived in Magnai at about 9.30. We fuelled up and then there was a "rebellion" because we found that we had to drive another 90 km to the tents whilst there was a newly opened hotel within 200 yards of the petrol station.

David Camancho, our tour leader, who normally drives in the Saab which had had problems in the morning and consequently was going to be late leaving had asked the Chinese if he could travel in their front vehicle and they refused. When he arrived he blew a gasket and we all drove into the hotel forecourt and told the Chinese that was where we were staying. Which we did.

A modern hotel, had no water, had opened less than 6 months and obviously had not been touched since so some doors didn't shut, there were no bath plugs, lights didn't work but there was an attempt in some rooms of palatialness. We had Chinese rugs on our floor for example. The hotel contacted the Water Company who were 1 km away and eventually we got rusty water but it was cold.

There were a series of casualties due to water in the petrol and a number of people had to drain their tanks completely and start afresh, flushing out the fuel system which, of course, costs time.

(To be continued)

Stewart and Nan Scotchbrook

PURLEY PARISH NEWS - PUBLICATION DATES 1996

To enable contributors to ensure that copy reaches the editor on time each month, listed below are the publication dates for Purley Parish News during 1996.

<u>Issue</u>	<u>Publication Date</u>	<u>Issue</u>	<u>Publication Date</u>
January	6th January	February	3rd February
March	2nd March	April	6th April
May	4th May	June	2nd June
July	6th July	August	NO ISSUE
September	7th September	October	5th October
November	2nd November	December	30th November
January ('97)	4th January ('97)		

Please note that copy must reach the editor by the 15th of the previous month, with the exception of August, when there is no issue of the magazine, and January, when copy must arrive by the **9th December**.

Editor

PURLEY PARISH NEWS

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I welcome contributions from anyone to this magazine, particularly on local issues and events. Please note, however, I reserve the right to edit contributions to suit space availability.

Comments and opinions expressed in this magazine do not necessarily reflect the views of the P.C.C. of St. Mary's Church, Purley on Thames - sponsors of Purley Parish News.

This magazine is published on the first Saturday of each month (except August). Subscription Price £4.00 for the period January 1995 - March 1996 inclusive. If you are new to the area and would like to subscribe to Purley Parish News, please contact the Circulation Manager, Les Jamieson, on 412342.

NOTE TO ADVERTISERS:

Bookings and orders are now being accepted for advertising space in this magazine. New adverts will appear for one year starting from April 1996 and, as Purley Parish News is distributed to almost 1,000 homes in and around Purley on Thames, an extremely effective and low price exposure for commercial and private advertisers is available. Advertising space is priced at £36 per quarter page for one year. Space is available in full page, or half, quarter and even one-eighth of a page with pro-rata costs. Interested? To book your space, contact our Advertising Manager, Claire Pearson, on Pangbourne 843070. Space is limited - so don't delay!

This month's magazine is published on **Saturday, 2nd December 1995**. All copy for

the January issue must reach me by **9th DECEMBER** and the magazine will be published on **Saturday, 6th January 1996.**

Finally, may I thank you for supporting Purley Parish News for another year. On behalf of everyone involved in the publication of Purley Parish News, may I wish all readers a Happy and Peaceful Christmas.

Editor