

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,

A very happy New Year to you all!

Like me, I am sure many of you find it hard to believe that another year has come. Time seems to pass so quickly! Even at this early stage in 1996 you may have already been making plans for events later on in the year - visits, holidays and family celebrations. If we don't think about such things early on, the events - if they happen at all - overtake us and are less enjoyable than otherwise they might have been.

From time to time in the last twelve months, I have thought about the next millennium! Not that I want to wish the time away, but that I'd like to see a really big celebration in the parish - with many different people and organisations taking part. Whether celebrations take place in the year 2000, or perhaps more correctly in the following year, is a minor detail. What is important is that the celebrations are co-ordinated and that we can work together as a community.

I am aware, of course, that anything could happen between now and then, and it may well be rather premature to plan anything at this stage, but it would do no harm to begin thinking about it. We could make use of a number of different centres in the parish for different events: The Barn, Memorial Hall, Schools, Church etc. We could lay on a Carnival parade through some of our streets; or we could even have a grand river pageant - sharing it with Pangbourne!

There could be parish parties, exhibitions and many other activities. It would be encouraging if every parish organisation took part and perhaps this magazine could become a sort of clearing-house for ideas and suggestions over the next year. We could get together and produce a special edition for the millenium!

How about it? Get your thinking caps on and let's see what we can do together. We could have events spread throughout the year, or we could have a fortnight of celebrations.

SPECIAL SERVICES ON SUNDAY, 7th JANUARY

- | | |
|-------------------|---|
| 8.00 a.m. | Holy Communion |
| 10.00 a.m. | United Service at Denefield School (no service at St. Mary's) |
| 6.00 p.m. | Evening Service |

PARISH REGISTERS

Funerals

- | | |
|---------------|--|
| 30th October | Frank Mahoney, aged 65 years |
| 29th November | John Albert Sears, aged 79 years (cremation) |

SENIOR CITIZENS TEA PARTY

We shall be having our usual tea party for senior citizens on **Sunday, 21st January at 2.30 p.m. in the Church Hall.**

We send out personal invitations, so any names please given to the Rector can be sent.

PROJECT PURLEY

The next meeting of Project Purley will take place on 9th January 1996, at 8 p.m. Please note, the venue on this occasion will be 8 Huckleberry Close, Purley on Thames. Society member, Ben Viljoen will give a talk illustrated with slides, the subject of which will be Humphry Repton. Repton succeeded Capability Brown, and became the most prominent English landscape gardener of his day. Purley is fortunate in that he prepared one of his famous "Red Books" for the Lord of Purley Magna in the late 1700's. This talk will be a treat for all gardeners who love Purley.

On 10th November Leslie Cram from The Museum of Reading made a welcome return to tell us more about Reading Abbey. Standing on a spur of land between the Thames and the Kennet, the Abbey covered a 30-acre site and many of the properties in the area of the Abbey still follow the original boundary line.

Mr. Cram set out to discover what evidence of the Abbey remains on paper. By means of slides we were able to look at Speed's map of 1610, and the redrawn map of the civil war period of 1640-42, continuing through to the ordnance survey map of Reading dated 1879. We also saw slides of some very beautiful paintings and architectural sketches, and from these we were able to see what were the constant features, and not just artists licence. The Abbey has a fascination all of its own, and the evening went much too quickly. It is hoped that we will be able to continue with even more about the Abbey on another occasion.

Rita Denman
(Hon.Sec.)

THE WEDNESDAY CLUB

On Wednesday, 6th December the Wednesday Club held their Annual Christmas Lunch at the Beech Road Social and Sports Club premises. Members and guests enjoyed a festive meal, followed by an afternoon of varied entertainment, including the singing of Christmas Carols, led by Edna Bint with her piano accordion.

The Wednesday Club meets in very comfortable surroundings at the Beech Road Social and Sports Club every other Wednesday. The first meeting of the New Year will be on January 17th. Senior Citizens are welcome to join us to meet other Purley folk for a chat, and tea and biscuits in a very relaxed atmosphere.

For details of activities and membership, please ring Rita Denman on 844682.

WOMEN'S INSTITUTE

Our Christmas Party was not until after the magazine went to press, so non-members will have to wait to find out what happened to the parrot (what parrot? Ed).

The next meeting, on Wednesday 10th January 1996, 7.30 p.m. in the Memorial Hall will be an evening for Board Games - if you have a good, not too lengthy one, bring it! Also, re-wrap your unwanted Christmas gifts and bring them to surprise people at the Not So Silent Auction, and any good Cracker Jokes for the competition.

Happy New Year!

Sybil Pryor

PURLEY MEMORIAL HALL ACTIVITIES FOR THE COMING MONTH

10th Jan.	7.30 p.m.	Women's Institute
17th Jan.	8.00 p.m.	Horticultural Society General Meeting and Talk (Pollination of Plants by Dr. M. Keith-Lucas)
18th Jan.	2.15 - 4.00 p.m.	Health Visitor Clinic
1st Feb.	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.

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.

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

TEA DANCES

The Tea Dances are no longer held at the Pangbourne Working Men's Club. They now take place at **The Cotswold Sports Centre, Downs Way, Tilehurst** once per month from 1.30 p.m. until 3.30 p.m. The cost is £2.50.

DENEFIELD SCHOOL

National Mathematics Contest 1995

Each Year the Mathematical Association organises the National Mathematics Contest. The contest is aimed at 'A' Level students and brighter pupils in Year 11. Nation-wide, over 33,000 candidates from more than 850 schools and colleges entered this year's National Mathematics Contest on 23rd November.

The questions are answered by choosing the correct answer from the five given. The scoring system is four marks for correct answer and minus one for a wrong answer. There is no room for guesswork and high marks are exceedingly difficult to achieve. Only 66 candidates scored over 100, out of 125.

The list of prize winners reads like a 'Who's Who' of the top public schools; Westminster, Rugby, Eton, etc., so our pupils were in good company. Lee Bowell, who is in our Lower-sixth studying Pure Mathematics with Mechanics at 'A' Level, scored 80. He is the only pupil from a local school to be awarded a gold certificate.

Four others gained bronze certificates: Andrew Strong in Year 12, Stephen Philpott, Robert Dimmock and Tim French, all Year 13.

Due to his success in the National Mathematics Contest, Lee Bowell has been invited to take part in the British Mathematical Olympiad. The first round will be held on Wednesday, 17th January 1996.

Only 750 students in the UK are invited to participate. Lee is the first pupil from Denefield to be selected. We wish him every success.

Dave Evans

ENGLEFIELD GARDENS

Open every Monday throughout the year, plus Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday from

1st April - 30th June, 10.00 a.m. - 6.00 p.m. Entrance £2.00, children free.

LONG LANE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Due to the seasonal pressures on the Parish Magazine production team, I am writing this before the end of term and am conscious that, when you read this, Christmas may be just a bulge on the scales!

As I write this, however, we are in the throws of Christmas with productions, carol services and parties - phew! Our Christmas Fair was again extremely well supported and made a profit of £1,400 which will help to pay for the new modular staging system I mentioned in last month's article. My thanks go again to the School Association and all those who work so hard to raise money for our school. The Association has a full programme for '96 which includes the visit to school by a theatre group, a car treasure hunt, barn dance and summer fair.

Like many of you, I was deeply saddened by the murder of Mr. Lawrence, Headteacher of a London school, who died defending one of his pupils from attack by a gang of youths. We do live in troubled times and I believe that, in many respects, schools suffer from the failings of society. As I have listened to politicians talking about the murder, it does seem popular to blame schools for all the ills in our young people. Have I missed something or do parents have a part to play in teaching children about right and wrong? I wish we could hear more about parental responsibility with schools working as active partners in influencing young lives rather than schools being expected to act as if the children came to us in a complete vacuum, devoid of the influence of others. I firmly believe that schools have a significant part to play and indeed have a statutory responsibility for developing children's moral, spiritual and social development. Bringing up children in, what the majority would see as, an acceptable way is surely the single most important investment adults can make. Parents who neglect their responsibilities do so at their peril and to the detriment of our society. I cannot help feeling that we are reaping what we have failed to sow in younger generations. Children seem to be surrounded by violence these days and violence is portrayed as fun in many computer games and "macho" in television programmes and films. I have heard the arguments about whether children are affected by violence on the television and the

argument seems to say that a link has not been proven. All I can say is watch younger children playing; one of the favourite programmes watched by young children is "Power Rangers" and, if I could have a £1 for every child I have had to stop copying the Martial Art fighting, I could retire and write a book!

The words of that old folk song "When will they ever learn" seem particularly poignant as the family of Mr. Lawrence and his school community mourn the loss of a brave and dedicated teacher who was determined to make a difference and stand up for ideals that are good and upright.

I can only hope that, as we start a new year, more people will recognise the vital role parents and schools play in shaping our future and Mr. Lawrence's tragic death may spur us into more determined action.

A.T. Kuhles,
Headteacher

MONDAYS - Pangbourne Primary School
6.00 - 7.30 p.m. & 7.30 - 9.00 p.m.

For details of other classes held in CHOLSEY and
WALLINGFORD, please telephone ALEX on 01865 858101

COTTAGE TO LET

Country cottage Brittany/Normandy borders, self-catering, sleeps 5/7. Half-hour from

Mont St. Michel, half-hour from St. Malo, one and a half hour's drive from Cherbourg. Available April to October. Enquiries to Della Davies on 427919.

FROM MY HISTORY NOTEBOOK

Mrs. Macrae's Story - Memories of School

Mrs. Macrae has lived in Purley for many years and my grateful thanks are due to her for the following information.

Her early childhood and schooldays were spent in a little village near the east coast of Essex during the years just before the first World War, and the following is just a little from her very interesting reminiscences:

"Most of us wore cuffs in the winter which we mostly made ourselves; the boys as well as the girls wore them: I don't remember ever having any gloves. My elder sister taught us to knit before we went to school, and in my school it wasn't considered girlish for the boys to be found knitting. The cuffs were made on four needles (two if you couldn't manage four, and then you sewed up the little seam), in 2-plain, 2-purl rib; they were about three and a half to four inches deep. Any old wool was all right - you undid old socks and things like that. The colours were heather mixture, grey or blue-grey, and older girls had stripes in theirs; I don't think they matched. And on cold days, when you couldn't hold your pen in school, you could just pull your cuffs down to your knuckles and your hands were lovely and warm."

Mrs. Macrae then went on to tell me more about her school days, which described conditions that were probably very similar to those in Purley School:

"In our school the infants were in a separate room which had an open fire, and if you weren't well or were crying, the mistress might let you sit in front of the fire while she read a story. But Standards 1,2,3 and so on were all in the same room which had a funny black stove with a guard round, and the master had his desk next to it. The noise in that one room was dreadful when we were all repeating different things at once - you daren't let your mind wander, you just had to keep glaring at the teacher and get on with it. Everything was repeated again and again until it was drummed into you. We learnt a lot of poems and did a lot of reciting.

We never did "mathematics", just "sums" but I think I can add up and subtract and multiply just as quickly as the children do today. We used slates for writing and we learned history. Twice a week we had needlework which was very important. We had to

do very minute stitching and not allow any blobs of blood from pricked fingers on the material. When we did the gathers, we stroked each gather with a pin and it did make such a difference - we did some very nice work.

We played with plasticine quite a lot and had to make THINGS, such as mushrooms and blackberries and leaves and we also did weaving with coloured paper. And when we were very tiny we did "fraying"; we were given a piece of cotton material and a pin and we sat and laboriously shredded each little line of thread until we had a little pile of cotton. It had to be just threads, not bits of material. I don't know what happened to it afterwards - it was all collected up and may have been used for stuffing.

Sometimes we were late for school and then we might be caned. We had a lot of caning; the boys were thrashed over their shoulders, but the girls were hit on their hands or on the backs of the legs. The headmaster was much more lenient than the mistresses who sometimes lost their tempers and really did thrash you - I would much rather have a master, they did seem to be more reasonable!"

Next month: more from Mrs. Macrae about children's toys and games.

Jean Debney

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

"HERE WE ARE, HERE WE ARE, HERE WE ARE AGAIN " ARE YOU?

We have received a lot of requests to organise another Old Tyme Music Hall and, as the last one was over 2 years ago, we think the time is about right.

We have now started to write the next show with a view to it taking place in 1996.

Do give us a call if you would like to "tread the boards" or help back stage. Whatever your talent, we'd love to hear from you and it would start the New Year on a high note.

Jean Chudleigh (842563)

Gerry Hiscock (418715)

THE TRIP OF A LIFETIME - THE LONDON TO SAIGON MOTOR CHALLENGE 1992 - PART 18

FRIDAY, 11TH SEPTEMBER 1992 - A HOTEL IN MANGNAI

At 6.30 a.m. it is still dark and the temperature is 9°C.

We now have a drive to Golmud of which the middle 220 miles odd are on dirt roads. "Not altogether good in some parts". We are now at 10,000 ft and most of us are beginning to feel the effect of dehydration as there is a problem in getting liquid in large quantities. We have been unable to buy water in China and the only way one can get water is by taking the boiling water which is provided in thermoses in each bedroom and cooling it or getting tap water and purifying it. Our water, when eventually it arrived last night looked most unpalatable as it was brown.

At 9 o'clock we have just stopped at the place where they intended we should have slept last night. The tents from the road look tiny, the loos are 300 yards from them and just opposite is a pig farm and it is the dirtiest, filthiest farm of any sort I have ever seen. Thank goodness we didn't come. I think if we had arrived there at 1 a.m. last night, tired and weary, and been asked to go in there, the organisers would have had a riot on their hands.

Just started off again and it is lovely scenery. It is still desert but it isn't flat. It is undulating with sort of interesting shapes, sand hills I think the Recce boys describe them as and, in fact, if we want to take photographs we have got to get cracking because there are 50 km or so of the day when photographs are forbidden. It is an area which is still closed to foreigners so perhaps we should keep our eyes shut as much as possible! Someone has noticed that a road sweeper was wearing specs and in this part of the world road sweepers don't wear specs. Was he, we wondered, a dissident? There have been a number of fairly remote works, yesterday we saw a huge lime-making operation in the mountain miles away from everywhere, very poor looking and one wonders who actually wants to work there.

At 110 miles we are now in an area which looks as if it has a fine coat of powdered snow but, as the temperature is 9°C, one wonders whether it is salt. We have been climbing for the last 40 or 50 miles now, very slowly, and are building up to the Tibetan Plateau. We are both conscious of the necessity of liquid intake to prevent dehydration and the minor headaches we both have can easily be blamed on the lack of sleep which is easily curable within 24 hours but altitude sickness is not.

We are travelling today across the Qaidam Pendi and for a section there is a flattened dirt road. At this time of the year one can drive at between 40 and 50 mph except on really bumpy sections but one is always on the look out for surprise dips which does cause the car to nosedive and bottom at the front end.

From the 300 km mark, we are keeping our eyes open for secrecy. Is it a dissidents' camp? Is it a military establishment? Is it a bomb factory? High tech research? It is really most desolate. We do believe, however, it is probably tied up with the Chinese nuclear bomb programme.

We are then in amongst the sand hills which look as if they have been swept by prevailing winds from the West, with sand mounds from about 2 ft. high up to 100 ft. Quite beautiful and amazing.

At 206 miles (330 km), we are still wondering what we are meant not to see. Perhaps it is the sand hills.

At 280 miles we are held up by the security who want all cars together so we wait for an hour and we discover that the restrictive zone is for 50 km from now so all our anticipation was for nothing and unfortunately we missed some superb country to take photographs in, but our security man has offered one of the party to send photographs in the future!

302 miles we come into a village which is called Quidam which would appear to have been or be some form of military town with high walls, but mainly derelict buildings inside. Apart from that we have seen nothing in the restricted area.

At 6.25 we are driving along the Wang Zang Salt Bridge, under which is a vast lake. We had been warned that Golmud is no place of beauty and if the approach is anything to go by how right they were! It is as though, in fact, we are driving across a causeway over an enormous, but enormous, sea of mud as far as the eye can see. Occasionally we have come across some salt and in one place quite an interesting operation going on bagging up the salt. There must have been thousands of bags of salt but it was quite difficult to see how they were getting it or what they were actually doing.

We arrived in Golmud to find several of the population wearing dust masks and, of course, that told us straight away the sort of town it is although we had been told.

PANGBOURNE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Happy New Year to everyone! Christmas was a very busy time for staff and pupils in the school. Most of our activities centred around singing in one way or another.

Years 4 and 5 produced a very traditional pantomime called Red Riding Hood, which proved to be great fun, both to watch and to perform.

The school choir, as well as taking part in the Junior Schools' Music Festival, was out and about even more than usual this year. We always try to encourage the children to think of Christmas as a time of giving as well as receiving. To this end we sang to the Over-60's Club at their Carol Service, we went to the Reading Association for the Blind, the Rehabilitation Centre at the Battle Hospital and the Pangbourne Lunch Club for Senior Citizens. Not only did all the groups we sang for enjoy and appreciate the children's music, but made us all extremely welcome.

We were lucky enough to be offered the opportunity to record a tape of carols professionally, which we were then able to sell to parents and friends of the school in order to boost our funds.

The school Carol Service took place on the last Monday of the term in our local church, and the proceeds went to Save The Children Fund as usual. We ended the term in great excitement, eagerly awaiting a visit from Meridian Television who were to record one of our carols.

Pam Hillier-Brook, Headteacher

THOUGHT FOR THE MONTH

You never know what may cause them. The sight of the Atlantic Ocean can do it, or a piece of music, or a face you've never seen before. A pair of somebody's old shoes can do it. Almost any movie made before the great sadness that came over the world after the Second World War, a horse cantering across a meadow, the high school basketball team running out onto the gym floor at the start of a game. You can never be sure. But of this you can be sure. Whenever you find tears in your eyes, especially unexpected tears, it is well to pay the closest attention.

They are not only telling you something about the secret of who you are, but more often than not God is speaking to you through them of the mystery of where you have come

from and is summoning you to where, if your soul is to be saved, you should go to next. *From The A*

LAUGHLINES

After meeting the mother of our teenage baby-sitter, I remarked to my family how very young she looked to be a mother of four; "that's ok, Mum" my eight year old son reassured me. "She probably uses that Oil of Delay stuff".

A group of ministers attending a conference had a free afternoon. Despite the wet weather they decided to go for a walk. They came to a rickety derelict footbridge crossing a burn which was in full spate. Suddenly they heard a shout and saw an old man running down the hill towards them. The senior minister shouted back, "It is all right, my man. We are not trespassing. We are Presbyterian ministers from the conference." Back came the reply, "I am not caring whether you are Presbyterians or not. I'm simply telling you that if you try to cross that bridge, you'll all be Baptists."

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 Editor or 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) and the subscription Price is £3.00 for eleven issues. 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.

This month's magazine is published on **Saturday, 6th January 1996**. All copy for the February issue must reach me by **15th January** and the magazine will be published on **Saturday, 3rd February 1996**. Finally, I wish everyone a very happy and peaceful New Year.

Editor