

PURLEY PARISH NEWS

MAY 2006



1 Thessalonians 4
17 Then, together with them, we who are still alive and remain
on the earth will be caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord
in the air and remain with him forever.

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35p

For the Church & Community of
PURLEY ON THAMES



ST. MARY THE VIRGIN

PURLEY ON THAMES

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FROM THE LOCAL MINISTER

One of the things I used to do in my day job was use personality questionnaires as part of the company's recruitment process. It was always emphasised that this was a personality questionnaire, not a personality test. We all have a personality (test). What we wanted to find out was what similarity a candidate's personality bore to Mother Theresa's or Attila the Hun's (questionnaire).

Administering the questionnaire was easy – I would sit the candidate down at a computer, and in due course they would tell me they had answered the hundred or so questions about themselves. I would then press a few keys and the computer would produce a multi-page report telling me what the candidate had revealed about themselves in their answers to the questions.

The report, of course, wasn't *Black Magic*. Like many computer programs, it relied on a bank of standard phrases which it would combine in different sequences to give a personalised report.

I remember one of these phrases, partly because it was to be found in many of the reports – Currently N is finding many aspects of life somewhat stressful. It is

now some years since we last used this as a recruitment tool, but at times I am getting an insight as to how these candidates felt ...

Which is one of the reasons that May is a favourite month for me, as (I suspect) for many working people – two Bank Holidays, often with some reasonably warm (but not too hot) weather encouraging completion (or at least starting) some of these necessary outdoor DIY tasks. For me that means painting the woodwork. Gardening is an art which has always been well beyond me! No doubt having made a favourable comment about Bank Holiday weather, this year will see two days of torrential rain... sorry!

This is the season not only for two Bank Holidays in quick succession, but also for two Christian festivals in quick succession – Easter and Pentecost.

Easter was a time of special celebration at St. Mary's this year. The church was full, the flowers were gorgeous, the music was uplifting, the message was special – if you haven't yet investigated the circumstances of the Resurrection and thought about their significance, what better time to do so? The Resurrection changed people two thousand years ago, and Christians believe its implications for us today are enormous.

Pentecost will, I'm sure, be special too – 4 June, in case you were wondering. It certainly changed the lives of people then – more food for thought – and Christians believe its implications for us today are enormous.

If you're wondering what the fuss is about, come and see! If you're thinking that these are events you've never given much consideration to, but maybe now is the right time, come and ask! We would love to help you think about what happened all these years ago, to weigh up the evidence, to ask your questions, to consider what their significance might be for you today.

This year, will you take the first step?

*With best wishes,
Andrew*

WWW.CHRISTIANITY.ORG.UK

THE SUMMER SOCIAL CHALLENGE

ARE YOU UP TO IT? SATURDAY 13 MAY 4.30-6.30PM AT ST MARY'S

You know that friend you've been meaning to have to dinner, or that new face you keep meaning to talk to? Well here's your chance to make that move... Jesus spent time in fellowship, often eating, with his friends – so should we!

This summer, members of St Mary's church are being encouraged to spend time getting to know each other better. Too often we get caught up in the daily (or Sunday) routine and miss out on opportunities for fellowship.

Come along on 13 May as we launch this initiative as we mean to go on – with food, fun and fellowship!

FUNERAL

28 Mar

Kathleen Sarah Dinnage

(Burial of ashes)

CHURCH SERVICES

7 May	9.30am	Family Worship
	11.15am	Holy Communion
	6.00pm	Holy Communion
14 May	9.30am	Family Worship
	11.15am	Holy Communion
21 May	9.30am	Family Communion
	11.15am	Morning Worship
	6.00pm	Evening Worship
28 May	9.30am	Family Worship
	11.15am	Holy Communion

CONVINCE A MAN AGAINST HIS WILL

AND HE'S OF THE SAME OPINION STILL

Whoever first said this got it absolutely right. No amount of evidence brings conviction if the person concerned does not acknowledge its validity and accept it! The will to believe something is a very important aspect. Think of the events associated with Easter – Jesus was crucified, buried in a cave, but three days later the grave was empty and He was seen alive by individuals, groups and on one occasion by a crowd of five hundred people!

Did the resurrection really happen or is this a hoax? Many people dismiss it as a rather nice way to end the story of Jesus, but quite impossible. This kind of thing just does not happen! But what convincing explanation is there of the empty tomb other than that God raised Jesus to life again? Various alternative *explanations* have been suggested:

Jesus did not die, but only fainted. He then revived in the cool grave, got out and persuaded His disciples that He had risen from the dead.

BUT not only was His body weakened by the flogging, it was also pierced by the Roman soldier's short sword and the soldiers who must have seen many similar crucifixions recognised a dead body when they saw one, and so they did not break His legs. And even if He did only faint, is it reasonable to suppose that he could have got out of the grave by shifting the heavy stone which had been rolled over the entrance? (Mark 15 v15; John 19 vv 33-37)

The women were mistaken. In their confused state they went to the wrong grave.

BUT they saw clearly where He had been laid after His body was taken from the cross. (Luke 23 v 55)

The disciples of Jesus stole His body and then told people He was alive again.

BUT How could they have got past the guards at the tomb, and even if they had fallen asleep as the chief priests said, surely the noise of the stone being moved would have woken the up? Any why spend time unwrapping the body of Jesus from the grave clothes and leaving them behind?

(Matthew 28 vv 11-15; John 20 vv 5-7)

The chief priests moved the body from the grave to stop the place becoming a shrine.

BUT why do such a thing? It would only lend support to the idea that He had been raised to life! And even if they had removed the body, there was one very simple thing they could have done when the reports of resurrection began to circulate – produce the body from where they had hidden it!

The *explanations* offered do not hold water. So what is the alternative? The facts of the situation point clearly to the only explanation that fits – Jesus was raised to life by the power of God! But the truth of the resurrection is not only that He was raised then, but also that He is alive now! There is plenty of evidence to support this amazing truth, but on its own it will never convince anyone. The will to accept it is involved too.

So what do you want to believe? Christian faith is not a pill to be swallowed – no questions allowed. Examine the evidence for yourself.

Roger Howell

BECOMING A HEALTHY CHURCH

St. Mary's people are currently engaged in a process designed to help us examine our life so that we become a more healthy church. We have thought about the 7 marks of a healthy church:

- being energised by faith
- having an outward-looking focus
- seeking to find out what God wants
- facing the cost of change and growth
- operating as a community
- making room for all
- doing a few things and doing them well

And we have scored each of these according to individual opinion. Beginning on Sunday 30 April we started asking another question – What does Jesus think of His Church? Our thoughts are focused on *The Letters to the Seven Churches* in the New Testament book of Revelation.

30 April	Ephesus - a church with heart trouble
7 May	Smyrna - a church with hard times ahead
14 May	Pergamum - a church wanting an easy life
21 May	Thyatira - a church trying to please everybody
28 May	Sardis - a church fast asleep
18 June	Philadelphia—a church with open doors of opportunity
25 June	Laodicea - a church like lukewarm water

WAM

A couple of months ago I wrote telling you about the wonderful group of young people aged 11+ that we have at St Mary's – members of WAM. Well, since I last wrote they have been spending time on Sunday mornings covering a variety of topics related to life as a teenager. Most of these sessions take place up "in the snug" at St Mary's Church, within the 9.30am Family Service, with one session a month taking place in a leader's home.

WAM members also get together twice a month on Sunday evenings to follow a programme of Social Events – a variety of activities suggested by them. Usually these alternate between 'in' and 'out' activities, but recently we seem to have been 'out' rather a lot! Apart from a Games Evening in church where good use has been made of the table tennis table between challenging board games, we have been Laser Questing; Evening walking, (with torches!) to the local chippy from where our purchases were greatly enjoyed on the walk back to Purley, and Ice Skating in Basingstoke. We finished for Easter with a meal at TGI Fridays, joined by WAM members who are now at University. Judging by the chatter and laughter, everyone had a great time, enjoying the chance to meet up again and catch up on all the news.

Since the end of January our thoughts have been with one of the WAM members, David Mackie, who is now halfway through his Gap Mission in Angola, teaching English to Hospital staff in preparation for the opening of a new hospital there. We are all proud of him – he's certainly a

Young Person WITH A MISSION to make a difference

If you are a young person (11+) who would like to join us at WAM then please contact one of the following people, or come along to St Mary's Church for the 9.30am service.

Nicki 984 2112, Richard 942 6056, Andrew 941 7170

Feed your faith and your doubts will starve to death.

THE LAST WORD?

This is the last time I will be writing to you as chairman of the parish council, at least for a while. Just over a year ago I decided I would be standing down in May 2006 after three years. Some of you may remember that I announced this at the parish meeting last year.

I have never thought it was a good idea for anyone to do the job for too long and am looking forward to refreshing my batteries on the 'back benches'. Don't think you have heard the last of me, though. I will still be involved in local affairs on lots of levels.

First priority when I took over the chair was to save the council from going into administration because it had insufficient members. This was achieved by an

appeal which generated a host of volunteers and gave us the youngest, most diverse and most vibrant council for years.

Second priority was to produce a village plan. Thanks to the help of a lot of people from both inside and outside the council, this was achieved in 18 months. In fact, it seems hard to believe now that not only did we not have a village plan three years ago, but we had considerable doubts as to whether we had the resources to produce one.

Recently, I had the honour of being invited to be part of West Berkshire Council's presentation team in a successful application for Beacon Council status, based on improving rural services and empowering communities through support for parish/village planning. The government inspectors praised us for our enthusiastic and passionate presentations – both in Purley and in London – and awarded us top marks in every category.

Third priority was to implement the plan and we have already gone a long way down that road. The latest victory, following on from the successful establishment of the Neighbourhood Action Group (NAG) – of which I hope to remain chairman, members willing, for a little longer – is the introduction of the Neighbourhood Wardens to Purley. Assuming recruitment went to plan in April, you should be seeing them around this month.

One of the most important spin-offs of village plans is that they have encouraged the development of a much closer relationship between the district and parish councils. This has been most clearly demonstrated in the way we have worked together to develop the Thames and Kennet Vision, which has received strong public support in the consultation stage. Most of the broader infrastructure aspirations of our village plan will now be incorporated in this vision.

I am very proud to have led the council through this exciting period of change and very grateful for all the support I have received from the members of the council, the clerk, and the village plan steering group. After all, they have done most of the work.

It was, therefore, a little disappointing to hear some of the negative things which were being said about the council during the recent controversy over Reading Festival parking. Still, every cloud has a silver lining. If more people take an interest in civic affairs as a result, that can only be a good thing.

There is nothing I would like to see more than a crowd at every parish council meeting listening to the way we conduct business on your behalf. A residents' association would be great if it involved more people in village affairs and provided a sounding board on village opinion – as long as it didn't degenerate, as many do, into a bunch of grumpy nay-sayers and Nimbys.

Most importantly, let's make sure we have enough candidates for the parish council to hold an election in May of 2007.

David Betts
Chairman, Purley on Thames Parish Council
david.betts@purleyonthames.net

PROJECT PURLEY

DOVECOTES

The guest speaker at Project Purley's March Meeting was Andrew Hutt, a member of the Berkshire Archaeological Research Group, whose subject was Dovecotes. His talk was informative, clearly illustrated and concise, the latter quality being especially appreciated by members who had already sat through the Society's Annual General Meeting in The Barn where the heaters were not operating effectively.

Andrew divided his talk into six parts. Firstly he drew attention to the two Berkshire dovecote projects, one conducted by Esme Few in the 1960s which created an archive of the 50 or so dovecotes existing in the county, and the more recent example undertaken by the BARG. This organisation has inherited and updated Esme's work, and a group of volunteers intends to publish a book entitled *The Dovecotes and Pigeon Lofts of Old Berkshire*.

The rest of the talk concentrated on the history of dovecotes, though Andrew did explain that the terms dove and pigeon can be used interchangeably as both are descended from the Blue Rock Dove, which likes to live in man-made buildings. Pigeons mate for life and a pair can produce two squabs (chicks) eight to ten times a year for seven years.

The first evidence of pigeon keeping comes from Ancient Egypt, as squabs were included on a menu for King Unas dating from 2600 B.C. From Roman times, doves are portrayed on pottery and two Roman authors, Varro and Pliny, describe doves being kept for food. Varro tells us that they were kept in a columbaria, a circular store building, that they were fed on millet, wheat and peas, and that their keepers anointed the doves' bodies with myrrh to attract other birds for breeding.

Dovecotes and pigeon breeding were introduced to England by the Normans following the invasion of 1066. Only Lords of the Manor were allowed by right to build dovecotes and the earliest extant dovecote, which can be seen at Hurley, near Bisham Abbey, was built in 1308 by Benedictine Monks as the right to ownership increased. The young squabs, rich in tender meat, were sold to provide food and bring in considerable revenue for the Monks, as the Hurley dovecote could produce over 6,000 squabs per year, equivalent to 200 meals per week. Squabs took 20 minutes to roast, whilst the fully grown pigeons, often stuffed with herbs and garlic, needed a much longer time as they were turned on a spit. However, the pigeons could be a menace to farmers, and a law passed in 1476 stated that any pigeons which had escaped from their dovecote could be killed to protect the farmer's corn and seed.

In medieval times, there were dovecotes in and around Berkshire at Harwell, Brimpton and Hurley, the largest standing seven metres tall and containing 660 nesting boxes. But the most local one was at Coley Park on land bought by Thomas Vachell after the monastery lands had been annexed by the Crown. That dovecote dates from 1553 and is still visible in 2006 in the centre of a housing estate, though the lofts have now been blocked.

In 1619 a law was introduced to allow freeholders to build dovecotes, so there was a post-dissolution boom in their numbers. Designs began to vary from the stereotypical circular building too and the first square dovecote was built at Carswell Manor.

The period from 1619 to 1793 saw a rise, then a fall in the keeping of pigeons and the building of dovecotes. In 1640 a law stated that pigeons were a protected species as pigeon keeping became a hobby as well as a business activity, with many more dovecotes appearing on the map, including one at Culham Manor which is the largest octagonal example in England. However the selling of pigeons both for business and for pleasure had become so widespread that, in 1694, any profit from the enterprise became taxable.

Then in the eighteenth century, following a massive boom in the population – from 5.25 million in 1714 to 10.5 million in 1812, the industrial and agricultural output of the country also increased. The price of wheat increased too following the French revolutionary wars, so that the value of the wheat eaten by the pigeons exceeded the value of the pigeons themselves. So the 1790s saw an end to large scale pigeon keeping and the majority of people who kept their dovecotes open were those pigeon fanciers who bred and flew them as a hobby.

Pigeons have been subject to more legislation in recent times. In 1948 it became illegal for farmers to wantonly kill pigeons feeding on their crops, but in 1961 the Public Health Act allowed local authorities to take preventative measures against any pigeons causing a nuisance or hazard to the public.

Andrew completed his talk by detailing the current status of some of the ninety dovecotes studied by BARG. Thirty still retain their original form, ten have been converted into living accommodation or for business use, four have had their holes removed and replaced with painted replicas and just one is preserved as a ruin. The Group's publication will record all pre-1793 dovecotes in East Berkshire, West Berkshire and South Oxfordshire.

It was a tribute to our speaker's obvious enthusiasm for his subject and his clear diction that he was able to keep his audience entertained on such a chilly evening.

David Downs

The next meeting of Project Purley will be on Friday, 19 May when John Dearing and Sidney Gold will lead a Reading Walkabout. We shall be meeting by the Forbury Gardens Lion at 6.45pm.

The Rain or Shine Theatre Company will be returning to The Barn on Friday, 9 June to present Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Tickets will be priced at £10 with concessions at £7.50 (under 16s and pensioners). The Company's visit proved to be very popular and well attended last year, so if you would like to reserve tickets, please contact David Downs on 942 4167. Profits from the event, which is being organised by Project Purley, will be donated to *Dogs for the Disabled*.

David Downs

NEIGHBOURHOOD WARDENS MOVE INTO PURLEY

BERKSHIRE'S biggest landlord is adding two neighbourhood wardens to patrol the streets of Purley on Thames to combat vandalism, graffiti and remove abandoned cars.

Purley Parish Council has invested £10,000 to expand the successful initiative already running in neighbouring Tilehurst and Holybrook, which will now be extended to include an extra 1500 plus households in Purley.

Purley is the latest to benefit from expansion of the warden programme across West Berkshire, and Sovereign Housing Group can now begin recruiting two more wardens to add to the three-person team currently based at the Calcot Centre.

Neighbourhood Warden Manager Andy Cooch said: "Wardens will make a real difference to the quality of life in Purley, not only by keeping graffiti and vandalism to a minimum, but also by liaising with groups of young people, and helping reduce fear of crime with their presence."

Purley Parish Council Chairman David Betts said: "We are delighted to have achieved this Village Plan objective after more than a year of negotiation. I am sure that residents will be reassured by an additional uniformed presence on our streets.

"The wardens, and the two new Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) who will be joining our neighbourhood Police team, will be targeted towards where they are most needed, with input from the Parish Council and the Neighbourhood Action Group."

Wardens differ from PCSOs as they don't have power of arrest. But by working alongside other agencies, wardens have a track record in helping reduce crime and anti-social behaviour.

Sovereign is now looking to find two people who know the Purley area well, and who want to put something back into the community.



Pray for Purley

Mon 8 May

Mon 31 July

Mon 30 October

Join Christians in Purley from many churches as we come together to give thanks to God for our village, and to pray - for individuals, families, schools, groups, activities etc. We start at 8pm and are finished by 9pm.

Sally Robertson – 962 5978 – sally.a.robertson@ntlworld.com –
Melyn Colyton Way (on the corner next to the shop)
Chris Rayers 942 1880 – c.rayers@talk21.com – 9 Allison Gardens

Tue 20 June

Tue 19 September

Tue 12 December

PURLEY PRE SCHOOL FUN DAY

SATURDAY 13 MAY

PURLEY MEMORIAL HALL, GLEBE ROAD

11.30AM TILL 2.30PM

FUN DAY OUT FOR ALL THE FAMILY

Food Drink Children's entertainer

Bouncy castle various stalls

Go on – bring out the child in you...



RECOLLECTIONS OF THE *LAKONIA* DISASTER



My thanks to Purley W.I. for their account, penned by Sylvia Conquest in the March issue, of a talk given by their guest speaker Chris Smallbone. Called *The Longest Night* it relates the speakers own survival at age 27 from the burning cruise ship Lakonia on 22 Dec 1963. As a result of this information I was able to make contact with Chris and fill in a few gaps for both of us to share after 43 years.

To explain... I too was aged 27 at that time but a crew member of the RN aircraft carrier HMS Centaur. Having sailed from Portsmouth a few days after Lakonia departed Southampton on her Christmas cruise on 19 December, we were bound for service in the Far East. Once in open water we went to flying stations to receive our aircraft landing on from naval air stations, fixed wing Sea Vixens and Scimitars in those days but also including 2 helicopters. With a full compliment of crew and Aircraft secured we headed SW across Biscay.

On the 22nd in the late evening we picked up distress calls from the *Greek Line* cruise ship TSMS Lakonia. Our position just west of Porto, Lakonia's position 550 miles NW of Casablanca and approximately 180 miles N of Madeira at latitude 39 deg. This was a distance of some 650 miles SW of our position. With Admiralty approval we made at full speed south west into a heavy wintry Atlantic swell. The last urgent distress call came in the early hours "cannot remain in the wireless station... abandoning ship... please help". Bulkheads shook as we powered on and after about 22 hours Lakonia was sighted in an early grey dawn, drifting, still burning and with a starboard list.

Two helicopters were launched searching for survivors and to drop smoke flare markers to guide our ships motor cutters which were to recover many bodies from the sea on this day. The first of these sighted had spread out some 15 miles from Lakonia due to wind and sea currents. Other ships responding to the distress in darkness had taken many survivors on board, mainly British; the

Argentine passenger vessel *Salta* rescued 475 people. Later arrivals were Charlesville (Belgian), Rio Grande (Brazilian), Stratheden (British) and Mehdi (Panamanian).

It was difficult for these ships of varied nationalities to communicate effectively in the dark but they saved hundreds of lives while hampered by lack of resources, rescue boats and yet took care of the many survivors suffering from hypothermia and injuries sustained in leaping into the sea.

By now the flames had reduced. The amidships superstructure, partially collapsed bridge, and aft decks had caved in. There were holes blasted near the bow and a 10 degree list to starboard. We closed on the stricken ship to about half mile, as I recall. This allowed me to snatch photographs from the vantage point of Centaurs flight deck as seen here. An attempt by a plucky Centaur helicopter crew to lower an officer on to the



after deck, of Lakonia to look for signs of life, was aborted. Deck plates too hot and with an estimated 500 tons of fuel oil still remaining on board highly risky for all of us.

Our later arrival on Centaur was a relief to these smaller ships; it gave a command structure to the operation, medical assistance and communications support. The British tanker *Montcalm*, an early arrival had taken many survivors on board some from life boats and some from the sea who

were young and fit enough to have survived the night long hours of immersion. One of these, as I now know, was Chris Smallbone as mentioned and I am thrilled to have discovered this quite recently due to Purley W.I.'s account in the March issue.

Some rescue ships had by now started to leave to land survivors at convenient ports including Montcalm to Casablanca and others to Madeira. We set about the task of transfer of bodies from other ships to Centaur which adding to those we had recovered from the sea and others missing were to account for 128 souls who perished. The old, the young, women, children and some crew members. Causes of death were exposure, drowning, burns and injuries received in leaping from the burning ship.

The remaining ships were now able to disperse leaving us with the 22,000 ton smoking, hulk adrift in open sea. It was a hazard to shipping, too hot to board. Admiralty had opposed our request to attempt a salvage operation and so we remained on station heaving throughout this Christmas period of 1963.





This was one of the few occasions in my naval service when I actually felt sea sick due to the events and to the constant roll in the heavy swell with little forward motion. Flat top aircraft carriers have a very slow side roll period under these conditions.

It was essential to carry out identification searches of the victims, possessions, papers photo records etc. I do recall unusual finds on

some crew members being reported and this was addressed at the subsequent disaster enquiry. Centaurs torpedo rooms were utilised as makeshift mortuaries.

We were advised that powerful Norwegian Sea going tugs were to attempt salvage. These duly arrived as we busied ourselves dealing with potentially hazardous obstacles, loose partly flooded life boats were sunk with gun fire.



The Norwegians meanwhile after many attempts managed to secure cables at Lakonia's bow anchors and swing the ship to start a tow in an easterly direction, the list by now being noticeably worse.

It was time for us to depart this disaster area. We said a final prayer and set a course eastwards, sadly on this grey day the sea becomes yet another grave for the many innocent souls lost.

The Norwegian salvage crew were reportedly in trouble. Lakonia was taking more water and becoming heavier in the water. On 29 December the tow was severed, the list increasing to 45 degrees, at about 2pm she started to keel over, onto her starboard side. She sank stern first in just 3 minutes. Lakonia lies in an Atlantic trench at a depth of 4 miles just 250 miles west of Gibraltar.

We docked at Gibraltar; the media were present at the dock side, also officials of the countries representing the families of victims, mainly British but also Swiss, Dutch and others. The victims were carefully transferred from Centaur to port authorities and eventually on to their final resting places.

My photos of the disaster taken from Centaurs flight deck have been shown only to family and friends over the years until now, in these pages, but not before sending copies to Chris Smallbone at Caversham. Chris was delighted and says he will treasure them and add to his experience. So to Purley W.I. thanks again.

Aftermath: The injuries received by many victims when leaping into the water, in total darkness, from the burning ship, were in cases due to others landing on top of them. This was confirmed at the inquiry, as also were complaints by survivors

of looting by some cabin crew from staterooms. I know that findings during our initial body searches of victims on board Centaur revealed neck injuries thought to be due also to the incorrect fitting of the then standard Lloyds pattern life jacket. Emergency drills it seems were not a safety priority and attended by only a few passengers.

Eight officers were charged with negligence, another five with simple negligence. The Captain Mathios Zarbis, his first officer and the ships security officer were charged with gross negligence. Captain Zarbis was sent to prison.

The fire was ultimately determined to be due to an electrical short circuit in the hairdressing salon. The adjacent corridors filled with dense smoke and fumes cutting off escape routes from cabins some passengers still asleep, those were some of the missing who must have gone down with the ship.

Some lifeboats burned before they could be lowered. Two of the lifeboats were swamped, spilling their occupants into the sea; one when it was lowered only by one end, and the other when its davits broke off. Chains had rusted in many of the davits, making boats difficult or impossible to move. In the end, just over half of the lifeboats made it safely away from the Lakonia, some of them less than half full. Several people who jumped overboard struck the side of the ship on the way down, killing them. Survivors had to bail water out of some boats with their shoes. The drain bungs were missing. When all available boats were away there were still many people adrift in the water and more than 100 left on board the burning ship. These were forced to descend ropes and ladders into the sea.

The ship had passed a safety inspection at Southampton by the Ministry of Transport 24 hours prior to sailing and held a Greek certificate of seaworthiness. The Greek Merchant Marine Ministry launched a two-year investigation into the Lakonia disaster. The board maintained that the ship should never have passed the safety inspection prior to sailing.

After formalities were completed at Gibraltar we sailed for Suez and the Red Sea for intended operational duties in the Far East. However, we found ourselves at Aden where Marine commandos were standing by to board for another emergency. This new situation was an Army mutiny at Dar es Salaam with hostages just one month after Zanzibar and Kenya had become independent.

The president Julius Nyerere appealing for British military assistance; British subjects and locals being terrorized and in fear of their lives: that's another story. Several books have been published about the Lakonia disaster.

For more concise information: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/TSMS_Lakonia

In memory of those lost.

*Bill Burgess
Orchard Close*

PLEASE SUPPORT YOUR LOCAL POST OFFICE

MASTER OF DISGUISE

This month's prize for most pointless planning decision must go to the mobile phone provider that has attempted to disguise their aerial mast, outside the Knowsley Road Tesco Express, as a traditional wooden telegraph pole when there are no such poles anywhere else on that road!

Editor

MACMILLAN CANCER RELIEF READING AND CENTRAL BERKSHIRE COMMITTEE

is proud to be part of

30TH MOZART SUMMER FESTIVAL

MUSIC FOR A COUNTRY HOUSE

Highfield Park, Heckfield, near Reading

Sunday 4 June 2006 at 3.00pm
(bar available from 2pm)

Tickets £12 including programme and afternoon tea
Brenda Jenkins 0118 942 9665

Highfield Park, part of Initial Style Conferences (easily accessible from the M4 and M3) is a charming Queen Anne Mansion set in 35 acres of parkland. This setting is ideal for a concert with Sweet Harmony in C18th costume, playing music by Mozart and his contemporaries.

In aid of Macmillan Cancer Relief

PANGBOURNE BOWLS CLUB

The *new season* is now upon us and whilst Purley on Thames has a number of bowls clubs in the vicinity I hope that players may be interested in checking out the facilities at Pangbourne. The green is situated at the far end of the Pangbourne recreation ground

As a bowls club we are always interested in improving the overall quality of the playing membership so if you are a player of established ability, or at least would like to participate in some competitive matches, then do please turn up at the green at any time and talk with some of our club members; Thursday evenings are particularly useful as our coaching staff is also available to help accommodate players new to the game.

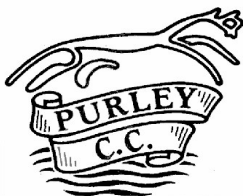
We do hope to see some new faces down at our ground this season.

*Nigel Cabeldu
Secretary, Pangbourne Bowls Club*

BUCKNELL'S MEADOW UPDATE

Following my article in April we have held a public consultation on the proposed cycle track in Bucknell's Meadow. Please keep an eye on the Parish Council Noticeboards and the website (www.purleyonthames.net) for further opportunities to comment on this facility.

Sally Robertson
Chairman Parish Council Recreation Committee



PLAYER RECRUITMENT

We are about to commence the 2006 season, and if anyone is interested in playing cricket and being involved in a successful club, we would be very pleased to hear from you.

We run 3 Adult teams on Saturdays and 2 on Sundays, with varying ability from Saturday Berkshire League Premier Division 1 champions, Sunday Millennium League Champions, to recreational players.

In addition, we run junior teams at all ages from Starters (6-8 years) to U17.

For further information about Purley on Thames CC, or if you are interested in playing cricket at any level, or helping with scoring/umpiring, please contact Martin Bishop, Club Chairman on 0118 945 3117, or Barry Carter, Adult Chairman on 0118 942 2075 or look at the club website.

purleyonthames.play-cricket.com

ALZHEIMER'S SOCIETY GARDEN DIG

On what started out to be a sunny Sunday morning in April, a group of Bradfield Young Farmers Club (YFC) and friends took up the challenge to transform a neglected area of a garden into a patio and vegetable plot. It all started, when Lydia Bendall, Berkshire's County Organiser was approached by Gill Brown, West Berkshire's Branch Coordinator for the Alzheimer's Society. A day's work was requested to help the Society prepare this garden for some of their clients to use. At the following executive meeting a plea went out to Berkshire YFC and so the ball started rolling. Luckily Mr N J Perry (the Expert) a landscape gardener was part of the Bradfield team that responded and agreed to meet with Gill on site. The plans were discussed and materials ordered. The day started slowly with lots of digging, a bit of measuring and some more digging. The members trickled in and the work moved on. By 2 o'clock the area was ready for the Expert to lay the slabs. Unfortunately with the Expert came the rain, and lots of it. They all soldiered on and with rain dripping down every gap possible they managed to finish and the end result looked fantastic.

Georgina Perry, a Bradfield YFC member said, "There were moments when we just wanted to stop and go home or quickly finish which would have meant doing a shabby job. We didn't do either of those things; in true young farmer's style we saw it through to the very end. Looking back on the day and the finished product we are all very proud of what we achieved. Knowing that we have done something to help others gives us a real buzz".

The Alzheimer's Society will use this peaceful garden in Burghfield Common for social and therapeutic gardening sessions. People with memory problems will be able to go there with their carers to enjoy using their gardening skills and make new friends. The project will be run in collaboration with Thrive, the local gardening charity, who will plan suitable activities. Sessions will start on the 12 May and run through the summer. If you or anyone you know would be interested in participating in or volunteering to help with this garden project, please contact Gill Brown on 01635 500870 or email alz.coord@pop3.hiway.co.uk.

Anyone interested in joining the YFC should contact Lydia Bendall on 01635 500872 or email berksyfc@btopenworld.com.



AN EVENING OF OPERA AND SONG

7.30PM FRIDAY 26 MAY 2006

The Rotary Club of Reading is presenting a fund-raising concert featuring 4 very accomplished professional singers with piano accompaniment in a varied programme of well-known and popular pieces of opera and song in the Falkland Islands Memorial Chapel at Pangbourne College at 7.30pm on Friday 26 May. The concert is in support of the club's Big Project – Centenary House – a new seven unit bed-sit property being built in the town centre that will be used as a half-way house to help Reading's single homeless get back into mainstream society. Website – www.BigProject.info

Tickets - £15.00 including an Interval Drink are available from:

Premier Pets, Pangbourne – 984 2111 or Box Office (Richard Stone) 984 4452

PURLEY PARK TRUST - PLANT SALE

Purley Park Trust in Huckleberry Close is having a plant sale on Saturday 13 May between 10am and 12.30pm where they will be selling bedding plants, shrubs, herbs and vegetable plants.

NATIONAL CHRISTIAN RESOURCES EXHIBITION

9-12 May at Sandown Park, Esher, Surrey.

Details available from 01844 271466 or at <http://www.creonline.co.uk>

MESSAGE FROM HOME FARM

Although there is much talk about the impending drought, until the last two weeks it has been the cold that has checked crop growth. The barley seed lay dormant for days as the ground temperature was too low to encourage germination and grass turned brown and disappeared. What a difference a few days of sun and showers made as a different picture emerged; with the cows enjoying fresh pasture and the barley growing apace apart from 3 acres in the middle of the field below poplars, where having run out of seed I used two year old seed... Never use old seed!

As I write over the Easter weekend, the Pangbourne election looms fast. I will be glad to see a new district councillor appointed as I have been the 'caretaker' for the past few weeks. It is a shame that two major planning applications in Pangbourne are coming to committee the evening before the election, as I have the job of 'speaking' as the acting ward member. They are both proving to be very controversial and causing a great deal of animosity in the community. One of them is a development for older folk, seeing many letters written, phone calls made, submissions to all and sundry and placards on the neighbours fence together with a huge petition raised. However closer scrutiny shows that all concerns are from adjacent properties and who wouldn't sign a petition when told that 'six old folk are to be evicted from their homes'.

Unfortunately a few exaggerations and manipulation of the truth have sent a community into a frenzy. Logic and common sense has been thrown out of the window. Speaking for the community as a whole, while safe-guarding the interests of the few will see me 'between the devil and the deep blue sea', and there is little doubt that by supporting one side I will alienate the other. This reminds me of the building of the new hall and extension to Purley Primary School; where after much consideration and debate I put the interests of the community first and supported the project; I still haven't been forgiven by some!

Tim Metcalfe

FOLLOWING RECENT EVENTS

Although our farm is a private business, we are aware that our plans and actions may have an impact on the local community. This said, sadly traditional farming is no longer sustainable and other sources of income are necessary. We are trying to preserve Home Farm as it has been for a number of years, but with the dairy industry declining at its current rate - with two more local dairy farms giving up this month it is increasingly difficult.

Please remember that we live here too and the recent proposal, which was only a proposal and barely at the consultation stage, might have caused a few days discomfort for us all, but would have aided us in prolonging our future plans and keeping Home Farm, Purley in its present form.

The Metcalfe Family

STRAWBERRY TEAS IN THE GARDEN

SUNDAY 25 JUNE 2–5.30PM

at

Cherry Acre, Purley Village, Purley on Thames

Strawberry Themed Food

Teas Cakes

Excellent Plant Stall

Activities for the Children

Browse Around the Garden

In aid of St Mary's church, Purley-on Thames



THE BOY

At the end of March 1945, six months after the September 1944 airborne disaster in Holland, our No. II BRC Mobile Hospital team was billeted in the Monastery of the White Fathers at 's-Heerenberg. This was near the Reichswald area, having crossed the Rhine (here the Waal) between Kleeve and Emmerich: now the Canadian CCS was leaving with their army which was advancing.

Without the army's mobile generator we were without electricity, but in the Monastery's dark basement kitchen there were functioning boilers cared for by the Boy.

He, when first spoken to in German, went a horrible grey/white in terror until convinced that we were British. Recently he had worked for the army and seemed to be attached to the place, and he had lit the boiler fires for us. When suddenly a boiler vibrated and hissed threateningly, the Boy calmly attended to it.

His main concern was how to manage to cater for the 15 extra workers for breakfast at 07.00 hours and lunch at noon on our team's rations for 24 – they had worked for the army and assumed that they would work for us.

When the 15 filed in promptly each received from the Boy a mug of tea of sorts and then slices of bread with a dollop of butter and a herring; all exactly the same, all in silence. The Boy then took the same ration down to the old man in the cellar, who having escaped from the Germans was too terrified to surface. This done, there appeared the Boy's brother, our interpreter, and three others, all expecting food, and got the same. Then only did the Boy take his own, the same as the others. After this was another queue for leftovers or scraps by men, women and children. Again he coped, and continued to help us whilst there.

Just how we could have managed there without the Boy we could never know, neither did we know his age, probably 15 or 16, nor even his name, just called

the Boy, who cheerfully performed his humble perceived duty – this young Dutch Boy with his OLQ*.

Soon on the 13th/14th of April 1945 the Canadians with some UK Hallamshire contingents liberated Arnhem, into which devastated city I drove an ambulance in our small team's convoy.

TIMETABLE OF WWII EUROPE PEACE PROCESS 1945

3 May	Allied Offensive Action to cease
4 May	Instrument of German Surrender @ 18.30 hours
5 May	General Ceasefire @ 08.00 hours
8/9 May	Ratification @ Midnight
8 May	Official End of War in Europe
10 May	Official Peace Celebration in Holland

Ref. Memoirs of Field Marshal B. Montgomery

* Officer-like Quality

*Dr. J.A. Hofmeyr
BRC Team Member
partially quoting M. Brindley's "A Hospital on Wheels"*

MESSAGE IN A BOTTLE

You may be interested in a scheme called Message in a Bottle which encourages people to keep their basic personal and medical details where they can easily be found in an emergency. A special plastic container is used to hold a form which gives information such as person's name, next of kin, Doctor's name and telephone number, any medication the person is taking, whether allergic to say penicillin and can even include details of any pets. In the container there are two green and white crosses - one to be put inside the main access door and one on the fridge door. The completed form needs to be put inside and the container placed in the fridge.

The Emergency Services know that if they see the stickers, the container will be in the fridge. Message in a Bottle can be obtained from various locations in West Berkshire including Newbury Police Station, some Doctors' Surgeries and Pharmacies, Fair Close Day Centre, Newbury Hospital and the Volunteer Centre.

WHAT THE PAPERS SAY

Did you know that Purley on Thames is now represented in the Reading Chronicle each week? If you have any news which you think the rest of the village would like to read about please let me know and I'll put it in my column called Village Life, subject to space – Club news, Church news, business news, sports news, 100th birthday news, etc. etc.

Jayne.Evans@pangbourne-on-thames.com

PURLEY PLAYERS

Present their summer show

THAT'S LIFE!

ON FRIDAY AND SATURDAY 14 & 15 JULY 2006

THE BARN, GOOSECROFT LANE, PURLEY ON THAMES

Tickets, which include a bowl of strawberries and cream and a glass of wine
£8.50 with concessions at £7

Come along with your friends and enjoy an evening of
sketches and songs of situations we all recognise

Box Office opens on 22 May

Tickets from Jean Chudleigh (984 2563) or Anne Bolland on (941 3259)

Lucky programme wins a bottle of Champagne

Proceeds in aid of Daisy's Dream

a service supporting bereaved children in Berkshire and the surrounding area

PURLEY ON THAMES PARISH COUNCIL

At the Parish Council meeting on 30 March members of the public were able to hear an introduction to the Neighbourhood Warden scheme from the manager and senior warden. This scheme is being expanded into Purley from Tilehurst and Holybrook and additional staff are currently being recruited so we should start to reap the benefits over the next few months. The majority of the public present were of course there to hear discussion on the aborted plans for parking at Home Farm for the Reading Festival weekend pass holders. Standing orders were suspended to enable the Managing Director of Mean Fiddler to respond to questions on the plan. When Council reconvened they agreed to approach both the landowner and organiser to ask them to reconsider the proposals but to also lodge an objection with Reading Borough Council if the plan went ahead. As you will now know from the media the proposal has been withdrawn. At that meeting a black woollen hat was left behind after the public departed so please contact the office if it is yours.



Please make a note in your diary regarding the Annual Parish Meeting which will be held in the Barn on Tuesday 23 May. As well as hearing from us about the work of the Council both Thames Valley Police and the Neighbourhood Wardens should be in attendance. The agenda is still being finalised and will be publicised on the notice boards and our website. Local organisations are also welcome to advertise their events on our notice boards and posters may be left at the office. Please allow 2/3 weeks prior to any event to ensure these are posted in time.

Information on what was previously known as the Eastern Area Vision (now Kennet and Thames area) is now available on the West Berkshire website. Click on past press releases April 2006 to locate. The South East Plan has also been published and a copy is available for reference in the office or for further information visit www.southeast-ra.gov.uk/southeastplan. Leaflets are also available from the office or from the display in the Barn.

I regret that there has been a spate of fly tipping, mainly garden rubbish, at the Recreation Ground, Pikesaw, and the allotments. I must warn those responsible that in conjunction with the Environment Agency we will take legal action against offenders. I have also had to advise plot holders at the allotments that Thames Water have ruled that the domestic hosepipe ban is applicable to them onsite.

Anyone who has received a police sponsored SmartWater kit from either the crime reduction team or neighbourhood watch should be aware that there is no longer a renewal fee. Further information is available from Ruth Hemingway on 01635 264624.

West Berkshire Council has advised us of the new schedule for the mobile library service which will visit on 11 May, 1 & 22 June, 13 July 3 & 24 August, 14 September, 5 October. Local times are: Orchard Close 2.00-2.15pm, Memorial Hall 2.25-2.40pm, Hazel Road 2.50-3.15pm & Church 3.25-4.20pm

Finally I regret that the office will be closed on Thursday 1 June as I will be attending the Society of Local Council Clerks Conference at Bradfield. Apologies for any inconvenience.

Brian J. Smith

Clerk to Purley on Thames Parish Council

The office, located near the tennis courts, opens:

Mondays (not BH): 5.45pm to 8.30pm

Including an opportunity to meet

Councillors between 6pm & 7pm

Thursdays: 9.00am to 3.15pm

Barn Manager: Jean Chudleigh 07917 453187

Purley on Thames Parish Council

Parish Office

Goosecroft Lane

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Purley on Thames

Reading

RG8 8DR

Tel/fax: 0118 984 4507

E-mail: clerk@purleypc.wanadoo.co.uk

www.purleyonthames.net

THE HAND OF FRIENDSHIP

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

Babs Waring 942 8844

Gladys Morris 942 3610

PURLEY PATHFINDERS

A WALKING GROUP FOR LADIES

At least it seems spring is here! It's great to be outside in the sunshine amongst the spring flowers – we've certainly waited long enough for both! We've had some great walks whilst looking for signs of spring. Through an avenue of majestic horse chestnut trees full of 'sticky buds' encapsulating an explosion of spring, we made our way down Bolney Lane between Caversham and Henley. Soon we stood beside a beautiful garden with an impressive miniature garden railway. We were delighted when, from amongst the shrubs appeared the train being driven by its owner. We were given a good demonstration of the power of steam in miniature as the engine made its way along the twisting track, in and out of the shrubs and flower borders. Set within the beautifully manicured grounds stands the grand station complete with a station clock, reminding us that time was passing, and so we continued on towards the River Thames. Through the meadows we walked the riverside stretch known as 'Cottage Reach'. The river was very calm, rippled only by diving grebes, mallard ducks, and a couple of swans, one of which, surprisingly in this rural setting, was black. The opposite bank showed white patches of chalk, and we noticed the ragged arch bridge built with stones taken from Reading Abbey.



On reaching Marsh Lock we stopped to read the plaque highlighting the Salmon Leap here. Beside us the weir roared and frothed spectacularly as the river dropped from one level to another. Wooden bridges, originally built for barge horses, took us right out above the weir. We left the river to continue on its journey into Henley, and headed for Harpsden where gardens showed signs of spring with daffodils beginning to open. On reaching St Margaret's Church, where Roman floor tiles lie in the porch, we

took a break, giving us time to explore inside its lovely church with wonderful stain glass windows and fine brasses. Back outside we admired the barn walls opposite, built using wallpaper printing blocks. Our walk continued with a climb into the lovely Harpsden Wood, a SSSI having over 40 species of the ground cover plants associated with ancient woodland. After a pleasant meander through the wood, we dropped down a lane to reach the garden centre where we enjoyed lunch and a browse around the floral displays and other gifts on sale for the forthcoming Mothering Sunday.

Our last walk before breaking for Easter was dedicated to Brunel, one of the top 100 Britons, and whose 200th birthday fell on 9 April 2006. Famous for The Great Western Railway, and his designs of super viaducts and bridges, we set out to find evidence of his work. We began by crossing a different bridge, the Toll

Bridge at Whitchurch, from where we gained lovely views up and down the river. The Thames Path took us alongside the mill and church before climbing out of the village to join the peaceful bridleway along a wooded path which undulates above the waters of the River Thames. Green shoots at our feet and blossom beside gave us more signs of spring. Across the water we could see Basildon House set grandly on the hillside opposite. Below the waterfowl became more exotic as the river flowed past the grounds of Beale Park.

Arriving at the BBOWT we took the opportunity to climb a short way up the hillside to be rewarded with a magnificent view along the river as it flows under the Brunel Bridge at Gatehampton. The scene was one of peaceful rolling countryside surrounding the church at Lower Basildon. Sheep grazed the green meadows, and a tractor moved silently backwards and forwards to create a new landscape of brown furrows. We could have stayed much longer, but we dragged ourselves away to continue our walk which soon found us beside the Thames as it flows through Little Meadow Nature Reserve. Numerous birds, including skylarks, appreciate this area for its 'larder' full of food. As we approached the Brunel Bridge we experienced two of Brunel's great achievements as a train sped magnificently across the bridge. We continued on the scenic path as it passed beneath the bridge, joined by a boat skimming along on the river. Three cormorants sat on a tree overseeing the activity as we pressed on into Goring. Here we enjoyed lunch before celebrating Brunel further by being transported home courtesy of 'his' railway via 'his' bridge!



Spring has arrived just in time for our Springtime Special this week which this year involves a Horse Drawn Barge trip along the Kennet & Avon Canal to Hungerford. Our weekly walks continue within our 'Waterways' theme with walks planned around Twyford Lakes, along The River Loddon, The River Pang and The River Kennet. May is 'birthday month'. We will be 7 years old on 11 May and celebrations this year will take place in the 'watery' village of Blewbury with a walk, picnic, and tour of Blewbury Manor House Garden with its lakes, streams and moat! How's that for a 'Waterways' theme?!

Photos taken on our walks can be viewed on our website, which is updated every two months as the new programme comes out. Any ladies wanting a copy of the programme can just give me a ring or contact me via the website. You'll be made very welcome.

www.purleypathfinders.co.uk

Nicki Woodward
984 2112 (niw2001@lineone.co.uk)

PURLEY W.I.

Those of us who attended this year's Spring Council Meeting at the Hexagon, Reading were highly amused to hear the vet, James Wight give a detailed account concerning his vet father, James Herriot. Some tales were given in a true Yorkshire accent, so what more could we have asked for?

BREAST AWARENESS DECORATED BRA

We have been encouraged to decorate an old bra to be displayed in September at the Newbury Show. We have been asked to be quite outrageous, it really doesn't bear thinking about – but you do have to keep abreast of events don't you? This should help to quell the Jam and Jerusalem image!

The same day we were dazzled by yet another experienced speaker whose industry was producing very attractive pewter goods. From tin mines, this metal plus other alloys are transformed into attractive working objects, ornamental items and even personalised gifts. We were quite stunned at the simplicity of the equipment and apparatus that produced these goods, but of course the final artistic touches are provided by Mr. Doble and his wife.

COMPETITIONS

Flower of the month: 1st Kathleen Devine, 2nd Kath Hodge

Pewter Item: 1st Lesley Honnor, 2nd Edna Bint

Next months meeting will discuss this year's Resolutions. The competition will be *Another Resolution* and there will be a Plant Stall. The meeting will be held on Wednesday, 10 May at Purley Memorial Hall, Glebe Road, Purley starting at 7.30pm with visitors welcome.

Sylvia Conquest
941 1936

Farmers' Market – 2nd Saturday of the month – next one: 13 May

MEAT-YOUR- MATES-AT-THE- MARKET

PURLEY HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY

SPRING SHOW

Despite the late spring, exhibitors staged one of the largest number of exhibits at any of the 22 spring shows that have been held. The judge, David Penny, commented very favourably on the number and quality of the exhibits, taking into account the cold spring weather. It is not always appreciated how much work goes into organizing shows and the work done by the support staff in drawing up the schedule of classes, finding judges, completing exhibitors cards, working as stewards, putting up and taking down tables and paying out prize money on show days, so grateful thanks to those involved as well as to the exhibitors and



visitors who came to view exhibits and hopefully enter exhibits in future shows and win prizes.

COACH TRIP TO LULLINGSTONE CASTLE

We are 10-15 people short of the required number to make this trip viable at a very reasonable price, which is £7 per person cheaper than Goldline charges. The forms to confirm a booking and pay the fare will be available at the Trading Store or from J. Armstrong and have to be returned by mid-May. It is hoped that the programme on BBC2 will stimulate interest in the visit.

PLANT SALE

This will take place in the Purley Memorial Hall car park on Saturday, 20 May from 9.30am until 11.30am (approx). Bedding plants will be available. Please try and come along and support the Society as this is a fund raising event for us.

TRADING

The Store in the Memorial Hall Car Park is open on Saturdays and Sundays from 10am until 11am. Membership numbers and takings at the Trading Store are lower this year than at the corresponding date last year. While this may be partly due to the cold spring weather, it is hoped that the situation will improve with the warmer weather and increase in members' gardening activities. The Society depends on the support of members renewing subscriptions and buying their requirements, whenever possible, at the Trading Store. Members can also help the Society by informing friends and neighbours about the Society and encouraging new members to join and benefit from what the Society has to offer for the small membership fee of £1.50 a year. You can still order Suttons seeds, young plants and other items in the catalogue, which is available at the Trading Store or from Mrs. M. Rolfe, (941 7427) who co-ordinates orders. Another catalogue with a wide range of gardening items, obtaining at discount prices through the Society, is also available at the Trading Store. If you wish to order items or have any queries, please contact Bob Hawkins, Trading Secretary.

23RD LATE SUMMER SHOW

This will be held in Purley Memorial Hall on Saturday, 9 September. Schedules will be available late May.

Marion Dabbs
942 2349

HELP BEALE PARK CELEBRATE THEIR 50TH ANNIVERSARY

Beale Park Wildlife Park and Gardens at Lower Basildon are looking for more volunteers to help with a variety of gardening projects on their 350 acre site. This is a special year for the park, celebrating 50 years since Gilbert Beale founded the Child-Beale trust.

If you are interested in volunteering and would like further information, please contact Rob Isenor (Head Gardener) on 0870 777 7160.



PANGBOURNE & DISTRICT VOLUNTEER CENTRE

If you need help with transport, or know of anyone else who does, please contact us.

Volunteer drivers always needed! Do you have a few spare hours? Car drivers are needed to transport clients to hospitals, also for local journeys to doctors, etc. Help in the office is also required. Office opening hours: Mon/Wed/Thurs/Fri 9.30am to 11.30am. Please come and join us.

Call 984 4586 or pop into The Committee Room, Pangbourne Village Hall.

Purley Parish News

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I welcome all contributions to this magazine, particularly on local issues and events. Contributions can either be delivered in writing or by email. Please note however, I reserve the right to edit contributions to suit space availability and to maintain consistency of style (font etc). Local event adverts can be accommodated but space is limited; landscape format copy is preferred in this case as it allows a ½ page entry to be published. If specially preparing content, please set your page size to A5.

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This magazine is published on the first Saturday of each month (except August). The price of each issue is 35p with a discounted annual subscription price of £3.50 for eleven issues.

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

This edition published	Next edition copy deadline	Next edition published
6 May 2006	20 May 2006	3 June 2006

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Purley Parish News is printed by Richfield Graphics Limited