

*In this issue*

**December 1996**

**Limewash and  
Limelight**

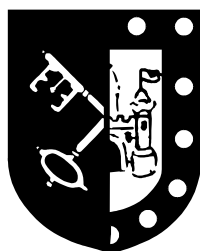
**Mending the  
Boiler - the Gas  
Man Cometh**

**Berkhamsted in  
the Gambia**

**Journey to the  
Lost World**

**Coopers Dip**

**This month's  
Notes & Events**



*for Town and Parish*

**25p**



## *The Parish Magazine of St Peter's with All Saints'*

Welcome to the December issue of the *Review*.

It's *that* time of year again. Christmas - and we wish you a very merry one when it arrives - and the timing of many regular bills around the turning of the year make a lot of calls on our pockets over the coming month or so. We must however, at this season, ask you to pay your annual subscriptions for the *Review*.

There is some good news. At £2.50 our annual subscription has been unchanged since 1986. We think that we can hold it at this level at least for the coming year. It represents a good discount of a sixth (16%) compared to the cost of paying the full 25 pence for each issue through the year. And you get it delivered!

**Please renew your subscription if you can. If you don't already have one please take out one right away. Please give your money to your local distributor. If you don't know who that is, please ask Daphne Montague (875320). Cheques should be made payable to *Berkhamsted Review*.**

Meanwhile we are, as ever, keen to receive contributions, including photographs and drawings. Relevant deadlines are given below.

*David Woodward*

### *In this month's issue...*

#### **Limewash and Limelight**

**Jessica Irons** blew away the dust at her *Cathedral Camp* at Wells.

#### **'Twas on a Monday morning...**

the gas man came to call, but still left **Vera Pullen** with a loft full of steam.

#### **Berkhamsted in the Gambia**

**Libby Grundy** visited the Gambia to help plan the library supported by funds from the 1996 Petertide Fair.

#### **Journey to the Lost World**

**Helen Appleyard** recalls her hair-raising moments on the Ashlyns School expedition to Venezuela.

#### **Coopers Dip**

William Cooper's cure for sheep scab put Berkhamsted on the industrial map. **Stephen Halliday** dips into its history.

*... plus much more, including our regular features, your letters, dairy dates and notes & notices.*

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**Next Copy Dates (all Fridays): 6 December 3 January 31 January\***

*(\* note early date due to short month of February)*



***Fr Mark Bonney  
wants us to sing  
our hearts out  
at Christmas.***

## ***review*** leader

When I was at university, due to the timing of the end of term, we always seemed to celebrate Advent Sunday on the last Sunday in November or first

Sunday in December, and then have the Christmas carol service during the following week plus the Christmas party and be home the following weekend just in time to be taken on as extra help by the Post Office (that dates me!). The beautiful Advent season was sadly truncated. That, of course, is what happens in the secular world too, except that Advent doesn't even get a mention.

The purists among us will complain about Christmas carols before Christmas; and it's far too easy a bandwagon to get on to complain about the materialism of Christmas, so I won't do that (after all, rather a large number of Christians make a significant consumer contribution at this time of year anyway and have little room to complain). When it comes to carols before Christmas I can't help feeling that there are some battles not worth fighting. We will surely benefit the Kingdom more by rejoicing that people want to sing carols at all, and speaking a word in season at the appropriate time.

That is why I am very happy to welcome the well-known evangelist J. John to St Peter's on Thursday 12th December to speak in the context of a carol service organised by the Association of Berkhamsted Churches (with all monies going to the Iain Rennie Hospice). Come along and invite your friends to do what everyone loves doing at this time of year - singing carols - and at the same time hear once again the great story of the birth of

Christ proclaimed afresh by a voice some of us haven't heard before.

Whilst not wanting to fight the lost battle of carols before Christmas it is important not to lose sight of the intense yearning that is at the heart of Advent. We find that deep yearning in lines of Advent hymns like *O Come, O Come Emmanuel*. It is a yearning and expectancy for the coming of Christ's kingdom in power that properly results in penitence so that 'Christ may be born in our hearts today'. I hope and pray that the wish of so many to sing carols before Christmas may in some small part be a sign of a yearning and desire deep within for something that the consumerism of this season cannot fill. A yearning and desire that it may be difficult to articulate, perhaps even to recognise, but which through our prayers and faithfulness God in his own time will satisfy as he only can.

*Father Mark*



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### High Street Architecture

What will happen to the old Waitrose building in the High Street when Kingsgate is opened? Rumours abound. Perhaps by the time this issue of the *Review* is out we will know.

In fact the store is in two buildings which were made into one when Woolworth's left town over 20 years ago. Waitrose, which was already established in half of their present premises, acquired the shop next door and about doubled the size of their store.

It seems likely that the present building will be kept as one or two lettings rather than knocked down and redeveloped. This is a pity, as from the point of view of the townscape almost anything would be an improvement on what is there now.

### Award-Winning Design

Round about the same time in the 70's when Waitrose expanded, all the old buildings between their store and the Town Hall were pulled down. There was a pub, the White Hart, and Boots' old shop which was in at least two rather poky old buildings. We wondered then what would go in their place.

The new buildings were designed by the local architects Melvin Lansley and Mark. If you look now at what was done you may not particularly like some of the features; but you can see that the design of the whole block was carefully thought out to be in a modern style while keeping the mixture of scale and intimacy of the old High Street.

The skyline is broken up and on different levels, and above the shop fronts the frontage moves forwards and back. In 1978 this development was rightly given a Civic Trust commendation.

### Chimneys without Smoke

The scaffolding has finally come down from above the roof of the Sayer Almshouses in the High Street, and to the casual glance there is not much to show for all the work that has been going on.

What has happened is that the three big chimney stacks which had become dangerously shaky have been carefully taken down and then rebuilt to look as nearly as possible as they did before.

This apparently simple operation has involved the services of an architect, a structural engineer and the planners, not to mention a protracted headache for Jim Pullen, the clerk to the Trust which is responsible for the building.

A sample panel of brickwork had to be built and approved before rebuilding the chimney stacks could start. The whole operation took much time and effort and cost a packet.

### The King's Cook

The almshouses take their name from the local man of influence who had them built - John Sayer, Charles II's cook. There is a panel on the front of the building which reads 'The Gift of John Sayer Esq., 1684'. Sayer also has a memorial in St Peter's - a large tomb chest with a florid Latin inscription.

The almshouses were intended for poor widows and have been used for this purpose for over 300 years, although they were altered not so long ago to form four larger



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houses rather than the original six. None of them now has a fireplace so there is no need for any chimneys.

However, it is a Grade II listed building which means that its appearance cannot be altered without consent of the planners. It was they who insisted that the chimney stacks be rebuilt just as they had been before. Responsibility for forking out for this rested with the owners, in this case a small local charitable trust.

As it turned out a contribution towards the costs was obtained but the principal funding agency in this field, English Heritage, normally only makes grants to Grade I or Grade II\* (*starred*) listed buildings. I think we only have two Grade I buildings in Berkhamsted - the Castle and the Tudor part of the Boys' School.

### **Rubbing it in**

Some *Review* readers have taken delight in drawing attention to my mistake in the September issue where I referred to the Dickens novel as *Edwin Druid*. Another was my use of discrete when I meant discreet. Unfortunately the spell check on one's computer only picks up misspelt words - not schoolboy howlers.

Talking of *faux pas* Frank Norman tells me that his company did some work for the Wellcome foundation at Crewe. Meetings were held in Crewe Hall in which there is a small but very charming chapel. Their site agent showed it to a visitor from Head Office, and as he ushered him in he whispered very reverently 'It is fully concentrated you know'.

### **Behind the Facade**

The decline of Berkhamsted's industry will take another step next year with the departure of AgrEvo. Many people who drive past their premises may wonder what goes on in that strange assortment of industrial and office buildings.

Some years ago I enquired from one of the directors about what actually came out of the laboratories there. I was told in a hushed tone that the researchers who work



*What lies in store for the Waitrose site?*

there had over the years 'come up with some very interesting molecules'.

Between the two big blocks facing the High Street is a low, ugly building which you can't normally see into. But on a hot day when the windows are open you can see a busy, old fashioned production line, complete with conveyor belt and a surprising number of people working on it. When I last peered in they were filling aerosols with *Raid*, a product on sale in local shops for squirting at insects.

### **Mystery Plants**

Did you notice the strange looking plants which sprang up in the summer round the base of the new young tree in the street near the *Barbers Shop*? They did not look at all like native wild flowers, and they grew and grew. Speculation was rife. Were they some alien intruders, even triffids? Informed local opinion came to the conclusion that they were nothing more exotic than sunflowers, and their seeds must have come from the parrot's cage in the shop. Alas, we will never know for sure because when they were on the point of flowering the Council, in an unusual fit of zeal, came along and pulled them all up.

### **Thought for the Month**

In the December 1975 *Review* Percy Birtchnell wrote: 'The Christmas greeting card trade may not be so brisk this year now we have to pay 6½p for a stamp.' ❖

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There are two sides to Wells Cathedral. One side is the magnificent one; the imposing rows of gothic statues gracing the west front; the arches which soar heavenwards, lifting the viewer's eyes and spirit; and the astounding detail inscribed upon the scores of carved capitals. These are the joys the average visitor is privileged to experience. But there is another side to Wells; a side which, though equally important, hardly rejoices in the same clouds of glory. Clouds there certainly are, but they are clouds of dust, cobwebs and ancient plaster; clouds which suddenly assume an uncomfortable familiarity if one is inspired to become a volunteer worker in the cathedral during the summer months...

It all began by the vicar's steps, on a bright, cloudless morning in mid-August. There we were: an enthusiastic (if perhaps misguided) selection of students, all sporting red T-shirts of a particularly vivid hue, with the words *Cathedral Camps* emblazoned upon them in large white letters. I, for one, had little idea what was to be in store for me, and mercifully so: had I but known, I would scarcely have awaited the distribution of tasks with such expectant interest.

First, the limewash. Or, to be more precise, the preliminary scraping down of the walls in question. This involved three uncomfortable hours' subjection to the jarring noise of harsh wire brushes squeaking relentlessly across old plaster. In a matter of minutes, the air was thick with

## Limewash & Limelight

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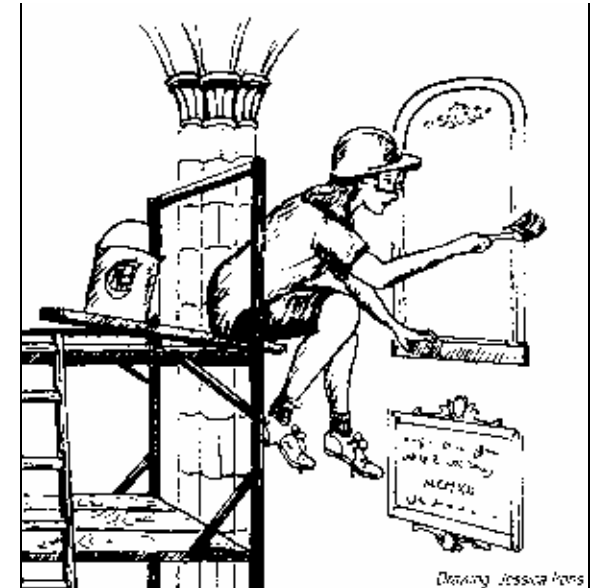
Still putting off painting that bedroom? **Jessica Irons** took on a whole cathedral!

---

stifling white dust, and it was virtually impossible either to see or to breathe. We emerged, unrecognisable, when the hour of lunch was at hand, prematurely grey and wrinkled under our layers of plaster, and wandered across the cathedral green in an

almost ghostly procession much to the amusement of the passing locals.

After this baptism by limewash to the life of a cathedral camper, at least I knew what to expect - and what to appreciate... Having endured clouds of plaster, as well as the doubtful delights of cleaning two towers and a coal cellar, and nearly disappearing down a large well, I accepted the chance actually to limewash the south cloisters with some alacrity. The scaffolding was precarious, and we had various close encounters with the projecting monuments. These included a statue of St Paul, and a marble cherub who seemed to be surveying our endeavours



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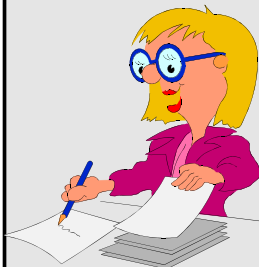
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with a critical eye. But the bright, clean atmosphere of the cloisters themselves, the relative absence of the clouds of dust and plaster, and the faint sound of the choir practice in the cathedral amply made up for any of the discomfort and difficulties which we had to suffer.

There were, indeed, many redeeming features to the week. Not only were we greatly entertained by the jazz musicians at the Wells Festival, but the Tunstall Choir, who were visiting the cathedral at the time, were a treat in themselves. In fact, as many of their members had been students at Durham together, I felt a particular affinity with them which intensified my enjoyment of their music.

And then there was the limelight...

'Cathedral Camps' - an organisation of which I knew little prior to my decision to become a volunteer - was in the process of celebrating its fifteenth anniversary. It happened to designate the camp at Wells as worthy to participate in the various festivities. And so, much to our surprise and interest, our last day of work included

the visits of both Baroness Blatch (with her substantial entourage) and the local television and radio... I never managed to witness my brief moment of fame, polishing misericordes on the local television broadcast, but the sight of the baroness and her private secretary rubbing away at the carvings with every appearance of zealous enthusiasm was reward enough in itself.

Whether or not they truly experienced both sides of life in Wells cathedral, only they themselves will ever know. I certainly did, and can honestly say that, whatever my reservations about clouds of dust and plaster, no time in a cathedral is ever really wasted. I returned home with an amusing collection of sketches, and with my mind full of anecdotes. The comment made to me by one of the jazz musicians stands out with particular clarity: "I used to be an art teacher", he informed me, "but now I spend my time travelling around, looking at the greatest works of art in the world: our cathedrals..."?



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In August 1995 we had our boiler serviced. We were told that some new parts were needed which were no longer available. Our old Potterton boiler had provided hot water and central heating for well over 20 years, so we were not surprised and decided to have a modern wall boiler which, we hoped, could be fitted in the downstairs loo. That afternoon a young man arrived, complete with his lap-top computer, and agreed we could have a new 'Ideal' boiler fitted where we suggested. We paid the full amount and waited hopefully. Sure enough, the next week two young men arrived, fitted our new boiler, removed the old one and departed, assuring us that we could start using it.

You may remember last autumn was very warm. So it wasn't until the middle of October that we started to use the central heating. Shortly afterwards Jim had occasion to go up into the loft and found it was very damp with water dripping off the rafters. We assumed we had roof trouble, and called in a man to check. He said it wasn't the roof, which was very sound, and it must be something to do with the boiler.

We phoned the gas company who sent a chap to have a look. He vanished into the loft, came down and said, "It's OK now". It wasn't. We still had steam in the loft if the boiler was turned up above minimum heat. During the next few weeks we had a variety of men from the gas company who, after going up to look, all thought it would 'be OK now'. It wasn't!

## Don't talk to me about the Gas Board!

---

**Vera Pullen** is all steamed up with her new gas boiler.

---

In the end we asked if we could have an engineer to see what he could find. Eventually one came who decided we needed an extra pump in the loft. He would send an estimate of the cost for that and for a small radiator to be fixed in the kitchen

(which was cold without a boiler in it.) The estimate arrived - for well over £500.

Remembering my mother's advice, 'Always go to the top', we wrote to the managing director of the gas company, sending copies to the local people and to the maker of our new boiler. Two days later a representative from the manufacturers arrived, went up into the loft and found the trouble immediately. The pipe into the expansion tank should have been *not less than 18 inches* and was in fact less than 6! He would report this to the gas company immediately.

A few days later a representative from the gas company arrived from Norwich, and said if only they would allow him to carry a bit of piping and a few tools with him he could fix it in five minutes! Not to worry, he would make sure two lads came within a few days. It was now February. Two lads came, went up into the loft once more, did the job, fixed a small new radiator in the kitchen and at last our house was warm again. A week or two later we had a phone call from the gas company telling us that they wouldn't expect us to pay the £500 plus! I said we had no intention of doing so anyway, somewhat tersely I'm afraid! ❖



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# Tujereng Update

In June the Petertide Fair raised £2,500 to set up a library in Tujereng in the Gambia.

**Libby Grundy** updates us on the progress so far.

Just one year ago I set out for the Gambia along with seven other teachers and a great deal of trepidation to investigate whether a link could be set up between a group of Hertfordshire schools and the village of Tujereng. One year on this October, I found myself again sitting under the familiar baobab tree with the village elders, imam and alkalo (priest and mayor) assorted villagers and twelve 'toobabs' (the English contingent), this time discussing how the proceeds of the Petertide Fair should be spent!

How could I have imagined when I was sitting in Berkhamsted that this would

be a straightforward affair? Where to put the library, and what form it should take, was clearly a major issue which involved all the above and anyone else who was passing the time of day under the tree. Some wanted a brand new building in a central location (not enough money for that!), some wanted it to be school-based,



some felt this would be too exclusive... the arguments flew to and fro in Mandinka. We couldn't get an English word in edgeways, and we kept our counsel until it was agreed that on the small acorn, large oak tree principle, the library should start in the school. If it worked successfully there, then a move to an independent building could be considered at some stage in the future.

Later in the week further meetings took place with the new headmaster of the primary school, who was really delighted to have the opportunity to improve resources within the school and to encourage literacy amongst the children in school and at home. He will keep me up to date with progress, and I felt I was leaving the project in safe hands.

By the end of the week and several discussions later, a



*The room in the primary school in Tujereng which will become the new library*

# CUTTING COMMENTS

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Local Councillor **Norman Cutting** continues his tour through council committee life.

---

large room in the school had been designated for the library. It has a new tin roof, and work on plastering, painting and furnishing it should begin any day now (well, that's according to GMT - Gambian Maybe Time!) The money we raised will also cover shelving and some furniture, training a librarian and buying some appropriate books for the children in the Gambia. We have already shipped out some second-hand children's books, and I very much hope, if funds allow, this will be an ongoing process.

For me it was very exciting to see the whole project begin to take off. I feel that what we have done will really make a difference to the school and the village, and I would like to thank again everybody who worked so hard at the Petertide Fair to achieve this success. ❖

*Libby Grundy wrote about the Tujereng project in the January 1996 Review. If you would like to help the project and be involved in other ways such as child sponsorship, donation or simply by saving old T-shirts and candles, please give Libby a call on 875814.*

This issue will be concentrating on the planning committee which, in the first section of each meeting, discusses general planning and environmental issues which may affect the town. These include the 'traffic calming', the county waste plans, Agenda 21, the borough local plan and the County Structure Plan. In the second part, these meetings discuss the local planning applications that have been received during the previous three weeks. Believe it or not, we look at about 10 applications for developments at each meeting.

The three main issues during the early months of our tenure were the application from the Berkhamsted School to build on Tomkins Meadow, the dreaded experiment with traffic management following the building of the by-pass and the design of the street name plates as promoted by the previous administration at Hemel Hempstead.

The Tomkins Meadow application by the Berkhamsted School made the mistake of attempting to build on open space within the town. It is generally accepted that we have a shortfall in open space within the town and so the application was refused. The school has plans to expand and applied earlier this year for a scheme on part of their sports grounds adjacent to Kings Road, only to be met with similar comments. No doubt yet another application will be forthcoming in the future and unless the school has a rethink,

both the town council and the borough will be giving the project yet another thumbs down.

The town centre enhancement scheme, which is still in progress, is part of six national projects to try to deliver improvements to town centres once the through traffic has been removed to a nearby by-pass. These schemes have not met with the general approval that it was hoped they would do. We are not alone in our concerns and hope that perhaps once they have finished and we have been allowed, say, two years to get used to the changes, we can put forward any suggestions we feel would make life more pleasant for the townsfolk and visitors.

The other on-going matter that spills over from the Transport & Highways committee is the design of the new street nameplates. The majority of towns and villages wanted a plain name-plate but the borough still wants to promote the 'corporate image'. The latest news is that within the conservation area, if requested, signs will be in black letters on a white background complete with the D.B.C. logo and the normal green letters on a cream background elsewhere. Mind you, this could change, watch this space.

The committee has been making comments on the assorted consultation drafts issued by both the county council and the borough on subjects as diverse as moorings on the canal, the Economic Development Strategy 1996-7, the County Structure Plan 1991-2011 and the Dacorum Residential Character Study. The one that will have the greatest impact on our town over the next 10 to 15 years is the County Structure Plan which is calling for an additional 65,000 homes to be built in the county during this timescale.

Allowing for dwellings already built, planned or land identified for possible house building, it leaves around 1500/1700 dwellings to find land for in Dacorum. Much anguish and hand wringing has gone on at borough over the last year, with both councillors and the management team trying to provide an acceptable solution to a difficult problem. The outcome, as far as Berkhamsted is concerned, is that we have to find space for around 250 dwellings on land not yet identified for building. Green belt is the obvious target and I suggest that we may have to decide which bits of the green belt around the town we would be prepared to lose. The good news is that the borough response to the county plan suggests the phased release of land within Dacorum and we are the last phase out of six. The town council has made it clear that it will resist any development on the green belt although this may be easier said than done.

As a personal view, I find it difficult to relate the perceived overcrowding in the south-east with a policy encouraging even more housing in the area. As the basis of all these strategies comes from national government, this would have been a golden opportunity to encourage employment and population movement gently away from the south-east. The green belt was devised to provide a 'breathing space' around London and here we are, proposing reducing this valuable facility. It can be done - look at Milton Keynes - but requires more vision than being currently employed. The borough council have done the best they can within the restraints provided by County who, in turn, had a directive from national government. ❖





W

alking off the plane in Caracas, the first thing that hit us all was the humidity. We had been told about the many possible dangers in Caracas and were aware of the high crime rate so had to be very careful. Plans had been made for Henrico, a local man, to come and meet us

at the airport. But there was no sign of him, so we hired a man and his bus to take us to the hotel. This showed us how things would be in the month to come.

The following day we hired a bus for the next stage of our journey. This took us to the small village of San Francisco where we were to start our trek to Roraima - one of the table top mountains, the Lost World of Conan Doyle.

When we arrived in the early hours of the morning the locals gathered around and watched us. It was raining and we had nowhere to stay. A local family cleared out of their home for the night so we could stay there. The small amount that we had agreed to pay made it worth their while to surrender their rooms. We were grateful for the shelter and floor space, spread out our sleeping bags, covered ourselves in mosquito repellent, and slept.

The next morning, after breakfast including traditional sweet coffee, local guides took us in jeeps to a drop off point. The walk on the first day was a tough one. We camped that night next to a river which we would have to cross the following morning.

The next day didn't go as planned. Due to the vast rainfall we had to wait over two hours for the river to die down enough for us to be able to cross. We then each had to walk across the powerful, thigh deep river, whilst clinging on to a

## Journey to the Lost World

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**Helen Appleyard has some decidedly awkward moments in Venezuela with the Ashlyns School expedition.**

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rope and using a stick for balance. After more trekking we came across the second of the rivers and stood on the bank in disbelief. It was a wide swelling river flowing violently fast. There was no way we would be able to cross it. We were then faced with a very difficult decision. What were we going

to do? The river was far too dangerous to cross that day but crossing it was the only way to achieve our aim of climbing Roraima. As it was, we were stuck between two rivers and had the first one also swollen we would have been stranded. We took the decision to go back over the first river and camp where we had been the night before.

That evening was awful. We had to talk out just what we would do. It took several hours of discussion to come to a decision, and this was made even harder by the fact that we had known each other for less than a week. There were many factors we had to consider. The amount of food we had, the strength of the group, risks in climbing, and, even if we could get across the rivers, would we get stranded on the way back? But this was an aim on the itinerary, and for some, the main goal on the expedition. I believe that the challenge of having to make that decision was one of the most taxing parts of the expedition and taught us a lot. Finally we decided that although we wanted to get to the top, the risks involved were too great and we didn't want to put the other phases of the expedition in jeopardy. The adults with us worried that with this decision the team might break down, some feeling let down and others holding personal grudges. But, the decision had been made. The next day we would start back to San Francisco.

Contrary to what had been feared, we actually got on really well: having to make the decision had made us all feel a lot closer as a team. The walk back was amazing. It poured with rain and the rivers swelled. It was almost as if the weather was reassuring us that we had taken the right decision. It was so warm that walking along in T-shirts and soaked to the skin we didn't feel cold. Paths which we had walked down two days earlier had become waterfalls. It made it harder going and pretty treacherous in places with steep slippery mud banks. When we arrived back at a village of about four huts we found an old hut which the animals used for shelter (it smelt accordingly) missing one wall. As we took shelter in here to wait for the jeeps again the rain continued to hammer down and we were feeling the cold. We set up the stoves and made ourselves warm drinks.

It was dark by the time the jeep arrived to take us back to San Francisco. There was only one and so we piled half of the kit and team into it and the other half was to stay in the village and wait for it to return. I was in the first load. The journey back was perhaps one of the scariest parts of the expedition. The mud tracks had turned into swirling mud baths. The jeep found it impossible to grip and on more than one occasion we came close

to toppling over. It was terribly frightening. There were tears, there were raised voices and at other times just a rather terrified silence.

It was a relief when we reached the river and the driver of the jeep told us he would go and fetch the others. Then the jeep drove off. It was a strange feeling as we were stranded then in the middle of nowhere just left to wait. We were in total darkness for a while. It is difficult to comprehend just what that means, not even a faint orange glow in the sky somewhere from a town far off. We worried. Had the jeep managed to get back up to the village? Were they getting down safely? Had the jeep turned over this time round? Eventually we saw two faint lights in the distance. In hind sight it had been exciting, but terrifyingly so and we were all relieved that it was over and we had been reunited.

The drive back to San Francisco was also an adventure with 'mucho problema' but we eventually we made it back at about 2:30 in the morning. As we piled out of the jeeps we asked the driver if he would be able to take us to St Helena, our next stop, in the morning. He said that would be OK. But it would be someone else who collected us. That was OK. At least we had got transport. Well, we'd have to wait and see.... ❖

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much more!!*

William Cowper (correctly pronounced 'Cooper') is much celebrated in Berkhamsted, with a road and a society named after him. Yet the 'other' William Cooper has had a more lasting effect on the town.

William Cooper arrived in Berkhamsted in the early 1840s. The precise date of his arrival is uncertain. His name does not appear in the census returns for 1841 but, by July 1845, he had an account with James Nash, a local blacksmith. At his death in 1885 the *Berkhamsted Times* claimed that he had been resident in the town for about 45 years. He had been born in 1813, the first child of William and Sarah Cooper of Clunbury in Shropshire in a property which still stands, called Eytons Tenement. William Cooper the father was, like his own father Thomas Cooper, a farrier. In those days this term did not simply mean a shoemaker but one who practised as a horse doctor and general practitioner in animal ailments - in fact the forerunner of the modern veterinary surgeon.

John King, the local carrier in Berkhamsted when William Cooper arrived, recorded that William Cooper lived originally in a little cottage in Castle Street opposite the lych gate to the Boys' school. The cottage was pulled down to form an entrance to

## *The Other William Cooper - Founder of an Industry*

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**Stephen Halliday** profiles William Cooper, whose company has been part of Berkhamsted for well over a century.

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Manor Close but by 1851 he was recorded as living in a small house two doors east of the old police station. The present police station stands on the site of Cooper's house.

One of his apprentices, George Gomm, recorded that William Cooper

was 'most striking, standing over 6ft in height and well built, with a keenly intellectual face and broad, deep forehead, surrounded with a wealth of iron grey curls'. He was evidently also rather quick tempered. The son of one of Cooper's head foremen recorded that: 'Dad and he were occasionally at loggerheads; he had to sack Dad about once a month, but he always sent for him the following morning. He was always apologetic. "Now Dean, let it be understood between us that whenever I sack you, always turn up at 6 o'clock the next morning". Sometimes Dad would not go to work next



*Illustration courtesy Sir Richard Cooper Bt.*

morning in his wrath and then he was sacked again but he stayed out his life with the firm nevertheless’.

William Cooper was one of the earliest members of the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons which was founded in 1844 and of which Cooper became a qualified member in 1849. He developed his famous remedy for sheep scab between the years 1843 and 1852, during which period he appears to have been making the dip with his own hands; a hazardous process since it involved creating a chemical reaction between arsenic and sulphur.

His first mill was built in 1852 but during this time he still continued his practice as a veterinary surgeon, even making provision in the first mill for stables for horses in his care. The first mill was erected in Ravens Lane and in the years that followed he developed a number of other compounds including Cooper’s Fly Powder, Cooper’s Foot Rot Powder, Wheat Dressing and Seed Protector. He purchased the site in Ravens Lane for his first mill for £140, borrowing the money from a Mr Olney, a canvas maker of Tring. On the same site he also built a dwelling for himself which he called Clunbury House after the village in Shropshire where he had been born. Originally, the mill was powered by horses but in 1867 he installed a 6 horse power steam engine made by a firm at Chenies in Buckinghamshire. It made such a noise that Cooper called it ‘Vesuvius’. By 1860 Cooper was selling over 27,000 packets of his dip and the success of the enterprise

was such that sales doubled again in the next four years.

William Cooper had no children of his own but he took into the business his nephew, William Farmer Cooper who himself qualified as a veterinary surgeon and is credited with developing the overseas sales of the business during the 16 years that he was with the firm prior to his untimely death in 1882 at the early age of 37. In 1920, the firm of William Cooper & Nephew was formed and in 1925 it became a public company under the name Cooper, McDougall and Robertson.

Coopers engaged its first salesman in 1879. His name was Henry Harrowell who had worked for a rival dipping manufacturer and who was responsible for a significant development of the company’s business overseas in South America, South Africa and Australasia. Harrowell settled in Australia in 1892 at Sydney and later transferred to New Zealand where he and his two sons set up subsidiaries for the Cooper business in those two countries. I wonder whether he is related in any way to Jim Harrowell about whom I wrote in the *Review* some months ago. Perhaps Jim will write and tell us.

William Cooper died on the 20th May, 1885 by which time his company employed about 120 people, all of whom followed him to his last resting place in the family vault in Berkhamsted Cemetery. A memorial window was dedicated to his memory in the north transept of St Peters Church, almost facing that of his wife.



*I have heard from a reliable authority that  
the Sgt Pepper concert this year raised  
£51,000 for local medical charities.  
Fantastic! Congratulations to all concerned.*

Stephen Halliday

**Stephen Halliday  
adds this footnote:**

The time of year is arriving when the distributors of the *Review* have to collect subscriptions for the new year. I am one of them. May I suggest to my fellow-distributors that each of us tries to add one new subscriber this year - a friend, neighbour, colleague or, in my case, a local business whom I shall be approaching. It must be the best value for any publication. John Cook's column, alone, is worth the cover price for its insights into some of our local places, objects and events. And it is, for some readers, probably their most regular contact with the Christian message. If any readers know of someone who would be interested, call Daphne Montague, who organises the distribution, and tell her. She'll pass on the details. Daphne's telephone number is inside the front cover.

SH



## The Coming Millennium

*What has humanity learnt in a thousand years,  
Do we really know more than our forebears,  
Though we've done wonders in our human mind,  
Have we softened our hearts, brought peace to  
mankind.*

*We may cure many ills, there's a surfeit of grain,  
But is the world free from hunger and pain.  
We have eased our labour, have more leisure,  
But has that been a boon, or even brought  
pleasure.*

*We have built the computer, also the bomb,  
Perfected the satellite, but also the missile,  
Borders are down, nations merged into union,  
But does that really mean they act in unison.*

*All this gives me great cause to wonder,  
If with the genocide such as seen in Rwanda,  
Have the years brought any real learning,  
Has mankind moved any nearer to God.*

S G Dollimore



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## reviewnorthchurch

**Jim Lawrenson**

**ponders on obstacles  
to Church unity**

Holidays are now almost forgotten, but as we took our holiday late, stretching into October, I would

like to share some thoughts that occurred to me during that time, partly triggered off by Malcolm asking me to have something ready for the December *Review*, by the end of October!

Holidays are a time for relaxation, reflection., and also an opportunity to catch up on one's reading. Unfortunately, in our last minute packing, I failed to include a book I intended to take with me. My wife did however take the Saturday's edition of *The Times*. Now, *The Times* is not normally regarded as inspired reading, especially not on the beaches of Greece! However, this issue did contain three items of special interest, each linked in one way or another with the others. They dealt with celibacy of clergy, the shortage of priests, and reunion of the Anglican and Roman Churches.

The first dealt with the misdemeanours of the Bishop of Argyll and The Isles, now known as Mr Wright. *The Times*, unlike other papers, dealt with the scandal in a very restrained fashion, and I would not wish to rehearse the details here. The bishop's actions, however, opened up the whole question of the celibacy of the priests in the Roman Catholic Church. Historically, it was not until the Middle Ages that the celibacy rule was formally imposed, and since that time not only has it been

abandoned in the other mainstream Churches - Orthodox, Anglican and Reformed - but again and again it has been broken within the Roman Church, by popes, bishops and clergy alike over the years. The latest incident has highlighted the problem once again for the young men, hoping to be ordained, yet wishing to marry. This has led to a decline in the numbers of men coming forward for ordination, and the consequent inability of the Roman Church to minister to vast areas in South America where the shortage is most acute, and where the church has to rely on the various orders of Nuns to minister to their sacramental needs. It was because of this that I expected that the Roman Church would have tackled the question of the ordination of women before we did in the Anglican Church. Unfortunately, though the problem has been discussed again and again, no definitive progress has been made. This is despite the fact that some branches of the Roman Church have accepted married

### Appointment of Rector at St Mary's Northchurch

*The Churchwardens are very pleased to announce that the Duchy of Cornwall, with the strong support of the Bishop of Hertford and St. Mary's PCC, has invited the Revd. Peter W. Hart, B.A., M.es L, M.Phil., to be our new Rector and that he has accepted.*

*Peter Hart trained for the ministry at Salisbury and Wells Theological College, and has held Assistant Curacies at Llansamlet and Sketty in Swansea. He is at present Priest-in-Charge of Warndon St Nicholas Ecumenical Parish in Worcester, a position he has held since 1992. Peter, who is 36, is married to Beverley; they have two daughters, Naomi (aged 9) and Imogen (aged 6). The date of Peter's Induction is likely to be early February.*

## What do they mean?

*Bill Frew writes:*

In the October *Review* John Cook refers to the arcane terminology which gets aired on special church occasions, to everyone's bewilderment.

Could I suggest that someone with the necessary knowledge contribute a piece defining and/or explaining some of these terms, particularly some which are in everyday use but probably without their proper meaning being generally understood. For instance, what is the difference between such simple (?) everyday words as *vicar*, *rector*, *parson*, *priest*, *minister* etc. and why and under what circumstances does an Anglican

rector style himself '*Father*' as I see the new incumbent at St Peter's does. Indeed, it might be possible to include a short list of definitions or explanations each month which in time would build up into a useful glossary.

Perhaps all those brought up as Anglicans know the answers to all these things but I am sure there are many like myself who were not but who are interested and who would benefit from such information.

31 Shrublands Road  
Berkhamsted HP4 3HX

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## *Northchurch Review (continued)*

clergy, and particularly here in England where married Anglican Priests, who have been unable to accept the ordination of women, have been received into the Roman Church. This anomaly has reopened the issue of celibacy, but any further progress is unlikely to be made under the present pope.

In another of the articles in *The Times*, the Rev. John Broadhurst, the leader of the traditionalist group *Forward in Faith* and a strong opponent of women priests, has called upon the Church of England to abandon its autonomy and seek to rejoin the Catholic Church, as he put it! That we need to move towards the reunion of the Churches goes without saying, but such a solution is unlikely to commend itself to the vast majority in either church. Reunion is more likely to come from the pressure at the grass roots, as I have experienced in my ministry. As long ago as 1940 when I was chaplain of Portland

Borstal Institution, at my suggestion the Roman Catholic chaplain and I shared joint evening prayers in the houses. In 1956 the Roman Catholic boys at Berkhamsted School were not permitted to come to my divinity lessons. By 1960, their various parish priests encouraged them to do so. And as many of you will know, in the Hemel Hempstead Deanery there are shared Anglican and Roman Churches. There are also of course shared Baptist, Methodist and Reformed Churches. Reunion will come, but we must continue to chip away at our own and others' prejudices that hinder progress.

As *The Times* leader summed up: 'What is required is flexibility, but that does not come naturally to a faith based upon unity, uniformity, and universality. For much of the past 2,000 years these elements have been a source of great strength. Without adaptation they may not be so in the future'. ❖

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## BEREAVEMENT SUPPORT GROUP

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We are hoping to set up a bereavement support group which would be a joint scheme with St Peter's and All Saints', both Anglican and Methodist churches. Referrals would be made by clergy to the co-ordinators of the group (Joan Cook, Sylvia Banks and Ruth Treves Brown) who would then ask a member of the group to make a visit. All visitors would have attended a bereavement support training course and would meet regularly in a support group. We are planning to hold a training course in the new year. If you think that you would like to be involved in this group or know more about it please contact either Joan (866278), Sylvia (871195) or Ruth (863268).

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## TUESDAY CLUB

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We start our Christmas celebrations with our party on 3rd December. It commences at 7:30pm with mulled wine. Thinking caps will be required! Further details from Thelma Harris (865785) or Rene Dunford (862420).

Tuesday Club members send warm greetings to all readers of the *Review*.

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## TOWN YOUTH COUNCIL

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*The Youth of a Nation are the  
Trustees of its Posterity.*

*- Disraeli*

At a time when radio, television and the press are going on and on and on about young people - the difficulties they face and the problems they are causing in the community, the town council is taking action to give youngsters an opportunity to have their say.

The newly formed community action committee is busily engaged in the creation of a town youth council - an assembly where the young people of Berkhamsted can meet and consider how they can participate more fully within the community.

Schools in the town are being contacted with the object of their holding elections to decide who should represent them on the youth council. The youth centre is playing an active

part and youth organisations such as guides and scouts will also hopefully become involved.

The town council doesn't claim to have invented the idea - Tring and Chesham already have youth councils up and running - but it is considered that the time is absolutely right to introduce the scheme to Berkhamsted.

Stanley Sharpe, who chairs the community action committee, is eager to get as many people as possible involved in ensuring that the youth council is as representative of the young people as can be achieved by the democratic process. If you feel that you could help or have some ideas which could further the project, contact the town clerk.

It is planned that the inaugural meeting of the Council should be in February next year.

"Far too often youngsters are viewed in a negative light", says Stanley Sharpe. "The reality is that they have lots of good ideas and care about what goes on in their town".

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## CAROL SINGING

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All are welcome to join with members of St Peter's and All Saints' in an evening of carol singing around the town on Wednesday 18th December. Proceeds this year are going to the RNLI appeal to purchase an inshore boat to be named *Berkhamsted*. We leave the Court House at 7:30pm and return for coffee and mince pies at around 9pm. More details are available from Georgina Tregoning on 871701.

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## WHOOPS!

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In the new FactFile page in the November *Review* we wrongly attributed the organisation of Sunday morning coffee at St Peter's. As several readers quickly pointed out, Rene Dunford (862420) has handled this valuable task for some 25 years and the editors can only apologise profusely for getting this wrong!

This highlights the need to keep the FactFile up to date, so if you notice any errors do please let the editors know; also please keep us informed of any changes to rotas, committee membership, contact points for the various activities we include and so on. Thank you!



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## CHRISTMAS MUSIC

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Many will recall that remarkable, evocative performance by the Chiltern Chamber Choir of Praetorius' *Christmas Mass* last December, which involved robust audience participation for the various chorales. This year the Chiltern Chamber Choir will be performing (in English this time!) Bach's *Christmas Oratorio* on Monday, 23rd December at 7:30pm in St Peter's Church. Once again, audience participation is invited. A limited number of 'Singers Tickets' is available to able and willing singers, who should attend the 'warm-up' rehearsal beforehand at 7:00pm. Music and tickets (at £4.00) are available from the Choir's director, Adrian Davis (864722) or from the Choir's secretary, Jean Green (863241). Normal tickets are available from *The Bookstack* at £6.00 each (concessions for children at £4.00).

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## CHORAL SOCIETY CONCERT

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Please support the concert by the Berkhamsted Choral Society on Saturday, 7th December in Berkhamsted School Centenary Hall (Kings Road) at **6:00pm** (not 6:30 as announced in the November *Review*). Tickets cost £5 for adults and £3 for children (not £2 as previously advertised). Bring all your family and friends and start Christmas with a song.

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## BERKHAMSTED W.I.

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Mrs. Odell, the president, opened the November meeting welcoming members and two visitors.

Five members and one husband had fun and enjoyed themselves taking part as a team representing the institute at a quiz in aid of the hospice. Four members had learned a great deal about the art of bead embroidery at a group craft day run by Mrs. Joyce Law.

Our speaker, Mrs. Donald, gave an amusing account of a 200 mile walk she undertook on her own from Hitchin to Dorchester following the old Drovers Route. She took 16 days. She had a tent, a sleeping bag and only absolute essentials as she back-packed her way across the countryside. She had been adventurous, even as a child, but she undertook this walk when her family had

grown up. She thought any experience was character training and always looked forward though you could only learn from the past.

She was an excellent raconteur and spoke amusingly of her encounters with various animals and people on her trek. She ended her journey in *The Black Swan* on the outskirts of Dorchester where the drovers used to meet at the end of their journey.

The draw for the bursary at Denham College was won by Mrs. Gladys Fenner with Mrs. Jean Gale available as a replacement if necessary.

Our next meeting is on 11th December at Gable Hall, Prince Edward Street, Berkhamsted at 7:30pm. Our play reading group will entertain and we shall end with the usual carols and circle of friendship.

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## BERKHAMSTED CASTLE W.I.

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Our president Joan Griffiths welcomed 31 members, two visitors and our guest speaker Mrs. June Smith MBE, county treasurer of Herts Federation W.I., at our meeting on 1st November. During the business part of the meeting members listened to reports given by the secretary, treasurer and president reminding us of the excellent speakers we have had during the past year and also our joining in Group 7 activities and outings.

Mrs. Smith presided over the election of a new president and Miss Elizabeth Baxendale was finally elected.

Mrs. Joan Griffiths was warmly thanked for her term as president and was presented with a garden token which she said she will use in her new garden on her retirement to North Devon.

On 6th December Dr A.R. Maisey will be talking to us on *Talking to Children - Silly Things Doctors Say* at the Court House, Berkhamsted at 2:00pm. Do come and bring a friend and enjoy a Christmas Party with us.

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## CHRISTMAS LIGHTS AND MINCE PIES

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The Christmas lights in the town centre will be turned on at 6:00pm on 29th November - all are invited. Father Christmas will be in attendance and bands will be providing musical accompaniment.

Coffee and mince pies will be available at the entrance of the Town Hall courtesy of the Friends of the Town Hall. Please do support this seasonal event. ❖

# reviewdiary

All services at normal times unless stated.

December 1996 / January 1997

## DECEMBER

|    |             |  |                               |
|----|-------------|--|-------------------------------|
| 1  | 11.15am     | Choral Matins  | <i>St Peter's</i>             |
| 1  | 6.30pm      | Evensong   | <i>All Saints'</i>            |
| 1  | 8.00pm      | Concert - The London Concertante                                   | <i>St Peter's</i>             |
| 4  | 7.30pm      | Alpha Course   | <i>All Saints'</i>            |
| 4  | 8.00-9.00pm | Advent Talk  | <i>St Peter's Lady Chapel</i> |
| 6  | 8.00am      | Anglican/Methodist Joint Prayers<br>followed by breakfast          | <i>All Saints'</i>            |
| 8  | 8.00pm      | Taize style worship  | <i>All Saints'</i>            |
| 10 | 10.00am     | Coffee & <i>goodies</i> in the Lower Hall before                   |                               |
|    | 10.30am     | Pram Service with Travelling Crib                                  | <i>All Saints'</i>            |
| 10 |             | Bishop Christopher's deanery visit followed by tea                 | <i>All Saints'</i>            |
| 10 | 6.30pm      | Choral Evensong to mark Bishop Christopher's<br>Deanery visit      | <i>St Peter's</i>             |
| 12 | 8.00pm      | Ecumenical Carol Service - Preacher: J John                        | <i>St Peter's</i>             |
| 15 | 7.30pm      | Berkhamsted School Carol Service                                   | <i>St Peter's</i>             |
| 16 | 9.15am      | Victoria School Eucharist  | <i>St Peter's Lady Chapel</i> |
| 19 | 7.30pm      | Thomas Coram Carol Service   | <i>St Peter's</i>             |
| 21 | 8.00am      | Ecumenical breakfast in the Court House<br>followed by prayers     | <i>St Peter's Lady Chapel</i> |
| 22 | 6.00pm      | Festival of Nine Lessons & Carols                                  | <i>St Peter's</i>             |
| 22 | 6.30pm      | Carol Service  | <i>All Saints'</i>            |
| 23 | 7.30pm      | The Christmas Oratorio:<br>JS Bach, the Chiltern Chamber Choir     | <i>St Peter's</i>             |
| 24 | 4.00pm      | Crib Service - collection for the Children's Society               | <i>St Peter's</i>             |
| 24 | 4.00pm      | Crib Service - collection for the Children's Society               | <i>All Saints'</i>            |
| 24 | 11.10pm     | Christmas Carols sung by the choir                                 | <i>St Peter's Lady Chapel</i> |
| 24 | 11.30pm     | The Procession to the Crib and<br>Midnight Mass of Christmas       | <i>St Peter's</i>             |
| 25 | 9.15am      | Sung Eucharist   | <i>All Saints'</i>            |
| 25 | 9.30am      | Sung Eucharist with donation of gifts to<br>the Children's Society | <i>St Peter's</i>             |

## JANUARY

|    |        |  |                        |
|----|--------|--|------------------------|
| 6  | 8.00pm | Epiphany - High Mass   | <i>St Peter's</i>      |
| 23 | 7.30pm | <i>Youth in our Care</i> - talk & discussion,<br>the Revd Ferial Etherington | <i>The Court House</i> |

## Baptisms (St Peter's)

13 October Phœbe Victoria Giles  
20 October Laura Eva Day

## Weddings (St Peter's)

19 October Amanda Kaye Booth & Andrew James Surry  
25 October Melanie Anne Langdale Seldon & Sean Michael Jerome

## Funerals

9 August John Richard Pocock The Chilterns Crematorium  
11 October Tom Fiske St Peter's (Chilterns Crematorium)

*Lack of space in this month's issue has meant we have had to omit the Review FactFile. It will be back next month.*



## K. D. WRIGHT

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Principal J.R.Adkins BSc (Hons) PGCE

The Revd Mark Bonney, The Rectory, Rectory Lane. Tel: 864194 (day off Monday)  
 The Revd Canon Basil Jones, 17 Lochnell Road. Tel: 864485  
 The Revd Jim Lawrenson (Hon.Asst.Priest), Downside, 7 Torrington Road. Tel: 865999  
 The Revd Preb Stephen Wells (Hon.Asst.Priest), 57 Meadow Road. Tel: 870981  
 Miss Marjorie Bowden (Reader), 18 Greenway. Tel: 871283  
 Mrs Joan Cook (Reader), The Gardeners Arms, Castle Street. Tel: 866278  
 John Malcolm (Reader), Landswood, Shootersway. Tel: 874993  
 Tom Montague (Reader), 27 Hill View. Tel: 875320  
 Mrs Jenny Wells (Reader), 57 Meadow Road. Tel: 870981  
 Parish Secretary: Mrs Jean Green, The Parish Office, The Court House Tel: 878227  
 Churchwardens: Christopher Green, 17 Cowper Road. Tel: 863241;  
 John Banks, Ladybrand, Cross Oak Road. Tel: 871195  
**Parochial Church** Secretary: Alan Conway, 7 Kilfillan Gardens. Tel: 865798  
**Council:** Treasurer: Michael Robinson, 36 Trevelyan Way. Tel: 863559

Director of Music: Vaughan Meakins. :01494 837412; Assistant: Mrs Jean Wild. 866859  
 Organist: Mrs Jean Cooper. Tel: 874088  
**Sundays**  
 8.00am Holy Communion (1st Sun Rite B)  
 9.30am Family Sung Eucharist with  
 Sunday Schools (in the Court  
 House) followed by coffee in  
 the Court House.  
 11.15am Matins & Sermon (1st Sunday only)  
 6.00pm Evensong & Sermon  
 (except 1st Sunday see All Saints')  
**Weekdays**  
 Holy Communion  
 Wednesday 6.45am  
 Thursday 11.00am  
 Friday 9.15am  
 Morning Prayer: Tues-Sat 7:30am  
 Evening Prayer: Tues-Fri 5:30pm  
 Holy Days - see weekly Notices  
 Matins & Evensong said daily  
**Confessions:** After Saturday Evening Prayer (5.00pm) or at other times by appointment.  
**Weddings, Banns of Marriage, Baptisms, Funerals**  
 Please contact Father Mark Bonney.  
**Bellringers (St Peter's):** Miss Priscilla Watt, 9 Kings Road. Tel: 863804

Organist: Mrs Valerie McCalla Tel: 384574 Choirmaster: Peter McMunn Tel: 874894  
**Sundays**  
 8.00am Holy Communion (1st Sunday - Methodist rite)  
 9.15am Family Sung Eucharist & Sunday Schools, then coffee in the Hall  
 11.00am (Methodist Morning Service)  
 6.30pm Evening Service (1st Sunday - Anglican rite, other Sundays Methodist rite)  
**Weekdays**  
 Holy Communion: Tuesday 9.30am  
 Holy Days - see weekly Notices  
 (All Saints' is shared with the Berkhamsted Methodist Church)

## Western Insurance

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