

Berkhamsted *review*

In this issue

May 1997

**Love your
Enemies**

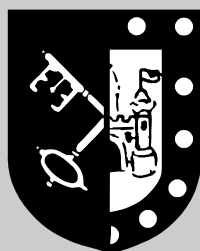
**Hospice of St
Francis update**

**The Silver
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Berkhamsted**

**Gruesome
Relics**

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of Hats**

**This month's
Notes & Events**



for Town and Parish **25p**



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

Welcome to the May issue of the Review.

Three good causes are making their pitch for your support in this issue of our magazine. The Berkhamsted Walk has been held on the second Sunday in May for over 20 years. The event attracts an impressive level of activity each year, saying a lot for the confidence which the Children's Society has built up over the years in its ability to aid and protect the unfortunate youngsters to whose rescue it comes.

Children Aid Week is also becoming a venerable institution. There are sometimes signs that some members of our society can suffer from 'compassion fatigue' in the light of the continuing news of disasters, many of them man-made, in the Third World. However, Christian Aid delivers the goods in the form of practical help.

Finally, the RNLI in Berkhamsted are seeking to mark their golden jubilee by raising the cost of a new boat. Every time we landsmen become complacent about the sea and forget the dangers which must still be overcome if we are to exist as an island people, some disaster occurs to show us how wrong we were to forget the people at sea. Let us help the RNLI to avert future disasters and to protect 'those in peril on the sea'.
David Woodward

In this month's issue...

Love your enemies

Rev Stephen Wells urges us to do so even in the wake of a general election.

Deserving Causes

Christian Aid, the Berkhamsted Walk and the RNLI Jubilee Appeal come under the spotlight this month.

Berkhamsted Cinemas

Stephen Halliday wonders what the future is for *The Rex* while **Frank Drewe** remembers the town's bygone houses.

Hospice Update

In the second of two articles **Angela Russell-Smith** looks at the work of our local Hospice of St Francis.

May is Mary's Month

Rev Peter Hart considers the role of Jesus's mother Mary in our worship today.

... plus our regular features, local and parish notes & notices plus dates for your diary.

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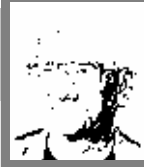
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Next Copy Dates (all Fridays): 2 May 6 June 4 July



**Rev. Stephen
Wells considers
the aftermath of
the General
Election.**

review leader

In the sermon on the mount Jesus said: 'You have heard what they were told: Love your neighbour and hate your enemy. But what I tell you is this: Love your enemies and pray for your persecutors'. This is never so difficult as in war, or at a General Election.

By the time they read this, most of my readers will have already voted or at least decided which candidate to choose. And whoever wins, we shall all be concerned to pray for the new government in their difficult, not to say impossible, task. We pray that they may be given honesty, sincerity, compassion and patience: and all the other virtues as well.

Many members of the public have been busy pressing their candidates to pander to

their own selfish wishes. But what should the government's priorities be? Justice and peace throughout the world, that is surely first?

I have always remembered the saying that 'Government exists to care for those who cannot look after themselves'. That is not quite the whole story, but it must be an important guide to their priorities both at home and abroad. We pray that the new government will be able to fulfil its best aspirations for the children, the elderly, the sick, the mentally handicapped, the homeless, the poor, the refugees, the victims of every kind of cruelty and discrimination. Money is essential, but it is only part of the answer, one means to the end.

In a world where community and compassion have a central place, the church's call and invitation will be heard. If only we can love our enemies in the name of Jesus Christ! ❖

Christian Aid **We believe in life before death** **11-17th May 1997**

Over half of Berkhamsted and Northchurch is not covered by the annual house to house collection because we still have insufficient collectors. If you are willing to help in a road near your home (or far away if you would prefer!) please contact Muriel Johnston on 866447 or Ted Lewis on 864352. Alternatively, put your name and address on the Christian Aid posters in the churches, or contact Mr and Mrs Pike (95 Bridgewater Road) on 866646.

Please support our stall in Berkhamsted market on Saturday, 17th May.

Christian Aid Week this year focuses on India as it celebrates 50 years of independence, aiming to help some of the poorest people in the world - people like 12-year-old Moti. Unlike children of the same age in Britain, Moti has to work to help feed his family. He is a shoe-shiner, and walks up to 8 miles a day looking for customers, earning about 30p a day.

However, Moti recently started going to evening classes, and a playtime in the park on Sundays. Both were set up by the Raipur Churches Development and Relief Committee, run by local people to improve the lives of child labourers. The committee plans to offer food to families who put their children into full-time education to make up for lost wages, and is funded by an annual grant from Christian Aid.

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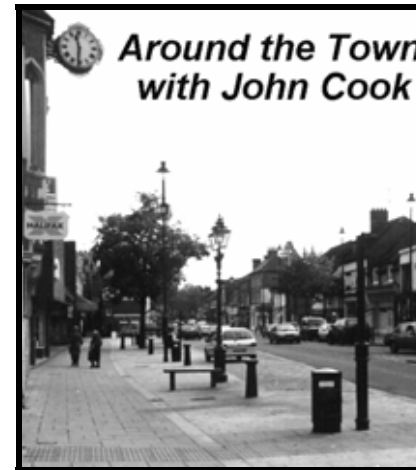
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Protected Species

Among wild life added earlier this year to the list of protected species were bluebells and water voles. I was surprised to see bluebells there as it is my impression that in recent years, in and around Berkhamsted at least, they have been increasing. They grow not only in marvellous blue carpets in woodlands but increasingly, it seems to me, in other places like hedgerows and roadside verges. In St Peter's churchyard they come up year after year, although this spring they were laid low much too early by the municipal mower. Under the lime trees you can usually find a few white specimens and an odd pink one. Every April they appear in the rose beds on the High Street side of the Church as well, although there they usually fade rather quickly in the direct sunlight.

Voles are a different matter. A few years ago along the section of canal which runs parallel with Lower Kings Road the sight of a water vole swimming was not at all uncommon; but it is several years since I can remember seeing one. Are there any left round here, and if not why not?

Various predators may be responsible for their decline. There are plenty of foxes even in the centre of the Town, and I am told there are pike in the canal big enough

to take a young vole. Elsewhere in the country mink which have escaped from fur farms have been held responsible for eating up all the voles. Rumour had it that it was a mink here who was responsible for decimating the young ducklings on the canal in the vicinity of the *Rising Sun* last year.

Berkhamsted Ducks

But there seem to be plenty of ducks left, and have you noticed we appear to be developing a local sub-species? There used to be one or two of those which habituate the length of canal by the Moor with white necks, presumably as a result of cross-breeding between mallard and domestic ducks, and now we have seven or eight with this colouring. Are we developing a Berkhamsted duck to rival Aylesbury ducks?

Not for the Squeamish

One of England's most popular saints, Thomas à Beckett, was at one time Constable of Berkhamsted Castle. Perhaps the Town should make more of this fact than we do. For the current exhibition at Canterbury Cathedral to commemorate the 1400th anniversary of St Augustine's arrival in Kent, various memorabilia of Saint Thomas à Beckett have been brought together in the cathedral (the scene of his murder in the 12th century when he was archbishop), including a casket containing some of his clothing and various bits of his body. There is a lump of his brain tissue, bones and some of his blood.

The great importance that was given to gruesome relics of this sort in mediaeval times is difficult for us to comprehend. When over a century after Thomas à Beckett had lived at Berkhamsted Castle, the King's brother, Richard Earl of Cornwall, was the occupant there, his son Edmund brought back to Berkhamsted from Germany what he believed to be a portion of the Sacred Blood of Christ. Part of this precious relic Edmund donated to the Abbey at Hailes; the rest he gave to



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Ashridge College when he founded it as a monastery in 1286.

When Edmund himself died at Ashridge his body was dismembered and its components disposed of piecemeal. His bowels were immediately removed and placed in the sepulchre in Ashridge Chapel. His heart and flesh were kept and then solemnly buried at Ashridge several months later; and six months after that his bones were interred with great ceremony at Hailes in the presence of the King. Chaucer (who was at one time Clerk of works at Berkhamsted Castle) refers in *The Pardoner's Tale* to 'the blood of Christ which is in Hailes'.

Just to complete the harrowing picture, there is a representation of Thomas à Beckett in a stained glass window in St Peter's - with a sword through his head.

Millionaires

'One in 550 adults in the country is a millionaire', was a recent headline in the national press. Berkhamsted is a fairly affluent place so perhaps we have double the average here - that makes some 50 millionaires in the Town. Mind you, the currency has been rather debased since the time in the last century when Lord Brownlow was one of the biggest landowners and richest men in the country. He owned 50,000 acres of England including quite a chunk of Berkhamsted, two magnificent country seats at Belton House and Ashridge House and a huge collection of old masters; yet he was only reckoned to be worth two million pounds.

On the subject of unimportant statistics (which I have a weakness for), you might like to mull over the fact that England has a population of about 42 million, and Berkhamsted one of about 14,000. So you don't need a calculator to work out that 1 in 3000 Englishmen is a Berkhamstedian.

Scenery

Response to my question about what is the most beautiful thing in Town has been disappointing: in fact none at all; but I



Another favourite sight? St Peter's churchyard.

have been told by some people what they see as their favourite pieces of scenery hereabouts. These include the view from Ivy House Lane over Gutteridge Farm and that from the top of Fieldway looking to the south (marred as this is by the bypass and pylons). In fact it hardly matters in which direction you walk out of Town - north, south, east or west - there is remarkably scenic countryside everywhere around, mostly gently rolling, and of course at its best in the spring. Perhaps my own favourite would be Stony Bottom, the little valley you cross as you take the footpath across Well Farm just before coming to the Common.

Elsewhere in this issue tribute is paid to our late friend Clifford Gossling who did so much for St Peter's and the *Review*. One of Clifford's talents was photography, and many of his lovely pictures of local rural scenes appeared on *Review* covers in the 1960's and 1970's. ♦

We would have liked to include some examples of Clifford Gossling's photography but technical problems in reproduction prevent it - CS

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The first picture house my father Frank Drewe remembered attending was in Cowper Road. It was called *The Gem* and was lit by gas from cylinders - very dangerous! One afternoon, coming out of *The Gem* he was knocked flat by a flock of sheep. He

bore the marks on his legs to his dying day. During the First World War, as he was watching a newsreel of the battle of the Somme at *The Playhouse* cinema in King Edward Street, the lad sitting next to him, a Belgian refugee, suddenly leaped to his feet and ran in front of the screen, desperately gesticulating to tell everyone to stop cheering for the wrong side!

My dad had the honour of being summoned to sing before the Inns of Court regiment - at (most appropriately) a theatre called *The Court*. This was Berkhamsted's grand auditorium, with a perfect acoustic for its 'Christie' American organ played by wizards of the keyboard such as Harold Betts and Vincent Collier.

The Court was built by the Pike family and stood where Tesco is now. The first talkie shown there was *Bulldog*

Berkhamsted Cinemas

Noel Drewe remembers the golden age of the town's silver screens.

Drummond and it also provided a splendid venue for variety, opera and pantomime. I saw *Babes in the Wood* there in the early forties.

My grandfather Reginald Drewe, who lived nearby in Castle Street, often took me to *The Court*

to see popular pictures of the day. I openly confess that tears rolled down my face as I watched *Lassie Come Home* in 1943. The 1949 *Kinematograph Year Book* describes the venue as: 'Court Theatre, Western Electric, Proprietors, Shipman & King Cinemas Ltd, Proscenium Width 34 Feet... Berkhamsted Population 8,053'.

When *The Rex* cinema opened, just prior to the Second World War, its first film featured Shirley Temple in (I think) *Heidi*. I saw the pantomime *Cinderella* at *The Rex* and I remember a fine café.

Like many locals, I spent much of the 1940s gazing up at the big screen in wonder as marvels unfolded. That was the golden age of the silver screen.



The appeal for £20,000 to buy a 'D' Class inshore lifeboat was launched on 8th February in the Town Hall when over sixty friends and members attended. So far we have raised over £5,500. We are running a draw during the appeal and the first prize is a water colour kindly donated by Harry Sheldon called *By the Tidemill - Woodbridge*. It is a super painting and can be seen in Dickmans the Chemist, Birtchnell's and Philip King's during the summer. Please make an effort and buy some tickets. The

draw will take place on 30th August at 12noon in the Civic Centre when there will be stalls and other attractions.



There are coffee parties being held in the district from now until the draw and if you would like information about 'where and when and how' please call me on 865545. We are happy to advise regarding fund raising and would welcome offers of sponsored runs, swims, slims and so on. Again, just contact me.

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Victoria First School

most successful dinner and dance was held at the Old Town Hall on 15th February as part of our centenary celebrations. The event was organised by the school association and was attended by parents old and new, staff, past pupils and governors. An excellent meal was provided by Bon Appetite and music by The Wright Brothers. Congratulations to the association on organising such an enjoyable event.

Supporting our centenary appeal, parents, pupils and staff took part in the fun run on 2nd March. Due to the generosity of the sponsors a total of £2,000 has been raised towards the electric wheelchair for Donna Woodworth, one of our pupils. A 'promise auction' was held on 18th April, and a Victorian Spring Fair will take place on 17th May.

Michael Hart, Headteacher



AREA COMMITTEES ELECTED

Members of our church area committees have now been elected. They will serve alongside those already elected to the deanery synod or the PCC (see the April Review) who are also ex-officio members of the area committee of the church where they worship.

St Peter's Church

Marjorie Bowden (871283)
John Cook (866278)
Libby Grundy (875814)
Keith Middleditch (862423)
Angela Morris (866992)
Priscilla Watt (863804)

All Saints' Church

Graham Harris (873974)
Tim Hennessey (865729)
Isobel Saffrey (873192)
Philip Wilton (875147)

To Doff or Not?

In the bleak mid winter - do you remember? - there was a Sunday when the heating system in St Peter's wasn't working, and the church was freezing, so some folk decided to go home.

As I entered church, I noticed how many men took their hats off as they came in to reveal bald heads. Now I like bald heads I hasten to say! I thought, "It's so cold. What a silly custom". Why do the men take their hats off when the ladies with lots of hair keep their hats on?

Wouldn't it be more sensible for men to keep their heads covered, so keeping the heat in their bodies? So tell me - what's the difference between a small fur hat and

With tongue firmly in cheek,
Yvonne Rix ponders a dilemma
facing the 'follically challenged'.

a hairpiece? One is acceptable but the other not? After all, if the bishop came into church he would leave his mitre on however much hair he had!

Now men, if you take your hats off when entering church on a freezing day, you could end up in a few weeks time entering church feet first with your hat on your tummy, and I'm sure I speak for all the ladies when I say we wouldn't like that.

So I vote for 'In the bleak mid winter hats on, and in the heat of summer hats off' - because I think bald heads are very distinguished, but not at the expense of being extinguished!



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In August 1996 we were very sorry to say 'Goodbye' to Dr Kilian Dunphy after seven years as our medical director. We knew it would be difficult to find a successor with his talents as a doctor and as a very caring person. We have been fortunate in acquiring Dr Rosalind Taylor to replace him and we look forward to her settling happily into our team.

Last summer we celebrated the tenth anniversary of the opening of our eight bedded in-patient unit, one of the beds being occasionally used as a respite bed. Relatives and friends who visit the hospice are always impressed by the homely atmosphere and the warm welcome they receive. We also care for about 60-70 patients in their own homes. No charge is made either for beds or our home care service.

On Tuesdays and Thursdays we have our day hospice in *Blue Mist* (the house adjoining the hospice). Volunteer drivers bring the patients in and they spend a day in surroundings outside their own homes; this enables their carers to have a break as well.

Support is given to the relatives of those recently bereaved through the Pilgrim Group, which meets monthly, and also the helpline which is manned every Monday evening to give extra support to those who need it.

Education remains an important part of hospice work in order to spread the knowledge of palliative care to a wider circle of doctors and nurses and those who are interested in the courses we run.

There is an active group of 'friends' who are doing a splendid job of fund raising, organising many events and manning stalls on every

The Hospice of St Francis: An Update

Continuing from last month's article, **Angela Russell-Smith** brings us up to date on our local hospice.

possible occasion.

Volunteers are always needed in every aspect of our work and we are grateful for the interest of so many. If you think you could help please contact Carole Livingston, our volunteers organiser, at the hospice. Some volunteers work in the

unit, some in the offices, some work throughout the year for the bazaar, and we have others who keep our gardens in such good order. We could not run the hospice without them.

Every year we have a thanksgiving service in All Saints' Church - this year it will be on Sunday, 5th October at 3pm. We have always been grateful for the service provided by the chaplain over the years and look forward to meeting the new incumbent in the near future. We are extremely grateful to those who have covered this important work for the last two years during the vacancy at All Saints'.

We are especially fortunate in our staff and volunteers who have given such long and loyal service to the hospice over the years. Little did we know the extent to which our work would grow when this great venture started. ❖





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CLIFFORD JOHN
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RIP

Clifford Gossling's memorial service was held in St Peter's church on Monday, 7th April. The following paragraphs are based on the address given by John Cook on that occasion.

He was a great servant of this church over the years, but much of what he did was achieved in such an unassuming way that it went largely unnoticed. Many choirboys - at least one now the father of a choirboy - remember with affection choir practices under Clifford's guidance, which began some 30 years ago. Then, how often did he stand in for the regular organist at services? At how many funerals did he play? I can remember years ago when I was churchwarden here we had a spate of gypsy funerals, and Clifford played the organ at them all. "I really do think I could play the Old Rugged Cross blindfold now", he said to me afterwards. And yet all these demanding and time consuming responsibilities were carried out so smoothly that most of the time we just took it all for granted.

His contribution to the *Berkhamsted Review* was very impressive, especially at

a time of very high inflation in the early Seventies. The fact that our magazine continues to exist at all is really due to him. He gave great skill and a tremendous amount of hard work to raise income to match rising costs, secure new advertising and maintain the level of sales. We remain grateful to him, not only for the work he put in but for carrying the responsibility of managing our financial affairs.

One of his special achievements was his photography. His work included many professional standard photographs which adorned the covers of the *Review* month after month and which many will still remember.

Characteristically, when he and Ivy moved from Bridgewater Road to St John's Well Lane Clifford took control of the management committee there and ran it highly efficiently for many years, to the satisfaction and relief of all the rest of the inhabitants of the flats.

In all these things - for the 64 years of their married life - Clifford always had the unfailing support of Ivy, his wife.

Clifford was a likeable and courteous gentlemen. Although he suffered to some extent from advancing years, he counted his blessings and his sense of humour stayed with him.

We mourn Clifford's passing, but we must also be thankful that with Ivy he had such a full and worthwhile life: a life in which so many of us were fortunate to share some part. ❖

If you're 'online' visit the **Petertide Fair** on the **World Wide Web!**

For up to date information on this year's Petertide Fair visit the fair's site on the World Wide Web (a brand new initiative this year!). If you have a PC with access to the Internet then the web site will tell you all the latest news, details of the causes the fair is supporting, contact points for everyone who's involved and much more. Before you say, 'Whatever next!', with more and more people now having access to the World Wide Web this is a valuable way to widen still further awareness of the event and to encourage support from across our community. Rest assured, though, the fair really will happen on 28th June in St Peter's churchyard - not just in cyberspace!

You can find the Petertide web site at <http://www.cavendish.co.uk/petertide> - if you can, do take a moment to 'drop in' and tell us what you think!



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The Petertide FAIR 1997



This is the second of two articles introducing this year's Petertide Fair and the causes we have chosen to support. The fair this year is on **Saturday, 28th June** and preparations are well in hand. Of course, if you can help in any way then the organising committee will be only too pleased to hear from you!

This month we look at the second cause we are supporting - the Gossoms End elderly care unit here in Berkhamsted. Maggi Farran-Wilson of the unit's League of Friends tells us more about the work of the unit on this page. We want to provide the unit with a new piano to provide entertainment for the residents, for whom music is sometimes one of the remaining sensations they can enjoy. We hope we can achieve this through your support.

Finally, Victor Mizzi, the founder of the Chernobyl Children's Lifeline (the other cause we're supporting) will be addressing St Peter's congregation on Sunday, 9th June - do please come if you can.

Chris Smalley

Organising Committee

Chris Smalley (co-ordinator) (826821)

Neil Bisset (862115) Libby Grundy (875814)

Alan & Barbara Conway (865798)

David Bull (870921) Stephen Lally (863526)

Getting older rarely attracts positive publicity although goodness knows why. Our lives vary enormously with different degrees of health, wealth and happiness but the one thing we all have in common is that, God willing, we will one day all become elderly individuals.

In truth, getting older really is a time to look forward to especially in Berkhamsted with places like Gossoms End elderly care unit that play an integral part towards the 'feel good factor' for those in the autumn of life.

Opened in July 1989 as part of the West Herts Community Health NHS Trust, Gossoms End is a bright modern health unit specialising in 24 hour care for the elderly who primarily reside in Berkhamsted, Tring and surrounding villages. The Gossoms End unit is a tranquil environment where residents discover new interests, continue hobbies and make friends whilst in the care of specialist medical staff. Volunteers at Gossoms End also play an important role escorting residents on outings, helping to organise entertainment programmes or lending a hand with new crafts - to name just a few.

It's the individual care Gossoms End provides that makes it such a special place. Based on individual needs residents not only receive medical care but a varied social and recreational programme ensuring an all round sense of happiness and well being. Regular visits from hairdressers, chiropodists, beauty therapists and more are arranged as well as visits from local ministers who provide pastoral care.

Gossoms End is a happy place where for some it has become their home and for others it is a short stay rehabilitation period, but above all Gossoms End is a place that recognises autumn can be one of the most beautiful times of all: wonderful colours, clear warm air and a calmness that makes you feel good to be alive.

Maggi Farran-Wilson

I'm beginning to feel everyone is ganging up on me. We've had two local by-elections and now we are going to have (as I write) two more elections on 1st May, one for county and one for national government.

As before, you all have the advantage on me as you read this because you know what I don't. What I do know is that after the lack of success in the recent Shrublands and Sunnyside wards of the town, there will be no independent contesting either county or national seats.

As everyone is currently promising you what they will do when they get into power, I thought I would have a little go as well. You may remember the catalpa tree that was run over by an errant skip lorry and then the replacement which died through neglect (let's be fair, that is what happened). Well, the borough learnt from this, and got two to replace it, one to be put back in the same position as the protected one (except some idiot put a 'Waitrose' sign in the way) and a spare. Borough asked the town council for

CUTTING COMMENTS

Local independent councillor
Norman Cutting focuses again
on recent council events.

suggestions on where to put it and my suggestion of the George Street play area has been accepted. May I ask all residents to keep an eye on 'our' tree as I would like it to last longer than the other one did.

The other little success is much nearer to home.

Velvet Lawn now

has two football pitches and residents in Chestnut Drive have had footballs land in the garden at regular intervals since the high fence rotted away. Borough have now finally admitted that a new high fence will be erected this summer and repairs made to the fence along the Briar Way section of the recreation area.

Meanwhile back at the council, the planning committee have been making comments on the county structure plan, mainly in response to the borough comments and missing the point that we could have made comments off our own back. After all, we only had over a year to do it. The main bone of contention is the forecast that family units are getting smaller and thus more dwellings are

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David Woodward
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Berkhamsted
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required.

Planning applications included the demolition of the Berkhamsted School's building known as 'Churchill' in Graemesdyke Road and the erection of flats. This has met with a lot of opposition from both the town council and local residents. It came to the borough development control committee in late March with the latest of numerous amendments, including a change in architect, was received only days prior to the meeting and was refused. The town council has had at least one meeting with the school over other planning applications and suggested that they actually consult with us before going ahead with planning applications, but that seems to have fallen on deaf ears.

At the finance and policy committee meeting in February a number of important changes in the way the council operates were presented. The law has changed and it was agreed that the town clerk would be appointed as the council's Responsible Financial Officer. An additional computer and suitable software to comply with the new legal requirements are to be acquired, hopefully in time for the new financial year, although at the time of writing this does not look likely. A different method of presenting and comparing budget figures with actual will be introduced as soon as possible.

A working party was set up to look into both my report on a possible improvement in the way the committee structure currently operates and Cllr Ian Johnsons' proposal of not having committees. In effect there would be a full

council each week in order that decisions could be made quickly and any business that came in during the previous two weeks or so could be quickly dealt with. This working party has also been charged with looking into the concept of the town guide, progress the heritage walk and the perceived failure, or otherwise, of the council newsletter, *The Conqueror*.

On this last matter, I must admit I'm getting more and more confused. It has the banner '*The voice of the Community*' and then goes on in almost every section asking what you think, why don't you express your view, what should we do? Quite honestly, I can't be the only one who believes the council newsletter should set out the reasons, policies and actions of *your* council.

Once again, I seem to have run out of space and the information on the youth council, CCTV, parish paths, proposed changes in ward boundaries, town warden and almost all borough matters that concern or may affect our town will have to wait until next time.

Having been writing this column for almost a year, may I take this opportunity to ask for a little feedback either to the editor or direct to myself for suggestions on content, length or even format. Would you like more comment, more facts or have I got it about right? Those of you in Sunnyside ward often get my newsletter *Sunnyside Up* in which I try to comment, whereas here I try to cover happenings that are generally unreported in the local press. Go on, prove that you actually read this column and care what both myself and fellow councillors do on your behalf. ❖



WAY INN - A Christian Centre at 268 High Street

Come through the **Post Office** to our **shop** which sells greetings cards, Christian books, stationery and many gifts. **Upstairs** you will find our **coffee shop** serving lunches, teas, snacks or just a cup of coffee.

My memories of *The Rex* cinema date from the early 1980s when, having come to live in Berkhamsted in 1981, I occasionally accompanied my children to see the films that were showing there. I particularly remember attending a *Star Wars* film with my son, then aged about six. The action was totally incomprehensible to me. This was partly because of the strange characters and their odd vocabulary. I had some difficulty working out whether Jabba the Hut (not a form of shelter but a slug-like creature) was a goodie or a baddie and, despite the whispered explanations of my son, never fully understood who was on which side. A further obstacle to understanding was the strange acoustic design of the building which, together with its antiquated sound system, made the dialogue both deafening and inaudible. I was sorry, but not particularly surprised, when its owners decided that it had no future as a cinema. Now one has to make the journey to Jarman's Fields, with the attendant risks of being blinded by the flashing lights,

Another Rescue Mission

The Rex cinema stands forlornly in the High Street. **Stephen Halliday** considers its future.

have been built on the site of Berkhamsted Hall (now occupied by Swingate school) but instead the promoters, Shipman and King, who owned a chain of cinemas, acquired the more centrally placed site of Egerton House, an old Tudor building which had been the home of the Llewellyn Davies family. In the years 1904-1907 they were often visited by J.M. Barrie, who used them as a model for *Peter Pan*. Shipman and King normally called their cinemas *Embassy* but in Berkhamsted the name *Rex* was chosen. The interior design was based on an 'Ocean Liner' theme with shell-like light fittings. It is the distinctive character of the interior design that led to its acquiring the status of a listed building through the agency of the Cinema Theatres Trust and English Heritage in 1988, shortly after the cinema closed and

deafened by the noise or assaulted by one of the numerous drunks who frequent the place.

In the meantime *The Rex* has become a desolate sight. It was designed by David Nye, a noted cinema architect of the inter-war years and opened in 1935. Originally, it was to

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the site was acquired by a property company. It is the only listed cinema in Hertfordshire.

Shortly after the site was acquired the property market collapsed. Many commercial developments dating from that time lie unoccupied and unloved and *The Rex* never even started to be developed. From the outside it has never been a particularly attractive building. The front of the cinema has some character but the adjacent flats and shops are dull, featureless and sad, especially now that the shops are closed, with the single exception of the gallant *Scissors*, a bright light amidst an otherwise desolate scene. Viewed from the side and from the car park at the rear the exterior consists of unattractive brickwork relieved only by the projection room which is stuck on the side of the building like a wart.

The present owners, a company called Estates and General, probably now wish they had never heard of it but they have to make some use of their investment and it is in the interests of all of us that some use should be found for the building or it will become an even more hideous blot on the landscape. A group of local people, called *The Friends of the Rex*, is trying to put together a deal which would use the site for starter flats (in partnership with a housing association); shops; and a Community and Arts Centre which could be used by Berkhamsted's many societies (for example amateur dramatic societies, history, archaeological societies, the University of the Third Age, perhaps the Adult Education Institute or similar) thus preserving those features of the interior for which the building is listed. It is possible that, given sufficient local impetus, lottery money could be forthcoming.

There have been other examples recently of fine old buildings in the town being rescued from apparently hopeless situations and put to good use: the Town Hall and *The Swan* are examples. If any of you would like to become associated with rescuing *The Rex* in its hour of need please write to:

The Friends of the Rex
c/o Mrs Pat Brison,
11, Hall Park,
Berkhamsted, HP4 2NU

Christian Aid: in May the annual door-to-door collection for Christian Aid takes place throughout the nation and I know that more collectors are always needed. Millions of pounds are raised for charitable work, usually in the Third World. I have been a collector for ten years and, although I am not one of nature's collectors, I regard this as thoroughly worthwhile work. I am allocated a few houses on the Ashlyns estate and distribute envelopes to them on a Tuesday evening. I return on Wednesday evening (when one can be pretty sure that people are at home to watch *Coronation Street*). Virtually everyone contributes willingly. Not only is the money worth collecting but it occurs that, for some of the contributors, it may be the only occasion in the year when they are reminded that Christians do this sort of work. That is another reason for giving up a little time. If you would be prepared to collect from a few houses please contact Mr & Mrs Pike at 95, Bridgewater Road (tel: 866646). ❖

A short article covering this year's Christian Aid Week appears on page 3.



reviewnorthchurch

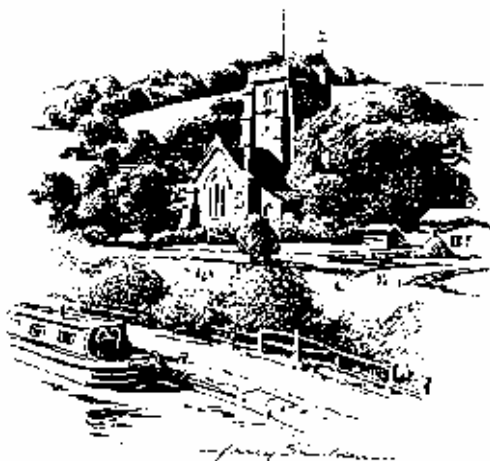
**Revd Peter Hart,
reminds us that
May is Mary's
month.**

May is Mary's month, and as our church is dedicated to St Mary, a consideration of Mary in our spirituality is timely. The first thing to be said is that the hierarchy of saints is visible within our town, as St Mary's, the first Christian foundation in the valley, bears the name of the mother of Jesus, and the next church founded is dedicated to the foremost of the apostles, St Peter. These two appellations bear eloquent witness to the early church's attitude to those who had worked with Jesus to bring in God's kingdom and establish his church. It also speaks volumes about the missionary nature of the churches built in the valley - the first ministered in the name of the one who brought our Lord into this world, who nurtured him and lead him to adulthood; the second witnessed in the name of the first apostle to take the gospel beyond the confines of Jesus's original followers to both Jews and Gentiles alike. It was around St Mary's, as far as we know, that the gospel was first preached, celebrated and lived in this valley, reaching sufficient maturity to extend beyond itself to the new settlement near the castle.

Both churches have chapels dedicated to Our Lady, specific spaces given over to prayer and sacrament. They are areas for quiet prayer and reflection, for small-scale worship and intimacy with God. In their dedication to Mary, these chapels by their very existence point us to a rôle accorded to her within the Church's tradition, that of intercessor with Christ. In the few accounts given of her involvement in the ministry of Jesus, her access to him is both immediate and

effective, and her presence at the foot of the cross has long been a stimulus to meditation and prayer, celebrated in art, music and poetry.

Mary as a rôle model, though, is a little more complex. For a long time, Mary has been a model of patience and holy suffering, as she 'pondered in her heart' all the things which occurred at the birth of Jesus, wondered about his words 'Did you not know that I must be about my Father's business?' when she and Joseph found him in the temple, felt the pain of Jesus's statement, 'Who are my mother and my brothers?', and watched her son die on the cross. Her example is truly one to be followed, but it has been all too easy for people to extrapolate from the Marian model to a blueprint of submission and inferiority for all women. This is false logic, as it denies the central rôle of Mary and other women in the ministry of Jesus, their presence at the cross and their witness to the resurrection. The kingdom was preached and the gospel spread as much through the efforts of Mary and her friends as by Peter and the other apostles.



THE BERKHAMSTED WALK 1997



This is a final reminder about the Berkhamsted Walk on Sunday, 11th May. Come and check in at the Court House any time between 10 and 11:30am. As I mentioned

last month, you have the option of a 20-mile walk or a 13-mile walk this year, both ending up back at the Court House.

The 20-mile walk is for those who want a little bit of a challenge, without it being impossibly difficult. If you made it all the way round last year's tougher-than-usual route, you'll find this one, if anything, slightly easier. It goes via Aldbury, then a new route across the valley to Clipper Down and on to Ivinghoe Beacon, returning via Duncombe Terrace, the monument and Ashridge Management College.

The 13-mile route follows the 20-mile route as far as Aldbury, then it goes direct to the monument, after which it returns to the Court House the same way as the 20-mile route.

So you need not decide which route you want to do until you reach Aldbury (Checkpoint 2). If some of your family or group want to do one route and some want to do the other, you all walk to Aldbury, where the 13-milers can linger a little longer and then stroll up the hill to the monument and drink tea until the rest of the party rejoins them!

The aim of all this is to enable a higher proportion of walkers to get all the way round;

not just the folk who want that bit of a challenge but also those who want just a pleasant day out, doing a walk that's well within their ability.

Of course, the usual facility of dropping out at an intermediate checkpoint, and getting a lift back to the Court House, is still there. If you want to stroll 7 miles to the monument, having a pub lunch on the way, you can still do that; or perhaps a 14-mile walk, taking in Ivinghoe Beacon and ending up back at the monument.

The aim is to have an enjoyable day out and at the same time to help in raising money for the Children's Society. If you haven't been sponsored, just come along and fill in a sponsor form and make a donation - and off you go! (All walkers must fill out a sponsor form to meet insurance requirements.)

While doing the Berkhamsted Walk, or any other walk, please keep dogs under control at all times. Remember, it is the lambing season.

THE VIKINGS ARE COMING!

At least, that's the impression you might have got from reading the piece last month about the history of the Hospice of St Francis. Its author, Angela Morris, reassures us that she does indeed realise the difference between a *longboat* and a *narrowboat*; she would like to avoid the pages of the *Review* overflowing with letters pointing out her slip of the keyboard and that horned Norsemen aren't often seen on the canal in Berkhamsted.

Northchurch Review (continued)

The Reformation condemned as idolatrous and swept away most of the trappings of medieval Marian devotion, leaving a Protestant suspicion around any reference to the Blessed Virgin Mary. However, Mary is one of the few women to receive more than a cursory mention in the New Testament, and therefore deserves a fuller place in our spirituality. If we believe the Gospel account of a young, frightened, no doubt ill-educated girl in a largely peasant

society granting acceptance to the message of the angel; if we can imagine the danger and worry of being the mother of a politico-religious agitator during an intifada against the Roman occupation; if we can feel for her situation as a parent bereaved in a particularly terrible way, we will reject the more sentimental views of Mary, and instead take strength and positive inspiration from her life and witness. ❖

WHO'S FOR A BUGGY?

Are you disabled or know anyone who is? Broken leg? Arthritis? Or just old and wish that you could go for a walk in the woods. Then come to Ashridge between the monument and the teashop, any day between 2 and 5:00pm (except Fridays) until the end of October.

There are four single-seater self-drive powered Batricars, and a two-seater buggy which enables a severely disabled visitor to be driven by a companion. Visitors can have a vehicle for 1½ hours and are often surprised there is no charge. However we tactfully point out there is a donation box, on which we depend for maintenance and overhaul.

Last year there were 278 users. Then there was only one approved trail along Duncombe Terrace over the bridge to Clipper Down. This year a new trail will be opened. It will go down to Old Copse, around the meadow behind the Visitors Centre. In time, it is hoped, to see the bluebells in that area.

In 1989 the Ashridge Estate became the first National Trust property to set up a pilot scheme with self-drive powered vehicles. Since then other properties became interested and today there are 78 vehicles at 45 different locations.

Telephone 851227 if you wish to book, or just turn up.

DOG WARNING

In the last year I have been concerned at the number of dead sheep I have seen on Well Farm. There seem to have been significantly more than in the previous years. Many of them have been large fully grown sheep and it is thought therefore that dogs rather than foxes have caused the problem.

There was one occasion when two dogs got into a sheep field on Well Farm and proceeded to chase and terrify the sheep. The Baxter family tried desperately to stop them and catch them, but to no avail. As a last resort he then had to shoot one of the dogs. They were left with several dead sheep, three missing (they had desperately forced their way through the fence onto Berkhamsted common and have not been seen since) and the rest of the flock terrified.

You begin to understand why some farmers are more trigger-happy than the Baxter family where dogs are concerned. It is not the regular dog walkers who are the problem. They know where the sheep are and either avoid sheep fields or keep their dogs under control. The difficulty is thought to be dogs that get out from their houses and go off roaming, possibly joining with others to form packs. In the wild dogs hunt like that.

So please heed the appeal we make every year in the Berkhamsted Walk instructions. Keep your dog under control *at all times*, especially when you are in or near fields containing farm animals. This usually means putting them on a lead, and many farmers will insist on it. Remember, we are in the lambing season.

Ian McCalla

OXFAM NEEDS BRIC-A-BRAC

Give spring cleaning meaning and turn those unconsidered trifles of jewellery, ornaments, glassware and china into seeds of hope for desperately poor communities. Seeds, hoes and training for village health workers can all be funded from the back of a myriad of cupboards in Berkhamsted. So please, start turning out, take those unwanted knick-knacks to the Oxfam shop and give the gift of life. Call Audrey Hope on 864537 for more details.

CORPUS CHRISTI: SOLEMN EUCHARIST

8:00pm Thursday 29th May

A service of thanksgiving for the Institution
of the Holy Eucharist.

The Chiltern Chamber Choir will sing Schubert's *Mass in G*;

The Eucharist will conclude with a
Procession and Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament.

WEA SUMMER COURSE

The WEA are offering a summer course on *Flora and Fauna* on Wednesday evenings at 8:00pm commencing on 14th May for twelve weeks. The tutor is Alan Outen and the meetings will be held in Berkhamsted library. The full fee is £27 but concessionaires pay only £19.75 while unemployed persons are not charged (the charity number is 314001). Further details may be had from Ann Gurney on 865445.

BERKHAMSTED W.I.



The Women's Institute is a member of the Associated Countrywomen of the World (ACWW) and at our meeting in March we had two WI national executive members to speak about aspects of work they had done with and for ACWW. One spoke of several visits she had made to Romania trying to teach democracy to the women there with their long history of communism and a male oriented way of life. A WI has been formed in Bucharest and now has 40 members. The other told of a conference she had attended in Northern Ireland for members of ACWW from Europe, which included many delegates from former eastern bloc countries. The theme of the conference was *New Opportunities and New Horizons* - helping women think for themselves. We realised how fortunate we are in this country to have so many WIs that can meet and speak so freely on matters of importance for women.

Mrs Brookes was presented with a garden token, having reached the necessary 12 points from our monthly competitions.

During the previous month four members had enjoyed making savoury and sweet muffins under the expert tuition of Mrs Jean Gale and three members had found a lecture on Henry Moore, given by Anthony Slinn, to be very informative and interesting.

Arrangements were made for visits to Frogmore House and Waterperry Gardens later in the year.

Our next meeting is on 21st May and we will be discussing the resolutions for the National Federation of Women's Institutes general meeting.

BERKHAMSTED CASTLE W.I.

It was our eighth birthday at our April meeting, so we were pleased to welcome Ann Parsons together with guests from the other institutes in Group 7 Ashridge.

Entertainment was provided by members as well as a weather quiz. This was to get us thinking before our birthday tea with excellent sweets and savouries and a lovely cake which was made by our secretary, Janet Mitchell.

An appreciation was given by Ann Parsons thanking us for an entertaining afternoon. During last month members were invited to join in a coach trip to the Bethnal Green museum of childhood to see a wonderful selection of dolls houses, dolls and toys from the Victorian age to the present day.

Next month on 2nd May we will discuss resolutions at the Court House, Berkhamsted at 2:00pm. New members and visitors are very welcome. ❖

review registers

Baptisms (*St Peter's*)

9 March John Andrew Aiton, Katherine Augusta Martell

Funerals

21 March Anne Frances Waldron
7 April Clifford John Gossling
8 April Richard Hollings

The Chilterns Crematorium
St Peter's (The Chilterns Crematorium)
St Peter's (The Chilterns Crematorium)

reviewdiary

All services at normal times unless stated.

May / June 1997

MAY

1	6:15am	Chiltern Chamber Choir greet May Day with Madrigals from the tower	<i>St Peter's</i>
1		All Saint's Area Committee	
2		St Peter's Area Committee	
8	8:00pm	Solemn Eucharist for Ascension Day	<i>St Peter's</i>
	8:00pm	Solemn Eucharist for Ascension Day	<i>All Saint's</i>
10	7:30pm	Berkhamsted Choral Society concert: Haydn <i>Nelson Mass & Fauré Cantique de Jean Racine</i>	<i>St Peter's</i>
11	10:30am	Children's Society Berkhamsted Walk sets out from the Court House	
17	8:00am	Ecumenical Breakfast in the Court House and Prayers	<i>St Peter's</i>
18	9:30am	Preacher - Dr Keith Straughan	<i>St Peter's</i>
	6:00pm	Choral Evensong	<i>St Peter's</i>
	6:45pm	David Brindle - Organ Recital	<i>St Peter's</i>
23		PCC meeting	<i>Court House</i>
29	8:00pm	Solemn Eucharist for Corpus Christi - with Chiltern Chamber Choir. Preacher: The Revd Canon Neil Collings, Rector of Harpenden	<i>St Peter's</i>

JUNE

1	7:30pm	London Concertante - Bach Concert	<i>St Peter's</i>
3	am	Victoria School Anniversary Service	<i>St Peter's</i>
8	6:00pm	Choral Evensong	<i>St Peter's</i>
	6:45pm	Concert - Mozart Serenade in B Flat K361 for 13 Wind Instruments	<i>St Peter's</i>
21	8:00am	Ecumenical Breakfast & Prayers	<i>Northchurch Baptist Church</i>

The Review Registers appear on page 25 this month.

SundaySchool

Churches

PCC 1997/8

Contacts

CHURCHES TOGETHER IN BERKHAMSTED

Telephone numbers to ring for times of services, etc.

1. Northchurch Baptist	Rev Peter Swaffield	Berk. 866685
	Mrs H Blundell	Berk. 875021
2. St Mary's Northchurch	Rev Peter Hart	Berk. 865312
	Mr W Frew	Berk. 864368
3. All Saints' Anglican	Rev Robin Figg	Berk. 866161
	Mr John Malcolm	Berk. 874993
4. Methodist All Saints'	Rev Nicholas Paterson	Berk. 866324
	Mrs Ida Rance	Berk. 865829
5. Sacred Heart (RC)	Father V Commerford	Berk. 863845
	Mr J McLellan	Berk. 871818
6. Society of Friends (Quakers)	Robert Ward	Berk. 864404
7. Kings Road Evangelical	Pastor Billy Milton	Berk. 876917
	Mr J Rainey	Berk. 866315
8. United Reformed	Mrs D Bahadur	Berk. 871107
	Mrs M Crichton	Berk. 875401
9. St Peter's	Rev M Bonney	Berk. 864194
	Mrs Jean Green	Berk. 863241
10. Berkhamsted Baptist	Rev James K Neve	Berk. 873283
	Mrs J Ivin	Berk. 865309
11. St Michael & All Angels	Mrs P Davis	Berk. 873609
Sunnyside	Mr G Greenwood	Berk. 863973
12. St John the Evangelist		
Bourne End	Mrs M Ireland	Berk. 865098
13. Salvation Army	Lt. Stephen Poxon	Berk. 876024



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Principal J.R.Adkins BSc (Hons) PGCE

review factfile

Contacts

The Revd Mark Bonney, The Rectory, Rectory Lane. Tel: 864194 (day off Monday)
 The Revd Robin Figg, All Saints' House, Shrublands Road. Tel: 866161 (day off Monday)
 The Revd Canon Basil Jones (Hon.Asst.Priest), 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 Council: Secretary: Alan Conway, 7 Kilfillan Gardens. Tel: 865798
 Treasurer: Michael Robinson, 36 Trevelyan Way. Tel: 863559

St Peter's

Assistant Director of Music: 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

All Saints'

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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