

Berkhamsted *review*

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for Town and Parish

30p



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

Welcome to the April 2005 issue of the Berkhamsted review

Why All Fools' Day?

Its origin is obscure but the tradition was historically widespread in Europe and of considerable antiquity. We find it mentioned in English sources from the 17th century onward and even earlier in France, where the tradition is supposed to have originated. A simple source of entertainment in both countries involved attaching a paper fish to the back of an unsuspecting passer-by. But why a fish? More elaborate hoaxes involved sending individuals on false errands - sometimes to a succession of pre-arranged hoaxers - a practice known in Scotland as '*hunting the gowk*'. In 1846 the London newspaper the *Evening Star* announced a grand donkey show on April 1st in Islington. Readers who attended found no donkeys apart from themselves. In 1976 the eminent astronomer Sir Patrick Moore, in a radio interview broadcast on April 1st, stated that, due to a favourable planetary alignment, a temporary decrease of gravity would be experienced at 9:47am. Some among his more gullible listeners confirmed a sense of weightlessness at the expected hour. And of course in 1957, *Panorama* broadcast a very plausible documentary on the spaghetti harvest. You have been warned.

Christopher Green

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**... plus our regular features,
notes & notices and diary dates**

Cover photograph — The Sayer Almshouses
(page 19) *Tony Firshman*

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Return to Fairacres

Father Basil Jones reflects on the passing of the Convent of St. Mary and the Angels, Boxmoor

This Convent was established by the Mother House at Fairacres in Oxford in 1928, when their numbers were increasing. Some 23 years previously, the original community was drawn together by Fr Hollings when he wrote that "There is at present no Contemplative Community and if it should please God to form one, I am absolutely convinced that it must begin in hiddenness, in a time of waiting on God only...and when all the excitement of leaving the world is over, and the send-off of friends is of the past, the aspirant will begin to learn what it is to come into the wilderness for the love of Jesus Christ."

With numbers declining the Convent at Boxmoor is closing and so after about 76 years they are returning to Fairacres and they will be greatly missed by those who for a variety of reasons have gained strength, comfort and wisdom from their quiet and hidden presence.

And we will have to get along without their local presence. I have been saying Mass there at least once a month for just under 30 years and we at St Peter's have made ourselves responsible for the 1st Sunday in the month for the last nine years. Many priests, Bishops and Archbishops, have been pleased to join with them in worship and to enjoy the coffee and conversation afterwards.

People are often curious about Convent Life especially in a Contemplative Order. The Sisters do not nurse or teach, but live inside their enclosure. They only go out when necessary. Their work covers

review leader

ordinary domestic tasks, office administration, hospitality, and the management of their SLG Press which specialises in printing and publishing books and pamphlets on Christian spirituality and which now has a web-site <http://www.slgpress.co.uk> .

The Community of the Sisters of the Love of God is a contemplative community dedicated to Reconciliation. Their chief work is prayer on behalf of the world. We may be tempted to think that there is nothing we can do, or that the contemplative life is worthless. Their own pamphlet exhorts us to combat such doubts and discouragement by identifying wholeheartedly with Christ in our daily choices, both small and great, and so release the power of divine love in the world.

They will be much missed at Boxmoor by many who never even met them, for their concerns were extensive and I for one will be the poorer for their physical absence although I have no doubt that this Parish will be much in their minds and prayers at this time. And we must pray for them at a time of great change. May God be with them. ❖

Amusing quotations, supposedly from children's writing have reached the **review** from more than one source. Circulating on the web?

Among the best:

Lot's wife was a pillar of salt by day,
but a ball of fire by night

Samson slew the Philistines with the
Axe of the Apostles

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Jennie Budd, with her husband, Peter, moved to Northchurch in 2003, met **Audrey Faunce** (see February 2005 Review, p5) who lived nearby, and there began a friendship rooted in their membership of **MU**. Jennie became a member in 1972 when she moved to Chandler's Ford in Hampshire. Wanting to find new friends and to get involved in the church community at St Boniface, Jennie found **MU** to be a welcoming group. Those were not the only reason for joining. Jennie was attracted by its focus on marriage and family life. It was also outward-looking, taking its worldwide responsibilities seriously. She quickly became an active member, holding office in the branch and deanery, and was very committed to its project work.

As a leader, Jennie found support and encouragement for her new roles. The diocese organised training days, giving guidance and the opportunity to meet with other members and share experiences as well as fellowship. The quiet days and deanery and diocesan services helped deepen her spiritual life, and she particularly remembers meeting many members from overseas at Winchester Cathedral in 1998 when they came to Britain for The **MU** Worldwide Council meeting. Jennie's enthusiasm for **MU** project work continued right through her time in Chandler's Ford. As Branch Leader Jennie organised meetings and social events for the members. Her branch regularly worked in the Cathedral cafeteria, but Jennie saw that their outreach went beyond their own locality. They raised money to help educate two boys in Africa and to support a church in Uganda. A member was able to take gifts to Uganda, bringing back photographs and stories to share with members at home. More recently, the two national **MU** projects for

MOTHERS' UNION

Welcome and Outreach
Margaret Burbidge traces one member's experience of the **MU**



the millennium, Literacy and Development and the Parenting Programme, have not been overlooked. This led to parenting courses being set up in her deanery, meeting a need in that area.

Living in the Winchester diocese meant Jennie had ready access to Old Alresford Place, where **MU** was founded by **Mary Sumner**, and to the village church where the very first

MU banner is displayed in a glass case. She had the privilege of taking visitors there and recalls the visit of **Dr Sam Ndimbo** and his wife, Inviolata from Tanzania. Inviolata was a diocesan president and as soon as she got out of the car, Jennie noticed that her walk was a steady plod; a pace to keep going, and necessary if you have to go on foot, to visit all your branch members, a journey taking 2 months in all!

Jennie has brought this commitment to our branch in Berkhamsted, where she has found new friends. She is a loyal member, who still believes in the importance of marriage and family life in today's world. Jennie's large family matter greatly to her, but so does the wider worldwide family we all belong to as **MU** members. Outreach to them and those in need is central to Jennie's life and faith, and this is right at the heart of **MU** membership. ❖

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The police can be a very reassuring presence. At a councillors' seminar at their HQ in Welwyn Garden City recently the individual policemen and women I met (policeperson has not caught on yet) showed that mix of trustworthiness, clarity and energy that we perhaps take for granted in them. At the entrance I was met by a young policewoman who

was courteous, bright and cheerful but with an aura about her from which it was quite clear that if I stepped out of line I would be politely but unambiguously slapped down. The police force has an esprit de corps that is often found amongst uniformed groups.

How disappointing then to discover, that when it came to the presentations and the leaflet hand-outs, the language used sank to the level of bland vacuity that is now almost universal when it comes to material distributed by public services to their customers - you and me. Can we really be inspired by a strap-line which runs *Working together for a safer Hertfordshire?* Paperwork that is supposed to inform simply slides over a mass of allusions and inspires nothing more than yawns. It fails to engage with the facts and resorts to bland generalisations - as if afraid of being pinned down to any factual detail that might be remembered and "*used in evidence*". I do not feel that I have learnt anything at all useful when told that, for example, of the "*draft priorities*" for Three Rivers Council one is "*young people*" and another is "*violent crime*". Presumably the intention is to reduce "*violent crime*" but what is the intention towards "*young people*"? In Dacorum, we are told that a "*zero tolerance towards arson attacks*" has been adopted. Well I should hope so. And when was there not a zero tolerance towards arson attacks. Has it been the case

Ian Reay's &news &views

A very reassuring presence

But the written work needs to improve. **Ian Reay** reports on the police

up until now that the odd school blaze was passed over with a shrug because there was not yet a "*zero tolerance*" policy towards arson?

All of this is a great pity because hiding behind all this we really do have a very good police force of which we can be proud. Take car crime for example. Some

readers may have had the same momentary experience of panic that I did a few weeks ago when driving into Maylands Avenue from the motorway on my way home. I saw the registration number of the car I was driving, my car, float in front of me, in lights, high up on a board at the side of the road. The police now have a device that can read number plates using video cameras. This is known as Automatic Number Plate Recognition. Using this a policeman can point a camera at a car and immediately see information about the car - who its registered owner is, whether the tax has been paid, whether it is reported stolen, and so forth. As can be imagined this is very bad news for car thieves. A stolen car can be tracked by CCTV and when it approaches traffic lights the police have the power to turn the lights red and keep them that way, boxing the suspicious car in until the police can catch up. The driver can then be caught - very courteously of course. Apparently over the last year or so this device has led to 13,000 arrests for car related crimes across the country.

Operationally and technically the police force is excellent - it is a pity though that along with the rest of the public sector it doesn't have the confidence to tell the facts as they are when presenting official jargon to the public.



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David Russell, in his talk at our Annual Thanksgiving Service, spoke with great enthusiasm of the opportunity for witness and outreach that the Way Inn presented, eloquently reminding us of our basic goals and underlining the need for us to work ecumenically. Oh that he could give the same talk in all the churches of Berkhamsted!

At this Easter season, it is not too inappropriate for me to borrow Jesus' method of questioning Peter, and apply it to you (and me!).....

Do you **believe** in The Way Inn?
Do you believe in The Way Inn?
 Do you believe in **The Way Inn**?

Jesus' reply to Peter was supremely demanding – *"Feed my sheep"* or, in a more modern idiom, *"I hear your words – now do it!"*

If we say we believe in the Way Inn, we cannot leave others to do it all for us. And that applies to Churches as much as individuals. We were conceived in prayer and we will only flourish with continued prayer. We were born through the labour of volunteers; we need their continued support in order to grow. We were blessed by all the churches of Berkhamsted and will always need their blessing in order to flourish.

Think:

We have always had a prayer support group. Could you give your time to this?

Does the Way Inn feature in the prayers of individuals? And is it remembered in Church prayers?

STIRRING THOUGHTS FROM THE KITCHEN

**Les Driver reminds us
that the Way Inn
needs our support**

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How often does the Way Inn come up at Church Meetings? Does your church give regular financial support ?

Do I sound rather harsh? I hope not, I am only trying to portray a real situation:

**The Way Inn needs you - individually.
 The Way Inn needs you - collectively.
 The Way Inn needs you - now!**

Contact **Les Driver** (864751)
 or **Lynne James** (872724) ❖



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 St Matthew's account takes shape during
 redecoration at St Peter's

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FRESHEN UP YOUR SOCK'S LIFE

Gerry Morrish wonders which one

the Church of England, but in fact I thought about socks. Maybe I'll discover the meaning of the universe on my next trip .

deal of freshening up.

Such were my thoughts which served to pass the time as I travelled from Berkhamsted to Aylesbury. I could have pondered the meaning of the universe or the state of



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St Peter's Church is a wonderful setting for the performance of both sacred and secular music. A strong musical tradition enriches the celebration of the great festivals of the Church, and the regular worship that takes place throughout the year. But, in addition the Church welcomes many concerts and recitals, and by doing so, serves the wider community as a powerfully atmospheric venue for all music-lovers. Whether for a recital of chamber works in the beautiful 13th century Lady Chapel or for a Beethoven symphony in the great nave, the experience is subtly enhanced by the historic setting.

So why do we never hear any of the great piano works of the classical and modern repertoire?

The answer is simple. The church lacks an instrument worthy of this music. But now, you can do something about it.

SPONSOR A PIANO KEY.

The Cowper Society has been raising money towards a Piano Fund for several years and is now making what it hopes will be a final appeal to all music-lovers in Berkhamsted to bring the fund to a level where the purchase of the instrument will be possible.

The appeal was launched at the most recent concert given at St Peter's by the Bridgewater Band when they gave a thrilling performance of Beethoven's Fifth Symphony. The audience was invited to sponsor individual keys of the piano. By the end of the evening some thirty keys had been sponsored, raising nearly £1,000. There are more than forty keys still to be sponsored. Give generously and we can raise the other £2,000 that the Cowper Society is looking for. Minimum donation £25. Contact **David Pearce** (878809), or Cowper Society members at any church service or forthcoming musical event.



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The global warming debate continues. Is it caused by man-made carbon dioxide or a naturally occurring change in weather patterns? Certainly the winter has been mild, with bluebells pushing strongly through the woodland floor in February. We cannot promise, but the routes this year should include the spectacle of carpets of bluebells at their best in the woods of Ashridge.

The Children's Society Berkhamsted Walk and Stroll will take place on Sunday 8th May. The Walk will start with registration from 10:00-11:30am at the Court House. The Stroll will start from Ashridge Management College with registration from 1:00-3:00pm.

The Walk gives a choice of routes in the beautiful countryside around us of either 12 miles or 18 miles. The Stroll is either 2 miles within the buggy friendly extensive grounds of Ashridge, or 5 miles, way-marked, in the countryside around.

Walkers intending to tackle the 18 mile long Walk should register early to ensure returning to the Court House, where refreshments will be available, before 6:00pm.

The routes this year are all new. The long and short walks will share a route to the first checkpoint at Little Gaddesden where the routes divide. The short walk makes its way to checkpoint three at Hudnall. The long walk adds six miles by going to Great Gaddesden via St. Margarets, continuing to checkpoint two at Bradden Lane and on to Clements End near Studham before returning to checkpoint three at Hudnall. The again shared route reaches the Bridgewater Arms, always a welcome stop for refreshment, via Little Gaddesden Church and continues to Ringshall where it enters the woods of Ashridge to reach the fourth checkpoint at the Monument. The

THE 37TH CHILDREN'S SOCIETY BERKHAMSTED WALK AND STROLL

Alex Evans sets the scene



route then passes through probably one of the finest displays of bluebells in the country to reach the open fields of Berkhamsted Common and the fifth checkpoint by New Road. The return is through woods to Northchurch Farm, then passing Bridgewater School, Castle Hill Farm, and back to the Court House.

The Complete Outdoors has again donated an expensive pair of exceptionally comfortable Chris Brasher boots, or outdoor goods of equal value, to be won by the walker (or his/ her dog!) who raises the most sponsorship money. In addition, **The Complete Outdoors** is most

generously donating a prize on the day to every child between four and fourteen years of age who takes part in the Walk or Stroll.

Sponsor forms are available from:

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Or ring 01442 864968 for forms and information.

As in previous years, if obtaining sponsors is not to your liking, you may alternatively make a one-off donation to **The Children's Society**, "*self sponsorship*". Please be generous in supporting a good cause!

The Children's Society works to help children who are vulnerable and deprived because of circumstances not in their control. When home becomes unbearable, more than 100,000 children run away each year. Please contrast the pleasures of walking on country paths in the spring with runaways' lives on the streets and help **The Children's Society** by your sponsorship to ensure that children at risk have somewhere safe to go.



FROM ROTHERHITHE TO PADDINGTON

Marc Brunel vindicated

Following the suspension of work on the Thames Tunnel in August 1828 a series of fresh proposals were considered for completing the project while approaches were made to the government for financial support. It was therefore essential that plans for completing the tunnel enjoyed the confidence of the government so, to that end, the Tunnel Company referred the different proposals for finishing the tunnel to a committee of distinguished engineers. They included **James Walker**, President of the Institution of Civil Engineers; **Peter Barlow**, who later developed the tunnelling shield for the construction of underground railways; **William Tierney Clark**, a pioneering water engineer; and the professor of mathematics from the new University College, London, **Augustus de Morgan**. This formidable quartet duly endorsed Brunel's method as the most feasible one for completing the tunnel and, fortified by this vote of confidence in their engineer, the directors approached the government for a loan, which was made to the company in December, 1834.

Marc now designed a new, more robust shield to replace the damaged one and in March 1836, six and a half years after work had ceased, tunnelling began again. Over the next two and a half years there were three serious floods and many minor ones. A further problem was the leakage into the tunnel of noxious gases such as hydrogen sulphide and fire damp. The tunnellers were now burrowing through unstable ground, saturated with sewage from the polluted Thames and inhaling poisonous gases. Every two hours, day and night, Marc visited the tunnel office to check the latest reports on the state of the ground. So worried was his wife Sophia by the effect on the health of her seventy-year old husband that she rigged up a

Stephen Halliday continues
the story of the Brunels



Marc Isambard
Brunel



Isambard Kingdom
Brunel

rope with a bell and bucket outside his bedroom window. Every two hours the bell rang, Marc awoke and pulled up the bucket with the latest samples of earth for his inspection. He placed his instructions in the bucket which was lowered to the ground as he returned to his rest.

These ordeals were accompanied by further requests to the government for financial aid and Government loans eventually amounted to £250,000. In December, 1841, after three more floods, the tunnel finally reached the northern shore at Wapping where a shaft had already been sunk to receive it. In the meantime Marc had been rewarded with a well-deserved knighthood, conferred by **Queen Victoria** in March, 1841, but in November 1842, as the finishing touches were being made to the tunnel, he suffered a stroke.

Fortunately Marc was sufficiently recovered to attend the tunnel opening ceremony on 25th March, 1843. This was a very grand occasion. A military band played as a long procession was led through the tunnel by a Metropolitan Policeman. The only sour note of the day was sounded by Thames watermen who flew black flags to signify the destitution which they feared would be caused by their loss of trade to the tunnel.

Tunnel or Fairground?

In its first four months more than a million pedestrians visited the tunnel, most of them drawn by curiosity rather than by a need to cross the river. In the first full year the number reached two million. Each of them paid a penny to do so but the income yielded by these visitors, amounting to less than £9,000, came nowhere near paying the interest on the loan, let alone the capital invested by the shareholders. It had originally been anticipated that the tunnel

would accommodate carriages, for which sixpence would have been charged but as all the available capital was exhausted in constructing the pedestrian stairways this potentially profitable source of revenue was lost.

Even before the tunnel opened the directors had admitted visitors to those parts which were completed in return for a payment of as much as a shilling and soon after its official opening they permitted stallholders to occupy the arches which linked the northbound and southbound passageways. In April, 1844, a year after the opening, the company mounted the first of many *Fancy Fairs* and these became a feature of the tunnel in its first twenty years which thereby developed into a visitor attraction rather than a means of communication. Stallholders came from afar to sell food, drink, trinkets and souvenirs.

In its heyday the tunnel was London's principal giftshop, frequented by tourists as well as Londoners rather as Oxford Street and Knightsbridge are visited now. But this period of modest prosperity was short-lived and the stall-holders' rents never contributed more than a few hundred pounds a year to the empty coffers of the Tunnel Company and its long-suffering shareholders. By 1860 the tunnel had degenerated into a haunt of homeless tramps, drunks and prostitutes which respectable Londoners hesitated to visit.

In the meantime the company's debts continued to mount. Since the revenue was inadequate to pay even the interest on the Treasury loan the size of the loan grew rather than diminished. By 1865 this debt had grown from £250,000 to £393,666. In the meantime the shareholders had received no dividends at all. In that year the tunnel was bought by the East London Railway.

The Building of Paddington Station

Isambard Kingdom Brunel outlived his father by only 10 years, dying in September, 1859. However this gave him time to make his own lasting contribution to the fabric of London: Paddington station. He had been engineer to the Great Western Railway since 1833 and by 1838 a

temporary terminus at Bishop's Road, west of the present site of Paddington station, was opened to run trains as far as Maidenhead.

In the meantime the search continued for a permanent site for the terminus. It was not until 1853 that the Great Western directors sanctioned the construction of a permanent terminus on the present site. Brunel had been determined upon such a course for years and in 1851, in a characteristic letter, he invited the architect **Matthew Digby Wyatt** to join him in the enterprise while leaving no doubt about who would be the senior partner.

Brunel was a notorious workaholic, routinely working eighteen hours a day and sleeping in the *Britzka carriage* which was designed to convey him from one task to the next while he worked or, occasionally, slept. Brunel's design for Paddington station reflects his admiration of Paxton's work. It was the first main line station to make such imaginative use of a large metal frame with glass panels. This design for a major station was to be followed by many railway engineers in the years that followed, most notably at St Pancras in 1868. Brunel's station was the first to have a major hotel attached to it: the Great Western Hotel designed by **Philip Hardwick** who later went on to design Euston station.

Thus did **Marc and Isambard Kingdom Brunel** leave their marks on Victorian London, the first below ground and the second above. Both of the great works with which their names are associated, the Thames Tunnel and Paddington Station, involved pioneering use of machinery and materials and both remain in daily use bearing passengers to and from the city and carrying them beneath its river. Like the Thames Tunnel the great Victorian railway station was a wonder of the world.



Next month: Tunnelling under London - 1869 to the present-day

From **Stephen Halliday's** book *Making the Metropolis: Creators of Victoria's London*, available from Ottakar's, High Street, Berkhamsted.

WILLIAM COWPER — ON HARES AND HUNTING

David Pearce, chairman of
the Cowper Society, brings an
eighteenth century perspective to
a modern debate

There was a seasonal reminder in the March *review* of hares, and of William Cowper's delight in his three pet hares, all of which appear in the St Peter's engraved window. If our poet had written the previous sentence he might have penned '*all of whom appear*', for he saw Bess, Tiney and Puss as distinct characters. The timely March observation, together with Parliament's passing of the Hunting Act on almost the very day that the *review* came out, prompted thoughts on William Cowper's reactions to hunting.

Cowper was the gentlest of men and we should expect him to condemn hunting. So he does, but there is more of theology in the argument than we should admit today, and certainly little of the contention of present-day Animal Rights. Nevertheless human sensibilities were then beginning to be attributed to animals, and, beset by the intermittent nightmare of his life, Cowper famously called himself '*The Stricken Deer*' - a hunted animal.

For him animals were an important part of life. They could convey love; he considers that a dog or a cat can bring one to an '*awareness of Christ*'. Man should feel the happiness of animals '*augment his own*'. Thus, his dog, Beau, seeming to know that his master desires to have a water lily, jumps into a pond and fetches him one! We find Cowper's thinking mainly centred on domestic, and tame animals - cats, dogs, hares, birds. He observes them and how they seem to have human-like identities. He has his favourites - those who come the nearer to the human state. Puss, for instance, was the hare he loved best - '*my poor favourite*'. Puss responded to being nursed through illness, and Cowper felt that he could understand the hare's expressions of face. It was not so with Tiney who received the same caring attention. '*Upon him the kindest treatment had not the least effect*', and he would always try to bite.

Cowper kept a linnet in a cage. It was commonplace then to keep wild song birds. It did not seem cruel, and yet when one escaped and stayed to commiserate with another in a separate cage instead of flying away to freedom, the example of bird-loyalty wrung Cowper's kindly heart. He believed that all animals come within God's divine plan, and that:

*'they yet depend
Not more on human help than we
on theirs.'*

Any divorce between animals and Man is but another result of the sin in the Garden of Eden, for before that time all was harmony.

*'(Man) ruled with meekness, they
obey'd with joy.'*

And that is how Cowper would, ideally, wish it still to be.

But - and here is the big '*But*' - the centre of this earthly argument is '*We*' - Man. Man rules; all creatures exist '*but for our sake*', and we are '*accountable*'. Cowper approaches the matter from a different point of view from the animal-lovers of today, and this is the clue to his thinking. For Cowper, Man, in God's image, is distinguished from animals by Reason and by '*grace divine*'. The prime emphasis should not be on the animals who may or may not suffer as intensely as people, but on the human responses to them. The animals are a gift and we have to answer for how we use that gift. Cowper would expect that to be a matter for the conscience of each rational man, and not a matter for legislation. We are ennobled or demeaned by what we do, and animals help us to come to terms, or not, with that responsibility. The world without animals would not only be infinitely poorer, but Man would have less reason to discover his complete nature. It is not a matter of Animal Rights but of human perfectibility.

For example, Puss, the hare, had been caught and tormented by children. Yet Cowper does not criticise the children for what they do in their ignorance. Instead, he takes in the hare so that hare and he may mutually benefit. The emphasis is on human response, not on the animal's possible suffering.

Of stag hunting, Cowper writes: *'When stags are followed by such people as generally follow them, it is all very well: their pursuers are men who do not pretend to much humanity, and when they discover (show) none, they are perfectly consistent with themselves.'* But he objects to the King hunting for 'he is a merciful man' and would wish him to show an example of mercy. The cruel man will behave cruelly until the merciful man convinces him.

In his great poem, *The Task*, William Cowper writes of Man inflicting pain,

*To make him sport,
To gratify the frenzy of his wrath.'*

That is the broad, general lesson to be learned. But when in a letter to **Lady Hesketh**, four years later, he describes a fox hunt which converged on the orchard where he was walking with **Mary Unwin**, he does so in terms that are matter-of-fact and not censorious. The dead fox was produced. *'I determined to stay and notice all that passed.'* He then narrates the

huntsmen's actions with regard to the body. It is not a pretty spectacle, but he notes it down unemotionally and with an academic reference to Virgil. There is no heavy moralising. It is not so much that hunting is wrong, as that it may be the excuse for base emotions.

Unacceptable are Man's frenzy, anger, cruelty. For those lapses each man will have to answer. But beyond those irrational and uncontrolled emotions there may be a necessity for killing, just as there clearly is for Cowper's own killing of a snake. He comes across the largest viper he ever saw threatening his kittens. He does not hesitate to search *'swift as lightning for a long Dutch hoe'*. He tells the story twice, in verse and prose, and there is no sense of guilt in either version.

*'With outstretched hoe I slew him at the door,
And taught him NEVER TO COME
THERE NO MORE.'*

The capitals and the double negative perhaps convey both his vehemence and his sense of delighted achievement.

The last word may be best left to Beau, Cowper's dog. The master berates him in verse for killing a bird without apparent cause, and the dog is moved to set out his defence, also in verse. Beau says that he never harmed Cowper's caged linnet when he might easily have done so, and that in this case he was but obeying the *'strong behest'* of Nature. His final verse is:

*If killing birds be such a crime
(Which I can hardly see).
What think you, Sir, of killing Time
With verse address'd to me?'*

In Man's search for Salvation the wasting of Time is the greatest crime. That is Beau's point - and Cowper's too. That may well be our feeling in the drawn-out current debate. ❖

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Drawing by Mary Casserley, with permission

There is a pleasing continuity in the architectural history of Berkhamsted. Stretching back at least as far as the Norman Conquest, our buildings are full of interest. They are rarely exceptional in architectural terms but they allow us to trace the history and growth of the town from the Middle Ages to the present-day. Starting with this issue, the *review* plans to illustrate this architectural history in a series of occasional articles, though not in any sort of historical order. The series will focus initially on buildings that demonstrate their age by being inscribed with the date when they were built. We start with the Almshouses, endowed by **John Sayer** and built in 1684 on what would then have been the outskirts of the town. John, who lived at Berkhamsted Place, died in 1682 and the building of the almshouses must have been supervised by his widow, **Mary Sayer**. John left £1,000 in his will towards the establishment of the almshouses. The building itself cost £269 and the balance would have gone towards the endowment of small stipends for the six widows for whom the almshouses were intended. **Mary Sayer** bought land at Chilton, near Thame to provide income for this purpose. She put £300 of her own money towards the cost.

How did **John Sayer** come to endow an almshouse? He was born in 1620 and grew up in a period when the endowment of

THE BUILDINGS OF BERKHAMSTED

Christopher Green begins a series of articles about Berkhamsted's history



almshouses was one of the chief forms of charitable benefaction. Over 200 almshouses were founded in the 17th century, more than four times as many as in the previous century. We shall probably never know who was responsible for designing the Almshouses, but whoever it was, he, or could it have been she, perhaps **Mary Sayer** herself, was familiar with the architectural fashion of the time, often called '*baroque*'. The Almshouse, although a relatively modest building has several architectural features that were common in many much grander buildings put up in England in the late 17th century. The segmented pediment, the architectural name for the rather flat arch surmounting the front of the building, was popular at this time. The two round-headed niches in the front of the building, characteristically empty, are also common features of the baroque style. And the florid scroll that encloses the Sayer coat of arms is thoroughly typical of the rich decorative style of this period. An unusual feature of the almshouses as we see them today is their three tall chimneys. Today the roof is a low, tiled double gable, but evidence in the loft of the building suggests that the roof may once have been thatched. A thatched roof would most likely have been a steeply pitched single gable, and this may account for the unusual height of the chimneys. ❖

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Contemplating Monet

Gareth Pritchard
finds inspiration in
the Tate Gallery

review northchurch

Towards the end of February, on a day of bright sunshine but cold, keen wind, we made our way to Tate Britain to see the Turner Whistler Monet exhibition. London looked at its best, with Westminster Abbey and the Houses of Parliament stonework positively gleaming in the Canaletto-like clarity of light. What a contrast with the time when these masters of Impressionist painting lived! In Victorian times, London burnt much coal, spewing out smoke and sulphur dioxide which lead to 'smog'- an obnoxious atmosphere which gave rise to notorious *pea-soupers* that could cast strange colours of yellow, orange and even green onto the ground. The smog, compounded by the polluted state of the River Thames, produced much bronchial illness –an unhealthy environment indeed.

Turner was inspired to capture these colours in a new style of painting; his *Rain Steam and Speed* (1844) blended swirling smoke from a rushing steam engine into the multicoloured clouds of smog. Whistler became fascinated by both his style and the subject matter and would spend nights out on the Thames, committing scenes to memory of the spooky fog-shrouded silhouettes which he would then transfer to canvas or paper. Monet was introduced by Whistler to views of the Thames, particularly the Houses of Parliament from the splendour of the Savoy Hotel and he also came under the ghostly spell of the permeating smog. Many of his paintings after that were influenced by this effect, whether he was painting in London, Paris or Venice.

Monet's style is intriguing. Standing close to one of his paintings and looking at a localised area, one sees a mass of different coloured blobs of paint, some no larger than pin pricks. Then retreating slowly to a distance from the painting, these blobs coalesce into a recognisable representation of a scene, quite different from the *postcard* photographic style of a Canaletto.

My musings made me wonder whether one could compare a Canaletto with the Garden of Eden – everything neat and tidy, beautifully proportioned and set out in fine detail. But then with what might one compare a Monet?

Our world contains millions of people, each *doing their own thing*. Immersed amongst them it is sometimes difficult to see an overall plan or pattern, unless one can take a more distant, objective outlook. The Tsunami Appeal has touched the hearts of countless, different individuals throughout the world, who have become united by compassion for the less fortunate – prompted by *something* to try to improve their situation. Their efforts will not produce *Paradise* but at least, like the small parts of a Monet painting, the combined efforts will achieve some clarity of outlook for the future. As Christians, our *something* is a loving God who sent his Son to atone for our sins. It behoves us sometimes to step back from the trivia of everyday life which can act like a smog, and take a wider view of what He has planned for us – just like stepping back from a Monet painting and seeing the view spring into life!



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ALZHEIMER'S SOCIETY - DACORUM BRANCH

What is dementia? Alzheimer's disease is the most common form of dementia. Dementia is not an emotional or psychological disorder. It is caused by physical changes in the structure of the brain. These changes lead to problems with memory, thinking and actions. Dementia is usually progressive – this means it gradually affects people's lives more and more. Dementia is not a normal part of ageing and is not something to be ashamed of.

Who gets dementia? Dementia affects people of all ages, although it is more common among older people. Over 700,000 people in the UK have dementia. The wider impact on families and friends means that millions of

people's lives in the UK are affected by dementia.

No-one need suffer alone or in silence! If your life is affected in any way by dementia call the Dacorum branch of the Alzheimer's Society (260088). They not only offer a listening ear but their Carer's Support Worker, **Barbara Cummings**, can make a home visit to offer sympathetic suggestions and practical advice. Coffee mornings and support groups in Hemel and Tring also provide invaluable opportunity to de-stress and share problems.

MADRIGALS AT ST PETER'S

Members of the Chiltern Chamber Choir will be on the tower of St Peter's Church at 6:15am on Sunday May 1st to celebrate May Day with a selection of madrigals. Come and listen on St Peter's Lawns and join choir members in the Court House afterwards for breakfast provided by the Cowper Society.

What & Where in St Peter's?



email review@c-of-e.freemasonry.co.uk
Answer next month

Answer to March's What & Where in St Peter's?



Centre panel of the reredos in St Catherine's Chapel. This image featured on the 2003 parish Christmas card.

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review notes & notices

GREENWAY FIRST SCHOOL AND THE GRAHAM GREENE BIRTHPLACE TRUST

In an endeavour to raise achievement, make the curriculum purposeful and to raise funds for a new library, Greenway First School recently launched a competition to write stories in the style of **Graham Greene's** books for children. **Graham Greene** was chosen as a role model as this famous author was born in Berkhamsted and 2004 was the centenary of his birth. The Graham Greene Birthplace Trust very kindly agreed to sponsor this effort by the pupils to support our library appeal.

Pupils in Key Stage 2 listened to the stories written by **Graham Greene** and their assignment was to write a story of between 250 and 500 words in a similar style. The story had to be about a vehicle and should be suitable for reading to children in the Reception Class.

The results were spectacular. Sixty seven pupils aged between 7 and 9 produced delightful stories and books featuring many different types of vehicle. The stories were varied and exciting and many included a moral at the end which is a feature of Greene's work but was not specified for the entries. The high quality of the entries made judging tough, but eventually the judges, drawn from staff and friends of the school, chose a winner in each class, with two runners-up from a short list of twenty stories. **William Smith** wrote an engaging story entitled *The Little Fishing Boat*. Beautifully written in the present tense, this story communicated the moral that '*biggest is not always best*'. It was voted overall winner of the competition.

During March the school held an open evening to celebrate the pupils' work and in April some of the winning essays will be exhibited at a Graham Greene Exhibition at Vevey in Switzerland where **Graham Greene** died in 1991.

BERKHAMSTED CHORAL SOCIETY

Saturday 21st May - Mozart: operatic excerpts and Mass in C minor with the Chorleywood Choral Society. 7:30pm at St Albans Abbey. Full details in our May issue.

THE BRIDGEWATER BAND

Saturday 21st May - Handel: Music for the Royal Fireworks; Philip Sawyers: Symphonic Music for strings and brass; Mozart: Requiem in D minor - with the Chiltern Chamber Choir. 7:30pm at St Peter's Church. Full details in our May issue

THE DIOCESAN RESOURCE CENTRE

The new Diocesan Resource Centre at Holywell Lodge in St Albans is now open to visitors. It has relocated with the rest of the Education Team and the Youth Team to the Diocesan Offices. A wide range of books, cards, gifts and teaching resources is available. To contact the Resources Manager, Ron Upton phone 01727 818158 or visit him at Holywell Lodge, 41 Holywell Hill, St Albans, Herts. Parking is not available at Holywell Lodge so visitors should park at the nearby Westminster Lodge car park.

BLIND CLUB

There is interest in establishing a local club for the blind and partially sighted. If you would like to learn more about this initiative, contact **Doris Cutler** (863793).



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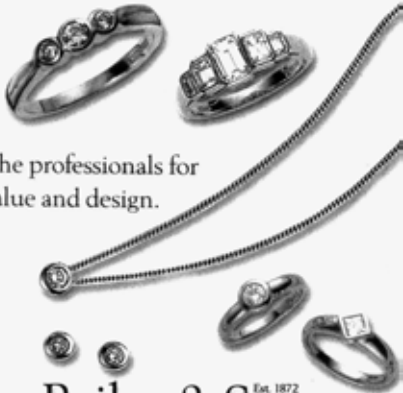
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*There will be an Open Day on Sunday May
1st 11:00am to 2:00pm*

Come and meet up with old school friends. Reminisce and catch up with all the news. Come back and see how the school has changed in some areas - and stayed the same in others

Refreshments available.

Farewell Martin and Geraldine



Martin and Geraldine Wright pictured in their garden a few weeks ago by **Michael Robinson**. This photograph now appears on the website of St Mark's Reigate (<http://www.stmarks-reigate.com>) where Father Martin is being inducted on May 18th at 7:30pm. A coach is being arranged. Please sign the list displayed in St Peter's or All Saints' if you want to come.

We wish them well in their new home

SUN	<i>St Peter's:</i>	8:00am Eucharist 9:30am Sung Eucharist, crèche, Sunday School & Pathfinders followed by coffee in the Court House 6:00pm Evensong		
	<i>All Saints' 10th</i>	8:45am Holy Communion – Methodist led		
	10 th	10:00am Common Worship – Methodist led		
	17 th	10:00am Holy Communion – Methodist led		
	24 th	10:00am Sung Eucharist – Anglican led		
TUE		<i>All Saints'</i>	8:00am Morning Prayer (MP) 9:30am Eucharist	
WED	<i>St Peter's</i>	5:00pm Evening Prayer (EP)	<i>All Saints'</i>	7:30am MP 8:00am Eucharist
THU	<i>St Peter's</i>	11:00am Eucharist 5:00pm EP	<i>All Saints'</i>	8:00am MP
FRI	<i>St Peter's</i>	9:15am Eucharist	<i>All Saints'</i>	8:00am MP 5:00pm EP
SAT	<i>St Peter's</i>	5:00pm EP	<i>All Saints'</i>	8:45am MP
1 st Sun	SUNDAYS TOGETHER LUNCH 12:30pm <i>Court House</i> For anyone on their own on a Sunday. Contact: Joan Morris (863780)			
3 rd Mon	GRIEF & LOSS SUPPORT VISITORS GROUP 7:45pm <i>Court House</i> Contact June Haile (873087), Thelma Harris (865785) or Ruth Treves Brown (863268)			
Tue	HILLSIDE GROUP: 8.00pm at 22, Upper Hall Park for bible study. Contacts: Rob & Julie Wakely (875504)			
Tue	CHUCKLES PARENT & TODDLER GROUP: 10:00-11:30am <i>All Saints' Church Hall</i> Song Time or Short service as announced. Jenny Wells (870981)			
Tue	ST PETER'S CHOIR Children 5:15 to 6:15pm <i>St Peter's</i> Contact: Adrian Davis (864722) or Jean Wild (866859)			
1 st Tue	TUESDAY CLUB 8:15pm <i>A lively women's group with guest speaker Court House</i> Contact chairman Jean Bray (864532) or secretary Joan Gregory (864829)			
3 rd Tue	MOTHERS' UNION: meets in members' houses at 8:00pm. <i>Non-members always welcome.</i> Contact: Kathie Lally (863526)			
4 rd Tues	MOTHERS' UNION PRAYER GROUP: 2:00pm <i>17 Shaftesbury Court.</i> Tell us if anyone needs our prayers. Contact: Jenny Wells (870981)			
Wed	JULIAN MEETING: meets about twice a month at Jenny's <i>57 Meadow Rd</i> <i>All are very welcome at 11:30am as arranged</i> or at Ruth's <i>1 Montague Rd</i> Contact: Jenny Wells 870981 or Ruth Treves Brown (863268)			
Wed	PATHFINDERS GAMES CLUB 7-8:30pm . (yrs 5-8) Jimmy Young (384929) <i>All Saints' Hall</i>			
3 rd Wed	GRIEF AND LOSS SUPPORT Lunch at 12:30pm for those who have been bereaved. Contact Thelma Harris (865785)			
Thu	HOME GROUP: 8:00pm on 2nd & 4th Thursdays. Contact Linda Bisset (862115)			
Thu	TE'S (Youth club for yr 9+) 7-9pm Jimmy Young (384929) <i>Court House</i>			
Thu	BELLRINGING: 8:00pm Priscilla Watt (Captain of the Tower) (863804) <i>St Peter's</i>			
Fri	LITTLE FISHES PARENT & TODDLER GROUP: 9:30-11:30am <i>Court House</i> Weekly meetings with a short service 1st Fri in St Peter's (10am) Nicole Addy-Varndell (864094)			
Fri	ST PETER'S CHOIR: Children 7:00-8:30pm, Adults 7:30-8:30pm. <i>St Peter's</i> Contact: Adrian Davis (864722) or Jean Wild (866859)			
3 rd Sat	ABC PRAYER BREAKFAST: 8:00am for breakfast & prayers. <i>Various local churches</i>			

reviewdiary

Please see opposite for a full list of regular services at St Peter's and All Saints' churches.
A priest is available for confessions by appointment (866161).

April / May 2005

APRIL

Sun	3	6:00pm	Evening Prayer – said	<i>St Peter's</i>
Sun	10	9:30am	Sung Eucharist – the Revd Canon Robin Brown to celebrate & preach	<i>St Peter's</i>
		11:00am	Annual Parochial Church Meeting	<i>St Peter's</i>
		6:00pm	Service of Thanksgiving & Commemoration for departed family & friends	<i>St Peter's</i>
Mon	11	8:00pm	Service of Wholeness and Healing	<i>St Peter's</i>
Sat	15	8:00am	Associated Churches Prayer Breakfast	<i>The Way Inn</i>
Sat	16	7:00pm	Deanery Confirmation Service – Preacher: Christopher, Bishop of Hertford	<i>St Peter's</i>
Sun	17		Area Committee Elections	<i>at both churches</i>
Tue	19	8:15pm	Parochial Church Council meeting	<i>The Court House</i>

MAY (forward dates for your diaries)

Sun	1	6:15am	The Cowper Society presents Madrigals sung from the church tower	<i>St Peter's</i>
			followed by breakfast in	<i>The Court House</i>
Thu	5	8:00pm	Ascension Day Eucharist	<i>All Saints'</i>
Fri	6	10:00am	Little Fishes Toddler service	<i>St Peter's</i>
Sun	8	10:30am	Children's Society sponsored walk sets out from	<i>The Court House</i>
		6:00pm	Choral Evensong	<i>St Peter's</i>
Mon	9	8:00pm	Service of Wholeness and Healing	<i>St Peter's</i>
Wed	11	8:00pm	All Saints' Area Committee	
		8:15pm	St Peter's Area Committee	<i>The Court House</i>
Sat	21	8:00am	Associated Churches Prayer Breakfast	<i>All Saints'</i>
		7:30pm	Concert - The Bridgewater Band with Chiltern Chamber Choir	<i>St Peter's</i>

reviewregisters

Baptisms (St Peter's)

20 February	Jack Lloyd Rees, Amelia Elaine Whittaker
6 March	Olivia Hope Tasker

Baptisms (All Saints')

27 February	Lydia Jane Sayle, Zoe Hannah Bonnet
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Weddings (St Peter's)

12 February	Graham Philip Rule and Nicola Joy Gifford
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Funerals

10 February	Elsie Delbridge	Chilterns Crematorium
10 February	Grace Margaret Kessly	Chilterns Crematorium
28 February	Michael George Buchanan	St Peter's Church (Kingshill)
2 March	Baby Nikola Draper	St Peter's Church (Kingshill)

review factfile

YOUNG PEOPLE at St Peter's and All Saints'

St Peter's

Sunday school and Pathfinders run from 9:30am to 10:30 in the Court House (next to the church in the High Street). Sunday School caters for 4 to 10 year olds, Pathfinders from 10 years upwards. Contact Sally Emery (870656) or Stephen Lally for Pathfinders (863526).

Crèche is available at 9:30am for under 3's. Parents are most welcome to use this facility in the Court House. Please contact Nicola Beadle (874538)

All Saints'

The Anglican and Methodist children meet together on Sundays at 10:00 am as *Explorers*, in four age-groups: *Trekkers* 3-5 years, *Hikers* 5-8 years, *Climbers* 8-11 years and *Pathfinders* 11 years onward. Contacts: Carenza Wilton (875147) Penny O'Neill (843422), Rebecca Judd (865691). Crèche is available at the same time for children under 3. Contact: Vicky Drury (384794).

Youth Groups

TEs for Year 9 up meets each Thursday at 7pm to 9pm in the Court House
Contact Jimmy Young (384929)
Pathfinders games club meets 7:00-8:30pm each Wednesday in All Saints' Hall

History Notes

In his sermon on the second Sunday of March (see <http://stpetersberkhamsted.org.uk>), **Father Luke Geoghegan** referred to the novel *Robert Elsmere* and noted that its author had lived at *Stocks*, the large country house in Aldbury. *Robert Elsmere* was published in 1888 and its author was **Mary Arnold**, the granddaughter of **Thomas Arnold**, Headmaster of Rugby School. Better known as **Mrs Humphrey Ward**, she was described by **Dean Inge**, Dean of St Paul's, who spoke at her funeral, as '*perhaps the greatest Englishwoman of our time*'.

Robert Elsmere which first appeared as a hefty three volume edition was hugely successful. It tells the story of a young clergyman who loses his faith. It reflects its author's belief that Christianity could be given new meaning by concentrating on social mission and giving less credence to miracles. Time has not been kind to the novels of **Mrs Humphrey Ward**. *The Cambridge History of English Literature* is severe - '*Her books, all solidly earnest, relieved their readers from any reproach of wasting their time on trifles.*'

As well as writing about social mission, **Mrs Humphrey Ward** was an active philanthropist, involved in projects to relieve some of the hardship that was the daily life of poor families in the cities of Victorian Britain. Cockney children were welcomed to *Stocks* and hampers of produce from the *Stocks* gardens were sent to the School for Invalid Children in Bloomsbury that she had been instrumental in founding.

Her daughter, Janet, married the historian **George Meredith Trevelyan**, and her rather rakish son, Arnold, was the MP for West Hertfordshire.

Christopher Green

reviewcontacts

General

The Revd Martin Wright, All Saints House, Shrublands Road (866161) (day off Monday)
 The Revd Prof. Luke Geoghegan (NSM), 16 Gravel Path, (866361)
 The Revd Canon Basil Jones (Hon.Asst.Priest), 17 Lochnell Road (864485)
 Christina Billington (Diocesan Lay Minister), 13 Ashridge Rise (385566)
 Marjorie Bowden (Reader), 16 Broadwater (871283)
 Joan Cook (Reader), The Gardeners Arms, Castle Street (866278)
 John Malcolm (Reader), Landswood, Shootersway (874993)
 Jenny Wells (Reader), 57 Meadow Road (870981)
 Parish Administration: Jean Green, The Parish Office, The Court House (878227)
 Stewardship Recorder: Miles Nicholas, 46 Fieldway (871598)
 Churchwardens: Carole Dell, 4 Clarence Road (864706)
 John Banks, Ladybrand, Cross Oak Road (871195)

Parochial Church Council: Secretary: Pat Hunt, 11 The Firs, Wigginton (822607)
 Treasurer: Michael Robinson, 36 Trevelyan Way (863559)

St Peter's

Director of Music: Adrian Davis (864722) stpetersberkhamsted.org.uk
 Asst. Director of Music: Jean Wild (866859)
 Organist: Jonathan Lee (0794 1113232)
 Weddings, Banns of Marriage, Baptisms, Funerals: Revd Martin Wright (866161)
 Bellringers (St Peter's): Priscilla Watt, 11 Cavalier Court, Chesham Road (863804)

All Saints'

Choirmaster: Peter McMunn (874894) allsaintsberkhamsted.org.uk
 All Saints' is an Anglican / Methodist Local Ecumenical Partnership.
 Anglican priest-in-charge Revd Martin Wright (see *General* above)
 Methodist minister: Revd Paul Timmis, 32 Finch Road (866324)

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