

*the magazine for town and parish*

November 2012

# *your* **Berkhamsted**



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Your Berkhamsted Young Writer of the year!

**50p**

# From the Editor November 2012



*The Parish Magazine of  
St Peter's  
Great Berkhamsted*

## Welcome to the November issue of *Your Berkhamsted*.

This month's magazine sees the exciting launch of the *Your Berkhamsted* Children's Short Story Competition. This runs alongside November's National Short Story Week (which was incidentally founded by our very own previous editor!) and you can read all about it on page 20. To tie in with this we also have a suggested list of short story reads for both adults and children.

To mark Remembrance Day there is an interview with Chris Richards who is the Standard bearer for the Berkhamsted Royal British Legion, and the history article this month describes how the First World War 'began' in Berkhamsted. We have a review of the Graham Greene festival, news from our friends in Ashridge, and information on some forthcoming festive events due to happen in December.

Finally, January may seem a very long way off but if you wish to submit anything for our January issue please do so now as we need items well in advance due to the Christmas break.

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## Helen Dowley, Editor

**Your Berkhamsted Needs You**—The editorial team of Your Berkhamsted is actively seeking new contributors for the magazine.

**Local groups**—Bringing news from local groups to our readers is an important function of Your Berkhamsted. If you belong to a local group please let us know about your latest news and events. Articles should be 500 to 900 words in length.

E-mail [editor@yourberkhamsted.org.uk](mailto:editor@yourberkhamsted.org.uk)

# Your Berkhamsted Leader by Fr Tom Plant



**F**orgive me for stating the obvious, but autumn is well underway. The air is cold and often wet, the sky a baleful pallor. The time has come to wrap up warm and hunker

indoors over a bowl of steaming soup. Yet advertising encourages us to indulge in the fantasy of a perpetual summer, a land of endless gambolling beneath sunny skies, in a state of perpetual youth and beauty, vigour, vim, green shoots and get-up-and-go. Winter sun holidays, tanning booths, nightclubs with the heating up so we can dance around in crop tops (I do this all the time, of course) and pretend it's Ibiza - all these things beckon us in from the cold reality outside. And to some extent, that's all well and good. We need such summer fantasies on our grey island. I'd like a bit of winter sun myself. But the cold months are important, too. We can't live a life of nonstop growth and energy. Ours is a world of seasons, and we need to respect the pattern of these seasons as much as everything else on earth does: to take time to hibernate, to refresh, to let the growth come gently underneath the frosty ground. Then, when the warm months come, we will be ready for them.

Many churches are guilty of the mentality of the perpetual summer, always brash and cheery, focussing on outwardly obvious growth and energy. And frankly, the forced smiles can grow rather tiresome. But if we follow the Church year properly, we can find a really seasonal spirituality. The summer season of Trinity, where the church is decked in fertile green, is drawing to an end. After the white of All Saints on the first of November, we come on the second to the pensive black of All Souls, when we pray for and with the dead loved ones, reflecting that we will one day join them. Soon after, we move to the penitential purple of Advent. This 'mini-Lent' is a time for reflection and inner growth, as we seek, warm and nourish the Christ hidden within each of us, ready for His birth, in golden splendour, at Christmas.

Believe it or not, Christ is hibernating inside you, deeper than you know. So try to withdraw a little in this cold season, keep warm beneath the spiritual frosts, and give Him the chance to wake up inside you in time for Christmas. Then the outer growth can really start anew.

**JB**

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# Around the town

## Storytelling Cabaret

The Kings Arms is hosting a unique evening of storytelling to celebrate this year's National Short Story Week. Berko Speakeasy, billed as a "cabaret of short stories" will entertain guests with tales from writers including Hanif Kureishi, Adele Parks and Dr Who scriptwriter Robert Shearman, all brought to life by a company of professional actors. The stories have been chosen from a new anthology, *Overheard*, being published by Salt Publishing to coincide with National Short Story Week. Berko Speakeasy is at The Greene Room, The Kings Arms, High Street, Berkhamsted on Wednesday 14th November (7pm for 7.30pm start). *Tickets £8, available from The Kings Arms, Waterstone's and by emailing tickets@shortstoryweek.org.uk*

## OXFAM and Nectar

Are you one of the 18.6 million people in possession of a Nectar Loyalty card? If so, Oxfam is offering a new outlet for your bonus points. A selection of Oxfam Unwrapped alternative gifts will be available online to Nectar cardholders at [nectar.com/oxfamunwrapped](http://nectar.com/oxfamunwrapped). They include Clean Water for Ten People, School Supplies, Feed a Family and Teach a Teacher. Ideal for that someone who is tricky to buy for. The full Oxfam Unwrapped range will still be available in the High St shops but Nectar points can only be redeemed online. Do call in for an unusual gift which comes with an attractive card illustrating your choice to send to the recipient.

## Author news

On Saturday October 13th newly-wed Berkhamsted authors Sue Hampton and Leslie Tate held a 'sign-in' at home in their flat not far from the high street, offering special discounts on their books (eighteen titles between them, across age ranges and genres) and free home-made cake. The event was a huge success with adults and children dropping by all day, and they are planning a re-run, 9am – 5pm on December 1st, with a Christmas flavour. See <http://www.suehamptonauthor.co.uk/> or <http://www.leslietate.com/> or call on 875425.

## Events presented by the Cowper Society at St Peter's Church

Fri 9<sup>th</sup> Nov at 1:00pm - RECITAL - Anna Le Hair *piano* and Helen Godbolt *cello*. Free Entry. Retiring collection.  
 Mon 12<sup>th</sup> Nov at 8:00pm - ORGAN RECITAL Jonathan Lee, St Peter's Church Organist. Free Entry. Retiring collection.  
 Sat 17<sup>th</sup> Nov at 7:30pm - CONCERT - Bridgewater Sinfonia Director Adrian Davis, Neilsen *Maskarade*; Sibelius *Symphony No.5 Op13*; Milhaud *La Création du Monde*; Ravel *Bolero*. Tickets: £15, U18s free, Dacorum Card concessions; from Aitchisons or [www.bridgewater-sinfonia.org.uk](http://www.bridgewater-sinfonia.org.uk).  
 Mon 26<sup>th</sup> Nov at 8:00pm - ORGAN RECITAL – David Hardie – Manchester Cathedral/ Royal Northern College of Music. Free Entry. Retiring collection.

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## *Read all about us!*

**Julian Dawson** looks at varied and surprising references to our town in the media

**B**erkofest was a big hit, helped by a glorious brief taste of late summer, and as befitting an event of this local stature there was plenty of coverage on the internet. I particularly enjoyed publicity from the enticingly entitled muddystiletos.co.uk which stated that “Berkhamsted punches above its weight with theatre, festivals and independent loveliness” and I stifled a guffaw when it described the town as “flirtatiously nudging south Bucks”. I say, steady on! In a later blog the writer describes the Ashridge estate as heavenly. I’ll have a glass of whatever they’re having Cricket fans amongst you may have come across a blog by Peter Baxter, former producer of the peerless Test Match Special. In the appropriately named aftertms.blogspot he writes thoughtfully about what makes a good commentator, emphasising that tone is as important as knowledge. Great exponents include John Arlott, John Murray and Clare Balding. He also enjoys the voice of Radio Four’s Charlotte Green. He is “sure it is she who informs you - gently and politely - that you are approaching Berkhamsted or Kings Langley and warns you not to leave any of your belongings on board when you get to Euston.”

I’ve mentioned a few local pubs in my column, so to be even handed this month’s honorary mention goes to The Old Mill, which is mentioned in Dispatches by the blog foodandcity wordpress, “Nice and quirky with beautiful little garden at the canal it offers really good food the whole day”. Interestingly its sister pub is in Harpenden, just across valley and dale from here. And whilst we are talking about local hostelries, the *Berkhamsted and*

*Tring Gazette* reports on Kings Arms owner Oakman Inns’ purchase of the Crown and Thistle in Abingdon for the little matter of 1.6 million. No lack of funds there.

Now you really know you’ve made it when you make an appearance in the esteemed *Financial Times*, thanks to the British Film Institute archive at our town. In Peter Aspden’s film and TV column he discusses that the 3D threshold has been crossed and chats with the BFI about the complexities of the medium. I’m not sure we are yet ready for a 3D version of *YB*, but don’t rule anything out.

Intriguingly, Berkhamsted crops up in the *East Anglian Daily Times*. A proposed Tesco mini store in Aldeburgh, Benjamin Britton land, has attracted objections from such far flung places as our own local town and far flung Strasbourg! This leads a Suffolk mother to react “What do they know about a busy working mum in Aldeburgh who wants to see more choice in her home town to make the family food budget go further?” Which does rather raise the question as to whether we would be happy with Suffolksiders or French residents having a view on our local Marks and Spencer. Which incidentally does seem to be going ahead now extra parking has been allocated.

And finally, Vodafone customers will have been frustrated by the lack of network for the second time this year. Rantings on the Vodafone Forum have been much in evidence. A reminder of life when one relied on the landline, telegraph, and carrier pigeon.





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# Find out what's happening in Ashridge this season and beyond

**Ann Lang**

**H**ave you been for a walk through the National Trust Ashridge Estate lately? It's beautiful at this time of year. In fact, it doesn't really matter what season we're in, it's the place to unwind and put life back into perspective. A frosty morning is the perfect time to enjoy the woods - and a home-made bowl of soup afterwards at the Brownlow Café. If you're busy getting the garden settled for the winter, spare a thought for Ashridge - the Friends of Ashridge's annual bumper plant fair isn't until Sunday 12th May next year but most of our sale plants are donated by kind people who have plants to spare in their gardens. John Cartwright (01442 864 984) will be very happy to hear from you any time between now and 5th May: whether you have perennials, shrubs, trees, vegetables, herbs or annuals, he'll welcome your donations of well-rooted, healthy plants. Pots and compost are available on request. Please fully label – including the colour of decorative flowers. In the meantime, preparations are well under way for 'Ashridge at Christmas' on Sunday 2nd December, bringing you original gifts from local craftspeople and suppliers in the magical setting of the National Trust Ashridge Estate. The NT shop and Brownlow Cafe will be open all day, too. And if the family could do with a breath of fresh air during the Christmas break, get signed up for the now-traditional and always sold-out walk on Tuesday 27th December. This gentle circular walk starts at the Visitor Centre, finishing with mulled wine or a soft drink and mince pies.



Photograph courtesy of Mary Dodkins

## Diary Dates

Sunday 2nd December - Ashridge at Christmas. 10am-4pm, Ashridge Estate Visitor Centre, Monument Drive, Ringhshall, HP4 1LX. Original gifts from local craftspeople and producers. National Trust shop and Brownlow Cafe open all day. Free parking and entry.

Tuesday 27th December - Ashridge Estate Christmas Walk for all the family. 10am - noon, starting and finishing at Ashridge Estate Visitor Centre, Monument Drive, Ringhshall, HP4 1LX. Wine/soft drink and mince pie at the end. Booking essential - 01442 851 227 before 21 Dec. Friends of Ashridge members £6, all other adults £7, under 16s £5.

Sunday 12th May 2013 - Friends of Ashridge Spring Plant Fair. 1,000s of affordable plants for sale from private gardens and commercial growers. 11am-4pm. Free parking and entry. All proceeds in aid of Ashridge Estate upkeep. **yB**

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# Berkhamsted Tennis Club

## Matt Dawson

In this article, I will be talking about 'Berkhamsted Lawn Tennis & Squash Rackets Club' (BLT&SRC). Many of you will probably think that tennis is a summer sport, however many people, including me, continue to play tennis throughout the year and into the winter months.

I have been playing tennis since a very young age and have been receiving tennis lessons at Berkhamsted Tennis Club. It's a great place to go and play tennis, providing you have a membership or have lessons there. I started off doing the mini tennis levels and went up from red to green. I'm now currently in one of the development squads at the club which I do with a group of people all of a similar age. I am coached every Monday and our lessons usually consist of different types of drills, fun games and matches.

As well as the development squads which I am in there is also the 'Berkhamsted Elite Tennis Academy'. This is for tennis players who want to take their game to the next level; they train more than once a week which means taking part in the programme is a huge commitment. There is a prestige level in which children aged 4-10 take part, whilst there is also an older group which takes on the challenge of developing teenagers into 'stars of the future'. The

team of coaches involved in the academy is led by Australian Tyrell Diaz Stevens, an ATP World Ranked Player.

The club has great facilities which include 11 outdoor courts, of which 10 are floodlit. The courts are a mix of carpet, synthetic grass, concrete and just recently a new artificial clay surface was installed. Meanwhile there are also two indoor courts.

You can also play squash at the club which you can again receive lessons for. There are six inside courts at the back of the club of which two have glass backs with seating areas. There is plenty to do down at the club: Friday nights see Junior Night where young budding tennis players can go in order to improve their tennis skills and just have a fun time playing tennis related games.

There are also lots of social events at the club within the bar area which has two separate lounges, one of which has a flat screen TV with SKY attached.

If anyone is interested in playing tennis or receiving coaching then BLT&SRC is the place to go and play! **yB**



Picture courtesy of Berkhamsted Lawn Tennis & Squash Rackets website



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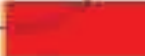


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# *How the First World War began in Berkhamsted*

Dan Parry



The Devil's Own was the proud nickname of the Inns of Court

elegant loggia outside the library at Ashridge. Receiving a telegram, he read the note in silence, put it in his pocket and then announced that he had to leave at once, that he couldn't say why but his hosts would understand tomorrow. The telegram summoned him to London where he was appointed Secretary of State for War, and the next day war with Germany was declared.

Early on, Kitchener saw the need for thousands of additional recruits and gave his face to the famous poster that pulled them in. Many came to Berkhamsted with the Inns of Court Officer Training Corps, who camped on what is now known as Kitchener's Field, behind the castle. Many of the men were billeted throughout the town, including Private Oliver Pearson who, in October 1915, wrote home to his family in Nottinghamshire to say he "was extremely lucky" to be given a bed at 24 Victoria Road "as most were billeted in sheds in a wood-yard". Private Pearson's "co-billeter" was a senior sergeant in a previous regiment, whose "former power has not yet worn off".

Training in the woods of Berkhamsted Common, the men dug 13,000 yards of zig-zag trenches in preparation for duty on the front-line. Brief stretches of these can still be seen in remote corners of the common, tucked away in Frithsden Beeches, at Norcott Hill and elsewhere. In fact, from this autumn, volunteers supporting the Chilterns Commons Project will plot the location of these trenches – and anyone wanting to help should make contact via the details below.

Trays of poppies are here again, and with them – like a familiar though slightly prickly friend – comes again the process of trying to stop the thing falling off your lapel, or turning into mush in the rain or stabbing you in the chest with its pin. But beyond the fancy ones with leaves, and the big ones for your car, what are the poppies all about? Of course, particularly given the war in Afghanistan, we buy them to commemorate those who have lost their lives in the service of their – our – country in conflict, whether recently or in the past. When it comes to remembering conflicts, poppies traditionally conjure up thoughts of the First World War, and from this autumn our WWI heritage is about to be explored in detail amid new archaeological work on Berkhamsted Common.

For Field Marshal Lord Kitchener, he of the 'Your Country Needs You' posters, the First World War began on August 3<sup>rd</sup> 1914, in Berkhamsted. The unbridled carnage unfolded soon after he sat down to tea under the carved stonework of the



In nearly five years from 1914, over 14,000 men passed through the area, most of whom were subsequently sent to the front – where the average life expectancy of an officer in the trenches was between just four and six weeks. While three were awarded the Victoria Cross, 2,147 men gave their lives in France and another 5,000 were injured, fighting for generals whose agility and ingenuity on the battlefield was, at best, mixed. Among the more astute commanders was General Sir Horace Smith-Dorrien who was born and buried in Berkhamsted. Given command of II Corps of the British Expeditionary Force (BEF) by Kitchener, his lifelong friend, Smith-Dorrien frequently clashed with the commander of the BEF, Sir John French, in a prolonged period of tension that unfairly eroded his reputation and ultimately damaged his career.

After the first battle of Mons, (August 23, 1914), Sir John ordered the BEF to abandon its equipment and hastily retreat. Ignoring the order, Smith-Dorrien mounted a spirited defensive action that bought his men enough time to gather up their supplies and make a fighting

withdrawal. This decision infuriated French who accused Smith-Dorrien of jeopardising the whole BEF. Four months later Smith-Dorrien took command of the Second Army, but further tension during the second battle of Ypres (April 1915) led French to sack Smith-Dorrien, who played no significant role in the rest of the war. French later wrote a partly inaccurate account of the start of the war, attacking Smith-Dorrien who as a serving officer was denied permission to reply in public. He later served as Governor of Gibraltar, devoted time to the welfare of Great War soldiers and played himself in the film *The Battle of Mons*, (1926). Smith-Dorrien died in 1930. He is buried in Three Close Lane Cemetery, and while there are memorials to him (in one form or another) in Canada, Gibraltar, and Australia there is little in his home town to remind us of him. Smith-Dorrien's is just one of dozens of local WWI stories that will inevitably emerge as the centenary anniversaries begin in a couple of years' time. For the moment, however, our memories are largely confined to the poppies.



The countryside around the town offered a varied terrain for the soldiers to practise all the different elements of warfare

If you would like to find out more about mapping local WWI training trenches, look at <http://www.chilternsaonb.org/news/107/19/Uncovering-WWI-history-on-Berkhamsted-Common.html> or contact Rachel Sanderson at [rsanderson@chilternsaonb.org](mailto:rsanderson@chilternsaonb.org)

*Photos courtesy of  
Berkhamsted Local History  
Society cared for by Dacorum  
Heritage Trust* **yB**

# *Ex-Jockey leads Remembrance Parade*

**John Gerry**



There are people in Berkhamsted whose face is familiar but you can't remember where you've seen it. One such is Chris Richards. He is the Standard Bearer for the Berkhamsted Royal British Legion and has

led the Remembrance Day procession for the last several years.

As Remembrance Day approaches, I thought it would be interesting to talk to Chris, and find out a bit about the man behind the flag. Apart from a spell in the Army (King's Troop Royal Horse Artillery), I didn't know what to expect.

In fact, there emerges a mixed and fascinating life. Born in Shrewsbury in the middle of the second World War, Chris grew up in the National Children's Home in Manchester. Small and wiry, he had precisely the right physique for a jockey, and was apprenticed in York to a flat racing stable. He rode for some eight or nine years, progressing to "Travelling Head Lad" in the well known stables at Lambourn. Chris explains that the "Travelling Head Lad" was top of the tree and enjoyed the privilege of accompanying the horses and meeting all the owners. So I suppose it was no surprise that, having decided to join the Army, he continued working with horses in the RHA.

Chris's Army career was cut short by a broken shoulder, suffered whilst drag-racing with Army colleagues, and in a complete career change he moved to Berkhamsted in 1968 as a barman in the

Kings Arms. The Kings Arms was quite a different place in those days and Chris remembers three or four coaches each week from London on their way to Stratford, stopping at Berkhamsted to see the castle and have lunch at the pub.

Clearly never one to stand still, Chris became a cocktail barman and, after a period learning about wine in London, moved to become Bar Manager in the Swan Hotel. Anyone watching the film "The Human Factor", based on the Graham Greene novel and shot in Berkhamsted, might spot Chris as one of the extras.

His next and final career move was to set out in his own business selling cuisine items door to door. This was not an easy life and Chris remembers many 14 hour days to make ends meet.

A major part of Chris's life since he came to Berkhamsted has been the Royal British Legion, both the organisation and the club (just off the High street). He has been a member for 44 years, and is very proud of the RBL's 90 year old tradition.

I asked Chris how he would compare modern Berkhamsted with the town in 1968. His reply was interesting because I confess to thinking that he would be remembering the "good old days". Far from it. "You couldn't even buy a cheese sandwich after two o'clock then" he recalls, and contrasts the modern thriving mixed High street with the many boarded up shop windows in 1968. He remembers that, at that time, Berkhamsted was home to six or seven major Head Offices:

Outspan, Pepsi-Cola and The Wellcome Foundation amongst them. All now long gone. I could only find a couple of pet hates: please don't call it Berko he begs,

and please wait for the Green Man before crossing the road!

All in all, Chris Richards is a great fan of Berkhamsted, its people and its ambience.



On 11th November he will carry the Standard leading the RBL procession from the Waitrose car park to St. Peter's church, and there will not be a prouder man in Berkhamsted.

*yB*

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## *Regular Church Activities*

- 3rd Mon Pastoral Network, 7:45pm, The Court House. Contact Philippa Seldon 871534
- Tue Chuckles Parent & Toddler Group, 10-11:30am. All Saints' Church Hall. Song Time or short service as announced. Contact Jenny Wells, 870981
- Tue St Peter's Choir, Children 5:15-6:15pm. St Peter's. Adrian Davis 01296 632263 or Jean Wild 866859
- 1st Tue Tuesday Club, 7:30pm A lively women's group with guest speaker. The Court House. Contact Barbara McKenna 871159
- 3rd Tue Mothers' Union, meet in members' houses at 2.30pm. New members always welcome. Contact Kathie Lally, 863526
- 4th Tue Mothers' Union Prayer Group, 2:30pm. 17 Shaftesbury Court. Tell us if anyone needs your prayers. Contact Jenny Wells 870981
- Wed Julian Meeting, meets about twice a month. 11:30am. All welcome. At Jenny Wells, 57 Meadow Rd, 870981 or at Ruth Treves Brown, 1 Montague Rd, 863268
- Thu Bellringing, 8pm, St Peters. Contact Helen Ruberry, 890949
- Fri Little Fishes Parent & Toddler Group 9:30-11:30am. The Court House. Weekly, with short service on 1st Friday in St Peter's (10am). Tracy Robinson 863559
- Fri St Peter's Choir, Children 7-8:30pm, Adults 7:30-8:30pm. St Peter's. Adrian Davis 01296 632263 or Jean Wild 866859
- 3rd Sat ABC Prayer Breakfast, 8am for breakfast & prayers. Various local churches.
- 1st Sun Sundays Together Lunch 12.30pm Court House. For anyone on their own on a Sunday. Liz Jackson 864382

### **St Peter's**

#### **Regular Sunday services**

8:00am Eucharist

9:30am Sung Eucharist with crèche, Sunday school and Pathfinders

6:00pm Evensong

#### **Regular weekday services**

Morning Prayer Monday -Thursday 7:30am; Friday 8:00am, Saturday 9:30am.

Eucharist Monday 6:00pm; Tuesday 9:30am at All Saints' Shrublands Road;

Wednesday 8:00am; Thursday Holy Communion 12:30pm; Friday 7:30am;

Saturday 10:00am

Evening Prayer Monday 5:45pm, Tuesday – Saturday 5:00pm

Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> November 8pm All Souls

**Services**

**Further information available from our church websites:**

[www.stpetersberkhamsted.org.uk](http://www.stpetersberkhamsted.org.uk) **and at** [www.allsaintsberkhamsted.org.uk](http://www.allsaintsberkhamsted.org.uk)

**All Saints' Services**

Nov 1<sup>st</sup> (Thursday) 8pm - All Saints Day, Holy Communion, Revd Rachael Hawkins  
 Nov 4<sup>th</sup>, 8am - Fourth Sunday before Advent, Holy Communion, Revd Rachael Hawkins  
 10am- Morning Worship, Jenny Wells  
 Nov 11<sup>th</sup>, 10am - Remembrance Sunday, Holy Communion, Revd Rachael Hawkins and Malcolm Lindo  
 Nov 18<sup>th</sup> 10am - Second Sunday before Advent Morning Worship, Revd Linda Woollacott and Rob Wakely  
 Nov 25<sup>th</sup>, 10am - Christ the King, 10am-Holy Communion, Revd Barrie Allcott, 4pm - Healing Service Revd Rachael Hawkins, Jenny Wells, Tracy Robinson, and Audrey Cox

**November Diary****St Peter's**

Cowper Society present:

Fri 9<sup>th</sup> Nov, 1.00pm - Lunchtime Recital. Anna le Hair and Helen Godbolt  
 Mon 12<sup>th</sup> Nov, 7.30pm - Society presents: Organ Recital: Jonathan Lee  
 Sat 17<sup>th</sup> Nov, 7.20pm - presents Bridgewater Sinfonia concert  
 Mon 26<sup>th</sup> Nov, 7.30pm - Organ Recital

**Baptisms**

16<sup>th</sup> September - Alexandra Stephanie Tiberghien (St Peter's)  
 16<sup>th</sup> September - Henrietta Alice French (All Saints')  
 23<sup>rd</sup> September - Ava Louise Rita Baker (St Peter's)  
 23<sup>rd</sup> September - Frederick Peter Antonio Turpin (St Peter's)

**Weddings**

1st September - Leslie Stuart Tate & Susan Mary Hampton (All Saints')  
 8<sup>th</sup> September - Paul Michael Knight and Alexxandra MacKenzie (St Peter's)  
 15<sup>th</sup> September - Simon Arthur Richard James Dell and Hannah Batchelor (St Peter's)  
 22<sup>nd</sup> September - Malcolm Cutts and Alexandra Jane Cutts (St Peter's)  
 29<sup>th</sup> September - Christopher Michael Kelly and Rosemary Suzanne Hewitt (St Peter's)

**Funerals**

5<sup>th</sup> September - Marjorie Caroline Emily Gower (St Peter's)  
 10<sup>th</sup> September - Iona Vivien Jones (St Peter's)  
 13<sup>th</sup> September - Eileen Rosemary Williams (All Saints')  
 18<sup>th</sup> September - Jack Boulter (St Peter's)

**Your Berkhamsted Team**

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Fr Michael Bowie, 864194 (day off Fri). Team Rector, St Peter's.

The Revd Rachael Hawkins, All Saints'.

## *Do you have what it takes to be the Your Berkhamsted Young Writer 2012-2013?*



To celebrate this year's National Short Story Week, *Your Berkhamsted* is launching a short story competition for Berkhamsted schoolchildren. There will be two age-groups for the competition, years 5 to 6 and years 7 to 8.

Pupils who enter must write a story based on the title "The Choice". What happens in the story is up to each entrant, but the protagonists in the story should have some sort of a choice to make.

Year 5 to 6 pupils should write a story of between 500 to 600 words, and year 7 to 8 pupils should write between 900 to 1000 words. Entries can be handwritten or typed.

The competition opens on Monday 12th November 2012 and entries can be submitted at any time between Tuesday 13th November 2012 and Monday 3rd December 2012. Full entry details are available from participating schools, so parents and pupils should first check that their school is taking part in the competition.

The competition opens on Monday 12th November 2012 and entries can be submitted at any time between Tuesday 13th November 2012 and Monday 3rd December 2012. Full entry details are available from participating schools, so parents and pupils should first check that their school is taking part in the competition.

There will be four category winners: best story by a year 5 pupil, best story by a year 6 pupil, best story by a year 7 pupil, best story by a year 8 pupil. The winning entries will be published in *Your Berkhamsted* between February and March 2013. The four winners will also each receive a £20 book token and can choose any one book by local author Sue Hampton.

**Good luck to all pupils who enter and we hope you enjoy writing your story!**



# Life is a series of short stories...

As it's National Short Story Week this month (which was founded here in our town in 2010!) we thought we'd share some recommended short story reads. These recommendations for adults have been made by prominent authors, actors and broadcasters.

## Simon Brett recommends:

***100 Selected Stories* by O. Henry** (Wordsworth Classics)

"O. Henry remains the master of the surprise pay-off. The range of subject matter in his stories is remarkable and, though he died in 1910, they remain fresh. As well as being highly entertaining, O. Henry's stories are object lessons in structure for any aspiring writer."

## Tracy Chevalier recommends:

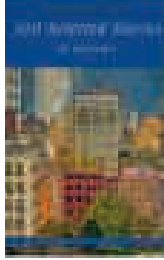
***Self Help* by Lorrie Moore** (Faber and Faber)

"I loved these stories by one of America's top writers. This collection considers the lives and loves of twenty-somethings primarily. The stories are heartbreaking and also very funny – not an easy combination to pull off!"

## Margaret Drabble recommends:

***Collected Stories* by Lorrie Moore** (Faber and Faber)

"One of my latest discoveries is Lorrie Moore, the American short story writer, recommended to me I think by Helen Simpson, also a fine writer of stories. I bought Moore's *Collected Stories* and have enjoyed them very much. They are contemporary, off beat, tragi-comic, full of ordinary/extraordinary people leading lives on the edge. They provide a wonderful view of America today, as you never see it on the news or the movies."



## Joanne Harris recommends:

***The Stories of Ray Bradbury*** (Everyman's Library)

"Every story is unique, quirky and different and has stayed with me."

## Lynne Reid Banks recommends:

***False Pretences* by Lee Langley** (Vintage)

"It's a terrific set of stories, each a stand-alone but with a linking thread running through them. She always writes so well and so intelligently. These are real page-turners, and the added interest of finding the common element in each adds a puzzle-like extra bit of entertainment."

## DW Wilson (winner BBC National Short Story Award 2011) recommends:

***The Turning* by Tim Winton** (Picador)

## Paterson Joseph recommends:

***The Heinemann Book of Contemporary African Short Stories*** edited by Chinua Achebe and C. L. Innes ( Heinemann)

"It's wonderful to read so many different stories from a continent of such diversity; the picture it paints of African imagination is heartening and exciting. I highly recommend it."

## Adrian Scarborough recommends:

***Four Stories* by Alan Bennett** (Profile Books)

"I would love to recommend Alan Bennett's collection just titled 'Four Stories'. Officially, I suppose *The Lady in the Van* isn't really fiction, but the other three are. Hilarious, painful and wickedly rude, I could read them again and again. I also have them in audio form; they are the best way to decorate your house! Next time you've a roller in your hand, pop them on. I consider 'The Clothes They Stood Up In' to be a work of serious genius. There is not a phrase out of place or a moment unexplored. Divine writing."

(continued on page 22)



(continued from page 21)

**Sue Cook recommends:**

***Runaway*** by Alice Munro (Vintage)

"The sort of stories that stay with you for days after you finish reading them."

**Terence Blacker recommends:**

***The Afterlife and Other Stories*** by John Updike (Ballantine Books)

"A masterly, humane take on the tricky business of life, love and lust as middle age ebbs away."

**And for children...**

And not to leave out children and young adults, here are some short story titles we recommend for them.

***Inner City***, edited by Tony Bradman (A & C Black Publishers Ltd)

*Publisher's description:* A whole range of experiences are brought sharply into focus in this sparkling collection of new stories, which feature crime, families in crisis and the collapse of community life in cities from London to Sao Paolo.

***The Wonderful Story of Henry Sugar and Six More***, Roald Dahl (Puffin Teenage Books)

*Publisher's description:* Seven stories by Roald Dahl. Things are not what they seem, they can't be what they seem. Turtles, fingersmiths, the Mildenhall treasure, even a man who could see with his eyes closed, everyday life is twisted into powerful and sometimes terrifying, fantasies.

***The Swap and Other Stories***, George Layton (Macmillan Children's Books)  
Brilliant, funny and disturbing stories of growing up in the Fifties, by the author of the acclaimed bestseller *The Fib*.

*Publisher's description:* He'd nagged his mother for weeks to let him go on the school exchange, swapping his home in the backstreets of a northern town for a posh house in London. With a



proper family. With a dad. But now it was all going wrong...

***A Little Aloud for Children***, Foreword by Michael Morpurgo, edited by Angela Macmillan (*David Fickling Books*)

*Publisher's description:*

This unique book offers a selection of prose and poetry especially suitable for reading aloud to children. It includes extracts ranging from modern day favourites (David Almond, Frank Cottrell Boyce, Neil Gaiman) to old classics (Kipling, Dickens, E. Nesbit), and features a foreword from Michael Morpurgo.

Each piece has been chosen by the Reader Organisation, whose team has unique experience in the effect and benefits of books that immediately capture children's interest and imagination.

***Dr Who: Short Trips Volume 1***, Various authors (Big Finish audio CD)

*Publisher's description:* Get ready for eight fantastic new adventures in space and time with the Doctor and his companions, featuring stories from many of Doctor Who's most popular authors from the worlds of television, print, comics and audio, as well as new talent and fresh voices... and read by your favourite Big Finish actors (including former Dr Whos Peter Davison and Colin Baker)!



**Other recommendations:**

***Tales of Wisdom and Wonder*** (book and CD),

Hugh Lupton & Niamh Sharkey (Barefoot Books)

***A Forest of Stories***, Rina Singh & Helen Cann (Barefoot Books)

***Short Too!***, Kevin Crossley-Holland (OUP Oxford)

***Enthralled: Paranormal Diversions***, Melissa Marr and Kelley Armstrong (HarperCollins Children's Books) **yB**



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The Hospice of St Francis is looking for 20 couples to embrace the Strictly fever and hit the dancefloor! This fantastic opportunity includes professional training by dance teachers, Brian & Shirley from Balia-Cusworth Dance School, culminating in a grand finale performance on Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2013.

Nerves will be tested at the Grand Finale at Centenary Hall in Berkhamsted where all 20 couples will perform in front of an audience to compete for the coveted Strictly Learn Dancing 2013 crown!

To add to the glamour, on the night contestants will enjoy the luxury of a **FREE** hairstyle, spray-on tan and makeover, courtesy of Gorgeous Beauty and Gorgeous Hair (of Berkhamsted).

Event organiser Fran Martin said: "We launched Strictly Learn Dancing in 2010 and it is now a firm favourite on our fundraising calendar! Both previous events were so fantastic and we couldn't believe the demand we had, so this year we'll be giving priority to couples who want to sign up together. Everyone had such a ball and the atmosphere on the finale night was electric. Whether you persuade your partner, collar your colleague or nab your neighbour, there's sure to be someone who will take to the floor with you.

"No formal dance training is required, we want complete beginners to take up the challenge and seize this opportunity. We

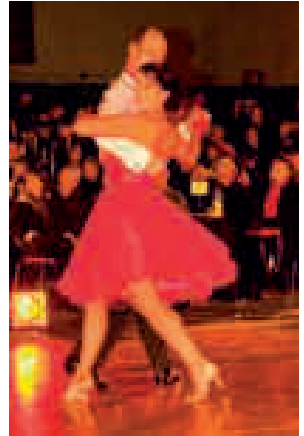
are so grateful to our supporters, Balia-Cusworth Dance School for teaching our participants and Gorgeous Hair & Beauty who will be making our dancers look glamorous – their support enables us to

keep our costs to a minimum and guarantees that every penny raised on the night will go towards the care of our patients. We are really excited to see who will take the crown this year!"

All participants will be encouraged to invite their friends and family to the Grand Finale and to raise a minimum of £400 sponsorship to support the vital work of the Hospice. Participants need to be available to take part in regular training sessions over a 6 week period on Wednesday evenings starting on January 16<sup>th</sup> and running up to the Grand Finale on Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> February.

Register now at [www.stfrancis.org.uk/strictly2013](http://www.stfrancis.org.uk/strictly2013). Closing date for applications is Friday 14<sup>th</sup> December 2012.

*For more information about this news release or fundraising at The Hospice of St Francis please contact The Fundraising Team on 01442 869555 or email [fundraising@stfrancis.org.uk](mailto:fundraising@stfrancis.org.uk)*







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# *The Graham Greene Festival, Berkhamsted, 2012*

David R.A. Pearce

The Graham Greene Festival has just finished in Berkhamsted. This was the Fifteenth Festival. Fifteen years ago people in Berkhamsted were saying 'Is it possible to find enough to fill up four days with material on Greene?' or 'Graham was not the sort of person who would have approved of gatherings in his name'. Neither response has proved correct; and nothing could have been more heart-warming than the initial gathering, here in the town, of friends from all over the world - friends who come loyally year by year, and who enjoy a common focus and Berkhamsted in the early autumn. They are joined by members of the Greene family.

Festival events are held in the Town Hall, the Civic Centre, the Rex and at the School. Graham, as probably most people in the town know, was the son of the Headmaster of the School, and he was born in St John's in 1904. He maintained that what happened in his childhood here was the key to his life and writing. This is a real Berkhamsted occasion. This year the main film was 'The Human Factor', which starred John Gielgud, Derek Jacobi, Nicol Williamson and Richard Attenborough. Filmed in 1979, it used Berkhamsted settings including the station, Castle Hill, the High Street and Birtchnell's shop - now, regrettably, no more.

The Festival is a happy blend of films, talks, meals together and good cheer. This year it began with a literary Quiz in aid of the Hospice; and there is, each year, a creative writing course. Greene papers, letters and diaries are, in the main, housed

in three libraries in America, and those resources attract international research. Much is still being discovered of Graham's life which was complex and rich in its interests, travelling, and loyalties, as well as in the writing. This year we found Graham in Vietnam, Tallin, Vienna, Cuba.

The Festival this year was directed by Professor Neil Sinyard who has been entertaining us from as far back as 1998 with his wit and cinematographic wisdom. This year he brought matters to a memorable conclusion with his examination of the famous legal case of 1937. Graham, in his magazine '*Night and Day*' had written of the sexual precocity of the nine-year-old Shirley Temple. Greene's observations seemed to us, as we watched Miss Temple's performances, not at all unreasonable, but the case was settled in the actress's favour and the libel was adjudged 'a gross outrage'. Poor Greene had to pay up. For four days Berkhamsted becomes the centre of the world for those who are interested in Graham Greene. Those reading this article should realise that from 26<sup>th</sup> September 2013 – that is next year – they will find congenial company mingling at the Festival, and celebrating a man who was born in the town, who was both happy and unhappy at school here, and who wrote: 'I feel it would be strange if, through the workings of coincidence....I were not brought back to die there (Berkhamsted) in the place where everything was born.' He is, though, buried in Vevey, in Switzerland.

**yB**

# Sea bass with fennel, orange dressing and basil pesto

Joanne Lloyd-Evans

Fennel can be a polarising ingredient – people either seem to love or hate its mild aniseed flavour – but it is really delicious in this dish and you may even be able to convert some sceptics. Fennel is an important ingredient in Mediterranean cooking and it grows all around the region. An interesting point of trivia is that the Greek name for fennel is *marathos* and the place of the famous battle of Marathon and the subsequent sports event Marathon, literally means a field with fennels.

To make this a more filling meal, you could serve this with potatoes. If sea bass is not available or is too expensive, you could use any other white fish in its place.

## Ingredients

4 sea bass fillets  
2 large bulbs of fennel  
4 tbsp olive oil  
1 tsp salt  
1 tsp caster sugar  
200ml freshly squeezed orange juice

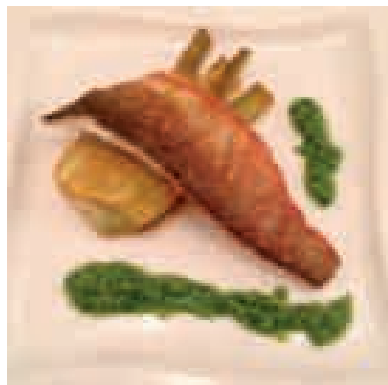
## Pesto ingredients

25g packet of fresh basil  
1 clove of garlic  
50g parmesan cheese, freshly grated  
25g pine kernels  
3 tablespoons olive oil

1. Make the basil pesto by putting all ingredients in a food processor and whizzing until fairly smooth. You do not want it to be too dry, so if it is a bit stiff, add a little more oil and perhaps some lemon juice or white wine vinegar as well.  
2. Preheat the oven to 190C. Prepare the fennel by trimming the tops and then slicing each bulb in half length ways. Cut out the hard core of the fennel but leave the

bottom end intact so that the bulb doesn't fall apart.

3. Heat 2 tbsp of oil in a large frying



pan (or a flameproof oven pan if you have one). Sprinkle the sugar and salt over the fennel and put the fennel halves into the pan. Cook until slightly browned on both sides. Add the orange juice and cook over a high heat for a few minutes to reduce. Spoon the juice over the fennel as it cooks.  
4. Transfer the fennel and juices to an oven dish and cook in the oven for 15-20 minutes. Baste the fennel twice during this time with the juice.

5. When the fennel is nearly ready, heat the remaining 2 tbsp of oil in a large frying pan and fry the fish skin side down on a moderately high heat for about 3 minutes. Flip the fish and cook for about 1 minute on the other side. You may need to adjust these cooking times based on the thickness of your fish, but to keep it as moist as possible, try to do most of the cooking on the skin side and do not over cook it.  
6. To serve, place the fennel on the plate, then balance the fish fillet on top and spoon over the juices from the fennel oven dish. Dress with the basil pesto and serve.

# *Calling All Wannabe Santas!*

Sprint, saunter or scoot your way into the festive spirit at The Hospice of St Francis' fifth annual Santa Dash!

On Sunday, December 9th, hundreds of Santas of all ages are expected to fill the streets of Hemel Hempstead, to help raise money for the Hospice of St Francis. Fun-loving families, schools, businesses, joggers and dog-walkers across Hertfordshire are all invited to get into the Christmas spirit and don a Santa Claus suit for the charity dash.

New this year, the hospice have introduced the exclusive Dashers Cup to reward the school with the most Santas for display in their school hall. Event organiser Emma Day is calling upon all local schools to take part and encourage its pupils to join the Santa Dash.

Emma said: "However you choose to dash the 2.5 mile route, we promise lots of

Christmassy fun for all your friends and family. Every age is welcome – find your friends, grab your grandparents and festive up the family dog! You could get your whole school involved! The school with the most Santas recruited will win our exclusive Dashers Cup!

Signing up will make a real difference to the special care we give to patients at The Hospice of St Francis, please raise as much sponsorship as you can." It's just £15 to register for adults, £5 for children, or you can

enter the whole family (including the dog) for just £35. You'll then receive your Santa suit or reindeer antlers, a Santa medal and a tasty treat at the finish. Visit [www.stfrancis.org.uk](http://www.stfrancis.org.uk) to register today or call 01442 869555 for more info.

The Snow Centre are donating generous prizes for the top fundraising Santas including 3 family annual memberships (worth £340 each) and 2 family private lessons (worth £99).

All the money raised from the event goes towards supporting families and patients living with life-limiting illnesses. The Berkhamsted-based hospice cares for patients 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

It also helps patients who are seriously ill at home, but needs to raise more than £3.7 million every year.

**yB**



L-R George Ivory, Ethan Dowley, Oliver Murray, Florence Size, Esme Ivory, Alex Williams, Catrin Williams, Florence Kingdom



# *Berkhamsted Festival Of Light*



Photo - Kris Gruber Ltd

It's that magical time of the year again when Jack Frost is starting to nip around the ankles, the shops are full of festive goodies, poinsettias and winter flowering pansies are everywhere – yes, Christmas is nearly upon us. Which also means Berkhamsted Festival of Light is already being organised for Sunday 2 December. This year we have a diverse range of entertainment to get us in the mood – Rock Chorus will be kicking off the proceedings and we also have Thomas Coram Middle School with their drumming Band, the Association of Berkhamsted Churches Nativity play, Berkhamsted School Big Band, Berkhamsted Strathspey Reel Club, Hemel Hempstead Brass Band and Ashlyns School Samba Band with the always popular 'Father Christmas'! The High Street will be lined with many of our local charities and commercial stalls promoting their goods and games,

the restaurants and shops will be open and there will be a host of catering outlets providing hot chocolate, mulled wine and mince pies, roasted chestnuts, candy floss, a hog roast and much more. The fairground rides will be up and running but just in case you need an extra prompt to attend – the Service at St

Peter's following the Festival of Light promises, once again, to be just the thing to get you feeling well and truly Christmassy.

The Festival is from 3.30p.m-6.00p.m with the Service at St. Peter's at 6.00p.m. Anyone wishing to hold a stall please contact Louise Cecil 01442 253935 or email [louise.cecil@btinternet.com](mailto:louise.cecil@btinternet.com).

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# *The Travelling Crib*

On Advent Sunday, 2<sup>nd</sup> December, at the morning services at All Saints' and St Peter's we will send a Travelling Crib from each church to begin a journey round the town as reminder of the story of the journey of Mary and Joseph to Bethlehem. They will leave with the first of the families who have offered their homes as a resting place on their journey. Each night they will stay with a different family before returning to church, with the last family at Christmas.

The figures of Mary and Joseph have been knitted by members of the Mothers' Union so they are very 'child friendly' and no one need have fear of them being damaged by young children.

The figures have a special basket to travel in and each family they visit is asked to prepare a special place in their home for them to rest for the night.

If you would like the Travelling Crib to spend a night in your home during Advent this year please sign up on one of the lists which will be in churches on Sundays 11<sup>th</sup> & 18<sup>th</sup> November and, during the week in between, at Chuckles and Little Fishes.

Make a note of the dates and bring your diaries! To avoid disappointment, sign up on Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> November!

If you have any queries please contact Jenny Wells (870981) for the crib at All Saints' or Kathie Lally (863526) for the crib at St Peter's.



## **Write the last word**

*The last word is available for readers to send in approx. 500 or 900 - 1000 words on a topic of their choice, and one that may stimulate debate in further issues. All opinions are the author's own.*

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