

*the magazine for town and parish*

January 2013

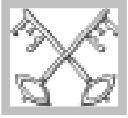
# *your* **Berkhamsted**



Happy New Year!  
Take a walk in Ashridge  
Ghost hunting in Berkhamsted

**50p**

# *From the Editor* January 2013



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

**Welcome to the first issue of *Your Berkhamsted* for 2013 and a Happy New Year to everyone!**

In this issue we have some ideas to get you moving in the cold winter months. Matt Dawson suggests ways to get into shape after the over indulgences of Christmas, and if a gym is not your thing we have a pleasant walk in Ashridge to get you started. Joanne Lloyd-Evans also provides a tasty and healthy recipe for you to try.

For the times when you just want to relax indoors away from the cold weather outside, there is a short story by previously local author Sophie King to lose yourself in and Dan Parry writes about some very spooky happenings in and around the town.

Looking forward to the summer months already we have news of the 2013 Petertide Fair and details of the charities that they will be supporting this year. This may seem a long way off but I bet it will come round quicker than we think!

**Helen Dowley, Editor**

We welcome contributions, suggestions for articles and news items, and readers' letters. Please send to [editor@yourberkhamsted.org.uk](mailto:editor@yourberkhamsted.org.uk)

*Photo credit: page 5: Berkhamsted High Street by Robin McMorran*

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*Responsibility for opinions expressed in articles and letters published in this magazine and for the accuracy of any statements in them rests solely with the individual contributor. Your Berkhamsted has no affiliation with the Save Your Berkhamsted campaign.*

## *Your Berkhamsted Leader* by Fr Luke Geoghegan



After four years of debate the people have finally spoken. Berkhamsted is not to have a residents parking scheme – at least for a good long time. I have to

confess an interest here – I was one of the few who lived in an affected road who actually wanted a residents parking scheme. But I was impressed that the ‘no’ campaign, leafleted, met, organised, debated and advertised over a sustained period to get their message across. This is the very heart and soul of democracy, not simply electing a person who takes decisions for the community but local people getting actively involved in local issues.

In the process of running my own one man ‘yes’ campaign, funded by global corporations and shadowy off shore tax dodgers (no I made that bit up, I funded it myself to the tune of about £3.75) I met people who I had lived near to for years but had never actually met or talked to. And what nice people they were. Some were in favour of the parking scheme and most were not, but they were always interesting conversations. An unexpected benefit of local democracy!

This has been described as ‘social capital’ – the glue of relationships that hold us together - and the process where simply living cheek by jowl suddenly is transformed into community.

And everyone I spoke to had a view on

the subject. If only all democratic processes could have these ingredients of passion and concern.

In contrast at the last General Election the overall turnout to vote was around 65%. But this average masks significant differences. According to figures by MORI, the polling organisation, older people had a turnout of around 76% and younger people (18-24 years) of about 44%. Social class AB (that’s the upper crust and the upper middle classes) had a turnout of around 76% and class DE (the other end of the scale) had a turnout of around 57%. There’s also huge variation in local turnout with poor areas having lower turnouts than richer areas. So we have a huge problem with the poor and young not exercising their franchise.

Which brings me to the recent elections for the Police Commissioners. I’ve never not voted (and that includes local elections) but I couldn’t bring myself to the voting booth for this one. Judging by the turnout figures a lot of people felt the same way – a turnout of just 14.5%.

I can’t claim to be a flag-bearer for the late Police Authority but it seemed to me that policing, overall, was working. And if it’s working why spend huge amounts of money on an election that few of us wanted, where minimal information was provided, that no-one was interested in and where issues, such as they are, can and must be dealt with at the level of operational police control.

If the debate around parking was democracy in action it seems to me that this exercise was democracy not in action.

**JB**

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## Around the town



Ten million people in Yemen, almost half the population, are suffering from food shortages but funds to meet the needs are short too. Haberdashery helps!

**Events presented by the Cowper Society at St Peter's Church or the Court House, Berkhamsted**

### **Haberdashery helps at Oxfam**

Al Mazraq camp in Northern Yemen is home to 11,000 people who fled to safety when fighting between tribal groups broke out in 2009.

Now, thanks to Oxfam's Livelihoods programme, some of the inhabitants have learnt new skills and started to earn an income. Men have been taught carpentry and the women have been issued with sewing machines to start a tailoring business.

Why not help to provide the funds needed to equip them by buying your haberdashery at Oxfam? The High St shop has an excellent selection of fabrics, cottons, buttons, zips, knitting machines, needles, wool, embroidery and tapestry frames and other essentials. Vintage patterns are popular, especially with theatrical groups. Anyone with a creative flair will find plenty of choice.

The Oxfam Bookshop will feature a supporting window with books on crafts from quilting to lace-making, patchwork, embroidery and smocking.

Mon 14<sup>th</sup> Jan at 8.00pm: ORGAN RECITAL in St Peter's Church - Lee Burgess, Holy Trinity, Potten End. Free Entry. Retiring collection.

Mon 28<sup>th</sup> Jan at 8.00pm: The Cowper Society WINTER TALK in the Court House – Dr Christopher Green 'St Peter's Church and its History'. Free Entry. Retiring collection.

Mon 4<sup>th</sup> Feb at 8.00pm: ORGAN RECITAL in St Peter's Church - Adrian Davis Director of Music, St Peter's Church. Free Entry. Retiring collection.

### **Ashridge Estate**

There may be no organised activities this month on the National Trust's Ashridge Estate, but it's still a wonderful place for a walk on a bright winter's day. And the Brownlow Café will be open every day from 8am to dusk, ready to warm you up with delicious made-in-house soups and casseroles, or just a coffee and a large piece of cake! **JB**

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## Activities: Exercises & Conclusions

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LIU, J. 1999. *Journal of Great Lakes Research* 25:1-10.

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## *Read all about us!*

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

It is quite easy to get diverted along the many by-ways of Wikipedia, so I thought it might prove an interesting variation on a theme to see how Berkhamsted crops up on Jimmy Whales' web phenomenon.

The most obvious manifestation is the town's entry itself, in glorious technicolor, annotated and sourced extensively with the inevitable nod to famous associations past and present from Duke William of Normandy to the fictional Ed Reardon. And describes our oceanic climate, which apparently we enjoy with the rest of the kingdom. It also sets out the different permutations of the town's name, which if some of the addressed envelopes I've seen are anything to go by are still much in evidence! Though in fact the current spelling is relatively recent being adopted in 1937. Earlier spellings included *Berkhamptead*, *Muche Barkhamstede*, *Berkhamsted Magna*, *Great Berkhamsted* and *Berkhamstead*, and the earliest variation being *Beorhoanstadde*. In fact there have been fifty variations recorded. It is believed that all of the above refer to homestead amongst the hills from the Saxon bergs.

Another large entry is for the Berkhamsted School, taking us through its foundation in 1541 to its recent building work. Though it stops short of the most recent developments relating to the Berkhamsted Schools Group. An intriguing link takes you to the British Pathe website in a clip entitled *Men of Tomorrow*, which shows boys at Berkhamsted School in 1938. They had apparently adopted the Swedish system of exercise which involved smooth swinging movements. It sounds better in the clipped King's English of the thirties. Actually, I

thought smooth swing was a type of jazz, but what do I know.

And immediately, Pathe invites me on an inevitable tangent. What other gems might I find searching for Berkhamsted? To be honest I wasn't expecting the manufacturing of lampshades in the town in 1951. This enlightening clip is actually more interesting than it immediately sounds. Or else I just need to get out more. And talking of clipping, the short film of harvesting in the cress beds in 1931 illustrates a world very much lost to the town in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

But back to the Wiki. The Castle is also honoured with its own entry, though foregoes to mention the badgers which made a guest appearance in my last article. It emphasises the royal connections of the castle including Henry I holding court in 1123, all the way though to 1580 when Elizabeth I leased the ruined castle and surrounding grounds to Sir Edward Carey, Keeper of the Queen's Jewels. He built Berkhamsted Place with stone from the ruins, explaining the current open plan feeling of the castle today. And in fact the Place also has its own entry, describing the fascinating history until its demolition in 1967. Seventy years ago the house had nine bedrooms, three bathrooms and five upstairs staff bedrooms, but by the 1950s, it became too costly to run and was converted into flats. The surviving 17th-Century wing of the house became the studio of the renowned sculptor Reg Butler, and if you want to find out about him there is another Pathe clip of him at work, including a tantalising glimpse of the exterior of the lost building in colour.

**JB**



## *Cooking with Chris could change your life*

A new course which will teach the recently bereaved vital skills in the kitchen has just been launched by The Hospice of St Francis.

The special initiative will offer support to people by helping to build their confidence to prepare and cook meals for themselves and others.

A pilot scheme which ran in March was so successful that the Berkhamsted-based charity now plans to run two courses a year, including a ground-breaking UK-first course for bereaved teenagers starting next February.

“It’s a wonderful opportunity to offer people something therapeutically different, to bring them together socially where the focus is on food and to build their skills and confidence,” explains Tania Brocklehurst, the Hospice’s Clinical Bereavement Coordinator. “After a bereavement, some people don’t access our one-to-one counselling or talking support groups and we realised there was a need for something where people who wouldn’t normally talk in a group can meet and spend time together, whilst learning new skills and increasing their motivation to cook and eat healthily.”

The health and therapeutic benefits for people impacted by grief speak for themselves. “Cooking is known to help increase concentration, sensory awareness and self esteem,” explains Tania. “It also promotes good nutrition, engages memory, extends social networks and reduces stress - all of which suggest that it’s a real aid to the bereavement process.”

The six-week course, called ‘Cooking with Chris’, is named after the hospice’s Catering Manager Chris Took. Every week, Chris and his senior cook Gill Sears will lead eight participants as they come together to prepare a three-course meal, which they then sit down and share.

Working in groups, they will take it in turns to prepare starters, main courses, puddings and something to take home, learning practical cooking skills and picking up tips on buying and preparing fresh ingredients, timing, batch cooking, using left-overs, freezing and cooking for one.

Uniquely, Chris tailors the detail around individual participants’ needs. “Whatever people want to make – whether it’s a signature dish for a dinner party or a coffee cake for afternoon tea, we’ll do it,” he says. “It’s not about regimented learning. It’s about having fun and making a difference.”

A difference, which for pilot course participant Darren Knight, was life-changing. After living with his mum Christine since his parents divorced when he was four, Darren, 42, from Bennetts End, had got used to his mum doing all the cooking. “She was a great cook. She was once a pub chef,” he says.

But after her sudden death to cancer, in May 2011, aged just 59, following a short stay at the hospice, Darren’s diet of junk food, constant snacking and pizzas saw his weight soaring and his health suffering.



"I couldn't cook and after Mum died, I had no motivation to. I just went to pieces," says the former theatre booking consultant. "When I started the course I thought: 'What am I doing here?!' I burn water. If I pick up a knife, I cut my finger. But I quickly found out that with a bit of instruction and someone looking over my shoulder, I could do it.

"The social aspect and support for each other was great but one of the biggest things the course has given me is confidence," he adds, explaining: "I've changed my name to William to mark a fresh start, I've started an accounting course, I've taken up sailing and gone on

holiday for the first time in years. And this year, for the first time in my life, I'm cooking Christmas dinner for my grandparents and my uncle. If I can stuff a chicken, I can stuff a turkey. I think Mum would have been proud."

The current course ends in November with a special fund-raising finale dinner for participants' relatives and friends. On 11<sup>th</sup> December, participants of both courses are set to join forces with Chris and the catering team for another fund-raising extravaganza - cooking the Hospice staff Christmas dinner.



For more information about The Hospice of St Francis, visit [www.stfrancis.org.uk](http://www.stfrancis.org.uk).

The Hospice of St Francis provides professional support and care for people with terminal or life-limiting illnesses. We bring peace, comfort and dignity to patients, helping them to live life to the full, for whatever time is left. Our care is tailored to each patient's individual needs whether that's in our In-Patient Unit, as an out-patient or in patients' homes. Support for families and carers is essential. The Hospice of St Francis really does provide total care when time is precious.

All our care is given free of charge but we need to raise £3.7 million annually to continue our care. We rely on voluntary donations for more than 80% of this. For more information contact 01442 869555 or visit [www.stfrancis.org.uk](http://www.stfrancis.org.uk). **JB**

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## *Getting into shape*

**Matt Dawson** encourages us to get moving after Christmas



Now that Christmas is over, you may be looking at yourself and thinking that you wish you hadn't eaten all that food. Well look no further than this article as I'll be helping you decide on what you can do to get back to full fitness and lose that bit of extra weight that you put on eating all that roast turkey and mince pies.

For those more able, head down to the new gym in the high street. What was once Fitness First has now been re-named The Fitness Society which is being described as Berkhamsted's Premier Gym. It looks like a great new facility and it consists of 32 Cardio machines, 67 individual exercise stations, weights area, sauna and steam room and changing rooms with over 100 lockers. The cardio machines are 'state of the art' and allow you to run, row and cycle. At the same time you can also listen to the gym's

library of workout tracks, radio stations or even watch SKY TV. The gym also offers personal trainers that help you to lose weight and get fitter in a one on one session. They will tell you how to do things in the right way and they will also set you specific goals and targets that you want to achieve.

As well as the gym in the high street there is a gym situated at Berkhamsted Sportspace. This gym is fully air conditioned and also contains a wide range of cardio machines, resistance machines and a free weights area. Berkhamsted's sports centre also has a variety of activities to take part in with its swimming pool in which you can take lessons as well as just swim. It also has large halls in which you can play things such as cricket, badminton and football.

Another idea is to go for a bike ride along the Grand Union Canal or around the different areas of the town. I've cycled up the canal before and I strongly recommend it as it's a great route. If you don't have a bike then why not jog or walk along it?

Meanwhile if you're less able to do the things already suggested then go for a walk to burn off those Christmas calories. A great place to go for walks is at Ashridge. It's got many great routes which will give you the chance to explore the 2,000 acres of magnificent woodland.

**JB**

## *Bumps, bangs and the undead of Berkhamsted*

Dan Parry goes on a local ghost hunt



Who's not interested in things going bump in the night? Just as long as it's not actually us who hears the bumps, clanking chains or eerie wails, then who can resist a ghoulish story? Of course we ourselves might not believe in ghosts. But, perhaps in the dark corners of our mind, lurks the thought that beneath the dreamy fantasies may just be the stuff of nightmares.

Convincing the editor that, in the interests of research, I needed to spend a few evenings in a variety of local pubs and restaurants I boldly set off on a mission of discovery, (I thought I maybe ought to take a magnifying glass or something, but couldn't find one).

First stop was the Crown, where the staff barely find room behind the bar for the number of spirits that while away their time there. Of course, there's nothing

unusual about spirits in a bar. But stories of ghostly figures caught my attention, specifically a couple in period dress walking past the cellar stairs towards the front door. The cellar itself, one of the oldest parts of the pub, is inevitably visited by something less than human. Its low ceiling, cold temperature, ancient structure and lonely ambience are what you might expect in a pub cellar, nevertheless I was relieved when I left the place. At the top of the pub are rooms over the passageway dividing the Crown and the King's Arms, and figures have been seen here too.

But it's behind the bar itself where the most interesting things happen. There's the kink in the shelf at the back of the bar as it follows a slight dog-leg bend. Here glasses regularly fall and hit the floor.

Glasses falling on the floor in a pub is not headline news. But why always at that particular place? Particularly when there's no-one about? Perhaps this is a simple case of gravity. The area is monitored by CCTV from the manager's office, and on occasion a manager will call down to the bar when a waiting customer has been overlooked. A woman waiting at the bar caught the attention of one manager watching the CCTV, they rang the bar but was told by the staff that there was no-one there. Don't know about you, but that one sends a slight shiver down my spine.

The huge mirrors in Brasserie Blanc apparently catch the reflection of more than just fine food. The ancient building is said to be haunted by unidentified spirits that flit about, their movement betraying their presence. But it's in the Lamb, one of the town's most mysterious buildings, that the biggest bumps in the night are heard. Phil the landlord was keen to point out it wasn't a bump, more a solid crash, that startled him. Believing burglars were breaking in through a first floor window he tore upstairs to discover a large, solid heating unit had suddenly toppled over. Too big and heavy to have been moved by anyone in the pub, there was no reason why it should suddenly take a tumble. He had been told that the pub's resident ghost doesn't like change – and she occasionally likes to make her point known. The building may be the last remaining outpost of the medieval hospital that once stood across the road until the mid-16th century, and Phil wonders whether the ghost, (a girl apparently), is connected to the hospital in some way.

Two years ago, specialist ghost-hunters visited the Swan, a former inn and now a youth centre. According to the *Gazette*,

they contacted one Mary Fitch who explained that she was 24, that she lived there when it was a cottage and that her death in 1468 was “very bad”. Another named ghost occupies the George and Dragon in Northchurch where former regular George Meager apparently sits in the chair he occupied in life, though now he prefers to visit the place out of hours.

Halfway between Northchurch and Hawridge stand the ruins of Marlin's Chapel, a 13th century site standing next to a medieval fortified farm. The walls and moat surrounding the modern farm still remain and are thought to be haunted. Near here too is the little known lane known as Soldiers' Bottom. Here, at the junction of Denny Lane, Johns Lane and Northchurch Lane is said to be the route taken by parliamentary troops during the Civil War, who have been seen at dusk, marching down to the town. Similarly the phantom coach of Ashridge rumbles along the road to Tring, though its wheels and the clattering hooves of its horses are heard far more than they're seen, unlike the Ashridge monk who silently wanders the Roman Lane between Nettleden and Frithsden.

All of these stories bring more questions than answers though they share one thing in common. Despite their unresolved details, their enduring appeal ensures that reports of the walking dead are alive and well. Is it true that there's no smoke without fire? Get yourself a strong drink, a sleeping bag and permission to while away a lonely night in the cellars of one of our ancient pubs, and let me know how you get on.

*yB*

# May I take your picture?

A short story by popular author **Sophie King**

Susan was walking along the beach front when she saw them. A young couple, just as she and Roger had been once, laughing over a camera.

‘I’ll take a picture of you,’ the young man was saying.

The girl, a pretty young thing in jeans and one of those jumpers with hoods, was shaking her head so that the wind caught her hair and sent it out streaming in an auburn fan behind her. ‘No, Tom. I want a picture of you!’

Before she knew it, Susan had stepped in. ‘Would you like me to take a picture of both of you?’ she asked shyly.

The young girl and man seemed startled and Susan wondered if she’d made a mistake. But then the young man smiled. ‘That would be lovely. Thank you so much. You just press this button here. See...’

Cameras these days were much more complicated than they used to be, thought Susan, waiting for someone to pass by before she pressed what she thought was the right bit.

‘Thank you so much,’ said the young girl politely, hanging onto her boyfriend’s arm in a way that made Susan’s heart lurch with longing.

It was she, Susan thought as she walked on, who should be grateful to them for bringing back all kinds of wonderful memories. Indeed, as soon as Susan got home to her apartment overlooking one of the big hotels on the front, she took down the silver-framed picture of Roger and had a little doze in her chair, looking out onto the communal gardens, with her husband safely on her lap.

‘Wasn’t it sweet of that old woman to take our picture?’ asked Melinda, curling up into Tom’s shoulder on the way back on the train. ‘Look.’ She handed over the camera so he could see all the pictures they’d taken that day including the one of them, holding hands on the front. ‘It will help, won’t it?’

He nodded, knowing what she was thinking but not daring to speak. They’d made a pact during their day trip to the coast, not to talk about it.

‘I’ll get the memory card printed out tomorrow,’ continued Melinda, talking in that rather fast way that she did when nervous. Although they’d only known each other a few weeks, he’d already tuned into some of her little mannerisms just as she had to his. It was almost as though they’d been made for each other.

He only hoped that nothing would go wrong.

If it hadn’t been for the young couple having their picture taken, it might not have happened, thought Janice ruefully.

Looking back, she’d spent most of her life feeling in the way. First when her mother had married again and no longer wanted a difficult teenager in the house. And then when she’d moved down to the seaside to find a job at one of the hotels.

At first it had been all right but then it turned out that the waitress who worked with her was jealous in case she got promoted first. And now this!

‘Right,’ said the doctor kindly. ‘What happened here then?’

Janice looked ruefully down at her ankle. ‘I tried to get out of the way of a couple having their picture taken. So I tried to hurry up and then slipped on some ice cream that someone had dropped on the pavement.’

The ankle was really throbbing now and there was a funny buzzing in her ears. Suddenly everything went very black...

Two months later, Susan was taking her usual walk along the front. How different it was in winter, when most of the tourists had scurried back home with their memories and photographs and sand in the back of their cars.

Every day, she told herself she was lucky to live here! Of course, if it hadn't been for Roger, she wouldn't be here at all.

'Excuse me.'

Susan turned to see a young girl with auburn hair that was fanning out in the wind, walking towards her.

'You probably won't remember,' the girl was saying, 'but you took our picture back in the summer. I was with my boyfriend then.'

The funny thing about growing older, Susan often thought, was that your memory wasn't the same. She couldn't really remember this particular girl – there'd been so many! – but it seemed rude to say so.

'I can't tell you how special that picture is to me.' The pretty auburn-haired girl's eyes were full of tears. 'My boyfriend's in the army, you see, and he's been sent abroad.' She put her hand in her pocket and brought out an envelope. 'I carry that photograph of us everywhere I go. It was the last time we were together.'

Susan's eyes began to mist over. 'My husband was in the navy during the war,' she said quietly. 'I know what you're going through.'

The young girl touched her arm. 'Did he come back safely?'

Susan nodded and the girl breathed a sigh of relief. 'I can't tell you how happy that makes me. May I buy you a cup of tea at that hotel, over there? Please! It's the least I can do to say thank you.'

When Melinda wrote to Tom – which she did every day – she told him all about the chance meeting. 'I'd gone down to the same spot because I wanted to pretend you were still with me. Silly, I know. But guess what? I bumped into that lovely old woman who took our picture and I took her out for tea. Her name is Susan and she seems rather lonely so we're going to meet up once a month!'

And Tom, opening the letter several weeks later during a rare moment of peace in a dusty war-torn corner of the world, knew for certain that his kind-hearted Melinda (whose picture he carried everywhere in his top pocket) was the girl for him.

Janice had always had an eye for faces. Names she often forgot. But not faces. So when the pretty young girl with the auburn hair started to come in for tea once a month with an old lady with grey hair and a walking stick, her initial feeling was that she wanted to go up and say 'Look what you've done.'

But then she reminded herself that it really hadn't been their fault and somehow she managed, despite her ankle which was only just out of plaster, to take their order with a smile.

This did not go unnoticed by the new manager who had already seen that Janice was keen to please. Look how she'd insisted on coming back to work so soon after her accident!

The following month, Janice was called into his office and offered the post of head waitress. 'But what about the other girl who works with me,' she spluttered. 'She's got more experience.'

The manager nodded. 'Experience isn't everything in this job but a pleasant manner with the customers can mean the difference between them coming back or not. I've seen you with our guests – especially the way you looked after that older woman the other day. You're exactly the kind of person we need here.'

Janice could hardly believe her luck! Immediately, she rang her mother with the good news and this time, she sounded genuinely pleased to hear from her daughter.

That night, Tom's regiment came under attack. As he sat, trying not to shake with fear, waiting for the next command, he took the picture of Melinda out of his pocket and told her that if – no, when – he got out of here, he would ask her to be his wife.

The following week, Susan saw a photograph in the newspaper that sent a cold shiver through her. It was the picture she had taken of the young couple. LATEST WAR

*(Continued on page 16)*



(Continued from page 15)

CASUALTY, screamed the headline. Immediately, she picked up the phone to Melinda.

Six months later, Susan sat in the lobby of her favourite hotel, waiting for a taxi home. They'd asked her to the wedding (so sweet) but she'd declined. She was getting a bit old to stand for long, she explained, but it was very kind of them to ask her to the reception.

She'd had a lovely time – honestly! – but now all she wanted was to get back. 'Shall I ring the taxi to see where it's got to?' asked the kind waitress with the slight limp.

'That would be lovely dear, thank you.'

Janice's gesture did not go unnoticed by the new manager. He'd been right, he told himself, to promote her. She was a nice girl; in fact, he wondered if she might like a drink on her evening off...

'Are you sure you're happy?' asked Tom as they sat on the patio of the ground floor bridal suite in the old hotel overlooking the sea front.

Melinda reached out for his hand. 'Happier than you will ever know.'

Tom looked down at his leg which ended now at his knee. 'Even though I'm like this?'

'You're still the same.' Melinda lent her head on his shoulder. 'Nothing can ever change the way I feel for you. When you meet the right person, you just know.'

Her eyes became all dreamy. 'Susan told me that. As she says, you only find true love once in your life and when you do, you must never let it go.'

Susan was glad to get back to her cosy little flat after the reception. It had been lovely but she was tired. Picking up the framed picture of Roger, she cradled it in her lap, grateful she had never told Melinda the truth about her husband who had never come back from the war.

'Goodnight, darling,' she said to her handsome husband in his naval uniform, just as she'd said goodnight to him every day for the past sixty years.

The following day, she was out on the front as usual, looking for someone suitable. That couple over there in the matching blue anoraks would do!

'I'll take your picture,' the man was saying.

'No,' protested the girl. 'I want a picture of you.'

Susan stepped forward remembering how a kind stranger had done exactly the same to her and Roger, all those years ago, before he'd gone off to war. Since then, she'd carried on the tradition. It made her feel young again because she could pretend that she was the young woman who was having her picture taken. Besides, it stopped her sitting at home and feeling sorry for herself.

'Excuse me,' said Susan shyly to the youngish couple in anoraks. 'I couldn't help overhearing. Would you like me to take your picture?'

© Sophie King.

Read more about Sophie King's short story collection, *Tales from the Heart*, and her novels, on her website at

[www.sophieking.info](http://www.sophieking.info) **yB**

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## *Popular money course to run again as people say they need tactics to cope with the age of austerity*

**B**erkhamsted residents are being given another chance to get their finances in order following the costs of Christmas with a popular FREE course being run by local churches.

Members of local churches, who have been trained by UK charity Christians Against Poverty, are again running the three sessions aimed at helping the local community to best handle the current economic downturn.

Money Coach Christine Johns, who will be leading the sessions called the CAP Money course, said: "If you know how to save and budget effectively, it can have a hugely positive impact on the whole family. With households feeling the squeeze on their disposable income, we've all got to get a bit more savvy about our money to get through these tough times. This is particularly so at this time of the year."

Berkhamsted Churches are one of more than 1,200 churches of different Christian traditions across the UK who are regularly offering the course, as they work together to positively impact the communities around them.

The CAP Money course has been found to be useful for newly retired people, soon-to-be students, mums dealing with mounting bills, families saving for a wedding and everyone in between.

She added: "We hope that we can help

people, quietly and confidentially, take the guess work out of their situation so they can plan for the future, sort out any problems early and come through unscathed."

The next course takes place in the Make Believe Cafe (behind Tesco), starting at 7.30pm on February 25th.

To find out more about the CAP Money course or to book your place visit [www.capmoney.org](http://www.capmoney.org) or telephone Mike Wallis on 07891 760244.

Christians Against Poverty is a home-grown debt counselling charity which is determined to reduce poverty in the UK caused by debt. It partners its financial expertise with the care of the local church to offer free debt help and a solution to people through 218 centres. The fast-growing charity intends to have a debt-counselling CAP centre in 500 towns and cities across the UK by 2015. For more about CAP see [www.capuk.org](http://www.capuk.org).



**JB**

## *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

<b>Services</b>	<b>Regular Sunday services</b> 8:00am Eucharist 9:30am Sung Eucharist with crèche, Sunday school and Pathfinders 6:00pm Evensong
	<b>Regular weekday services</b> 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

### **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)

**January**

6<sup>th</sup> Epiphany, 10am: Holy Communion, Revd Valerie Rockall

13<sup>th</sup> Second Sunday of Epiphany, Baptism of Christ, 10am: Covenant Service with Holy Communion, Revd Rachael Hawkins

20<sup>th</sup> Third Sunday of Epiphany, 10am: Morning Worship, With Holy Baptism, Revd Rachael Hawkins

27<sup>th</sup> Fourth Sunday of Epiphany, 10am: Holy Communion, Revd Brian Tebbutt, 4pm: Healing Service, Revd Rachael Hawkins, Jenny Wells, Tracy Robinson, and Audrey Cox

**St Peter's**

Cowper Society present:

Mon 14 Jan, 8pm: Organ Recital: Lee Burgess – Holy Trinity, Potten End, 8:00pm

Mon 28 Jan, 8pm: Cowper Society Winter Talk: St Peter's Church and its History in the Court House

Mon 4 Feb, 8pm: Cowper Society presents: Organ Recital: Adrian Davis

**Baptisms**

25<sup>th</sup> November Kit Henry Cotterell (St Peter's)

Freya Alexandria Hudson (St Peter's)

Rebecca Jane Hudson (St Peter's)

**Weddings**

1<sup>st</sup> December Gary Paul Lucas and Robyn Louise Harrowell (St Peter's)

**Funerals**

14<sup>th</sup> November June Douglas (St Peter's)

23<sup>rd</sup> November Joan Cook (St Peter's)

27<sup>th</sup> November Kirsty Pears (St Peter's)

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**Key Church Contacts**

Parish Office, Hilary Armstrong and Kate Perera, Court House, 878227.

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

The Revd Rachael Hawkins, All Saints'.

## ***Petertide Fair news 2013***

**St** Peter's church in Berkhamsted has long been fundraising to raise money to help charities in our own community and those overseas through its annual programme of 'Petertide' outreach. In 2012 the church raised an impressive £19,057.35 and hopefully this year will be just as successful for the two charities that it has chosen to support.

### **PETERTIDE TO SUPPORT HOME-START DACORUM**

For 2013 the church is delighted to be supporting *Home-Start Dacorum*, which offers support, friendship and practical help to families with at least one child under the age of five in the Borough. Volunteers, who are parents themselves, visit families in their own home to support with the pressures of bringing up small children, helping them to avoid crisis and enjoy family life. The charity also delivers parenting skills courses over 10 week periods, and weekly Family Groups, where parents/carers get an opportunity to make new friends and share ideas and experiences. Money raised via Petertide events will enable the charity to build on its relationship with Berkhamsted town and set up a Parenting Puzzle course and provide for a regular Home-Start family group.

Samantha Quill, Manager at Home-Start Dacorum, says, "We are absolutely delighted that St Peter's church in Berkhamsted has chosen Home-Start Dacorum as its home charity for its annual Petertide fundraising commitment. Last year we helped over 100 families across the Borough, some of whom live in

the Berkhamsted area, but St Peter's support will enable us to have a greater presence in the town and ensure that the real need here in Berkhamsted is being met. It is wonderful to have this support in the year in which Home-Start Dacorum will be celebrating 30 years of service to families in the area (having been started from a house in Greenway, 29 years ago!). Further information and details about becoming a volunteer can be found on the website: [www.homestartdacorum.org.uk](http://www.homestartdacorum.org.uk).

### **OVERSEAS CHARITY – MAJI MAZURI**

Overseas, St Peter's will raise money for **Maji Mazuri** which helps deprived communities in poverty-stricken Kenya through various socio-economic



Pictured (left to right) is Stephen Lally representing the Nepali Children's Trust, Pru Murray - Petertide Fair Chairman, Father Michael Bowie - Rector of St Peter's Great Berkhamsted and Robert Breakwell, Business Development Director of Iain Rennie Grove House Hospice handing over two cheques with the proceeds from the 2011/12 Petertide fundraising

initiatives. The projects seek to address the root causes of poverty and focus on alleviating it by empowering people to bring about change in their own lives. Through Petertide fundraising, the church is hoping to raise money for a kitchen and for a bathroom block at Kiserian school in the Masai area outside Nairobi, which provides education for boys and especially girls who would not usually receive an education; their parents tend to be nomadic so Maji Mazuri has set up dormitories so the children can board and stay in school. This is especially crucial for the girls who otherwise get married-off very young.

The dorms at Kiserian are built on top of the kitchen and there is a risk of fire so the government has decreed that all kitchens must now be separate from dorm blocks. So Kiserian must rebuild its tiny and poky smoky hut and build new bathroom facilities which are not just holes in the ground. Improvements at the school should also help the education provider to attract and retain staff.

Rachel Lindley, Trustee of the UK branch of Maji Mazuri, comments, "With first-hand knowledge of the conditions out in Kenya and some of the projects Maji Mazuri is working on, I am absolutely delighted that St Peter's church will be supporting our work through their annual programme of Petertide fundraising. I know any money raised will make such a difference to the lives of the children in the school, for example with a properly equipped kitchen it would be possible to prepare meals in a more sanitary environment and hopefully teach the staff new cooking skills that will, in the long term, improve the quality of the food the children are served."

For further information, please visit:  
[www.majimazuri.org/maji-mazuri-uk](http://www.majimazuri.org/maji-mazuri-uk).



Kiserian across aloe field

Pru Murray, Petertide Fair Chairman, comments, "We all know these are tough economic times and, although we raised £19,000 for our charities last year, it's no guarantee that we will secure a similar amount this year although we'd love to! The Petertide Events committee is working hard to plan an exciting programme of activities which we hope will be supported across the town. Just by coming to our quiz night, attending our charity dinner in May or picking up some bric-a-brac at the Fair in June will all enable us to raise money to help improve the lives of people in our own community and overseas."

For further information, please visit  
[www.petertidefair.org.uk](http://www.petertidefair.org.uk).

[www.homestartdacorum.org.uk](http://www.homestartdacorum.org.uk)

[www.majimazuri.org/maji-mazuri-uk](http://www.majimazuri.org/maji-mazuri-uk).

### **Forthcoming Petertide Events**

Friday 25 January 2013 – Burns Night Quiz Night (Quiz and Supper) £10 a ticket. Tables of 8.

Tuesday 7 May 2013– Petertide May Dinner, The Gatsby 7:30pm

Saturday 15 June 2013 – Petertide Fair, 10 – 3pm

For further information, please contact  
[chair@petertidefair.org.uk](mailto:chair@petertidefair.org.uk) or call 01442

871386. **JB**

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## *A century in and out of Berkhamsted*

**Nancy Lawrenson** continues her story of life in our town

### **Part 2: Royal Naval School**

When the time came for my younger brother Stephen to go to prep school my father and mother asked me if I too would like to go to boarding school. We were now living at Boreham, out in the country about three miles from Chelmsford, in a house that had been a pub, The General's Arms, with two large barns, a tennis court and an orchard. "Would I like to go to mother's old school, The Royal School for Naval and Marine Officers' Daughters at St. Margaret's, Twickenham?" "Yes please" I said. I think that Gill Malcolm lived there when she was a child.

St. Margaret's lock on the Thames was very busy and many years later was where my brother Michael, younger by 10 years and sister Rosamund, younger by 11 years, kept their rowing boat.

My father died in 1928, we had no car and my mother had to cycle briskly into Chelmsford for shopping followed by two grumbling girls, myself and Rosemary, with the two and one year old Michael and Rosamund left with our lovely young nanny, Grace Puxley. My mother decided to move us all to Kew, where we would be near her friends the Gepps. We could hear the river flowing at night and I remember



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# *New Year's resolutions*

**Cathy Edmunds** suggests some positive actions that we can take to mark the dawn of a new year

## **1. Make a fresh start**

Make a fresh start to the year by clearing out your wardrobe of all those old clothes and accessories you never wear any more. Donate them to one of the town's charity shops.

## **2. Everybody needs good neighbours...**

Do a favour for a neighbour. If you don't know your neighbour, go and introduce yourself!

## **3. Say it with a smile**

Make a promise to yourself to smile at one stranger every day in Berkhamsted. You never know, they may just smile back!

## **4. Plant a tree**

Help the environment and plant a tree. There's information on how to do it at [www.woodlandtrust.org.uk](http://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk).

## **5. Be positive**

Say "yes" more often than you say "no" this year.

## **6. Adopt a charity**

Adopt a specific charity for the year. There are loads of ways you can support them, through volunteering, donations and sponsorship. The options for which charity to choose are endless - there are many international, national and local charities that would love your support. Get some ideas by visiting [www.charitychoice.co.uk](http://www.charitychoice.co.uk).

## **7. Give some time**

Find half an hour each week to go and visit one of the 40,000 elderly people



living in care homes in Britain that never get any visitors. For information on helping the elderly go to [www.ageuk.org.uk](http://www.ageuk.org.uk)

## **8. Be organised**

Buy next year's Christmas cards in the January sale.

## **9. Get in touch**

Contact someone you've lost touch with and have wondered how they are.

## **10. Keep learning**

Make an effort to find out something you never knew! There is information on the latest WEA classes and talks on our Community Pages, or visit the U3A website at [www.u3a.org.uk](http://www.u3a.org.uk).

## **11. Expand your vocabulary**

Learn a new word and then use it. Visit <http://wordsmith.org/awad>.

## **12. Remember past times at playtime**

Get out an old board game or jigsaw, dust it off and spend an hour or so playing it. Remember what fun can be had without



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## A walk around Ashridge

This 3½ mile circular walk taking about 1½ hours, starts at the Bridgewater Arms in Little Gaddesden, HP4 1PD. A detour to view the great house of Ashridge adds half a mile.

To reach the start, from Northchurch take the B4506 (New Road) to Ringshall. Pass Monument Drive and Beacon Road, both on the left, then turn right, signposted to Little Gaddesden. The Bridgewater Arms is on the left with its car park opposite. Permission has been given to park a car there while you walk. If you are unfamiliar with this area, the Berkhamsted Citizens' Association Footpath map provides assurance for those new to the area. The OS reference is 993 136.

At the back of the car park is a public footpath sign, Chiltern Way, pointing down a slope with a wire mesh fence on the left. At wooden steps, cross a road with a four way signpost opposite. Continue downhill in the same direction to cross another access road, pass Witches Hollow, and reach the bottom of the slope at a signpost, Chiltern Way. Turn left alongside hedges at the end of gardens then past a high wooden fence. Down a gentle slope, continue in the same direction. The path continues ahead, past a plaque, *Foot Path Only, No Horses* to reach a road.

Cross the road to a post opposite, *No Horses*. There follow the path with wooden stakes at the roadside then curve to the left into the Golden Valley. The footpath follows the bottom of the valley, passing a brick structure in trees on the left, the bridge of an ancient track. *For the detour to Ashridge, keep an eye on the*

*slope on the right to see a log bench with a signpost close by. Follow the path signed by the post up the slope to emerge at the west end of Ashridge, a magnificent white stone building dating back to 1825.*

The grassy path merges into a surfaced track with a *No Horses* signpost on the left and in 30 yards a yellow-headed signpost points to a gravelled track going uphill, your route. Spiked railings on the right as you ascend surround a pumping station, now below you.

The track goes uphill and round a hairpin bend to reach a seven bar wooden gate at Nettleden Road, with a National Trust Ashridge Estate sign alongside. Cross the road onto the pavement opposite and turn left, then in 50 yards turn right, between Vine and Shepherd's Cottages with a plaque, *Home Farm House*, on a wall ahead. Turn left at the wall to enter a somewhat concealed bridleway between a brick wall and a wooden fence.

Walk up the slope of the bridleway and through a gate to reach a white painted stable building. Turn right then left to pass two garages and follow the bridleway downhill. Conifers are initially on the left but the view soon opens up over grassy fields. Note the imposing chimneys of Little Gaddesden House on the left. The bridleway follows the edge of the field, turning left and then right uphill.

Where the route reaches a copse bear right around a muddy S bend to reach a road and a bridleway signpost. Turn left on the road to pass a former farmhouse and dwellings to reach Hudnall Lane. Cross the Lane into the No Through Road opposite, passing the Little Gaddesden Council notice board.

*(Continued on page 29)*



# Spicy beef and noodle soup

Joanne Lloyd-Evans brings us a warming, healthy recipe to start the year



80-100g soba noodles  
(or other dried noodles  
of your choice)

100g sugar snap peas  
1 red pepper, diced  
1 or 2 pak choi, sliced  
½ bunch coriander or  
basil, chopped

1. Place the water, beef  
stock cube, soy sauce,  
ginger, garlic, chilli  
and cinnamon into a  
large saucepan and  
bring to the boil. Leave  
to simmer while you

**T**his is a perfect recipe for January, as it is warming and comforting, but also very healthy and quite light, which is probably much needed after the Christmas season. It is a speedy meal that can be ready in 20 minutes if you work quickly – read through the whole recipe before you start as you need to be coordinated to avoid overcooking the noodles or the steak. This quantity serves two adults.

## Ingredients

900ml water  
1 beef stock cube  
2 tsp dark soy sauce  
2 tsp finely grated fresh ginger  
3 cloves garlic, finely chopped  
½ of a fresh chilli (or more or less to taste)  
½ tsp ground cinnamon  
300g rump or sirloin steak  
1 tbsp dark soy sauce  
2 tbsp sweet chilli sauce  
1 tbsp olive oil

get the other things ready.

2. Do not cut up the steak; leave it whole for the moment and coat it in the soy sauce and sweet chilli sauce and set aside (you could marinate for longer if you have time, but it is not essential).

3. Put the noodles into the boiling soup to begin cooking them.

4. Heat the olive oil in a frying pan, and when the pan is hot, cook the steak on a high heat for no more than 2 minutes on each side. Remove from the heat.

5. When the noodles have about 3-4 minutes left to cook, throw in the red pepper, sugar snap peas and pak choi to cook them briefly.

6. Slice the beef thinly and if it is too pink for your liking, throw the slices back into the hot pan for 30 seconds or so.

7. When the noodles are cooked, serve the soup in some large bowls, top with the slices of steak and sprinkle with the basil or coriander. **JB**

*(Continued from page 27)*

Where the road bears to the right, continue ahead to a signpost in a holly bush with Meadows Farm on left, to enter a footpath at a Neighbourhood Watch sign. The footpath shortly reaches a galvanised swing gate into a large field with the tower of Little Gaddesden church in view ahead. The path continues with hedges on the right, for half a mile to bear left across a field, to reach a road alongside the church. Turn left alongside the church wall and continue on a

footpath between the church car park and the cemetery to reach a wooden swing gate. Continue in the same direction through galvanised swing gates to reach a wooden gate at the road to the village.



Ashridge Business School within the National Trust estate, photograph courtesy of Mary Dodkins

Turn left on the pavement to pass the village store and return to the Bridgewater Arms where a warm welcome awaits you.

**yB**

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# *The parking problem*

**Norman Cutting**



**By** the time you read this, the Town Council will have spent over £4000, hours and hours of deliberation over the past couple of years,

generally going over similar ground that the very same Town Council went over some 10 years previously (although with a completely different make up), listening (in the end), pushing forward with a plan that affects the holy grail called the motor vehicle. Woe betide anyone who comes between the motor car and a driver.

It's a bit like the American 'right to carry arms' concerns in the good ol' US of A. Everyone has concerns regarding the carrying of lethal weapons and every so often, the American government thinks the time is right to get guns off the streets and then the lobbyists gather support, threaten to go to court, bring down the government or just really make life very difficult for all concerned. For some reason, the logic of having an inalienable right to kill someone or something you don't like the look of whilst wondering why the middle east residents just love to shoot bullets into the air to celebrate some event or the other without a care in the world where these lumps of lead are going to land (and land they surely will!) seems to escape residents in a modern democratic society called the USA.

So what do we want to do now? I've only lived in the town a short while and I really do not remember when there was not a problem with town centre parking, from the days when you just stopped 'nose in' next to the kerb and reversed out when

you wanted to leave – unless you had a white hand painted Austin 7 and had a title when you obviously had the right just to stop anywhere (sometimes forgetting to put the handbrake on), before moving a couple of hundred yards further down the road to do the same thing and then making your way back up the hill towards Ashridge (ask your mum or dad if this means nothing to you).

The latest habit is to have a home with a drive and a garage. You know exactly what is coming next, but I'll say it as no one else will.

Garages are being converted into habitable rooms like there is no tomorrow, drives seem far too difficult to put a vehicle onto and the result is that if you have a garage and/or drive, it's not used, so a metal box on wheels gets left as an obstruction on the public highway. Bet you didn't know there are actually garages to rent in some areas, but few takers. I'll tell you a little story. I have an 84 year old relative who reverses his car into his garage every time he goes out (it's a narrow drive about 30 yards long). He had a friend come last week (about 30 years younger!!) and they were going out in the car. Disbelief was expressed that she couldn't reverse down a drive into a garage so how did he?

If you live in one of the many properties around the conservation area without the luxury of a garage, then the choice really is limited. The other problem in the town is the Borough Councils attitude that why would anyone want a car when public transport is available, so parking requirements are minimal even to the extent that how many entertainment venues don't have parking facilities?

Even the hospital (which you can't actually get a bus direct from this town to 'that' one) has a car parking facility. We mustn't forget that 'big borough' has a cunning plan to increase the number of parking spaces in the town centre. I just hope it doesn't use the same accounting method as when the High Street on-street parking facility came into operation with the additional 400-odd extra parking spaces. Go on, count them, multiply by 8 and you have about 400 up to one hour parking spaces. Now go to the cinema! (or school or anywhere).

We need a vibrant market town used by residents and not a parking lot (sorry Councillor) and this means a mix of short term parking, small numbers of long term parking, larger numbers of spaces for commuters and residents' vehicles or a complete change in attitude regarding our very own personal transport. This utopia is something we do not have, and unlikely to have unless the Parking Provision and Management Discussion Forum actually comes up with some better ideas. Remember we are not talking rocket science, just some acceptable ideas. As many know, I have a simple solution - but you won't like it - simply enforce the law. Final threat might concentrate minds, perhaps! **yB**

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