

Berkhamsted *review*

In this issue

January 1999

**A 'NewStart'
for 1999**

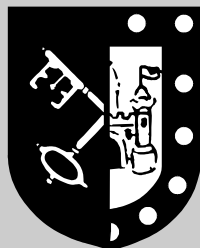
**Make the
most of it!**

**Doctors, rivers
and *foie gras***

**The things
they say**

**Plan or
improvise**

**This month's
Notes & Events**



for Town and Parish **25p**



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

Welcome to the January 1999 issue of the *Berkhamsted Review*.

We hope you have renewed - or taken out for the first time - your subscription for this year, or that you will shortly do so. We must resist the tendency to consider 1999 as the 'fag-end' of the century and the millennium. Like all other normal years it will have 365 days, every single one of which may - for better or worse - end up being a most significant day in your life.

This year makes the *Review* about 125 years old (the first year was 1873/4). But of course a magazine, however venerable, survives only if it meets the needs of the here and now. This is the magazine 'for town and parish'; that is, of its readers. So please continue to let us have your articles, snippets, poems, photographs and drawings. Let us have your comments even if you feel you cannot write all that well. Tell us how we can improve the *Review* (shoot the editor??). We value your comments. And if you like the *Review*, please recommend it to your friends.

A very happy new year in 1999.

David Woodward

Cover: The Glaxo Wellcome site in Ravens Lane - see Industry to Housing, p5.

Photo: Chris Smalley

In this month's issue...

NewStart

Fr Robin Figg proposes a NewStart at home, for the world's poor and with God.

Make the most of it!

Liz Baxendale wants public buildings, like our castle, to be more welcoming.

Doctors, Rivers and Foie Gras

A peculiar accompaniment for **Stephen Halliday** on a cycle trip through France.

BT or not BT?

It might be good to talk, but **Elizabeth Jackson** needed a phone line first.

Olden Graffiti

John Cook has found some less-than-official inscriptions in our parish church.

Plan or improvise

Revd Peter Hart says that God wants us to plan ahead - but also to improvise.

... plus our regular features, readers' letters, notes & notices and diary dates.

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Next Copy Dates (all Fridays): 8 January 5 February 5 March



review leader

Happy New Year to you! I hope you had a joyful celebration of Christmas, finding time in the midst of the festive rush to reflect once more on the true meaning of the Incarnation. As Fr Mark reminded us last month the spiritual truth at the heart of Christmas is that in Jesus Christ the Word of God took to himself human nature. God came to show the world a new way of living, a way of truth and justice, a way of love, joy and peace. God came to offer the world a new start.

It is no coincidence therefore that *NewStart* is the keyword in the churches' preparation for the millennium, which is now just twelve short months away. At a national level preparations are well in hand; locally there is much work still to be done. Churches Together in England have proposed three *NewStart* themes: *NewStart at Home*, *NewStart for the World's Poor* and *NewStart with God*.

NewStart

At home we need to be asking ourselves 'What kind of Britain - our national 'home' do we want for the new century? In what ways can we support local community based projects, such as the Focus project or the Swan project? In November I was a member of the group visiting the Swan with the Bishop of Hertford and I was very impressed by what I saw. Much good work is being achieved in supporting some of the young people of our area. But their work is not easy and needs our support. Also, where do we need to make a new start in our homes - our families, our personal values, our areas of 'brokenness'?

We need to concern ourselves, rightly, with the issues facing our own society, but we must not neglect the needs of the world's poor. Most people are aware of the efforts of the Jubilee 2000 Coalition campaign to secure relief for the world's poorest nations. Clare Short, Secretary of State for International Development spoke to the last meeting of General Synod on this issue. In her speech she praised the contribution of the churches to the campaign for debt relief and urged them to take the next step: 'I want to ask whether the international campaign for debt cancellation can be broadened into an alliance to eliminate poverty? ... The biblical concept of jubilee goes far beyond debt - slaves were to be freed, land was to be restored, tools given to people. In short nobody was to be left in extreme poverty. That is what we should strive for - and for the first time in human history, it is possible. The question is can we work together to make it happen?'

If we are to engage with such searching issues which affect our own society and the nations of the world we need also to ensure that the spiritual dimension is not forgotten. It is all too easy to lose sight of the real meaning of the millennium: we are celebrating none other than the 2000th anniversary of the birth of Jesus Christ. In the birth of the Christ-child God made a new start in the world; the hope is that we can each respond to that birth with our own new start with God.

So we have just twelve short months to prepare for a *NewStart*: a *NewStart* at home, a *NewStart* for the world's poor; a *NewStart* with God. A happy New Year to you: make good use of it!



***Fr Robin Figg
wants us to use
1999 to prepare
for a New Start.***

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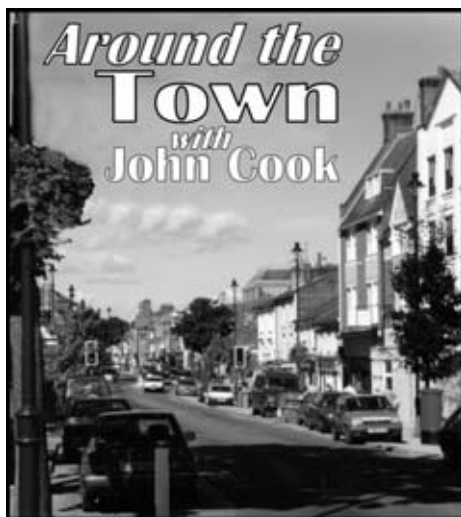
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Feathered Friends

Since the little newsagent's shop in Castle Street closed I walk to the railway station to get the morning newspaper. There are two pleasures in this. The first is to wish the commuters good morning and give them a cheery wave as I turn back home and they go on to face a hard day at the office and travel disruption. The second is to observe the bird life (at least before the mornings got too dark).

The canal is sometimes teeming with life, including our unique collection of crossbred, piebald ducks. There are perhaps a dozen of these, all with different patterns of plumage that allow them to be individually identified. Coots, moorhens, swans, geese and black-headed gulls are also regularly there. A heron is sometimes perched on top of the roof of the Alsford Wharf flats, oblivious it seems to the efforts of the rooks to drive it away. Pied wagtails, sometimes in numbers, are all over the place, particularly on the Moor. A grey wagtail flits about on the banks of the canal or the Bulbourne; and now that our little river has a good flow in it perhaps there will again be the emerald flash of a kingfisher.

In 1998, as far as I know, no house martins bred in the centre part of the

Town, but one morning last September the skies were suddenly filled with a wheeling and soaring flock of them. Presumably they bred elsewhere and were preparing for their migration. Lets hope that some of them, looking down on Berkhamsted from the air, will have thought that it looks a nice place to return to next spring and raise a family. Swifts we had in plenty and starlings returned to their old roost on the roof and spire of the Collegiate School chapel, which they shared last week with six magpies. It does cheer you up to see such wildlife in and over the Town.

Industry to Housing

After a period when the three principal sites in the Town which once belonged to Coopers/Wellcome have been empty and forlorn, things are now stirring.

Between the golf clubhouse and the top of Gravel Path the old animal experimental station is to be developed as a 'retirement village'. Most of the present buildings will go, but the rather splendid mansion is to be preserved.

Nearer the centre of the Town, Glaxo Wellcome, who own the old Coopers property between Ravens Lane and Manor Street, have been canvassing local opinion about the options for redeveloping that large site. The developers for the even larger deserted AgrEvo site at the east end of the High Street have several times already revised their plans for a housing development there, in efforts to satisfy the members of the Development Control Committee and their advisers. It is good that the planners are trying to get the best design they can for this prominent site.

Between 90 to 100 homes are proposed, and with the exception of a row of four cottages all the existing buildings will be demolished. This will be no great loss except for the handsome laboratory building facing the High Street. Some time ago one of the directors told me that the laboratories there had produced 'many interesting molecules'.

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Contamination

One of the problems that will have to be tackled before the houses are built there is the contamination in the ground. The developers commissioned a study by experts, and their report is available for inspection in the Civic Centre, along with the plans. It makes interesting reading.

Arsenic sheep dip was produced on the site for 50-60 years. The raw arsenic material was shipped from Portugal and then barged up the Grand Union Canal to Berkhamsted where it was unloaded and ground up. Arsenic and sulphur minerals were then mixed together. It all sounds to have been a pretty horrendous operation.

The consultants' proposal for removing the contamination that still remains in the soil is a major civil engineering operation: to excavate the site to below water table – a depth of about three metres – and build a cut off wall of steel sheet piles. The cost of this could be £2.5millions.

Medieval Scribbles

The logo of the Mothers Union is familiar to readers of the *Review*. It includes a letter M based on the ancient symbol which was often used in mediaeval times to represent the Blessed Virgin Mary. In St Peter's Church there are three of these Ms in the form of graffiti scratched into the soft stone of one of the massive tower pillars. These graffiti date from the 13th or 14th centuries and are nearly worn away now, but they can be found by a careful examination of the wall by the bell rope. A torch held at an angle against the wall helps you to see them.

Other medieval religious graffiti to be found in St Peter's takes the form of Vs, which are in fact overlapping votive V's. Dr Doris Jones-Baker, who is an authority on the subject and a year or two ago conducted a guided tour of examples of early church graffiti in Hertfordshire, told us something about them. She thinks that if you cut one V it meant you intended to perform some worthy act, two Vs that you



Mediaeval graffiti in St Peter's

were in the process of doing it and three

that the good deed was done.

There are other religious graffiti in St Peter's, including crosses scratched into the stonework, especially on the pillar in the centre of the Lady Chapel area. This particular pillar also has the remains of the inscriptions of three heraldic shields. For most of these old graffiti you need to look to about knee level because they were made when the church floor was two or three feet lower than the present one. There are also plenty of graffiti from the 17th and 18th century in the church and the tower. Look especially for the boy's name, Robart Clarke, neatly cut into the second pillar on the left from the church door, some 300 years ago (*see picture above*).

But the most important graffito in the church is in now barely decipherable Lombardic Latin. It is on the wall facing the Lady Chapel, and was probably made there soon after that part of the church was built in the 14th century. It translates 'The Virgin Mother, the Eternal Gate of Glory of the Church'. ❖

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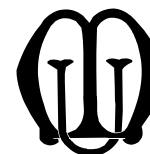
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THE MOTHER'S UNION

Does the name Mary Sumner strike a chord? It should do, says **Jenny Wells**.

August 9th is Mary Sumner's day. Who is Mary Sumner and why has she suddenly appeared in the Anglican calendar?



Her name is well known by all Mother's Union members. She is their founder!

One hundred and fifty years ago, 19 year old Mary Heywood married George Sumner, a young country vicar, and became involved in the life of his parish. She soon became aware of the difficulties encountered by the wives of the farm labourers within the parish as they struggled to bring up their large families. There was no-one to help them and she felt that she must do something. So, she arranged a meeting. She was so overcome when she saw the number that had turned up that her husband had to speak for her!

Her help was however appreciated and she soon overcame her shyness. Others copied her ideas, asked her advice and eventually, in 1876, the Mothers' Union was formed.

The society grew and where the Anglican communion went, the M.U. went too, supporting family life, educating mothers in childcare and generally giving support where it was needed.

It is now the largest Christian organisation for women in the world - and that is a tribute to Mary Sumner. ❖

LET'S MAKE THE MOST OF WHAT WE'VE GOT!

Liz Baxendale is vexed by churlish notices at tourist attractions.

For many years, while on holiday, I kept a scrap book. This would consist of a daily diary recording activities, places visited, meals eaten, people met. Amongst the text there would be placed photos, postcards, entrance tickets, menus, bills, sugar wrappers and so on. These books make quite interesting reading as some now go back twenty years or more. It is amazing to compare prices apart from anything else: a fish and & chip lunch in 1971 cost 32p, for example!

One use of these jottings has been to alert others to the joys, or horrors, of particular places. While we had enjoyed our visit to a Somerset stately home, we had found the tea shop 'unwelcoming and very expensive'. An animal park in Devon is recorded as 'disappointing, very few animals and *no* ice cream' (the latter was essential in the heatwave of that summer, and a necessity of every day at the sea-side whatever the weather!)

We have sent people to enjoy the imagination of The Jorvik Centre in York and have passed on to other collectors the names and addresses of museums of childhood the length and breadth of the country. We can direct folk to wonderful churches, and tell them where the best ploughman's lunches are to be found.

One entry refers to our visit to a small Yorkshire town where there were historic alms houses and a folk museum. The

(continued on page 11)

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problem was the museum. As we drove through the fine wrought iron gates a large notice declared *No Parking In The Grounds*. We retreated to find a place without, and returned on foot, delighted by a patch of green sward in the centre of the courtyard. It was a hot day. We could sit a while on the cool green grass. Not so! *Keep Off The Grass*.- said a notice in the centre. We went to the large black door to the our left. *No Entry*, backed up by *Use Other Door*. We found the Other Door. Notices were pinned all over it. *No Dogs*.(OK) *No Unaccompanied Children* (as a teacher I thought this rather sad, but maybe from a safety point of view it was sensible?) *No Smoking* (fine). *Do Not Run* (as if we would!) *Leave Bags At The Desk* (not likely!) Once inside we were bombarded at every turn by a *Do Not* notice.

I began to wonder if they *wanted* visitors but having left a young dog tied to their foot scraper at the door, where she was 'singing' sadly, we couldn't stay long anyway. We shall never return, and we would warn off anyone who thought of going!

I thought of this miserable museum the last time I went to Berkhamsted castle. The notices there are churlish: *Dogs Must Be Kept On Leads* (though of course dogs

can do things on their leads that they can also do off - it depends what you have in mind!), *Visitors Are Forbidden To Climb The Walls, Private* (now round the only seat that is out of the rain) and *Danger - Steep Bank*.

Now I think all of these signs are probably necessary, but they are not notices that make you feel *wanted*! Why can't notice -writers add a polite *Please*? Is it the cost of the extra letters? *Please Keep Your Dog On A Lead* sounds fine. *For Your Own Safety Please Do Not Climb On These Old Walls* is much nicer, and a *Welcome To Berkhamsted Castle*



wouldn't come amiss. Perhaps the addition of '*We Hope You Will Enjoy Your Visit*', a board with some information, and a few more seats (it's a lovely sheltered spot on a sunny day). And what about a pointer to the nearest tea shops, the loos, and those nearby attractions - the totem pole, the school and St Peters church?

So this is a plea to English Heritage to make *our* castle more 'user friendly' - otherwise it may go down in someone's holiday scrapbook as a *never again* place.



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As I write, the two hot political subjects are the reduction of the 'moderating' power (*aka* abolition) of the House of Lords and government by parties. All I will say about the former is that it will not affect the local situation directly, but I fear the country will suffer as a result if it goes through.

The independent has no place in the current proposals for a more proportional election system. If the first chosen named representative does not get sufficient votes, then your second choice goes to a party appointed representative. Being independent means that I can (and do) agree and support the best bits of the Labour, Conservative and Liberal-Democrat views without fear of upsetting my group leader. Remember that nearly ten percent of the majority Labour group at borough have upset their leader according to the local press, and even in Berkhamsted nearly half of the independents elected in 1995 have resigned over policy issues.

The second residents' association has been formed in the town under the guidance of the borough council. The first was in the Swing Gate Lane / Woodlands Avenue area. The new one is based on the Ashlyns estate. I was lucky enough to hear about the latter a day before the first meeting and duly attended as both areas are within my ward. I understand that the town council and ward councillors are not encouraged to get involved as the idea is to allow access to the borough officers and housing committee chairman and vice-chairman. As the only Berkhamsted representative on that very same committee I was stupid enough to believe I should be involved in this excellent initiative of the borough - silly me. At that meeting, residents were as surprised as I was that the only area set aside for children to play

CUTTING COMMENTS

Independent councillor Norman Cutting on housing development in the town.

by the borough council I suppose, because it wasn't used. The report that went to council suggested youth were hanging around the area, making a nuisance of themselves. As the land was under the control of the housing department the solution was obvious, wasn't it?

Other non-housing concerns raised at the meeting were the Hilltop Road 'pedestrian facility' near the flats, possible damage caused by the weight of a certain metal 'contraption' on the flat roof of one of the blocks of flats and the construction and maintenance of the footpath 'steps' leading down to Chesham Road. These steps are unlit, unevenly spaced and each step slopes downwards. I will go as far as to say they are downright dangerous and the council have been lucky that only one death has occurred in this area. I have tried to get additional lighting (no money), cut back the trees (the warden had a go, but nature took its course) and even suggested relocating the Chesham Road column about five yards down the hill to light up the steps (to no avail). I wonder if the election will suddenly make something happen?

Meanwhile, back on the town council, it is budget time. Readers may remember that I was instrumental in preparing the last two town council budgets. In 1997/8 this was as a result of the then chairman of finance and policy resigning, and the current 1998/9 one because I ended up as chairman of the committee. As a result of pressure by some of the newly elected members, the current year's precept was reduced and nearly £37,000 taken from reserves. I believed a serious error was

in was located at the foot of Robin Hill, and that it was described as a 'disused playground'. Having been neglected by the borough the area is about to be built on. No alternative sites have been suggested

made by council and so did not stand for re-election on that particular committee. Nevertheless, I have continued to take a keen interest and it looks as though the electorate will suffer this year as a result of the decision to reduce the precept last year. All I can say is that I am sorry my independent colleagues did not support my proposals last year. Remember the majority of the influence on the town council is now party political, with only two independent members on the finance and policy committee. Isn't this where I started?

The *Festival of Light* should have been a great success by the time you read this, with most of the credit going to the town mayor, John Brookes, who even organised things from his hospital bed. He is now back in harness and I hope the organising group will meet early in the New Year to

build on the framework now in place. The town council should be congratulated on picking up the pieces dropped by the Chamber of Commerce and allow the participants to forge ahead independent of the council, but with the support only local government can provide.

Have a healthy and prosperous New Year and I look forward to keeping you up to date with all those little things that generally pass over the local press. Next month I should have news about the budget, various developments within the town and the usual comments to get you thinking. You will not now have the pleasure of elections every year, although the addition of two more town councillors, the removal of one borough councillor and the shifting around of all the wards will be enough to keep your interest. ❖

the things they say

Ancient Egypt was inhabited by mummies and they all wrote in hydraulics. They lived in the Sarah Dessert and travelled by Camelot. The climate of the Sarah is such that the inhabitants have to live elsewhere.

Moses led the Hebrew slaves to the Red Sea, where they made unleavened bread which is bread made without any ingredients. Moses went up on Mount Cyanide to get the ten commandments. He died before he ever reached Canada.

Solomon had three hundred wives and seven hundred porcupines.

The Greeks were a highly sculptured people, and without them we wouldn't have history. The Greeks also had myths. A myth is a female moth.

Socrates was a famous Greek teacher who went around giving people advice. They killed him. Socrates died from an overdose

A compilation of true responses to GCSE questions.

of wedlock. After his death, his career suffered a dramatic decline.

Julius Caesar extinguished himself on the battlefields of Gaul. The Ides of March murdered him because they thought he was going to be made king. Dying, he gasped out: "Tee hee, Brutus".

Nero was a cruel tyranny who would torture his subjects by playing the fiddle.

Gravity was invented by Issac Walton. It is chiefly noticeable in the autumn when the apples are falling off the trees.

The sun never set on the British Empire because the British Empire's in the East and the sun sets in the West.

Actually, Homer was not written by Homer but by another man of that name.❖

In 1997 my wife, Jane, and I went on a cycling holiday in Ireland organised by Irish Cycling Safaris. Since we had to go in September we knew we risked getting rained on but, as it happened, the second week in September that year was mostly fine and sunny in the

Dingle peninsula. We enjoyed the experience so much that last year we decided to take a similar holiday but we thought we'd be tempting the clerk of the weather too severely if we chose Ireland in September again. Instead we went to the Dordogne. It never rains in the Dordogne in September, does it? It does!

We took the Eurostar from Waterloo to Lille where we picked up a connecting service to Angouleme. We left Berkhamsted at 7:00am and reached Angouleme at 4:00pm (3:00pm English time). It was a very civilised way to travel. At Angouleme we met the other people in our group. They were an interesting and unusual mix of people. There were four doctors (medical doctors), two Ph.Ds, a South African lawyer, a civil engineer, a doctor's receptionist, a private soldier, a textile factory worker and a nurse. The youngest of the party was a junior hospital doctor, incredibly fit, in her twenties, the oldest a lady in her early sixties who was a general practitioner. The doctors all agreed that, in the event of any of them falling off their bikes and being injured, they would rather be treated by the nurse (my wife) than by any other doctor, reasoning that a nurse would be less likely to flap! I asked the French guide why it was that so many of the medical profession go on cycling holidays. Is it because they are conscious of the need for fitness? Do they like fresh air? The French guide explained that it was probably because they advertise the

Doctors, Rivers and Pate de Foie Gras

**Stephen Halliday cycles
in France in the company of
doctors, geese and ostriches!**

holidays in *Private Eye*. Make of that what you will. They've tried advertising in accountancy and legal publications but it appears that accountants and lawyers don't like cycling!

Each day we cycled about thirty miles. I had assumed that, following a broad

river valley, the rides would be flat. I was wrong. The river might be flat but the roads were surprisingly hilly. They were also very quiet. One could cycle for miles along quite important roads without seeing any cars at all and when a car did eventually pass it was usually English. The Dordogne has long been popular with the English, from the time that Richard I and his Plantagenet successors were in dispute with the kings of France about who should rule the area. We stopped for lunch each day, usually a picnic in one of the small and very beautiful villages that are so common in the area. On the way we would pass vineyards, goats, cows and on one occasion ostriches. Above all, I have never seen so many geese: fields full of hundreds of them who were doomed to end up as *pate de foie gras*.

At the end of the day we would arrive at our *logis*. A French *logis* is a privately owned hotel where the manager is also the owner (in that respect, but in no other, like *Fawlty Towers*). Our luggage had been transported for us and we would have time for a drink before a magnificent meal which we felt we had earned. One of the pleasures of the holiday was to see how such a heterogeneous group of people got on so well together. You develop quite a strong affection for people when you have puffed and sweated your way to the top of a hill in their company. I would certainly do it again though not next year when we have promised ourselves a long-awaited trip to the Galapagos Islands. ❖

AM AHL AND THE NIGHT VISITORS

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for many years I am beginning to wonder
if our loyalties are misplaced. Upstairs awaiting connection to the Internet.

Sitting begging is all it can do at present because we seem unable to get our second telephone line installed. The necessity for the new line is because our burglar alarm 'red care' runs over our existing line and cannot be interrupted. And, BT were offering second lines at half

price if ordered by the end of June. What they neglected to tell us was that in our area of North Road, Berkhamsted, there were no free lines available...

According to records our new line was due to be installed on 14th July. The engineer duly arrived full of gloom and doom, saying that he could do the interior work but nothing else. Fair enough, it was not his fault he just happened to be the one to pick up our particular job. But, from the time he entered the house until he left, it was one long moan. The existing wiring was useless, the walls were too hard, and the plugs in the study were not in the right place. To quote, 'no one has plugs half way up the wall. The correct place for them is by the skirting board' (they had been carefully put at desk level in readiness for the computer).

After about one and a half hours and several cups of coffee later, he finally decided that he would have to run in a new cable and take it round the outside of the building. The next thing that was wrong was that the walls were too hard! Instead of being able to hammer the cable clips in he had to drill a hole each time. He eventually reached the window of the room where the line was to come in, and

BT OR NOT BT?

Installing a phone line is a simple business, right?

Elizabeth Jackson disagrees!

had the nerve to ask if he couldn't just put the plug inside the window instead of on the opposite wall where it was to join the other plugs!

During this whole episode there were mutterings all the time about how this was not going to help his 'stats'. The final straw came when he was

leaving, he looked at his watch and said, "I've been here for three hours now and none of this work will show on my stats". At this point he very nearly became a statistic himself.

Several telephone calls were made during the next few days, mainly to find out when exactly a line would become available. Finally, eleven days later, another engineer arrived. Oh, what a difference! He was so nice. He smiled all the while and nothing was too much trouble. Unfortunately he was not qualified to do the underground work. He set off down the road to try and free an available cable but was unable to do so. He returned very apologetic, and said that he was not able to help; however, someone would be along the next day.

Yes, you've guessed it. No one came. A further call to the office resulted in an engineer who was due to call the next day and finally fix us up - seventeen days from the outset. ❖

POSTSCRIPT: Yes! we're now on-line, but our brains don't seem very well equipped to deal with this new gadget. But that's another story.

We were lucky enough to celebrate our diamond wedding anniversary recently, and had a wonderful time with family and friends. I suppose even fewer couples will reach that in years to come as they are either marrying much later or not getting married at all. What a pity. When we were first married we bought a house at South Kenton, then a new estate, and watched it being built. Our neighbours were mainly young people, like ourselves, and others with young families.

We were also invited back to the Church of the Annunciation, daughter church of St Augustine, Wembley Park, for their 60th celebration in October. This was one of many small churches built on new estates in the 1930's. Arthur Lander was the first priest-in-charge, a dynamic, enthusiastic man who very soon was gathering us all in to help. The building was small, with no visual aids, a small sanctuary, tiny vestry, a font (both our children were baptised there) and heavy panels which had to be manhandled into place to shut off the sanctuary when the church was used as the church hall. Every penny counted and I didn't know until very recently that Arthur had to pay the gas heating bill himself at first as the church had no money for it! Very soon we were asked to teach in Sunday School, and in those days we had over a hundred children each Sunday. We knew them all well as some were neighbours. I always remember one day when I was leading the prayers for Sunday School I was suddenly overcome with an acute attack of giggles - heaven knows why! A very solemn teacher complained to Arthur that I wasn't fit to teach in Sunday School.

However, I continued. Sadly numbers dwindled once the war started as many were evacuated for safety. After the fall

MEMORIES

Vera Pullen recollects her experiences of life in a small suburban church.

of France and the threat of invasion many children sailed on the *City of Benares* bound for Canada. She was torpedoed with great loss of life, taking only 25 minutes to sink and only a few passengers being saved. This devastated our neighbourhood as you can imagine. I can still remember the dreadful feeling of loss and despair. I met one man at the lunch after that service in October who, as a child, was to have sailed on that ship but at the last moment his mother wouldn't let him go. They have a service of remembrance and he always goes as he knew many of the children who died.

Nowadays the congregation is multi-racial, which is lovely. They are all a very friendly lot and we were made very welcome. I think the thing that impressed us most was the dignity of the whole service, the priests, servers and congregation. A very small choir and organ, but the singing was great, the whole event was a very moving experience. The church is delightful: simple Stations of the Cross round the walls, a statue of the Virgin and Child, and a large painting, an icon, of Christ behind the altar. The flowers were simple but beautiful. What a long way the church had come since our early days there. Money is still an ongoing problem, as it is with so many of our small churches both in the suburbs and country.

I couldn't help comparing it with St Peter's, where we never have to worry about money for various things to 'improve' the church. I know we give generously to various charities, as a church, but to my mind the real feeling of achievement comes when every penny counts, and you get that wonderful prayerful, spiritual awareness of being right there with those who are working

hard to keep things going and spread the
Word. ❖



On *Friday 1st January* the Berkhamsted Citizens Association hold their traditional new year ramble. Meet at 10:30am at Berkhamsted station. No charge. Bring your own food or join those who will take a pub lunch.

On *Monday 4th and Tuesday 5th January* Berkhamsted Film Society present Baz Luhrmann's stylish version of *Romeo and Juliet*, set in Los Angeles, in the civic centre at 8:00pm. Tickets for non-members will cost £3 from Berkhamsted library.

On *Saturday 16th and Thursday to Saturday 21st-23rd January* the Park Players perform the pantomime *Robin Hood* by Trevor Pilling. On Saturdays performances in the civic centre are at 2:00pm, 5:00pm and 8:00pm and on Thursday and Friday at 7:30pm. Cost on Thursday is £3.50, and other days £6.00 (concessionaires and children £3.50). Tickets at door, from ticket office (248839) or at ABC Costume Hire, 213 High Street.

On *Monday 25th and Tuesday 26th January* Berkhamsted Film Society screens *The Ice Storm*. This is Ang Lee's suburban drama, set in the 1970s, of dysfunctional family life. Tickets (non-members £3) from Berkhamsted Library; performances start at 8:00pm.

On *Wednesday 27th January* Berkhamsted Local History Society hold their annual meeting followed by *Personal Reminiscences of the Sunnyside Area* by Ray Brinklow in the civic centre at 8:00pm. Admission for non-members is £1 at the door.

On *Thursday 28th January* Berkhamsted Archaeological Society present an illustrated talk on *Past Times in Bucks* by Barbara Hurman in the Newcott wing of Berkhamsted Collegiate School, Mill Street at 8:00pm. Admission for non-members is £1.50 at the door.

On *Saturday 30th January* Berkhamsted Jazz present Clark Tracey's *Tribute to Art Blakey* with Guy Barker (trumpet), Peter King (alto sax), Alan Barnes (tenor sax), Steve Melling (piano), Dave Green (bass) and Clark Tracey (drums) at 8:00pm in the civic centre. Tickets from the civic centre, the secretary (01525 220894) or at the door cost £8 for non-members (£4 for students and children).

TUESDAY CLUB

Our first meeting of the New Year is on Tuesday, 5th January when Mrs Wendy Austin will give an illustrated talk on *The English Rothschilds*, including both the history of the family itself and their estates.

We meet in the Court House at 8:15pm on the first Tuesday of each month. New members are always welcome. Please contact Angela Morris on 866992 or Margaret Barnard on 862794 for further information or just come along on the night. You will be made very welcome. Copies of our programme are available in St Peter's, All Saints' and on the noticeboard in the Court House.

Our February meeting, on Tuesday 2nd, is our birthday celebration with a talk by a local JP.

CENTRAL AMERICA APPEAL

The sum of £709 was raised by special collections in November in aid of the Central America appeal following the disastrous hurricane in that region. Of this total £60 came from the sale of home-made biscuits by the *Biscuit Rappers* of All Saints' church.

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

If you are interested in finding out more about, or supporting the work of Amnesty International please ring Joanie Marion on 395184.

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NEWS ABOUT GIDEONS

In response to an article about Gideons International, I invited their local representatives, David and Yvonne Neville-Rolfe, of Woodcock Hill, to spend a Friday evening telling our house group all about their work.

David and Yvonne were a credit to the movement they represent. They showed a video of the work of Gideons International in Uganda, they brought Gideon literature in abundance, they answered questions, and provided an interesting, informative and challenging evening. I felt we had all been treated to an insight into an organisation which is doing a great work of evangelism without blowing its own trumpet (those people familiar with the story of Gideon will need to forgive that pun, I'm afraid!).

We certainly benefited from the visit. One of our ladies was given a large print New Testament, and is now able to read her way through the stories of Jesus for the first time in a long while. The lounge in our flat (does that make our house group a flat group?) was packed tight (16 people, I think) with folk like me who started off in a position of ignorance and ended the evening with nothing but admiration for the obvious commitment to evangelism which the Gideons have.

I recommend David and Yvonne to you. I recommend Gideons International to you. We have good representatives of an international Christian organisation living right here in Berkhamsted. Let's use them! Let's support and encourage them!

*Captain Stephen Poxon
Salvation Army (876024)*

PLANT FAIR APPEAL

The Friends of Ashridge are appealing for more plant growers to help stock their plant fair on Sunday, 16th May. If the income from this event is to be kept up (it raised £3,244 last year) we must have more growers rather than having to rely on a few who give a lot of plants. Many of the plants are sold for around £1 and so this is a very economic way of helping to maintain the Ashridge Estate's amenities. If you can help, please ring John or Anne Powell on 878640.

WEA SPRING COURSES IN 1999

There will be a series of 10 meetings on *The Art of the Victorians and the Pre-Raphaelites* on Wednesday mornings, 10-11:30am. The tutor is Judi Rich. The course will be held in the Friends Meeting House, High Street starting on 13th January. The course fee is £25.

A course entitled Architecture, Part II, Post-medieval buildings will be held on Monday evenings at 8-9:30-m starting on Monday 18th January (10 sessions). The tutor is J Carpenter. The course will be held in Berkhamsted library and the cost is £25.

Concessions are available and both courses are free to the registered unemployed. Phone Ann Gurney on 865445 for further details.

The Workers Educational Association is an independent, voluntary national movement run by its own members. It is non-party in politics and non-sectarian in religion.



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WALKS AND GENTLE STROLLS ON ASHRIDGE

Friends of Ashridge

There are two programmes of perambulations round the Ashridge estate this year. You are asked to book for *walks* in advance by ringing Mrs Janet Stupples on 842252 or writing to her at Berkhamstead Lodge, Ashridge Park, Berkhamsted HP4 1NP. For *gentle strolls* you do not need to book. The charges for walks are £2 for members of the Friends of Ashridge and £3 for non-members; gentle strolls cost £1 unless indicated below.

1999 Walks Programme

Bluebell Walk: Tuesday 4th May at 7:00pm. Meet at the Information Centre, Monument Drive.

Early Morning Birds: Sunday 9th May at 5:00am. Meet on the Northchurch side of Berkhamsted Common on the B4506 (£3 Friends, £4 non-members).

Ashridge House Gardens: Thursday 3rd June at 7:00pm. Meet at the college car park.

Annual Tour of the Estate: Saturday 19th June at 2:00pm. Meet at Monument Green (members only - £3).

Downland Walk: Thursday 24th June at 7:00pm. Meet at Steps Hill grass car park, Beacon Road.

Woodland Walk: Wednesday 30th June at 7:00pm. Meet at Lady's Walk car park midway between Monument Drive and Aldbury Road on the B4506.

Fungus Foray: Wednesday 6th October at 10:00am. Meet at the Information Centre,

Monument Drive (£3 Friends, £4 non-members).

Deer in Rut: Sunday 17th October at 10:00am. Meet at road end of Monument Drive (£3 Friends, £4 non-members).

1999 Gentle Strolls Programme

Thursday 25th March, 10:00am: meet at the Information Centre, Monument Drive.

Thursday 22nd April, 2:00pm: meet at the small car park on the tool road which passes Ashridge College situated 100m on the Berkhamsted side of Berkhamstead Lodge.

Wednesday 19th May, 2:00pm: meet at Dockey Wood car park opposite the Bluebell Wood, Beacon Road.

Tuesday 8th June, 2:00pm: meet on B4506 at the Northchurch side of Berkhamsted Common. Car park entrance is opposite Hill Farm.

Thursday 15th July, 10:00am: meet at Steps Hill grass car park, Beacon Road.

Tuesday 17th August, 2:00pm: meet at car park on the right of Tom's Hill Toad travelling from Aldbury to the B4506.

Tuesday 14th September, 10:00am: meet as for April stroll.

Wednesday 13th October, 2:00pm: meet at road end of Monument Drive.

Please:

- note that all *walks* require early booking
- send stamped and self-addressed envelope for reply
- mail cheques payable to National Trust - Ashridge
- note that *accompanied* children are welcome at half the relevant adult price.



We wish all our readers a very
happy and prosperous New Year

BERKHAMSTED W.I.

The October meeting opened with our president, Mrs Jill Blumson, welcoming Mrs Anne Parsons, our VCO, who was to lead us through our annual meeting. Mrs Blumson reported upon all the activities of the past



month and reminded us of outings and activities for the forthcoming month. Reports were given of the autumn group meeting and the autumn council meeting. A team was gathered for the forthcoming HFWI quiz, to be held in the Warners End

Community Centre, on 29th January.

The monthly affairs having been dealt with, the annual meeting commenced. The treasurer gave her annual report; this was followed by the committee report and then the president's address. Mrs Blumson paid tribute to each and every member of the institute, commenting that the strength of the institute arose directly from the 'volunteering' capacity of members, who, as often as needed rose to every occasion and 'volunteered' for everything from going on committee, to running the meetings, to helping

with the annual fair, to organising outings. The list was endless. The president then thanked her retiring committee, welcomed new committee members on board, noting the full quota of committee members and then, having made special thanks to secretary, Mrs Val Atkinson, handed the chair to Mrs Parsons.

Mrs Parsons spoke of all the latest happenings at county level, which was both informative and useful - with particular reference to a new format for the Hertfordshire county newsletter from next March. This is to be a 12-16 page booklet, with colour in places and suitable local advertising. The price, however, will remain the same for members. A presidential election followed, which resulted in the re-election of Mrs Blumson, amidst much applause. Mrs Olive Odell thanked Mrs Parsons for giving up her evening to conduct our business and the evening ended on a light hearted note with members, in pairs, constructing a millinery confection from two pages of the *Financial Times* and four pins!

At our meeting on 16th December 1998 in The Gable Hall Mrs Janet Naylor spoke on A Box of Crackers. New members and visitors were as always most welcome. ❖

review notes¬ices

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**Revd Peter Hart
suggests God wants
us to plan ahead,
but to be ready
to improvise.**

reviewnorthchurch

A recent editorial in the *Guardian* bewailed the fact that, as a nation, we are held in thrall to the television schedules over Christmas and the New Year. 'Wouldn't it be so much better,' the gist of the article ran, 'if we could spend time celebrating together without glancing at the clock or rushing to set the video'.

Television is but one of many timetables that govern our lives - buses and trains run by them, shift patterns and the shape of the school day dictate our work time and our free time, ingrained habits of coffee at eleven and tea at four are unconsciously obeyed, week in, week out. We are creatures of habit, we are comfortable with our routine, to the extent that we even enjoy it.

The Church adheres to as strict a timetable as the television planners, and feels the need to plan well in advance - be it to know the date of Easter fifty years hence, or to organise who will be taking the collection six months from now. The shape of our liturgy and the nature of the Christian calendar encourage us in this direction, along with a strong desire for orderliness within our organisation. In defence of this, we can point to the orderliness of God's creation, the systematic teaching that we have inherited, both from Christ and from the teachers of the church, the necessary control that the Holy Spirit brings to the lives of the people of God.

However, the Spirit of God is also portrayed as a wind that is unpredictable, as a fire that burns without control, as a drenching burst of water that flows in

many directions. The Holy Spirit is depicted as a dove, and those of us who watch birds closely know that a dove's flight is erratic and affected by gusts of wind and eddying air currents. That same Spirit is at work in our hearts and lives to re-fashion us in the image of Jesus Christ - a Jesus who was predictable or unpredictable, intransigent or willing to be swayed?

As we plan our lives in 1999, as we prepare for the millennium with ever-growing zeal, as we pore over timetables and schedules to organise the minutiae of our lives, let us step back, let us look at Jesus the improviser, at the dove-like Holy Spirit, taken suddenly off course by a breath of wind to unplanned destinations, and may we discover God in the risk, the unexpected and the unusual, as well as in the glorious order of our Heavenly Father. ❖

ORGAN RECITAL

Hilary Norris will give the first of a series of organ recitals on the recently rebuilt organ of St Mary's, Northchurch, Berkhamsted on Sunday 17th January at 3:30pm.

The concert is free and will

be followed by light refreshments. Programme to include popular works by J.S.Bach and Vierne.

SUNDAY	<i>St Peter's:</i>	8:00am	Eucharist				
		9:30am	Sung Eucharist, crèche, Sunday School & Pathfinders followed by coffee in the Court House				
		11:00am	Celebrate Together (2nd Sunday only) - A service for all ages				
		6:00pm	Evensong [except 1st Sunday]				
	<i>All Saints'</i>	8:00am	Eucharist [except 4th Sunday, Methodist rite]				
		9:15am	Sung Eucharist, crèche, Sunday School & Pathfinders followed by coffee in the hall. All Saints' is an Anglican Methodist local ecumenical partnership. On the <i>first Sunday</i> each month there is <i>instead</i> a joint family service at <i>10am</i>				
		6:30pm	Evensong [1st Sunday only] Other Sundays Methodist service				
	7:30-9:30pm	Youth Fellowship (<i>contact Christine Billington 385566</i>)					
MONDAY	<i>St Peter's</i>	7:30am	Morning Prayer (MP)	5:30pm	Evening Prayer (EP)		
TUESDAY	<i>St Peter's</i>	7:30am	MP				
	<i>All Saints'</i>	9:30am	Eucharist				
WEDNESDAY	<i>St Peter's</i>	6:45am	Eucharist	7:30am	MP	5:30pm	EP
THURSDAY	<i>St Peter's</i>	7:30am	MP	11:00am	Eucharist	5:30pm	EP
FRIDAY	<i>St Peter's</i>	7:30am	MP	9:15am	Eucharist		
SATURDAY	<i>St Peter's</i>	7:30am	MP			5:00pm	EP
1st Sunday	SUNDAYS TOGETHER LUNCH: 12:30pm in the Court House <i>For anyone on their own on a Sunday. Contact: Joan Morris 863780</i>						
Mondays	GRIEF & LOSS SUPPORT GROUP 8:00-9:00pm in the Court House as announced.						
3rd Sunday	OPEN HOUSE: 11:30am - 5:00pm with the Macdonalds (384953) 9 Hall Park <i>Stay for five minutes or five hours; unlimited coffee; lunch; tell a friend, bring a friend.</i>						
Mondays (except 1st)	BIBLE STUDY/HOUSE GROUP: 8:00pm at the Macdonalds (384953) 9 Hall Park						
1st Tuesday	TUESDAY CLUB 8:15pm in the Court House <i>A lively women's group with guest speaker</i> Contact chairman Angela Morris 866992 or secretary Margaret Barnard 862794.						
Tuesdays	CHUCKLES PARENT & TODDLER GROUP: 10:00-11:30am All Saints' Church Hall. Song Time 1st & 3rd Tuesdays; Short service 2nd & 4th Tuesdays. Special activity weekly. Gillian Malcolm 874993 or Jenny Wells 870981.						
Tuesday	MOTHERS' UNION PRAYER GROUP: 2:15pm third Tuesday at 3 Nightingale Lodge. <i>Non-members always welcome.</i> Contact: Jenny Wells 870981						
2nd Tues	MOTHERS' UNION: meets in members' houses at 8:00pm. <i>Non-members always welcome.</i> Contact: Jenny Wells 870981						
Wednesdays	MEDITATION GROUP: meets about twice a month as arranged at Jenny's 57 Meadow Road and at Ruth's 1 Montague Road. <i>Everyone is very welcome to join us for about half an hour of quiet prayer.</i> Contact: Jenny Wells 870981 or Ruth Treves Brown 863268						
Wednesday	PATHFINDERS GAMES CLUB 7:00-8:30pm in All Saints' Hall. Contact Chris Billington 385566.						
4th Wed	WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP: meets 2:30-4:00pm in the Court House. The meetings are usually addressed by a guest speaker and the group attracts senior members for whom lifts can be arranged. <i>New members and visitors always welcome.</i> Contact: Vera Pullen 862196						
Thursday	BELLRINGING: 8:00pm at St Peter's. Priscilla Watt (Captain of the Tower) 863804						
Tuesday / Friday	TUESDAY / FRIDAY STUDY GROUPS: Tues 1-3pm / Fri 9:30-11:30am. Two separate weekly meetings for informal Bible study and support. <i>Young children welcome.</i> Contact: Kate Semmens 866531 for Tuesday or Gillian Malcolm 874993 for Friday						
Friday	LITTLE FISHES PARENT & TODDLER GROUP: 9:30-11:30am in the Court House. Weekly meetings with a short service on 1st Fridays in St Peter's. Katy Bonney: 864194						
Friday	CHOIR: Boys 7:00-8:30pm (& Tuesday 5:15-6:30pm), Adults 7:30-8:30pm. Contact: Adrian Davis 864722 or Jean Wild 866859						
3rd Saturday	ABC PRAYER BREAKFAST: 8:00am for breakfast followed by prayers. Meetings rotate between local churches.						

reviewdiary®isters

There is Eucharist every Tuesday (9:30am) at All Saint's and every Wednesday (6:45am), Thursday (11:00am) and Friday (9:15am) at St Peter's. At St Peter's there is 7:30am Morning Prayer every weekday and 5:30pm Evening Prayer on Monday, Wednesday and Thursday; there is 7:30am Morning Prayer and 5:00pm Evening Prayer on Saturdays.

JANUARY

6	8:00pm	Solemn Mass for the Epiphany of our Lord	<i>St Peter's</i>
8	10:00am	'Little Fishes' Pram Service	<i>St Peter's</i>
9	7:30pm	<i>Amahl and the Night Visitors</i> , a comic operetta (see page 16)	<i>All Saints'</i>
13		St Peter's Area Committee	
14		All Saint's Area Committee	
16	8:00am	Association of Berkhamsted Churches Prayer Breakfast	
28		Standing Committee	

FEBRUARY

2	8:00pm	Solemn Eucharist - The Presentation of Christ in the Temple	<i>St Peter's</i>
9		Parochial Church Council meeting	
17	8:00pm	Solemn Eucharist and Imposition of Ashes for Ash Wednesday	<i>St Peter's</i>
27	7:30pm	Concert - The Bridgewater Band	<i>St Peter's</i>

Baptisms (*St Peter's*)

15 November	Grace Elizabeth Jane Elliott, Henry Trelawny
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Funerals

5 November	Rosina Frances King	Chilterns Crematorium
6 November	John James Brain	Chilterns Crematorium
11 November	Ronald David 'Ron' Casey	Chilterns Crematorium
13 November	Paula Joanne Newman	Chilterns Crematorium
17 November	Gordon Kenneth King	St Peter's church, burial at Tring Cemetery
17 November	Ellen Louisa 'Nell' Juchau	Chilterns Crematorium
24 November	Lilian Esme 'Emmie' Ablett	St Peter's (committal at Kingshill)
3 November	Leslie Pedder	St Peter's church, burial at Kingshill

Young people

Churches

PCC 1998/99

Contacts

ASSOCIATION OF BERKHAMSTED CHURCHES

Telephone numbers to ring for times of services, etc.

1. Northchurch Baptist	Rev Peter Swaffield	Berk. 866685
	Mrs H Blundell	Berk. 875021
2. St Mary's Northchurch	Rev Peter Hart	Berk. 865312
	Mr W Frew	Berk. 864368
3. All Saints' Anglican	Rev Robin Figg	Berk. 866161
	Mr John Malcolm	Berk. 874993
4. Methodist All Saints'	Rev Martin Turner	Berk.866324
	Mrs Ida Rance	Berk. 865829
5. Sacred Heart (RC)	Fr Peter Grant	Berk. 863845
	Mr J McLellan	Berk. 871818
6. Society of Friends (Quakers)	Mr Robert Ward	Berk. 864404
7. Kings Road Evangelical	Pastor Billy Milton	Berk. 864393
	Mr J Rainey	Berk.866315
8. United Reformed	Rev Jane Wade	H.H. 212320
	Mrs Margaret Crichton	Berk. 875401
9. St Peter's	Rev M Bonney	Berk. 864194
	Mrs Jean Green	Berk. 878227
10. Berkhamsted Baptist	Rev James Neve	Berk. 873283
	Mrs J Ivin	Berk. 865309
11. St Michael & All Angels	Rev David Abbott	Berk. 865100
Sunnyside	Mrs Pam Davis	Berk. 863609
12. St John the Evangelist	Rev David Abbott	Berk. 865100
Bourne End	Rev Dick Clarkson	Berk. 873014
13. Salvation Army	Lt. Stephen Poxon	Berk. 876024



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Principal J.R.Adkins BSc (Hons) PGCE

Contacts

The Revd Mark Bonney, The Rectory, Rectory Lane. Tel: 864194 (day off Friday pm / Sat am)
 The Revd Robin Figg, All Saints' House, Shrublands Road. Tel: 866161 (day off Monday)
 The Revd Canon Basil Jones (Hon.Asst.Priest), 17 Lochnell Road. Tel: 864485
 The Revd Jim Lawrenson (Hon.Asst.Priest), Downside, 7 Torrington Road. Tel: 865999
 The Revd Preb Stephen Wells (Hon.Asst.Priest), 57 Meadow Road. Tel: 870981
 Miss Marjorie Bowden (Reader), 16 Broadwater. Tel: 871283
 Mrs Joan Cook (Reader), The Gardeners Arms, Castle Street. Tel: 866278
 John Malcolm (Reader), Landswood, Shootersway. Tel: 874993
 Tom Montague (Reader), 27 Hill View. Tel: 875320
 Mrs Jenny Wells (Reader), 57 Meadow Road. Tel: 870981
 Parish & Area Youth Worker, Christina Billington, 13 Ashridge Rise. Tel: 385566
 Parish Secretary: Mrs Jean Green, The Parish Office, The Court House Tel: 878227
 Churchwardens: Mrs Barbara Conway, 7 Kilfillan Gardens. Tel: 865798;
 John Banks, Ladybrand, Cross Oak Road. Tel: 871195
Parochial Church Council: Secretary: Richard Foster, Vandykes, 29 Ashlyns Road. Tel: 863359
 Treasurer: Michael Robinson, 36 Trevelyan Way. Tel: 863559

St Peter's

Director of Music: Adrian Davis 864722 Asst. Director of Music: Mrs Jean Wild. 866859
 Organist: Mrs Jean Cooper. Tel: 874088

Sundays		Weekdays	
8.00am	Holy Communion (1st Sun BCP)	Holy Communion	
9.30am	Family Sung Eucharist with crèche, Sunday Schools & Pathfinders (in the Court House) followed by coffee in the Court House.	Wednesday	6.45am
		Thursday	11.00am
		Friday	9.15am
11:00am	Celebrate Together (2nd Sun)	Morning Prayer:	Mon-Sat 7:30am
6.00pm	Evensong & Sermon	Evening Prayer:	M,W,Th 5:30pm
(except 1st Sunday see All Saints')			Sat 5:00pm
		Holy Days - see weekly Notices	

Confessions: By appointment 864194

Weddings, Banns of Marriage, Baptisms, Funerals: Contact Father Mark Bonney.

Bellringers (St Peter's): Miss Priscilla Watt, 11 Cavalier Court, Chesham Road. Tel: 863804

All Saints'

Organist: Mrs Valerie McCalla Tel: 384574 Choirmaster: Peter McMunn Tel: 874894

Sundays
 8.00am Holy Communion (4th Sunday - Methodist rite)
 9.15am Family Eucharist (except 1st Sunday when Anglican-Methodist)
 Family Service at 10:00am
 6.30pm Evening Service (1st Sunday - Anglican rite, other Sundays Methodist rite)
Weekdays
 Holy Communion: Tuesday 9.30am Holy Days - see weekly Notices
 (All Saints' is an Anglican / Methodist Local Ecumenical Partnership)



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