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This Month's Notes and Events





for Town and Parish

30p



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

Welcome to the October 2007 issue of the Berkhamsted *review*

On the second Saturday in September I took part in the sponsored Bike Ride organised by the Beds & Herts Historic Churches Trust. Last year the Bike Ride raised £97,000. This year the target is £100,000. What a wonderful way to raise money involving thousands of people, if we count riders, walkers, sponsors and helpers. The sum raised is impressive too, but maintaining churches is a costly business. At St Albans Abbey they are appealing for £700,000 to restore the organ. In Berkhamsted, at St Peter's, more than £100,000 is being spent renewing the heating in the church and a lesser sum of £40,000 is needed for work on the organ. These large sums of money are typical of those raised within communities to maintain their churches. The success of fund-raising by the community - sometimes tens of thousands of pounds in tiny villages - is a measure of just how much our churches mean to us. They are there for everyone in the community, whether we worship regularly in them, turn to them in times of trouble and celebration or value them for their architecture and the history that they preserve in every town and village. They are truly part of our national heritage.

Christopher Green

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Next copy dates (all Fridays) 5 October 2 November 31 November



The CIA and
Bad Television

Father Michael
Bowie traces
their malign
influence

review leader

'The devil doesn't carry a gun: the devil carries fast food, cheap appliances and bad television.'

So rants **Judy Davis** in one of my favourite Australian films, *Children of the Revolution* (a humorous portrait of the rise and fall of an

Australian Union official who turns out to be **Joseph Stalin**'s love child).

recently watched John Pilger's remarkable new film, The War on Democracy in which, against the implicit backdrop of the war on terror he carefully the documents interventions hypocrisies of United States foreign policy in Central and South America from the 1950s to the present day. Pilger, yet another Australian, I'm afraid, is no Michael Moore. His work is measured, well-documented and eschews cheap tricks. He is not anti-American, but anti-Empire (i.e. any power which seeks to impose itself on others solely in its own interest). His particular angle is that all humanity is equally valuable and that we expect democracy to affirm that. As the title of his film indicates he does not see that affirmation cashed out in the results of US policy abroad.

Children of the Revolution is a comedy, predicated on the primacy of human values over those of states and systems – Stalinist Communism and those who believed in it in places like Australia are gently mocked (another wonderful line comes from Stalin himself: 'never underestimate Australians – they are not as silly as they sound'). The film is actually about the importance and tragedy of the human relationships which dash themselves against ideologies in its characters' lives and the ordinary madness which this produces.

Pilger's The War on Democracy is in no way amusing. Whether or not you agree with all his conclusions, I suggest that you could not fail to be moved by the suffering which has multiplied across the South American continent: that is fact, though we hear a senior CIA man first denying it and then saying that actually it doesn't matter, so long as US interests are served. I have some personal knowledge of the Chilean situation, past and present, and can vouch for the accuracy of that part of the story he tells. I have never been so affected by a piece of documentary film-making. The film will be released as a DVD this month (October).

But we don't live in South America. And I think that **Judy Davis**'s smart remark in *Children of the Revolution* may be more pertinent to how we are colonized – by beguiling and soulless homogenizing influences which detract from our own history and civilities, replacing them with a reductive *one-size fits all* aesthetic. Cheap toys from China spring to mind as proving problematic of late; the less and less distinctive High Streets of towns, cities and even villages are often lamented; examples of homogenizing banality are not difficult to find.

There is, of course, a very seductive and dangerous alternative – quaint nostalgia, *Heritage* as we call it when we want funding. I don't advocate that – I'm sure you don't want your nation to be a themepark any more than I do – I who have come half way round the world to live here because I see a difference and distinctiveness about British life (and Christianity) which I value.

If I am asked to describe what that distinctiveness is about, I would use words like liberal, humane and tolerant. Of course they are not everywhere in British society,



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sunny August ne morning a group of MUmembers from Berkhamsted climbed onto the coach to join their friends from Tring and Leverstock Green branches for a day's outing to Mary Sumner House, the home of the Mothers' Union in the heart of London. Feelings excitement and

expectation were high as we greeted one another and settled into our seats for an easy and relatively traffic-free journey into London.

Each year during the first week of August Mary Sumner House is open for members to visit. For every member this building has always been more than just an office. Its location in London near the Palace of Westminster symbolises the MU's desire to be at the heart of the nation to strengthen and preserve marriage and family life, and as membership has spread throughout the world every member regards the House as being at the centre of the organisation. This then was the reason for our journey – to learn more about the spiritual and organisational heartbeat of our great organisation.

It was just over ninety years ago that the Central President. then **Emily** Wilberforce, proposed building permanent home for the MU in London. The war had revealed the depth of the spiritual and physical need for the MU's work and the organisation felt if could not respond adequately from its rented offices. Almost the entire building cost of £58,388 was financed by the members through various fundraising projects giving the House a special place in their hearts. The foundation stone was laid in Tufton Street in 1923 with the official opening of the five storey building in 1925. Mary Sumner House has withstood the test of 80 years extremely well. It has survived flood and war and continues to serve the needs of the global MU.

THE HOME OF THE MOTHERS' UNION

Kathie Lally describes a visit to Mary Sumner House



given a short presentation by one of the Unit Co-ordinators on the work of their particular unit.

Close by the Conference Hall is the dispatch room, where all the orders for Mothers' Union merchandise are processed and the goods packaged and dispatched. The trading arm of the organisation together with the well stocked gift shop play a very important role, providing a significant part of the funds for the many MU projects throughout the world.

The Chapel on the ground floor is at the heart of the organisation's spiritual life and is the focus for the whole house, a place of worship and a quiet refuge. Midday prayers are said on every working day and regular Holy Communion services are held. Originally planned as a Memorial Chapel the wood panelling on the lower portions of the wall carries names of members' husbands, sons and brothers who lost their lives in World War I. The carved wood screen and the east wall of Sanctuary commemorate those members who have made particularly significant contributions to the The main window was organisation. made at the Whitefriar Studios and depicts a formalised figure of the infant Christ.

Although the House escaped any direct hit during the air raids of World War II it suffered greatly from bomb blast and two round stained glass windows in the Chapel were lost. In 1947 they were

p19**→**

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rchaeological excavations at Stag Lane are still going on as the building work gets but some underway, interesting discoveries have already been found, including evidence of medieval limekilns. Any significant new building work in o r near Berkhamsted has

permit to archaeological survey so that any evidence that might be discovered is documented before it is lost. Occupation of the land in and around the town goes back not just a few hundred years until the time when St Peter's and much of the centre of the town was built, or to almost the thousand years since the castle was built, but several thousand years. There are remains of a Roman villa in the ground beyond the cricket club at Kitchener's Field; there are the remains of Iron Age forts nearby, on the top of Ivinghoe Beacon and at Cholesbury. When the bypass was dug in the 1990s evidence of occupation, going back well into prehistoric times, was discovered at New Ground and Kings Langley.

We may not be exactly walking in the footsteps of our ancestors because, although the High Street still runs along the original Roman road, many of the other thoroughfares have now changed — the main access route to the Castle is no longer Castle Street for instance. The ambience of the place has also changed over time so that we cannot really say that we are occupying the same space that our ancestors did when they lived here in the past. Indeed, it will have metamorphosed many times, decaying and being renovated over many cycles.

But we all, from time to time, wonder what it must have been like to have been here in the past. We long to get under the skin of our forefathers and experience life as they experienced it - whether as members of the Sealed Knot, re-enacting battles from the



Berkhamsted Castle

Ian Reay looks forward to a virtual visit

English Civil War, or simply watching a costume drama on TV. Remains such as Berkhamsted Castle tantalise us with glimpses of the setting of long past lives and who, when wandering through the castle grounds, has not wondered what it would

have been like to grow up and live there during its heyday – at the time of **Thomas** à Becket, Geoffrey Chaucer or the Black Prince.

But modern technology is amazing and experiences of this type are becoming more and more feasible through virtual worlds – used for computer games. The authenticity of the experience cannot be vouched for though and there is a danger of backprojecting our sentimentality. But in principle at least such technology enables us to soar like an eagle and hover above a medieval landscape or wander like a ghost through the chambers of a medieval castle.

Berkhamsted Town Council and the Local History and Museum Society are doing their bit to enable us to indulge in such fantasies. They are sponsoring a student from the University of Hertfordshire to build a 3D animated virtual model of Berkhamsted Castle. The earthworks will be transformed into an image of what they may have been at the height of its influence in the 13th century. The Local History Society will oversee the authenticity of the reconstruction. The original entrance faced Castle Street and was destroyed presumably at the time the railway was built. It will be reopened in the parallel universe of cyber space and we will be able to walk, or ride, like a knight in shining armour, through the motte, the bailey, the keep, the smithy, the chapel, kitchens, and bedchambers; complete with sound effects and period music. When it is finished it will be available to anybody with Internet

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BLACK PRINCE YARD

John Cook writes

was marching off from Berkhamsted Castle to fight the battles of Crécy and Poitiers.

of Black Prince Yard;

but I suppose there is

some justification for

this as the shop dates

from about the time

that the Black Prince

The present very ordinary shop front conceals one of the High Street's historic buildings, or what's left of it. Some readers may remember that in 1989 the derelict shop on that site was given a major makeover. It had been badly neglected and mutilated over the centuries, but quite a lot of the original medieval structure remained - the oak frame, the wattle and daub walls and, most interestingly, an original crownpost roof truss, incorporating a handsome centre post with a carved top. In style this post is a much smaller version of the only wooden pillar in St Peter's Church - the one that supports the roof over the choir stalls - and probably dates from about the same time.

The conversion of the building into a shop and offices 18 years ago was done in a much more drastic way than I guess English Heritage would allow today. I remember seeing the old wattles which were perhaps over 500 years old being stripped out of the walls and tossed on a bonfire in the yard. But many of the old timbers were kept and incorporated in the building that is there today, including that special roof truss. You can see some of the original heavy floor joists in the passageway by the side of the shop. The restored roof is exposed in the office upstairs, but that is private.

The building, together with the new one behind, was given the slightly ridiculous name

So here is another of Berkhamsted's hidden treasure of ancient constructions. There are all sorts of buildings in the town which on the face of it are not particularly interesting because they have been 'modernised' at some time in their lives, often by having a new façade stuck on the front, but which have old, often medieval parts to them. You can find some of them by snooping around, looking down side passages or peering rudely into people's windows. One example of ancient timbers is in the driveway beside Nash's estate agents; others are the cottages at the top end of Castle Street facing the church. Figg's old shop opposite the town hall received nation-wide publicity when a few years ago its oldest timbers were discovered to date from the 13th century. Behind the Victorian front the shop was well restored, largely at English Heritage's expense, and you can walk in there to buy a house and admire the timbers dating from the middle ages at the same time.

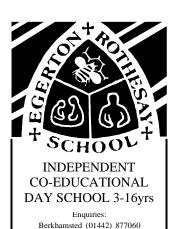
Most of these buildings are on the south side of the High Street, but in what for donkey's years has been Berkhamsted's principal drapers, now called M&Co, behind the gentlemen's clothing department, you can look up to see a particularly fine old oak roof.

←p3 The CIA and Bad Television

but they do survive here to an unusual degree. They are eroded, not by some creepy horror film Satan, dripping with immorality and undermining wholesome family values, but by the 'devil [who] carries fast food, cheap appliances and bad television.' I suspect that he may be behind the war on democracy as well.

Jesus and the Kingdom which he proclaimed were not agents of democracy, or any system of human government. He was, of course, murdered by the empire of his day, possibly because he appeared to be in opposition to its rule (a mistake, but one easily made when one speaks in metaphors about kingdoms to local civil servants of any empire). He was very clearly, however, advocating the worth of every human being as equally children of God – our equality is located by him in that relationship, not in any theoretical system. And it is an equality which accepts and affirms difference and distinctiveness, always seeking to invite it into loving relationship with God.

It is easy to be beguiled by what is easy. The *sub-prime* mortgage scare is a recent example of where that can lead. I hope that you will join me in praying (and working to ensure) that it is God's kingdom, and not that of any convenience Beelzebub, which will prevail in all our lives.



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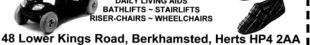
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R on was the Leading Lock Keeper at Cow Roast for most of the 1970s. He left the canal in 1979 and now lives in retirement in

A Lock

KEEPER'S STORY

Reminiscing with **Ron Whatley**

Wales. A Barge Full of Mousetraps - the article in the July review by Bob Forst on the Canal at Cow Roast during the Second World War had Ron digging out some of his records of his time on the Canal. He has very kindly let the *review* have sight of them and we draw together here extracts from newspaper and magazine articles inspired by Ron and chronicling his experiences as a Lock Keeper.

Ron skipped out of the rat race in his early thirties, from a job as a credit controller in the

offices of a large local firm to become involved with canals. "I just wanted to be part of it" he said. The British Waterways Board was suspicious that a fresh-faced office worker should choose a hard and financially unrewarding life, so it was a trial by hard work. He had to prove himself physically by starting as a labourer with the hardest jobs, moving slowly up the scale until he was able to apply for the post of Lock Keeper at the Cow Roast Lock, at the southern end of the Tring Summit Level of the Grand Union Canal. This was an important job, ensuring that precious water supplies were not wasted at this key point on the climb of almost 400 feet from the Thames in London. The Cow Roast Lock was padlocked each night. Ron was the man with the key. His other main task was to record every boat that passed through the lock. On one occasion his records helped police to catch two crooks who had stolen a boat and worked their way up the canal stealing from moored craft. The police caught them when their boat sank in the frozen canal beyond Cow Roast towards Aylesbury.



Sam Horne

By the 1970s most of the boats on the canal were pleasure cruisers in the form of converted narrow Working boats. narrow boats carrying freight between

London and the Midlands had given way to pleasure craft in the 1960s before Ron became part of the canal world. Caring for the lock however was still hard work. Ron was paid £63 for a 58-hour week and even had to pay rent for his tied cottage. His duties included anything from scything the grass along the towpath to the horrible task of fishing out of the canal bitches deliberately drowned

because they were expecting puppies sometimes, in spring, as many as one a day! Ron's wife Liz was obviously an important unpaid worker at the lock. In summer she ran an informal hospital for wounded boaters. She recalled that in a single year the list included a heart attack, an appendicitis case, a little boy with heat stroke and numerous cases of accidental duckings.

Were boaters glad to see them at this summit lock after the onerous climb to reach it? No "By the time they reach here" Ron remarked "They are so bad-tempered, they curse and shout at everybody". Their perceptive daughter Joanne, at the age of twelve, told a reporter writing up his trip on the canal "The only smiling boaters I saw had a store of wine to keep them happy".

Ron's love of canals is evident in the articles he wrote for journals such as Waterways News and Motor Boat and Yachting and in his lively drawings of canal life and characters. We publish here his drawing of his colleague Sam Horne, one time Lock Keeper at Berkhamsted. ❖



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BOOKTHRIFT

David Pearce writes

review and those who enjoy the vitality of our High Street will have been saddened by the sudden demise of **Bookthrift** - one day flourishing a n d convivial and the next all empty shelves and vacancy. The change means much more than the disappearance of a little shop that had gamely sparred and successfully with its big-chain competitor. It means, most obviously, that the town is deprived of an outlet for books priced with the reader in mind, not just the publisher. Coffee-table glossy novelties will

eaders

of

the

always attract buyers, but *Bookthrift* offered genuine bargains and a personal service for customers who were discerning, who had the time to browse, and who liked to talk books and authors, and about events interesting and new in our town.

Berkhamsted has room for book-shops of both sorts. We might not have thought so once, but it has proved to be the case.

Andrew Houseman, the manager, created not just an anywhere-high-street



shop, but Berkhamsted High Street shop. He knew books and his customers. He knew what children wanted, and he would happily himself busy individual orders. We enjoyed dropping in, because he enioved being there and making the shop a soundingboard and a noticeboard for much of the life going on in our midst – the Graham Greene Festival, the concerts for which he sold tickets. charities, the artists and writers and musicians. The shop was an encouragement

for local identity.

The traditional shop-keeper – whatever he sold - was once as important as his shop. A welcome, a face, an open door. The street took off its hat to the shop, and the man at the counter waved to the passers-by. There was a reason always for stopping, if only to pass the time of day. That was true of **Bookthrift**.

We have been lucky in Berkhamsted, but now we have one book-shop and one helpful book-seller the fewer, and that is a cause for regret.

review letters

Sheila Newland writes:

Thursday, 30th August 2007 was a very sad day for many people in Berkhamsted. It seemed that we had hardly got over the shock of seeing a *SOLD* sign above *Bookthrift* when the dreaded day of closure arrived. As I passed the shop yesterday, the windows were blank and all life had gone. It was an empty shell. *Bookthrift* (previously *The Bookstack*) was a very important part of the community - especially for those who enjoy searching for books and having the added pleasure of conversation with Andrew who is so knowledgeable and always so extremely helpful. I know there are many people who would like to pass their grateful thanks to Andrew and wish him well for the future.

BERKHAMSTED'S BEST WALKS

1. Beautiful Beeches in Ashridge Estate

Townsman writes

It seems hard to believe that, forty years ago, footpath walking was regarded as a somewhat eccentric pastime. Footpaths were ploughed and not reinstated, stiles

were often neglected or non-existent, and way marking in the countryside was almost non-existent. Hedgerows were being grubbed out and ponds being filled in. Today in Dacorum we enjoy a network of well-defined and way-marked footpaths, with an advanced programme of replacing stiles by wooden gates or galvanised *kissing* gates.

In the 1960s a writer in the *review*, using the nom-de-plume of **Townsman**, described footpath walks in the Chilterns under the heading of *Berkhamsted's Best Walks*. Townsman (the younger) has returned to see if our readers would welcome occasional seasonal route suggestions to take full advantage of the new Citizens' Association Footpath Map (see September *review*).

The walk in the October 1969 issue of the *review* was entitled *Autumn Splendour in Ashridge Park*. Thanks to the National Trust, the splendour is maintained. The golden leaves of the Ashridge beeches in autumn are a sight not to be missed. *The Best Walk* following takes you to see them in their full glory.

The Route

The walk starts at the top of Bridleway, a turning off Bridgewater Road near the junction with Billet Lane. A bridleway (BW) sign on a lamppost points into woods. The bridleway starts up a short steep slope then bears left with houses just visible through trees on the left to reach a fork in about 400m. Fork right in the direction of a blue BW sign to emerge on to a surfaced road with a red

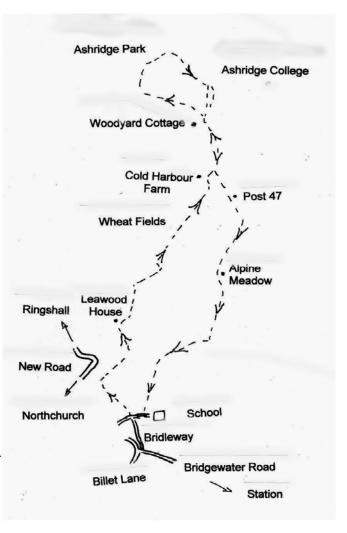
letter box on the right. A metal signpost points to the BW continuing ahead with the surfaced road soon becoming a stony access road with a wood on the left and houses on the right. The BW narrows as it goes down hill with a house,

Long Acre, as the last of the houses, and then rises to reach a marker post with a red Byway arrow on it. At the green, bear right across the green to pass Northchurch Farm and reach Leawood House at a new wooden gate inviting dogs to be kept on leads. The route now becomes a section of the Ashridge Estate Boundary Trail (AEBT). Through the gate, follow the driveway with a beech hedge on the left then bear left to a galvanised swing gate. Signs point the direction of a footpath, well defined by use, going diagonally across the field with a white post visible in the far left corner of the field. At the post, turn left on the far side of the hedge and then right downhill on the field edge path following the AEBT sign. The field path ends at a gate with a stony track ahead between trees and then bearing left uphill to reach derelict gates where turn right onto a farm track. The track goes straight ahead for nearly a kilometre with the stalks of harvested wheat on the left and hedgerow on the right. The track reaches a stile between hedgerows with an AEBT sign pointing half-left across a small field with a pond at its low point. Follow the path through gates past the properties of *Cold* Harbour Farm to reach a four-way junction of tracks. Your route is straight ahead on a stony grey track with silver birch trees on both sides to reach Woodyard Cottage and stables on the left. At the bottom of the slope, with a stile ahead, turn left to pass through a wooden barrier and walk on the footpath alongside the edge of the field. Giant beeches line the path on the left, surely nearing the end of their lives. The route now follows a path all the way around the field to return to Woodyard Cottage! Provided you stay

within sight of the field, all the time, on your right the path is obvious. At the lower far corner of the field from the cottage a *No Horses* signpost confirms your route, as does a later *Chiltern Way* footpath sign. The path continues with a pond on the left and later animal pens on the right. Near the upper far corner of field, a stile on the right in the hedgerow, easily missed, takes a path across the field in a direction of a *Right of Way* sign to the stile at the start of your circular route. Fear not if you miss the stile, the path continues alongside the field edge, downhill, to reach the same

stile. You now retrace your steps along the grey stony track back to the junction of tracks at Cold Harbour Farm. Here, turn left onto the track between two upright posts going down the slope to a fork where go right in the direction of the waymark on Post 47. The track, still between trees, reaches the corner of a setaside field on the left. Follow the BW to reach a waymark post conspicuous for its 11 way-marks where bear right in the direction of the third waymark down, continuation of the BW. The BW wends its way through trees to a fork with large holly trees alongside and ahead, where bear right to a stile ten yards ahead into a horse's field with stables on the left. Keeping the hedgerow on your right, pass through a barrier and a gate to reach a galvanised swing gate into an Alpine Meadow Nature Reserve, a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), an ancient chalk grassland rich in wild flowers. The path bears

left down hill through a gate and then up hill to another swing gate. Through the gate, turn steeply up hill as directed by the waymark signs, to reach another swing gate then continue in the same direction, always keeping the hedgerows and woods on your right. Walk alongside two fields with the Berkhamsted water tower on the horizon passing a pond on your left to reach a wooden swing gate. The path continues downhill with a wire mesh fence on the left to reach the entrance to *Bridgewater School*. Turn right to return to the BW where you started your walk.



have been asked, as the St Peter's organist, to do the almost impossible – that is to explain in an easily understood way, the plans for our Berkhamsted Organ. Because we cannot

manage without your help, it is important that you should know just what is involved.

We are already fortunate to have a musical instrument of great character and versatility. It would be difficult to imagine the excitement of Christmas Eve without its accompaniment, or a joyous wedding, or a

solemn funeral. It is an instrument for all our lives, and it speaks to us whether we are students of the organ or simply those who delight in listening.

Our organ is a flexible instrument that can play music across the whole repertoire – from the earliest to the most modern. It is fully mechanical, which means that the player is in direct contact with the pipes through the keyboards and a system of levers. As such it is an excellent instrument for us and future generations.

Now work is needed – not just any old maintenance, but £40,000 worth of it. Those of you attending church or concerts recently will have noticed strange noises - from full squawks to a quietly piercing and annoying ringingin-the-ears sound. These aviary moments are the occasions when the organist has failed to overcome the problems, or is suddenly confronted with a new one. It is like having a washing machine that malfunctions on several cycles. It is not always easy to avoid the problem. Although in its design the organ is a fine instrument, the way it was built has meant that the mechanical parts have deteriorated rather earlier than should have

THE ORGAN APPEAL

Jonathan Lee, organist at St Peter's, explains the problems



happened. The result is unreliability.

The solutions can be explained in four parts.

1. The mechanical action

Connecting the keyboard to the 1,775 pipes there is a

complex array of rods, levers and brackets. These mechanisms for transferring control from finger to pipe have not stood up well to use, and often fail, resulting in those strange noises. All the connections between the keyboards and the pipes will be rebuilt. This will be done to a more *standard* specification and use will be made of materials of the highest quality.

This work will make the *touch* of each key more regular. Currently, some keys need pressing harder than others and the lack of regular *touch* means music often sounds jumpy and unmusical. With this put right, organists will be able to make music rather than plan damage control; and the specialist who maintains our instrument will be able to concentrate on tuning rather than on patching the faults.

2. The electronic system

An organ has lots of *stops* or sounds that the organist combines as a painter combines colours, or a composer combines





sounds in an orchestra. As organs have become larger and more varied, the demands placed on them to make contrasting sounds have increased. For the last hundred years, organists have had systems to help remember combinations of sounds. So, like finding a preset station on a radio, you can make big changes at the touch of a button. Without such a system, one has to turn each sound on or off individually - impossible if you need suddenly to make big changes. It is a requirement of most organ music that the changes happen swiftly and reliably especially in the more modern repertoire which assumes that these demands can be met. The present very basic system will be replaced with a state-of-the-art and industry-standard system. A further problem with the existing system is that there is no access to the electrical components except by sawing through the wood of the instrument. The proposed alterations will overcome this problem.

3. The wind

Just like organists writing articles, organs are full of wind, and this wind must be effectively channelled. Unfortunately for the organ in St Peter's, the wind is often in the wrong places and not always steadily supplied. The system of control valves has broken down several times in the past few years. In 2004, the wind system broke down at Christmas so that the organ was out of action. Fixing the problem and reaching the defective valve, necessitated removing pipes and sawing through the complicated wind box on which the pipes sit. Now, the systems supplying the wind will be replaced with the more tried-and-



tested method of bellows. This will make the wind supply more constant, and able to cope with heavy demands during loud playing. The stability of tuning and the sound-quality will both be improved.

4. Rumble on the bottom

You will all know that organists operate a pedal keyboard as well as a manual one. It is on the pedals that all the exhilarating low sounds are created. The pedals need to be balanced in sound with the rest of the instrument if their independent line is to be heard fully. Alas, the pedal sounds on the present organ are not strong enough to achieve this balance, with the result that the overall sound is not full-bodied but rather weedy.

How to add more sound? To add just one new stop of pedal pipes, would need the space for 30 big pipes, with the biggest being nearly three times as tall as the writer of this piece. The solution is to add a *digital* pedal sound. One sound only, but it will provide a deep bass to the instrument, give depth and balance to the current sound, increase the possibilities for the organist, and provide definite, new excitement for all those listening. A *digital* sound at these depths will not have the synthetic artificiality that we might associate with a fully digital instrument.

So, there it is - a full £40,000 of work. The work is to be carried out by the organ builder **Vincent Woodstock**, a well-respected specialist whose organs are used by some of the top orchestras and musicians. He has looked after our instrument for a number of years.

Your help is needed to bring our organ gloriously to life for ourselves and future generations. Once the work is completed at the end of April 2008, there will be a number of recitals and concerts in celebration of our united efforts

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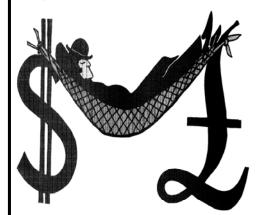


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his month come into the 21st century with our series buildings ofin Berkhamsted. dated for all to see. The date is 2002. The building is

part of the residential complex developed on land once occupied by the offices, manufacturing premises and dwellings associated with one of the most important enterprises Berkhamsted's industrial

McDougall Robertson was eventually Lamb. acquired by the Wellcome Foundation in

THE COUNTING **HOUSE**

Christopher Green writes





1959 and after changing hands on two further occasions ceased activity in Berkhamsted in 1997.

All the premises in Berkhamsted were subsequently acquired by developers and the building that illustrate on the cover is part of the extensive redevelopment followed. It stands on the site of the offices that housed Cooper's

history. This was the firm started by the finance department, known, as such offices veterinary surgeon William Cooper in a were in the nineteenth century, as The small factory in Raven's Lane in 1852 Counting House. As you will see, Laing, making a powder-based sheep dip of which the builders couldn't resist an advertising the active ingredients were sulphur and opportunity and as well as the date, the arsenic. The firm expanded successfully words Laing Homes appear on the plaque. throughout the nineteenth century and by There is however good early precedent for the 1950s had come to occupy a large area such conspicuous self-promotion. In July on the south side of the High Street at the 2005 we illustrated the Town Hall in the eastern end of Berkhamsted, with an review with the date of 1859. Beside this important outlying research complex near date in a similarly flamboyant style are the the golf course. Merged with McDougall & initials of the somewhat idiosyncratic Robertson in 1925, the firm of Cooper architect of the building - Edward Buckton

← p5 THE HOME OF THE MOTHERS' UNION

repaired to their original designs with funding from Australian members. Two other notable windows in the Chapel are dedicated to Mother Julian of Norwich and St Hilda of Whitby.

Ascending to the upper floors our visit included the Mary Sumner Room on the first floor which is now used for meetings. The room incorporates four distinctive stained glass windows together with the framed charter of incorporation and an imposing picture of Mary Sumner. Topped off by three elegant chandeliers the atmosphere is one of calm

The Princess Mary Room on the second floor provides a comfortable haven of sofas, and armchairs with numerous photos of times past adorning the walls. Also on this floor we were able to view the World Wide President's room and her display of some of the gifts presented to her during her many overseas visits.

Finally on the top floor we were able to visit the guest rooms – a well kept secret amongst members, but one well worth knowing should you require overnight accommodation at a modest cost during Monday to Friday in the heart of London. The accommodation, bed and self-service breakfast in either twin-bedded or single rooms, is clean, quiet and comfortable and is also available to non-members.

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Something a Bit Different

The Revd Jonathan Gordon experiences worship at Greenbelt

review Northchurch & Wigginton

A couple of weeks ago went we to the Greenbelt Festival at Cheltenham Race This year Course there was the bonus of sunny weather, which was enjoyed by the 17,000 people who camp at the site. Greenbelt brings together a variety of speakers

musicians that in part explore the relationship between Christianity and the world.

I really enjoy the chance to go to things that are a bit different. One such event was arranged by a group called ICON that took the form of alternative worship. When you went into the hall you passed through one of three doors marked Atheist-Doubter-Believer. Once in the arena the first thing that struck you was an eight foot young woman (standing on a box), who was dressed in a large coat. The theme of the service was the nature of faith and everyone was invited to come up at any time and type changes to the creed on a laptop, which was then projected onto a wall. The worship was a mixture of film images and speeches. One of the messages was focused on the need to let go of what was most precious to us. The speaker used the images of taking up your cross, and suggested that what we really have to crucify is our own image of God, as this image, will inevitably be distorted, our own experiences, emotional longings and need for security. Struggles to ascertain the nature of the divine were also mirrored in our own personal experiences, where life was defined as a process of being unravelled and ravelling. We have to let go of our own desires and the perceptions that we have of ourselves

as people, and be remoulded and grow in new ways. At the end the very tall woman spoke for the first time asking us to leave and to *go in pieces*. A comment which made me smile.

It was a bit wacky, and the first critique that came to mind was the assumption that we live in isolation. We may experience the process of letting go, but the way we feel is usually shaped by how other people are feeling and in particular those who are closest to us.

However, the theme of letting go or renunciation is an important part of the Gospel message. Jesus is a success. Everyone, it seems wants to hear his message. If any of the crowds were harbouring the belief that following Jesus would be an exciting adventure, he goes out of his way to put them straight. Jesus tells them that if anyone wants to be his follower they *must take up the cross* or *sell their possessions*. These are hard sayings and extremely challenging.

The context of all this in the Gospel is very important. Many of the hard sayings in the gospels can be found when Jesus is on the road to Jerusalem. There is a point in St Luke where Jesus must make a decision. It takes place in Samaria. Does he go north to Galilee or go south and head towards Jerusalem? Galilee would have represented home and safety. Whilst the name Jerusalem meant *peace* the reality could not have been more different. Galilee was the more peaceful option. In Lent we read of how Jesus was tempted in the wilderness, but temptations continue right through his ministry, because all the time he can make choices. Why not go home to Galilee? There were undoubtedly many people who needed healing from illness or distress. There were many good things that he could do and most likely have a comfortable life.

p30**→**



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FRIDAY LUNCH HOUR RECITALS

At 1:00pm at St Peter's Church

<u>28th September</u> - The Jacquin Ensemble: *clarinet, violin, piano*.

<u>6th October</u> - John Reader and Anna le Hair: *piano duet*.

2nd November - Edward Beckett: *flute*.

Entry free. Retiring collections in aid of the Organ Appeal.

BERKHAMSTED CASTLE WI



In August we met at the home of our Secretary **Janet Mitchell** who entertained us in her garden where we enjoyed a cream tea and raffle - a very relaxing

afternoon. At our September meeting, on the 7th, we were welcomed by Joint President Judith Lowther who read to us an amusing poem about shopping and together with Secretary Janet Mitchell took us through the business matters of the meeting and various invitations available to us. Our speaker this month was Beryl **Hulbert** who has been with us on several occasions and gave us an illustrated talk on Jersey. Such a small island being just nine by five miles in size with colourful scenery and ever-changing shorelines. The slides of the Battle of Flowers held annually in August were stunning. A vote of thanks was given by Joy Lovell.

BERKHAMSTED TEAM EVENT

Sunday 30th September 4:00pm. St John the Baptist Church, Great Gaddesden invites the Berkhamsted Team congregations to an illustrated talk *Pilgrimage to the Holy Land*. Afterwards, tea and a chance to meet with friends from across the Team, followed at 6:30pm by *Songs of Praise*. All welcome.

IAN RENNIE HOSPICE AT HOME

Wednesday 10th October at 7:30pm in the Centenery Hall, Berkhamsted Collegiate School. *Jazz 3000 Play Live for Pepper*. A special event building up to the launch of celebrations for the 20th year of Sgt Pepper shows. The fabulous big band sound of Jazz 3000, directed by James Eager, play big band favourites and items from recent Pepper shows.

Tickets £15 from 0845 675 5566 or send cheques with SAE c/o 7 Castle Hill, Berkhamsted HP4 1HE.

CHRISTMAS CARDS

Friday October 26th
Saturday October 27th
Saturday November 10th
Saturday November 24th

From 9:15am to 4:00pm, in the Court House. The Berkhamsted Combined Charities will be holding their Charity Christmas Card Sale. Many national and local charities will be represented, offering a wide selection of cards, wrapping paper and Christmas accessories.

THE HOSPICE OF ST FRANCIS

Published in September, *The Hospice of St Francis Walk* by **Robert Rodway** describes walks in the Chilterns of west Hertfordshire and neighbouring Bucks, The book has six chapters, each featuring an easy day walk with suggestions for refreshment stops, maps to ensure there's no chance of losing your way and historical information on the sights you will pass.

Available from Waterstones and the Hospice of St Francis shop at £4.50, or direct from the Hospice (p & p 50p). Just call 01442 869555.

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VICTORIA SCHOOL NEW BUILDING FUND

Sunday 14th October - 7:30 pm at All Saints' Church. A concert of *Popular Opera and Songs from the Shows* performed by **Philip Conway-Brown** and **Kathryn Jenkin**. Tickets £12 (children uner 16 free) from Way Inn, Victoria School (865781) and **Cathy Salmon** (871965).

BERKHAMSTED MUSIC SOCIETY

<u>Saturday 6th October</u> - 8:00pm at the Civic Centre, Berkhamsted. **Nikolai Demidenko** *piano* performs an all-Chopin programme. Tickets £12, U21s £6 from 871598 or at the door.

THE PERCY BIRTCHNELL MEMORIAL PRIZE

The Percy Birtchnell Memorial Prize awarded by the Berkhamsted Local History & Museum Society to Year 4 pupils at Victoria First School was offered this year for the sixth time.

Percy Birtchnell an old boy of Victoria Boys' School was a founder member of the Society and it was while he was a pupil at the school that he first developed his interest in history and especially in the history of Berkhamsted.

There were seven entries for this year's prize. Prizes were awarded to Claire Below for her project Berkhamsted in World War II and to Hannah Story for Life in Berkhamsted during the Second World War. Talitha Penny was Highly Commended for Diary & Journal 1939 and Olivia Black Highly Commended for Life in Berkhamsted in the Second World War. Once again the standard of entry was high.

TUESDAY CLUB

At the first meeting of our new season, Adam Smith gave us a talk with interesting slides about Country House Furniture in the 18th century. At that time walnut was much in vogue. It was imported from Europe but during the wars between France and England there was a shortage and mahogany came into its own. This came from America and the Caribbean, from much larger trees. The finest cabinet-makers were in St Martin's Lane, London but many items were brought from Italy and Greece by young men doing the Grand Tour and also from the Far East. The following day I visited Sezincote House in Gloucestershire and was able to identify several items of Chippendale furniture, an Italian marble table made of hardstone and coloured marble and an 18th century mahogany commode - all very similar to those that Adam had shown us.

OXFAM UNWRAPPED

Early October sees the launch of the new catalogue of popular alternative gifts.

This year it will be much easier to obtain the virtual reality presents as the Oxfam shop will be offering an increased range of 50 ideas to buy over the counter.

Will there be cuddly alpacas again this year – or mango plantations? All will be revealed when the new gift list comes out. But it is certain that their purchase will benefit the health and welfare of poor people across the globe.

Why not get your school, business or club to choose one of the larger items as a fund-raising objective or give prizes of clean water or other essentials instead of chocolates or flowers?

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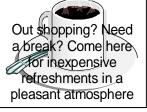
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HOSPICE OF ST FRANCIS EVENTS

Friday 5th October - 8:00pm at St Lawrence Church, Abbots Langley, The Breakspear Trio performing classical repertoire and songs from the shows. Free entry and glass of wine. Retiring collection. For details contact **Anita** Catterick (01923 262198)

Saturday 13th October - Bring it and Sing it! Abbots Langley Singers & Orchestra performing Handel's Messiah. Open for all to perform or listen. Rehearsals at 11:00am and 2:30pm for performance at 7:30pm

£10.00 for the day, £5.00 for the performance. Details from **John Fryer** (01442 250083).

THE NORTHCHURCH SOCIETY

Monday 29th October - 8:00pm in the Parish Rooms, Rectory Lane, Northchurch. *Use and Abuse of Water in the Bulbourne and Gade Valleys*. A talk by Mike Stanyon, Dacorum Heritage Trust. Admission £2.00.

ASHRIDGE NATIONAL TRUST EVENTS

<u>Saturday</u> 20th <u>October</u> 2:00-4:00pm. Enjoy a country tea and learn about fallow deer and how they live on the Estate.

Booking required. Details 01442 851227

Monday 22nd October 12:00-4:00pm Halloween Mask-making. Create a spooky mask or hat. No booking required.

<u>Thursday 25th October</u> 10:15-11.15am Bird-watching. Meet at Startops carpark for a nature walk around the reservoirs. Booking required. Details 01442 851227

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For 20 years, HOST has been linking international students at British universities with volunteer hosts, for short, enjoyable and mutually beneficial visits. Last year, several hundred adults, from all over the world, enjoyed discovering Christmas in private homes across the UK. Sadly, several hundred more had to be disappointed. A Chinese student writes "It was a pity. My flatmate had a wonderful first experience of Christmas, but there was no place for me". If you think you might be able to offer an invitation this Christmas, please look at http:// www.hostuk.org, or call HOST's voluntary regional organiser: Trina Golland 01707 642091 or email to

richard.golland@virgin.net

HOST is a registered charity, founded by the British Council and the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, to promote international friendship and understanding.

St Peter's Church Organ Restoration

The Cowper Society invites you to the Launch of the Appeal

A Reception and Musical Entertainment

Settings of poems by Verlaine - Fauré Five Betjeman Songs - Dring Cabaret Songs by Auden - Britten Jenny - Weill

Jonathan Lee *piano* Christine Kinsella soprano

St Peter's Church 7:30 - 9:00 pm Sunday 7th October

All welcome - Wine - Entry free

October SUN St Peter's 8:00am Eucharist 9:30am Sung Eucharist 6:00pm Evensong All Saints' 7th 8:00am Holy Communion - Methodist led 10:00am Morning Worship - Anglican led 10:00am Holy Communion - Methodist led 21st 10:00am Morning Worship - Methodist led 28th 10:00am Holy Communion – Methodist led review services & activities All services at St Peter's unless otherwise indicated MP = Morning Prayer EP = Evening Prayer MON MP 7:30am EP 5:00pm Eucharist 6:00pm TUE MP 7:30am EP 5:00pm Eucharist 9:30am All Saints' WED MP 7:30am EP 5:00pm Eucharist 8:00am THU EP 5:00pm Eucharist 11:00am (Fr Michael's day off) FRI MP 7:30am EP 5:00pm both churches Eucharist 9:15am SAT MP 9:30am St Peter's EP 5:00pm Eucharist 10:00am MP 8:45am All Saint's 1st Sun SUNDAYS TOGETHER LUNCH 12:30pm Court House For anyone on their own on a Sunday. Contact: Joan Morris (863780) 3rd Mon GRIEF & LOSS SUPPORT VISITORS GROUP 7:45pm Court House Contact June Haile (873087), Angela Morris (866992) or Ruth Treves Brown (863268) Tue HILLSIDE GROUP: 8:00pm at 22 Upper Hall Park for bible study. Contacts: Rob & Julie Wakely (875504) Tue CHUCKLES PARENT & TODDLER GROUP:: 10:00-11:30am All Saints' Church Hall Jenny Wells (870981) Song Time or Short service as announced. Tue ST PETER'S CHOIR Children 5:15 to 6:15pm St Peter's Contact: Adrian Davis (875674) or Jean Wild (866859) 1st Tue TUESDAY CLUB 7:45pm A lively women's group with guest speaker Court House Contact chairman Val Atkinson (866792) or secretary Joan Gregory (864829) 3rd Tue MOTHERS' UNION: meets in members' houses at 8:00pm. Contact: Kathie Lally (863526) Non-members always welcome. 4rd Tues MOTHERS' UNION PRAYER GROUP: 2:00pm 17 Shaftesbury Court. Tell us if anyone needs our prayers. Contact: Jenny Wells (870981) Wed JULIAN MEETING: meets about twice a month at Jenny's 57 Meadow Rd All are very welcome at 11:30am as arranged or at Ruth's 1 Montague Rd Contact: Jenny Wells (870981) or Ruth Treves Brown (863268) Wed PATHFINDERS GAMES CLUB 7-8:30pm. (yrs 5-8) Jimmy Young (384929) All Saints' Hall 3rd Wed GRIEF AND LOSS SUPPORT Lunch at 12:30pm for those who have been bereaved. Contact Sylvia Banks (871195) Thu HOME GROUP: 8:00pm on 2nd & 4th Thursdays. Contact Linda Bisset (862115) Thu TE'S (Youth club for yr 9+) 7-9pm **Jimmy Young (384929)** Court House Thu BELLRINGING: 8:00pm Priscilla Watt (Captain of the Tower) (863804) St Peter's Fri LITTLE FISHES PARENT & TODDLER GROUP: 9:30-11:30am Court House Weekly meetings with a short service 1st Fri in St Peter's (10am) Nicole Addy-Varndell (864094) Fri ST PETER'S CHOIR: Children 7:00-8:30pm, Adults 7:30-8:30pm. Contact: Adrian Davis (875674) or Jean Wild (866859) 3^{rd} Sat ABC PRAYER BREAKFAST: 8:00am for breakfast & prayers. Various local churches

review diary

Please see opposite for services at St Peter's and All Saints' churches.

October/November

OCTOBER				
Fri	5	10:00am	Little Fishes Service	
		11:00am	Victoria School Harvest Festival Service St Peter's	
Sun	7	9:30am	Harvest Festival Sung Eucharist	
		7:30pm	Launch of the St Peter's Organ Appeal St Peter's	
Tue	9	10:15am	Chuckles Toddlers' Service	
			Joseph & his RainbowCoat All Saints'	
		8:00pm	Parochial Church Council	
Sun	14	6:00pm	Choral Evensong	
		7:30pm	Concert in aid of Victoria School's	
		•	New Building fund	
Sat	20	8:00am	Association of Berkhamsted Churches	
			Prayer BreakfastKings Road Church	
Fri	26	1:00pm	Recital – Piano Duet –	
		-	John Reader & Anna Le Hair Lady Chapel, St Peter's	
Tue	30	10:15am	Chuckles Toddlers' Service Jacob and his Ladder All Saints'	
NOVEMBER				
Thu	1	8:00pm	Patronal Festival Service	
Fri	2	10:00am	Little Fishes Service	
		1:00pm	Recital - Edward Beckett flute Lady Chapel, St Peter's	
		8:00pm	Solemn Requiem for All Souls (Fauré Requiem) St Peter's	
Sat	10	7:30pm	The Cowper Society presents –	
			The Bridgewater Band St Peter's	
Sun	11	3:00pm	The Royal British Legion Service of Remembrance St Peter's	
		6:00pm	Choral Evensong	
Tue	13	10:15am	Chuckles Toddlers' Service Joshua and his Trumpet. All Saints'	
Sat	17	8:00am	Association of Berkhamsted Churches	
			Prayer Breakfast	
Sun	18	6:00pm	St Peter's Choir - St Cecilia Concert St Peter's	

review registers

Baptisms (St Peter's)

19 August Jack Ethan Orriss, Lowri Edith Webster

26 August India Rose Frost, Charles Henry Denis Lavin, Gracie Eve Wilson

Weddings (St Peter's)

4 August William Andrew Campbell & Lindsay Jane Dobie
 11 August Mark Rowland Roberts & Jennifer Anne Thompson

review factfile

YOUNG PEOPLE AT ST PETER'S AND ALL SAINTS'

St Peter's

Sunday school and Pathfinders run from 9:30am to 10:30 in the Court House (next to the church in the High Street). Sunday School caters for 4 to 10 year olds, Pathfinders from 10 years upwards. Contact Carolina Bowie (864194) or Stephen Lally for Pathfinders (863526).

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

All Saints'

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

Youth Groups

TEs for Year 9 up meets each alternate Thursday at 7pm to 9pm in the Court House Contact Jimmy Young (384929)

Pathfinders games club meets 7:00-8:30pm each Wednesday in All Saints' Hall. Contact Jimmy Young (384929)

←p21 Northchurch

Religious teachers were generally well respected and looked after by the community. Jesus could have chosen the comfortable option. However, we read that he *set his face towards Jerusalem*, and he knew that what awaited him were betrayal, arrest and suffering. It was the hard choice, and it was certainly not an easy one. We are shown that Jesus struggled with the choices that he had to make. The emphasis is on *bearing the cross*. He set his face towards Jerusalem: he did not want to go, but he went.

Jesus makes the decision to head south, and those who follow him have to be realistic about what this will entail. It might involve renunciation, letting go of the things that make us feel secure. The important question is what message does this have for the church? Maybe it provides a useful reminder that Christianity does have a cutting edge. Whilst we would want the church to be accessible, open to all and inclusive, if we are not careful we can provide a form of Christianity without a cost. In reality Christianity should require a health warning: *coming to church can seriously change your life*. To walk with Jesus requires a spiritual ruggedness.

So if you are not feeling peaceful or are struggling then take heart from what the Gospels might be showing us. We may well be in the place where God can teach us a great deal. There is a danger of becoming too comfortable in our own spiritual Galilee. We might need shaking up, made to consider new things and take on things that might seem quite daunting. This may not be such a bad thing.

review contacts

The Revd Dr Michael Bowie, (Team Rector), The Rectory, Rectory Lane (864194)

(day off Thursday)

The Revd John Pritchard (Curate), 6 Severns Close (870016) (day off Tuesday)

The Revd Prof. Luke Geoghegan (NSM), 16 Gravel Path, (866361)

The Revd Canon Basil Jones (Hon.Asst.Priest), 17 Lochnell Road (864485)

Canon Anthony Lathe (Hon Asst Priest), 15a Kingsdale Road (863115) Christina Billington (Diocesan Lay Minister), 13 Ashridge Rise (385566)

16 Broadwater (871283) Marjorie Bowden (Reader),

Joan Cook (Reader), The Gardeners Arms, Castle Street (866278)

John Malcolm (Reader), Landswood, Shootersway (874993)

Jenny Wells (Reader), 57 Meadow Road (870981)

Parish Administration: **Jean Green**, The Parish Office, the Court House (878227) Stewardship Recorder: Miles Nicholas, 46 Fieldway (871598)

Chris Hunt, 11 The Firs, Wigginton (822607) Churchwardens: Philippa Seldon, 1 Fieldway (871534)

Deputy Churchwardens: Peter Bryant, 36 North Road (871680)

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

Council: Treasurer: **Michael Robinson**, 36 Trevelyan Way (863559)

Adrian Davis (875674) | http://stpetersberkhamsted.org.uk Director of Music: Asst. Director of Music: **Jean Wild** (866859)

Jonathan Lee (0794 1113232) Organist: Weddings and Funerals,

Banns of Marriage and

Baptisms: Fr Michael Bowie (864194)

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

Saints

Peter':

Peter McMunn Choirmaster: (874894)

All Saints' is an Anglican / Methodist Local

Ecumenical Partnership.

Methodist minister: The Revd Paul Timmis (866324)

What & Where in Berkhamsted?



Answer next month

September's What & Where





http://allsaintsberkhamsted.org.uk

An elegant sign on the Red Cross Shop 207 High Street (see p9)

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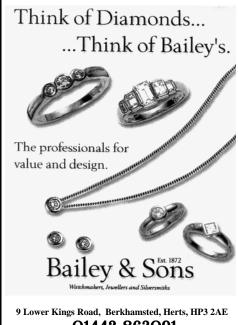
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