

*the magazine for town and parish*

# *your* **Berkhamsted**



Anniversary Special: Ashlyns at 60

What's happening in Berkhamsted this month

The Berkhamsted Walk: how to join in

Loss of a local landmark

April 2011

50p

# ***From the Editor*** April 2011



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

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

In this month's issue we mark the 60th anniversary of Ashlyns School with a look back at the origins of the school. Next month we'll continue the celebrations with an article about life as a foundling at the Ashlyns Foundling Hospital.

Following on from last month's photograph and article about the collapse of Birtchnell's, Jenny Sherwood reflects on the loss of a local landmark.

We bring you latest news from "Around the town" - please let us know your community news for future issues.

In answer to many requests we have printed Carolina Bowie's Prayer for Chile.

This month we also have features about the Berkhamsted Walk and St Peter's brasses, our regular columnists, and the seventh chapter of our serial *Little Spirit*.

## **Ian Skillicorn, Editor**

We welcome contributions, suggestions for articles and news items, and readers' letters. For all editorial and advertising contacts, and for copy dates, please refer to page 30.

## ***Contents***

Leader by Fr John Pritchard	3
Around the town: local news	5
Hospice News	9
Sam Limbert 's letter home	11
Ashlyns at 60	12
Little Spirit - Chapter 7	14
Parish News	16
Prayer for Chile	20
Berkhamsted Walk	23
The local beekeeper	25
Loss of a landmark	27
Christopher Green: brasses pt 2	28
Editorial contacts and info	30
Last Word	31
Photo from Our Lady of Walsingham Procession	32

Cover: Berkhamsted Castle in spring 2011. Back cover: courtesy of Carole Niven - [www.needaphotographer.co.uk](http://www.needaphotographer.co.uk) - taken on evening of Our Lady of Walsingham procession.

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

# *Your Berkhamsted Leader* by Fr John Pritchard



If, as Reinhold Niebuhr believed, "Humour is a prelude to faith, and laughter is the beginning of prayer", then in our Christian

community at St Peter's many of us could be recognised as a people who share in good humour and laughter. On the whole many of us desire a deeper faith and a more earnest prayer life. Now that we are in the season of Lent we run the risk of putting humour and laughter to one side as we enter more deeply into our pilgrimage into God. But perhaps eliminating humour and laughter from our discipleship misses the point, demonstrating, if we are not careful, that religious piety renders us humourless, silent and even miserable human beings. To think that being penitential and self-examining equates to a denial of who we are, again, misses the point in my opinion. Lent is about us developing a deeper perception of our identity in God, where there is I believe a natural joy, happiness, and, I pray, laughter.

We follow a religious tradition which acknowledges The Resurrection as part of our world's history. So even though we are now submerged into the story of the wilderness, and will soon accompany our Lord as we recall the story of his trial and execution, we remember also that we live a couple of millennia away from having to bear the real brunt of the awfulness of our Lord's Passion and Crucifixion (even though similar atrocities and executions continue in our world today). Perhaps it is

easier for us that we should, even in this penitential season, continue to rejoice in the shared truth of his resurrection from the dead. This is what we do when we daily celebrate the Holy Eucharist at St Peter's, we celebrate our Lord's victory over death, his resurrection, and are all invited to participate in that celebration.

We all have our own traditions and practices that we impose on ourselves throughout Lent. Some of us will succeed in the discipline, others of us will try again next year. We will give something up using Lent as a good excuse. We might take something on, and contribute towards some other person's life in an unexpected and good way. We might simply do nothing. But what ever we do, do it happily, in a quiet and unassuming way, with good humour. "Jesus said, "Beware of practising your piety before others in order to be seen by them; for then you have no reward from your Father in heaven."


We contribute to God's presence in our world though our joyful and loving demeanour towards one and other, we are from a happy place delving ever deeper into what it is to know God. When that sense of humour fails, when the love runs thin, we fail in our Christian responsibility to make God known to our generation though our daily living.

In this Lenten Season, take seriously the need to grow deeper into the life and love of God; do it with laughter, good humour and I pray, encourage one and other in kindness. JB

**CONNEXKT  
COLOUR**

**TECHNIK**

**Bringing colour to life**



**www.connektcolour.com**  
**www.technik.com**

**THE OLD PASTURES**  
*LUXURY ACCOMMODATION FOR DOGS*  
Icknield Farm, Icknield Way,  
Tring, Herts HP23 4JX



Luxury heated accommodation for your dog  
Only 8 large kennels giving your dog the  
extra care and attention they deserve. All  
dogs are walked twice a day.  
Holiday homes for small animals

**DOG GROOMING**

BATHING, CLIPPING, TRIMMING, HAND-  
STRIPPING, NAILS AND EARS. WEEKEND  
APPOINTMENTS AVAILABLE. EASY WALK  
IN, NON-SLIP SHOWER IDEAL FOR  
OLDER AND BIGGER DOGS. WE CAN  
CATER FOR ANY SIZE DOG.  
EASY PARKING.

FOR AN APPOINTMENT FOR GROOMING  
OR KENNELING PLEASE CALL:

**01442 824856**

The Composer Society presents

**Chiltern  
Chamber  
Choir**

**Bridgewater Sinfonietta**

directed by  
**Adrian Davis**

**Johann Michael  
Haydn**

**Requiem in C**

**Jan Dismas Zelenka**

**De Profundis & Laudate Pueri**

**Sunday 17th April**

**6.30 pm**

**St Peter's Church**  
Berkhamsted

*Soprano*  
**Lucy Hall**

*Contralto*  
**Susanne Dymott**

*Tenor*  
**Nick Allen**

*Bass*  
**Christopher Faulkner**

Tickets: £13, £11 concessions  
under 18 free

From: Cole Flatt, 124 High Street

The Composer Society & Chiltern Chamber Choir are members of  
the Society for the Preservation of the Music of the 18th Century  
and the 19th Century. The Society is a registered charity No. 1040000.

**Church View Funeral Service**



*Independent Family Funeral Directors of Distinction*

- ◆ *Serving Tring, Northchurch,  
Berkhamsted & Surrounding Areas*
- ◆ *Traditional Values*
- ◆ *Fully Qualified Funeral Director*
- ◆ *24 Hour Personal Service*
- ◆ *Independent Family Business*
- ◆ *Golden Charter Funeral Plans*
- ◆ *Home Arrangements*

**Church Yard, Tring**  
**Hertfordshire**  
**HP23 5AE**

# ***Around the town***

The latest news from around Berkhamsted



**D**o you live in a Rew House? The Berkhamsted Local History and Museum Society has identified two of the houses Charles Henry Rew designed in Berkhamsted, Stonycroft and Kilfillan, and one house in Potten End designed by Noel Ackroyd Rew. But the Society knows from evidence available at the RIBA there were many more. The next step to take would be to consult the archives of Dacorum Borough Council where the former Berkhamsted Urban District and Rural District Councils' archives are now housed, but these are at present closed because of financial cutbacks.

This is where the Society needs your help. In many instances it knows the name of the person for whom the house was designed but not the name of the house nor exactly where it was. In any case names of houses are frequently changed over the years. If any of you have the deeds to your house look at them to see if the name of the architect is mentioned on the plans or anywhere else in the documents. If you have ever heard it

suggested that yours is a Rew house please do let the Society know.

Charles Henry Rew, the architect, moved to Berkhamsted together with his young family in 1884, living at first in the Rustic Cottage, Bank Mill Lane. His younger son, Noel Ackroyd Rew, followed his father into the same profession. Shortly before his father's death in 1912 Noel joined him in practice in Berkhamsted. A number of buildings designed by the Rews still stand today. Some are no more. Noel Ackroyd was still practising in Berkhamsted at least until the mid 1950s. He died in Surrey in 1971.

Charles Henry Rew is well-remembered for the building of the Chapel and Deans' Hall at Berkhamsted School and, probably with the assistance of his son, for the building of the School's library and more notably All Saints' Church.

Their legacy was however much greater. Victoria Girls' School, still in use today, was a Rew design and also the former Post Office in Lower Kings Road, now no more. Apart from these large buildings the Rews designed a number of houses in Berkhamsted and Potten End, and Boxmoor too at the request of local people.

If you can help in any way please contact Jenny Sherwood on 01442 865158 or email [KSherw9100@aol.com](mailto:KSherw9100@aol.com) or Susan Johnson on 01442 875517 or email [scgjohnson@btinternet.com](mailto:scgjohnson@btinternet.com).

**(more news on page 7)**



# Blair Electrical Limited

Electrical Engineers & Contractors

Domestic, Commercial & Industrial installations

REGISTERED MEMBER



Blair Electrical  
- people you can rely on

Blair Electrical Ltd. Unit 11 Akeman Business Park,  
Akeman Street, Tring, Herts. HP23 6AF

Tel: 01442 827696 Fax: 01442 827698

e-mail: [info@blairelectrical.com](mailto:info@blairelectrical.com)

<http://www.blairelectrical.com>

# T.A. LINGARD MOTORS

BILLET LANE  
BERKHAMSTED

Tel: Berkhamsted 871911

- WELDING
- SERVICING
- BREAKDOWN  
RECOVERY
- BODY REPAIRS

## PETER D HANNABY

### Painter and Decorator

*Interior and exterior  
work undertaken.*

*For competitive  
quotations  
please call:*

mbl: 07765 250092  
home: 01442 288956

## Abbeyfield

Where older people find care in housing

The Abbeyfield (Berkhamsted and Hemel  
Hempstead) Society Limited

### **Independent but unhappy living alone?**

Abbeyfield provide very sheltered houses at  
Potten End  
Hemel Hempstead  
Leverstock Green

For further information contact:  
Mrs Susan Pullen 01442 217578

Registered Charity No. 262424. Registered Office 175 High St. Berkhamsted



Will Kimberley  
Garden Services  
01442 255784

- ◆ Grass cutting
- ◆ Hedge trimming
- ◆ Patios cleaned
- ◆ Gutters cleared
- ◆ All cuttings and  
clippings removed
- ◆ References available

*Why not phone  
for a quote?*

## Berkhamsted Carpet Cleaning Ltd

carpets  
oriental rugs  
upholstery

- residential & commercial
- professional • good value
- fully insured

David Green  
01442 876622  
0788 405 8795

PO Box 903 Berkhamsted  
Herts HP4 3ZQ

[www.berkhamstedcarpetcleaning.co.uk](http://www.berkhamstedcarpetcleaning.co.uk)

## Berkhamsted Oven Cleaning Ltd

complete valet service for

**all ovens, hobs  
and extractors**

- professional • good value
- fully insured

David Green  
01442 876622  
0788 405 8795

PO Box 903 Berkhamsted  
Herts HP4 3ZQ

[www.berkhamstedovencleaning.co.uk](http://www.berkhamstedovencleaning.co.uk)



Easter eggs are a symbol of new life and what better way to give the gift of new life to poor cocoa farmers and their families than by buying your Fairtrade Easter eggs at Oxfam.

There is a delicious range to choose from and they will taste all the better for knowing poor people in Africa will benefit from your purchase.

Are you a past pupil, teacher or parent of Ashlyns School? If so, please get in touch with the school if you have anything connected with the your time there – exercise books, photos, old uniform, yearbooks - which you could lend the school for their forthcoming 60th anniversary Open Weekend. Do you have time to help organise a decade of memorabilia; do you have contacts with past pupils, especially any who sang in the choir who might like to participate in the concert?

If you can help contact David Pipprell at [dpipprell@ashlyns.herts.sch.uk](mailto:dpipprell@ashlyns.herts.sch.uk).

Come to the Court House for soup and crumbles and support the work of Christian Aid on Tuesday 5th April, from

noon to 1.30pm. Telephone Margaret Burbidge on 862139.

Take part in a 9km sponsored walk for you and your dog on country paths, raising money for Lions Local Charities and The Hospice of St Francis. It's simply a lovely stroll through the Berkhamsted countryside starting at 11am on Sunday April 10th. *Please note that the walk starts and finishes from The Hospice of St Francis and **not** Ashlyns School as we reported last month.* All sponsorship money will be split equally between Lions Local Charities and the hospice. Registration forms are available in the Hospice shops. For more information, email [berkdogwalk@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:berkdogwalk@hotmail.co.uk) or call 01442 875417 or 01442 863185.

There is more music to be enjoyed at St Peter's this month:

Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> April at 7:30pm: Piano Recital: Alexander Ardaikov – Bicentenary of Franz Liszt - *Valee d'Obermann, Sonata in B minor, Petrarch Sonnet No 104, Concert Paraphrase of Rigoletto (Verdi), Liebestraum No 3, Tarantella, Consolation No 3 and Mephisto Waltz.* Free Entry: Retiring collection.

Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> April at 6.30pm: *Palm Sunday* CONCERT: Chiltern Chamber Choir with Bridgewater Sinfonietta - Michael Haydn: *Requiem in C minor* Jan Dismas Zelenka: *De Profundis*; and other works by Zelenka. Tickets: £13, choir members or Cole Flatt, 124 High Street, Berkhamsted. *yB*

*Please let us know your community news. Contact details are on page 30.*

# ajw home services

gardening  
building works  
plumbing  
carpentry  
electrical  
decorating

**ANDREW  
WRIGHT**

**07790 751335**

**(answerphone)**

Friendly, efficient service - over 30 years experience in property  
Work charged at £15 per hour

## FURNITURE RESTORATION

Modern & Antique  
French Polishing,  
Lacquer Finish,  
Repairs. Kids  
playhouses, Dens,  
Treehouses.  
Cabinet Making &  
Carpentry. Spray Paint.

**Phone Brendon**

**01582 842817  
07958 927806**

### BOOKS PURCHASED

HARDBACK BOOKS  
WANTED OLD OR NEW  
LARGE OR SMALL  
AMOUNTS  
HOUSE CLEARANCE  
DISCRETION ASSURED  
PROMPT PAYMENT

**01442 877757**

**D J PROCTOR**

## S.Dell&Sons LIMITED

THE PROFESSIONAL REMOVERS

**NEW CONTAINERISED WAREHOUSE  
IN OPERATION & OPEN FOR INSPECTION  
BETWEEN 9AM & 4PM  
HOLDING UP TO 600 CONTAINERS**



SILVERDALE HOUSE, CANALSIDE, NORTHBRIDGE ROAD, BERKHAMSTED, HERTS HP4 1EG  
TEL: 01442 863959 or 01753 891151 FAX: 01442 862163



### ELLIOTT FLOORING Carpets supplied and professionally fitted

Sample service, to  
view in the comfort of  
your home/office

Wood flooring, variety  
of woods & laminate

Carpet maintenance  
and cleaning

Free estimates,  
measuring and advice

Over 20 years experience

Tel/Fax: Cholesbury (01494) 758855  
Mobile: 07836 315333

## BRIAN S GROOM MBHI



*Qualified Clock Maker  
(over 30 years experience)*

*Antique and quality  
clocks repaired  
and restored*

*Also watches, barometers  
and music boxes*

**Telephone: 01525 872679**



## ***Literary experts and music buffs needed!***

**MUSIC** buffs and literary locals with a passion for vintage vinyl and dusty books are urgently wanted to lend their expertise to the Hospice of St Francis.

Keen musical collectors and bookworms who have knowledge or an interest in music and books from days gone by are required to support the Ebay team based at the Hospice of St Francis. The website [www.stfrancisbooksandmusic.co.uk](http://www.stfrancisbooksandmusic.co.uk) sells items of value across the world to interested shoppers keen to bag some collectable bargains.

Due to an increase in donations of quality, rare and unusual books and music, a new online shop has been set up to encourage buyers to bid, raising money for the Hospice. But volunteers are now needed to spend just an hour or two a week listing and packing items on the internet at the Hospice of St Francis's Ebay office at the Berkhamsted based building, sharing any special knowledge and background information they may have to help value and price the donated finds.

Bernie Horabin, Ebay researcher, joined the Hospice in September. She became interested in Ebay at home. Her background in sales has been helpful in her everyday role: "It's so fascinating to investigate all the things we are sent in. We need someone with a real interest and a good knowledge of vinyl and older books. I would love to find someone who really knows their stuff, release dates, first editions, limited editions and rare finds."

"We have a growing number of books, DVDs, records and collectable LPs. Some people just buy vinyl for the covers and



these can be anything from £10 upwards. An original first edition Ladybird Cinderella book could go for about £50. We have an original Jonathan Routh book - the cheapest on Amazon is currently going for £140!"

"It is hard to put a price on some of these items. They are all useable and in excellent condition. We need someone to collate the sort of information that is very time consuming to research - we need to know just how valuable an item is so we can make sure the Hospice gets the most it can. If your interests run more to collectables check out the website at [www.shopatstfrancis.co.uk](http://www.shopatstfrancis.co.uk)."

For more information, please contact the Hospice of St Francis on 01442 869555 and ask to speak to Samantha Evans.

*yB*

## ACHILLES FOOT HEALTH

A PROFESSIONAL  
AND FRIENDLY HOME  
VISITING SERVICE TREATING  
THOSE WITH COMMON FOOT  
HEALTH PROBLEMS  
IN BERKHAMSTED,  
NORTHCHURCH AND THE  
SURROUNDING AREA.

**NICK JOHNS**

MAFHP MCFHP

**Tel: 07739 535015**

## **John Cossins & Co. Chartered Accountants**

A friendly and professional  
accountancy and taxation service for  
individuals and small businesses offered  
by a Chartered Accountant in Berkhamsted  
with over 30 years experience.

**Competitive fees.**

**Free initial consultation**

01442 863231

email: johncfca@gmail.com

## **THE ALEXANDER TECHNIQUE**

with

**Trevor Allan Davies (STAT)**

*To book a free introductory lesson  
in Central Berkhamsted:*

(07963) 642844

info@trevorallandavies.co.uk

# little jim's

## MINI-COACH HIRE

for 15 to 27 passengers

- Nights Out
- Airport Runs
- Family Events
- Hen Parties



**07736 705520  
01442 870029**

1 Castle St, Berkhamsted HP4 2BQ

## **LOCAL ELECTRICIAN "FAST"**

For all types of electrical work you  
require. Benefit from over 40 years  
of experience and our reliable and  
friendly service. From rewires to  
repairs no job too small. Call today  
for a **FREE NO OBLIGATION**  
quotation.

**Freephone Anytime  
0800 169 7409**

Part P  
Registered

Fully Insured

Emergency calls  
**1 hour response**

# *A serving marathon...with a sprint*

**Sam Limbert** continues his regular column written to us from university

**B**efore moving to the University of Surrey, I'd enjoyed over six years as a regular member of the serving team at St Peter's. In Guildford, the university is located down the slopes in the shadow of the cathedral, so I had an obvious place to go to church. Very quickly after arriving last September, I was introduced to the head server at the cathedral and before I knew it, I was on their next rota.

The serving I'd done in St Peter's served me well when learning the ways of Guildford cathedral as, despite my initial concerns, there were many similar roles as a crucifer to those I had become accustomed to in Berkhamsted. The biggest change I needed to get used to was the size of the building and the size of the cross. Practice was needed to be able to carry the cross high whilst keeping it balanced.

My first duties were as a crucifer for two Sundays in Advent before I found myself in an extraordinary run of weeks after Christmas that I'd rarely experienced as a server. Starting on Sunday 13th February, I went on a run of three weeks consecutively serving at the cathedral. In many senses it felt like a serving marathon, but also meant that despite being in Guildford for a relatively short period of time, I'd already become comfortable serving in the larger space and was at the stage where I could really enjoy serving at the cathedral without constantly reminding myself of my next steps. However, as all distance runners would tell you, no marathon is complete



without a sprint finish. On returning to Berkhamsted for the first weekend in March, I had the privilege of carrying the cross as part of the Procession of the Statue of Our Lady of Walsingham. This did present its own serving challenges. I was surprised that keeping the cross at a good height for the duration wasn't one of them, however this was partly because my hands had almost frozen in position around it, making it difficult to drop! Overall though, it isn't every day you get to serve outdoors, let alone on the High Street road, so it was very special.

Despite thinking the Walsingham procession on that Friday night was the end of my serving marathon, my sprint finish was completed as I donned an alb just two days later. On a rare Sunday back home, I ended up being a late replacement acolyte for the 9.30 Eucharist. I couldn't remember the last time I'd been an acolyte so was surprised when my mind seemed to click into gear and saw me through the service.

It's like all other good skills in life; you never forget how to serve. *yB*

## *Ashlyns at 60*

### **Joanna Brown** looks back at sixty years of Ashlyns School

**O**riginally Ashlyns School was the Foundling Hospital in Berkhamsted and the story of how the school evolved from its historic beginnings and the original Foundling Hospital in London is unique.

The story began after tireless campaigning by Captain Thomas Coram, a retired sea captain, who was distressed by the sight of abandoned children on London's streets. The London Foundling Hospital, the world's first incorporated charity, was established for the "Maintenance and Education of Exposed and Deserted Young Children" under a Royal Charter, granted by George II in 1739.

The Foundling Hospital started in Hatton Garden, but soon moved to a new site in Lamb's Conduit Fields which, when completed in 1745, could house 400 children.

The Foundling Hospital in London attracted support from a number of benefactors including William Hogarth who encouraged the use of works of art by English painters and sculptors. In April 1747 there was a public opening of the works of art, and the annual exhibitions which followed led later to the foundation of the Royal Academy.

Another benefactor was Handel who "generously and charitably offered a performance of vocal and instrumental musick" in 1749, the proceeds of which were used to complete the Chapel. In 1750 Handel became a Governor and donated a music organ for use in the Chapel. On his death he bequeathed the Hospital a "fair

copy of the score and all parts of his oratorio call'd the Messiah".

By the early twentieth century the Governors were looking to relocate in search of cleaner air and country living. Berkhamsted was chosen and part of the Ashlyns Hall estate at the top of Chesham Road was purchased in 1929. The new Hospital echoed the design of the previous one but now included a gymnasium, a swimming pool and large playing fields. The buildings provided for about 500 foundlings with separate wings and dining rooms for boys and girls.

A number of original items dating from the 18th Century were salvaged from the demolition of the original Hospital and were incorporated into the new building, including the main staircase which was brought from the Girls' Wing of the original Foundling Hospital, original stained glass windows from the London Chapel, the coach lights which still flank the drive up to the buildings and even original Governors' pews once sat upon in the 1700s which are still in the school today.

In 1935 the Foundling Hospital moved into its new buildings in Berkhamsted where it continued until 1955. By this time Hertfordshire County Council had taken over the educational responsibilities and the buildings first became a bi-lateral Secondary School and finally Ashlyns Upper School in the three tier comprehensive system, with the few remaining Foundling children completing their education in the new school. 1951



actually marked the end of Foundlings only and was when the first local children were welcomed into the school.

The Foundling Hospital was home to more than 20,000 children from the 18th to 20th centuries. The work of the Hospital in caring for vulnerable children continues today through Coram, latterly the Thomas Coram Foundation for Children. The Foundling Museum, based in the original London site, houses a nationally important art collection as well as an exhibition on Handel. The experiences of former pupils are a key element of the history of the hospital and give important and fascinating context to the collections.

If you want to know more about the unique history of Ashlyns and to be part of the celebrations to mark the School's 60th Anniversary then please come and

visit us during the Open Weekend from 10.30am to 4.30pm on both Saturday 14th and Sunday 15th May 2011. There will be tours of the school and open classrooms, with memorabilia from each of the last 60 years. There will be new films to view based on the experiences of former Foundling Hospital School pupils and items of historical interest to see. Tea, coffee and lunch will be on sale. Entry is free.

There will also be a Dinner for Past Pupils on Saturday 14th May and a celebratory concert on Sunday 15th May. The concert will include music through the ages, starting with arias from Handel's Messiah, and is a collaborative event between the Bridgewater Sinfonia, the Chiltern Chamber Choir and Ashlyns School choir and orchestra. For more information and tickets for these events please contact [governors@ashlyns.herts.sch.uk](mailto:governors@ashlyns.herts.sch.uk) JB

# *Little Spirit*

‘...everyone’s mission to others begins at home with the self.’

## Chapter Seven: The Night Visitors by **PJ Marvell**

As the clock machinery groaned another day to its end, Little Spirit woke with a shudder. He sighed, opened his eyes and closed them again. Dark still... it was the middle of the night. He hadn’t expected to still be hiding in a dank cupboard in the tower of a church in a strange country. Six months had passed since his arrival and he thought his time spent hiding at the church would have ended long ago.

Over the past weeks the young boy had waited and waited in the graveyard for his friend Eliza, hoping she would come and help him to tell the Curate about The Lost Sun. Then he could claim the reward money and begin to find his way back home. But it seemed that Eliza had disappeared and Little Spirit knew his English wasn’t good enough to tell the Curate about his precious discovery and convince him that he hadn’t stolen it.

So yet again, the boy sat in the cupboard, wrapped in the last remnants of the old curtain willing that this day would bring Eliza back to him.

Just a few yards from the church the Curate locked his front door. He looked furtively up and down the street, hoping at this late hour, that all the parishioners would be very deeply asleep. He would prefer not to see anyone as he embarked on his midnight mission. Armed with a small knob of butter carefully wrapped in foil, which had become a regular in his jacket pocket, and a large torch, he tiptoed across the cobbles to the church. He was

determined to find out who or what was wandering around in the church late at night. He also wanted to solve the mystery of the disappearing key to the tower. He was so convinced that he hadn’t lost it, and that maybe he had left it in the tower itself, that he had spent many hours raking through the cupboards in the vestry, hoping a spare key had been left by an absent-minded predecessor. Finally, at the back of a wooden drawer, luck had greeted the Curate in the shape of a large iron key - now he could search the tower without fear of interruption.

As the Curate entered the church, Little Spirit had fallen asleep on a row of prayer cushions under the great windows at the back of the church. He had decided that he simply couldn’t spend another night sleeping in the musty cupboard, and had made a bed in the main church in his favourite spot, made more beautiful by the Easter flower arrangements. He had left the tower door unlocked in case he needed to run back up and hide. He hadn’t expected visitors... especially not the stranger with black pointed shoes who now happened to be standing immediately behind the tower door brushing the dust off his jacket from his journey through the secret tunnel.

As the Curate crept down the aisle, his torch at the ready, held firmly in his hand, the man made his way up the winding tower staircase. By the windows, the boy moved restlessly in his sleep.



At the end of the aisle the Curate turned right and made his way back up the side of the church returning to the font and checking the water level – it was low again. He then climbed the stairs to the balcony.

The man again ransacked the contents of the cupboard in the ringing chamber; a bunch of bananas, some scraps of Easter egg wrappers, but no sign of The Lost Sun.

Under the great window the boy slept on.

As the man climbed higher up the tower and entered the bell room, the Curate sat looking down from the balcony. He had found no sign of the old curtains that seemed to travel magically around the church. It was only a week ago that he'd found them, in tatters in the cupboard in the ringing chamber. The water in the font troubled him, it depleted faster than the rate of baptisms that were performed, but on the other hand the prayer cushions were always neatly stored on the pews, there was never a leaflet out of place and for some inexplicable reason he felt that the church was a little more loved.

Up in the bell room the man grinned. 'Gotcha!' he said and pulled up the Lost Sun from its hiding place under a trap door in the floor. He lugged it out of the room and down the stone steps. Quickly reaching the bottom, he noticed the tower door was ajar. The man shoved The Lost Sun under his jacket and walked into the church.

'Mamá! Papá!' the boy cried out in his sleep.

From the balcony the Curate snapped on

his torch. 'Who's there!' he commanded.

The man ducked down as the Curate swung the torch light across the church and the boy awoke and crept to the pulpit.

The man crawled to the nearest of the tall choir pews and stuffed The Lost Sun underneath it. Little Spirit watched from the shadows.

'I'M CALLING THE POLICE!' bellowed the Curate, dashing down from the balcony.

The man saw the church door was open and pelted up the aisle, his jacket billowing around him. He flew out of the church and disappeared into the dark night, and all the Curate saw was the glint of his black pointed shoes.

Little Spirit seized his opportunity and ran across the church to the choir pew; at last he could show the Curate what he had discovered.

'STOP!' yelled the Curate wondering if he had seen a ghost; the boy looked so thin and pale. 'Lights!' said the Curate determinedly and ran across to the main switches. Snap! The church was flooded with brightness.

Little Spirit stood motionless, mesmerised by the glare of the lights. The Curate walked briskly towards him. This time, the young boy had nowhere to hide.

*To be continued next month...*

*How will the serial end? There are only two more installments of Little Spirit to go, so make sure not to miss May and June's issues!*

## **St Peter's Tuesday Club** by Jean E Bray

Tuesday Club was formed in 1973 and meets on the first Tuesday evening of the month at 7.45pm. Our programme runs from September through to the following July with a variety of speakers on many varied subjects, some very amusing.

Future talks this year include 'Police Dog Handling', 'Period Costume 1937 Onwards' and 'Bullets in the Beech Tree'. This last intriguing title comes from James Cuming, who two years ago entertained us

with memories of his wartime childhood as an evacuee in rural Buckinghamshire. At our May meeting we shall be celebrating our 38<sup>th</sup> birthday with party savouries and cake, and invites are sent to ladies groups in other churches in Berkhamsted. The meeting in June is also a social event with a shortish walk followed by tea at a local venue. New members are always welcome - see the parish diary pages. *yB*

## **Bye Buy Childhood** by Margaret Burbidge

How do you see childhood? Is it a time for fun and play and moving on to the next stage as it comes, or is this innocence and naivety being lost with the pressure the media and consumerism put on children today?

The world in which children grow up is very different from that of a few decades ago. Children are exposed to more adult material through television and the internet, adverts and magazines, and peer pressure cannot be ignored. It is easy to think that children have been robbed of their childhood when at a young age they begin to look and act like older teenagers. The Mothers' Union, committed to family life and the upbringing of children, has in recent years been researching this, and successfully launched a Bye Buy Childhood campaign (for details see the MU website). As a result its Chief Executive, Reg Bailey, has been asked by the government to chair a review to look at the commercialisation and premature sexualisation of children. The issue is high



on the political agenda and the Prime Minister has been outspoken on the subject. Parents have been given an opportunity to voice their concerns, and spoke of their experiences of the pressure on children today. Reg Bailey wants to support parents in their role and is working with advertisers and retailers to get the balance right for the clock cannot be put back.

In its 135 year history, The Mothers' Union has not shirked from tackling difficult issues that affect family life and the upbringing of children. Its founder Mary Sumner saw that mothers needed support in her village community; parents need it today and it is to be hoped that this government review will bring guidelines to help parents be parents and children be children. *yB*

## **Not your average Friday night in Berkhamsted by Sam Limbert**

On Friday 4th March, Berkhamsted High Street was bought to a standstill with an estimated over 300 people processing down the road with the statue of Our Lady of Walsingham.

The evening had started at Sacred Heart Roman Catholic church with readings and an address from Bishop Lindsay Urwin, Bishop of Walsingham. The candle-lit procession then set off in the darkness, moving up to the High Street before heading down to the Berkhamsted School chapel. On arrival at the packed chapel, there were youth prayer activities before benediction.

The visit to Berkhamsted was part of the celebration and commemoration of building of the first Holy House at Walsingham 950 years ago, after Lady

Richeldis' vision of Mary. After visiting Berkhamsted, the statue went on to St Albans Abbey, where an estimated 1,300 people were there to worship.

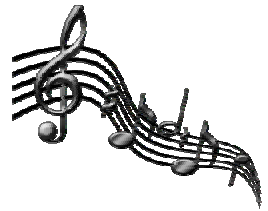
I was fortunate enough to be near the front of the procession as crucifer, and was struck by the number of cameras and people who stopped to observe the procession as we ceremonially moved down the road. For those going out for Friday night, either by car or by foot, they couldn't help but be drawn towards the road to observe this extraordinary event.

With Our Lady rarely leaving the shrine in Walsingham, it was a real honour for Berkhamsted to host the statue. Her presence created an unforgettable evening for those involved as well as onlookers.

## **News from the pews...a light-hearted view by Julian Dawson**

It seems that the intellectual leap between a skunk and the Paris ring road has proven challenging in the extreme. Never mind that I am pinned in between a rock and a hard pew. Have you ever known a soft pew? Actually, a blow up pew might save an awful lot of trouble from a purely logistical point of view. Although I admit that lighter members of the congregation might be confounded by severe draughts from the west door. Well, let's face it. Aren't we all? Which reminds me that the one of the greatest pieces of deception in the Second World War was achieved by inflatable tanks and aeroplanes opposite the Calais coast. So, I now have a cunning plan to achieve my escape. All I need is sufficient breath to inflate a significant

amount of Victorian church architecture to achieve my outrageous trompe l'oeil. And that's not easy to articulate when you are out of breath. If you can contain your excitement, all will be unveiled in the next issue. *yB*



### ***Regular Church Activities***

*Due to extended Easter Services listings please refer to March for Regular Church Activities. Back next month.*

# April Parish Diary

Fri 1st	11.00am	Victoria Mothering Service, <i>St Peter's</i>
Tues 5th	12.00nn	Christian Aid Lent Lunch: until 1:30pm, <i>The Court House</i>
Thurs 7th	9.30am	Victoria Palm service, <i>St Peter's</i>
Fri 8th	12.00nn	Thomas Coram End of term Service, <i>St Peter's</i>
Sat 9th	10:00am	10–4.30pm Bible Fresh Festival at Bishops Stortford Methodist Church— <i>see flyers and poster at All Saints'</i>
Sun 10th	11:00am	APCM, <i>St Peter's</i>
Tues 12th	8.00pm	Worship Committee at 57 Meadow Road, <i>All Saints'</i>
Sat 16th	8.00am	ABC prayer breakfast, <i>St Peter's</i>
Sun 17th	6.30pm	Cowper Society presents Chiltern Chamber Choir Palm Sunday concert, <i>St Peter's</i>

## Sunday Services

### St Peter's

8:00am Eucharist  
9:30am Sung Eucharist & Sunday School  
6:00pm Evensong  
*First Sunday in month Family Service at 9:30am*

### All Saints' - April

3rd 10:00am Mothering Sunday. All Age Worship with Holy Baptism  
10th 10:00am Passion Sunday, Holy Communion  
*Holy Week & Easter Services below*

## Registers

### Baptisms

27 Feb Jack Reginald Eastaff (*St Peter's*)

### Funerals

25 Feb Michael John Coopey (*St Peter's*)

# Key Church Contacts

Parish Office, Hilary Armstrong and Kate Perera, Court House, 878227.  
Fr Michael Bowie, 864194 (day off Fri). Team Rector, St Peter's.  
Fr John Pritchard, 870016 (day off Thurs). Asst Curate, St Peter's.  
The Revd Caroline Weaver, 866324 (day off Fri). Methodist Minister, All Saints.

## Further information available from our church websites:

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

**St Peter’s - Holy Week and Easter Day**

17th	9.30am	Palm Sunday, Sung Eucharist
	5:00pm	Evening Prayer
	6.30pm	Concert (diary)
18th	7:30pm	Holy Eucharist, 8:00pm address by Fr Greg Seach
19th	7:30pm	Holy Eucharist, 8:00pm address by Fr Greg Seach
20th	7:30pm	Holy Eucharist, 8:00pm address by Fr Greg Seach
21st	8:00pm	Maundy Thursday, Sung Eucharist Pr. Fr Greg Seach
22nd	12:00nn	3 hr Devotion, 2:00pm Liturgy of Good Friday
23rd	9.00pm	Easter Vigil
24th	8:00am	Easter Day, Holy Eucharist
	9.30am	Easter Day, Sung Eucharist
	6.00pm	Easter Day, Choral Evensong

*Fr Greg Seach, Dean of Clare College, Cambridge will preside over St Peter’s services from Palm Sunday to Easter Day*

**Holy Week at St Peter’s by Fr John Pritchard**

Holy Week, beginning on Palm Sunday is the most solemn and "holy week" we can observe as Christians.

The story of Jesus' life and death gathers pace and momentum as we encounter new issues and aspects of the story on a daily basis which lead us into a much deeper contemplation of God's interaction with humankind and vice versa. To help us explore this holy season this year, Fr Michael has invited The Reverend Dr Greg Seach (who was a member of the Choir in Christchurch, St Lawrence while Fr Michael was Rector n Sydney) to preach from Palm Sunday onwards.

You will see the itinerary above, and are invited to share in the daily Holy

Eucharist and then starting from 8pm Fr Greg will offer an address. Try and take Holy Week as a "whole" so that the threads of the story can be bound together. In the depths of despair, even when Jesus prays alone in the Garden of Gethsemane, we from this distance share in the knowledge of the Resurrection.

**Gregory Seach** is Dean of Clare College, Cambridge. Responsible for the services in Chapel, he also has a pastoral role among the Fellows, staff, students (undergraduate and graduate) and all members of the College. He is an Anglican priest, and as a Fellow of Clare, is Director-of-Studies in Theology and Religious Studies. *yB*

**All Saints’ - Holy Week and Easter Day**

17th	10:00am	Palm Sunday	21st	8:00pm	Maundy Thursday Holy Communion
18th	8:00pm	Meditative Worship	22nd	11.00am	Good Friday Service
19th	8:00pm	Meditative Worship	24th	10:00am	All Age Easter Communion
20th	8:00pm	Meditative Worship			

## *Praying for Chile* by Carolina Bowie

I would like to turn to Jesus' question 'How many loaves have you? Go and see.' In the context of the reading, Jesus poses this question to his disciples after they have requested the crowds be sent away. This, after the crowd had followed them to a deserted place. The crowd was seeking, searching, looking, longing, needing and wanting. But the disciples, weary and worn down, want the mob to be sent away to buy their own food. Jesus says, without embellishment: 'You give them something to eat.' And then the challenge, 'How many loaves have you?'

In the Chile where I was born, this seemingly innocent question, asked with such simplicity had the power to become a subversive and dangerous cry. However, Chile's history since Spanish colonisation has been one of dubious interpretations of Christ's gospel. The church in Latin America has been the birthplace of many faithful followers of Christ, rich and poor. It would be too easy for me to stand here and say that all the wealthy landowners, the feudal patrones and their families are in some way 'bad'. Many wealthy people in Latin America have been friends and patrons of the church and still are. The sheer numbers of people attending daily mass in Chile have surprised me. The military coup of the 70's is a complex phenomenon to unravel. Many players acted out their parts with considerable aplomb, including the middle class women of Chile, who took to the streets with pots and pans in a symphony of domestic protest, demanding that the men, the military and the church, restore the nation to order. In this world view, order means acceptance of the status quo. If we understand the message in our reading

today as one of being fed with the spirit of Christ and the abundance that we find therein, this poses no threat to the catechistic diet of the privileged. After all, in this gospel Mark is showing us how Jesus reflects the nurturing that God shows in Exodus where he led his people out of slavery and into a desert place where they could become dependent on God for food and life itself. But also in Exodus we hear God's instructions for sharing the Passover meal: "If a family is too small for a whole lamb, it shall join the nearest household in procuring one and shall share in the lamb".

*And shall share in the lamb.*

Clearly, this is a foretelling of what is to come. Jesus will become the lamb that is sacrificed for us to share. Jesus did come and he did dwell among us as flesh and blood. His existence and death were not ethereal notions. What I find confronting when I worship in Santiago is coming face to face with the crucifix and the very real image of suffering. You cannot hide because this face of suffering is actually everywhere. It is hardly surprising that liberation theology exploded in Latin America with its premise that we are forced to understand God from within history mediated through the lives of oppressed human beings. God is not recognised analogically in creation's beauty and power, but dialectically in the creature's suffering and despair. The god of the future is the crucified God who submerges himself in a world of misery. God is found on the crosses of the oppressed rather than in beauty, power, or wisdom.



In a place where theology such as this finds expression, the question of sharing our gifts, our talents, our loaves, becomes less a question of choice and more a call to arms, a call to action, a call to prayer a call to communion and an invitation to become a real *companera* – a Spanish word used amongst friends, families, colleagues. It means, literally, ‘one with whom we share bread’. I ask myself and I ask you:

How many loaves have you, *companera*?

The following lines come from a text known as the Latin American Our Father by poet Mario Benedetti;

Our father who art in exile  
Hallowed be thy name  
Not those who hallow in the name  
Closing one eye so as not to see the dirty  
fingernails of misery  
It’s no use asking you  
Thy kingdom come  
Because thy kingdom is also down here  
In the midst of rancor and fear, filth,  
desolation and somnolence.  
In this eagerness to see you in spite of  
everything, when you spoke of the rich  
man, the needle and the camel  
And we unanimously voted you into  
glory,  
At the same time the silent Indian raised  
his hand  
The Indian who respected you but resisted  
thinking  
Thy will be done.  
I’m not sure I like the style in which your  
will chooses to assert itself  
I say this with reverence and gratitude  
thinking of our bread  
Of every day and every little piece of the  
day  
Yesterday you took it from us  
Give it to us this day

Or at least the right to give ourselves our  
bread  
Not only that of crumb and crust  
But Our bread  
Our daily bread.

According to liberation theologian,  
Gustavo Gutierrez, A theology of the  
Church in the world should be  
complemented by a theology of the world  
in the Church.

I can think of no greater example of this  
than the Chilean Saint, Padre Alberto  
Hurtado, who was canonized in October  
2005 by Pope Benedict. It was said of  
Father Hurtado that “he was incapable of  
seeing pain without wanting to remedy it.”  
And one day a chance encounter changed  
the course of his ministry.

A poor man in shirt sleeves, suffering  
from acute tonsillitis and shivering with  
the cold, approached him saying he had  
nowhere to find shelter. The man’s misery  
left Fr Hurtado shaken. A few days later,  
while giving a retreat to a group of women  
he began to speak, on the spur of the  
moment, about the misery that existed in  
Santiago and the need to respond to it:  
“Christ roams through our streets in the  
person of so many suffering poor, sick,  
dispossessed people thrown out of their  
miserable slums; Christ huddled under  
bridges, in the person of so many children  
who lack someone to call father, who have  
been deprived for many a year of a  
mother’s kiss upon their  
foreheads....Christ is without a home!  
Shouldn’t we want to give him one, those  
of us who have the joy of a comfortable  
home, plenty of good food, the means to  
educate and assure the future of our  
children?

*Continues on page 23*

For Personal Attention from Berkhamsted's  
only independent family business

# **J. WORLEY**

**(FUNERAL DIRECTORS) LTD**  
**344 High Street, Berkhamsted**  
**FUNERAL DIRECTOR and**  
**MONUMENTAL MASON**

● GOLDEN CHARTER PRE-PAYMENT PLANS ● 24 HR EMERGENCY  
SERVICE ● COMPETITIVE PRICES ● PRIVATE REST ROOM

Telephone Day/Night Berkhamsted 870326

## **MCLEAN** **DECORATORS**

INTERIOR AND  
EXTERIOR

ESTABLISHED 1985

EXCELLENT LOCAL  
REFERENCES  
FREE ESTIMATES AND  
ADVICE

PHONE 01582 696032  
MOBILE 07957 848222

## **DAVID GIDDINGS**

### **LANDSCAPES**

Qualified Plantsman  
Garden Construction  
Planting Aftercare

**4 Kingsley Walk,  
Tring, HP23 5DN**  
**Tel: 826628**

## **The 50plus**

- Electrical
- Plumbing
- Handyman
- On-line
  - fixed prices
  - helpful advice
  - discounts
  - articles



- Locally based
- Free estimates
- NICEIC & Gas Safe personnel

**0845 22 50 495**

**www.the50plus.co.uk**

By the 50plus for people of all ages

## ***Norman*** ***Cutting*** ***Electrical***

- *Free Advice*
- *Inspections*
- *Installations*
- *Fault Finding*

All work complies with Part P of  
the Building Regulations

**01 442 871851**

[normthesparks@aol.co.uk](mailto:normthesparks@aol.co.uk)  
[www.normancutting.co.uk](http://www.normancutting.co.uk)

## **Computer Consultancy and Repairs**

*Getting your PC up and running again*

Software installation & configuration  
Basic and intermediate level training  
Specialising in anti-virus, security & hardware upgrades



**Andy Robinson** 36 Trevelyan Way  
Berkhamsted HP4 1JH  
Mobile: 07885 966570  
[Andyrc@dolphin4.demon.co.uk](mailto:Andyrc@dolphin4.demon.co.uk)

## **CG HOLDER** **PLUMBING & HEATING** **LTD**

For a good reliable  
installation of all  
plumbing and  
heating systems  
**Gassafe registered**  
with over 30 years  
in the trade

**01442 862244**  
**07973 144336**

‘What you do to the least of my brothers, you do to me,’ Jesus has said.” And in this simple way the idea of the “*Hogar de Cristo*” or Home of Christ was born. This ‘home of Christ’ is thriving today: in a country where there is no welfare or NHS it provides the only means of alleviating the suffering of so many of our brothers and sisters.

As another man of God closer to home

and to myself has said,

There are times when only action will do. Hurtado began by simply acting because he saw, suddenly, in that particular poor man, that unless we share our bread, the Eucharist and our faith is just a trivial boutique. In our lives it must be a feast of life to which we are all invited. yB

## *Put Spring in your step*

**Alex Evans** encourages us to get walking, for a good cause



The Berkhamsted Walk, on Sunday 8th May, is in aid of The Children’s Society and offers three routes, about 18, 12 and 6 miles, all in the Chilterns countryside, an area of outstanding beauty.

The Bluebell Walk, 12 miles, and the Challenge Walk, 18 miles, start from the Courthouse alongside St Peter’s Church, with registration between 10.00 and 11.30 am. The Fun Walk, 6 miles, starts in front of Ashridge College, with registration between 11.00 am and 2.00 pm. You can pre-register your interest in advance on the “How to Take Part” page on the website, or just arrive and register on

Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> May. Sponsorship forms can be downloaded, but are also available at The Complete Outdoors, Bourne End, Berkhamsted Library and ‘phone 01442 864968.

There are valuable outdoor prizes for the most sponsorship, generously donated by The Complete Outdoors. The Walk is for your pleasure but especially for funding the vital work of The Children’s Society.

Please take part, not only for your fitness and enjoyment but also to raise funds for the essential work of The Children’s Society. Every child deserves a good childhood!

More about The Children’s Society, the Walk and Ashridge Estate, is on our website. We hope it entices you to be with us on 8<sup>th</sup> May. yB

More information and sponsorship forms:

**[www.berkhamstedwalk.com](http://www.berkhamstedwalk.com)**



- Rewires
- Replacement Fuse Boards
- New Circuits
- New Sockets, Switches
- New Light Fittings
- Downlights
- Smoke Alarms
- PAT Testing
- PAT Testing
- Periodic Inspection & Testing
- Landlords Certificates
- Power to : extensions  
sheds, garages, ponds,  
gardens, lofts  
workshops
- CCTV
- Access systems
- Gate automation
- Satellite systems
- Telephone extensions



Approved Contractor and  
Part P Registered

Tel : 01296 630124

Mobile : 07825 747773

Email : [steve.rozentel@circuitfix.co.uk](mailto:steve.rozentel@circuitfix.co.uk)

Website : <http://circuitfix.co.uk>

**PROBABLY THE BEST**  
**TOPSOIL**  
**IN THE SOUTH EAST**

**WE DON'T SELL RECYCLED SKIP WASTE!**  
**WE ONLY SELL CERTIFICATED TOPSOILS!**

'Bury Hill Black'™ is our PREMIUM GRADE  
 PLANTING SOIL. We also sell quality  
 blended soils suitable for SEEDING,  
 TURFING & GENERAL LANDSCAPING

**We also sell:** • QUALITY TURF • SOIL  
 CONDITIONER • COMPOST • MULCHES  
 • SELECTED AGGREGATES • SHINGLES  
 • ROCK SALT **Plus** • HARDWOOD LOGS  
 • COAL AND KINDLING

SUPPLIED IN BULK BAGS AND LOOSE,  
 WE CAN DELIVER 1 TON TO 10,000 TONS!

**Tel: 01306 877540 or buy online**  
**[www.buryhilltopsoilandlogs.co.uk](http://www.buryhilltopsoilandlogs.co.uk)**

**FREE DELIVERY**

**Bury Hill Dorking Surrey**  
**TOPSOIL AND LOGS**

## Haspineall COLLINS

**For all your building requirements**

**Big jobs...Small jobs...Short lead-time jobs...Staggered & phased jobs...Your job**

With over 28 years combined building experience,  
 Sam Haspineall, Elliot Collins and their team guarantee high levels of **workmanship**,  
 a **personable** & **reliable** service and **competitive** prices too.

Our goal is simple: your glowing references = our growing business.

**Extensions ♦ Conversions (Loft, Garage etc.) ♦ Refurbishments ♦ Plastering ♦  
 Decorating ♦ Paving ♦ Plumbing & Heating ♦ Brickwork, Stonework & Masonry**

**Whatever the job - domestic or commercial - call us today for a quote**

**Tel. 01442 865753 Mob. 07971 052 174**

**[www.haspineall-collins.co.uk](http://www.haspineall-collins.co.uk)**

# *The local beekeeper*

**Crispin Baker** continues his monthly beekeeping diary

April can be such a lovely time of year and the commencement of weekly hive inspections will enable us to monitor the growth and health of the colony. Last month we observed pollen being brought to the hive to make food for the bee larvae, so our initial inspections need to establish that we have a queen and that the colony is disease free and healthy.

To inspect the bees we need to access what we call the brood box, which is effectively the engine house of the hive, this is where the queen lives and breeds. Frames of drawn honey comb hang inside a square box that upon inspection we carefully take out to see the bees.

Placed on top of the brood box we have the supers which are smaller boxes with shallower frames for more honey storage and it is these that we hope to take off at the end of the summer, full of honey. In a good year a full super can hold up to 30 pounds of honey which, unsurprisingly, the bees become quite possessive about, come the time to relieve them of it!

You may have noticed the local honey granulating slowly in the jars (this is easily remedied and a note to this effect is on the back of every honey jar). All honey will eventually granulate, some much

quicker than others depending on the source of the nectar. The two predominant sugars in honey are fructose and glucose, most floral honeys from the summer crop have more fructose and granulate slowly. However the Spring crop honey has much more glucose than fructose and therefore rapidly granulates. This is caused almost exclusively by the bees harvesting nectar

from oil seed rape (OSR) – the yellow peril. Beekeepers are divided as to their enthusiasm for OSR as the honey, if left uncared for in the comb, granulates to the texture of granite therefore making extraction impossible. We must remove the honey from the supers as soon as

the rape crop is finished. On the positive side however, OSR can provide a good crop of honey, so much so that beekeepers regularly take their hives to the edge of large rape fields to exploit the nectar and pollen available. Look out for the first jars on the shelves by early June.

That's all folks, next time we'll hear about swarms! And what to do if you find a swarm in your garden. To have a swarm collected ring 07984 072666.

Bee friendly plants for this time of year: Cherry, dandelion, forget-me-not, violet.



# One to One PC Tuition

*Computer help tailored  
to fit your needs*

- Internet and e-mail
- Word and Excel
- Technical problems explained and resolved
- PC maintenance — backups, security, housekeeping

**Call Roger Blunt**  
**01442 896041**

[roger@121pctutor.co.uk](mailto:roger@121pctutor.co.uk)  
<http://121pctutor.co.uk>

## Design Workshop

Soft Furnishings & Gifts

- ♦ Curtains / Blinds made to measure
- ♦ Poles / Tracks supplied & fitted
- ♦ Fabrics & Wallpapers
- ♦ Gifts for all occasions including an extensive range of Lolita Glassware
- ♦ Gift vouchers available

[www.designworkshopuk.com](http://www.designworkshopuk.com)

Design Workshop, 53-55 The High Street, Kings Langley, WD4 9HU

**01923 260990**

[design.workshop@hotmail.com](mailto:design.workshop@hotmail.com)



**ERS** EGERTON ROTHERHAY SCHOOL  
DURRANTS LANE, BERKHAMSTED, HERTS

## Why Egerton Rotherhay?

We offer

- An inclusive, caring, educational environment
- Additional specialist support for everyone
- Non selective entry, ages 5-16
- A school where your child can flourish

For more information contact Liz Martin on  
01442 877060, [liz.martin@eger-roth.co.uk](mailto:liz.martin@eger-roth.co.uk)

For details of our  
Open Mornings  
visit our website:  
[www.eger-roth.co.uk](http://www.eger-roth.co.uk)





## *Loss of a Berkhamsted landmark*

**Jenny Sherwood** reflects on the demolition of Birtchnell's shop

'It can't just have fallen down' was the comment on the end of the email. 'Perhaps it was a failed bank robbery?' suggested a bystander. 'I hope the sale has been completed'. 'The board still says 'Sold, Subject to Contract'. These and other comments could be heard among little groups of people, gathered near the Britannia Building Society or outside M & Co., and almost anywhere in Berkhamsted since the fateful night of 29<sup>th</sup> - 30<sup>th</sup> January when 185 High Street, *Birtchnell's*, collapsed at around midnight.

The destruction of a well-known building with long-standing memories for many inhabitants of Berkhamsted reminds me of the destruction of another important landmark during the night more than 150 years earlier, that of the burning down of the Tudor Market House on the night of 23<sup>rd</sup> August 1854. It was to be six years before the new Market House, Town Hall and Assembly Room was officially opened, six years of discussion, disagreement and wrangling, but also community support and money-raising efforts before the new building worthy of our historic town was complete. The Market House was, of course, a community asset. The same cannot be said of 185 High Street, but nevertheless it has become a much-loved landmark in the town, a landmark, not for its architectural beauty but a landmark because of its associations with Percy Birtchnell, 'Small Man Beorcham'. Percy was born and spent his entire life in Berkhamsted, the town he loved, and among the people he loved. Whilst at Victoria Boys' School he became interested in the history of our

'royal' town and when still in his teens he wrote his first article on the history of Berkhamsted.

Those of us who knew Percy Birtchnell will each have our own memories of him. Many of us will remember going into the shop, P C BIRTCHNELL, and down to the basement with our sons to buy school uniforms. Where will husbands go now to hire morning dress for the Buckingham Palace Garden Party or wives to buy something special for their husbands for Christmas?

The building *Birtchnell's* has gone, recorded, however, in old photographs and for posterity in the film *The Human Factor* made in 1979. Percy's legacy remains in his writings. The name '*Birtchnell's*' is also carried on by Bob Clark's son, who has taken the shop's most recent logo for his on-line men's wear business. 29<sup>th</sup> - 30<sup>th</sup> January 2011 will for long be remembered! *yB*

**RODERICK  
WILSON**

Fully qualified  
TREE SURGEON  
and FORESTRY  
CONTRACTOR

07795 481946  
07768 937138  
01442 842716 (eve)

# St Peter's Brasses

**Christopher Green** completes our tour of the brasses of St Peter's



Last month I wrote about some of the historic memorial brasses that are, or were in St Peter's Church. In a recently published survey - *The Monumental Brasses of Hertfordshire*, the authors, with immense attention to detail, identify no less than 73 memorial brasses in St Peter's and record a further five described as *lost*. That's a lot of brasses. Where are they? Only five are medieval, dating from the 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> centuries. Four of these were mentioned in last month's article, the fifth is in the floor of the old chancel, now the vestry, and is a priest of about 1400, thought by some to be Thomas Brydde, who was Rector of Berkhamsted early in the 15<sup>th</sup> century. Memorial brasses remained popular in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, though generally less ornate than those of the medieval period. In addition to the

brasses commemorating Robert and Katharine Incent, mentioned last month, there is a mutilated armorial brass on the tomb in the north aisle of Sir John Cornwallis who died in 1543 and an inscription and shields in a wall tablet in St Catherine's Chapel commemorating John and Margaret Waterhouse who both died in 1558. These Waterhouse brasses are not in their original position and are part only of the original Waterhouse memorial. The other surviving part is a brass inscription, fixed on a windowsill in the Lady Chapel. These brasses are particularly interesting. They are palimpsests - brasses made by cutting up old memorial brasses and engraving new inscriptions on the reverse. On the reverse of the Waterhouse brasses in St Catherine's Chapel are parts of an effigy and an inscription - Flemish of about 1530. Another part of the same inscription survives in Suffolk as a palimpsest in the church of St Mary at Halesworth. Equally fascinating is the Waterhouse brass on the sill in the Lady Chapel. The reverse is part of a brass with an inscription commemorating Thomas Humfre of London, goldsmith, and his wife Joan the daughter of William Bayntun, brewer. The style suggests a date of about 1510. In one of the letters in the inscription is the figure of St Jerome accompanied by the lion with which he is traditionally associated. Another part of this memorial to Thomas Humfre and his wife survives in Sussex as a palimpsest in the church of St Margaret of Antioch at Isfield.

After the 16<sup>th</sup> century, memorial brasses passed out of fashion. There is only one dating from the next two centuries and



this, on a window sill in the Lady Chapel commemorates, in 1782, not a person but a *Faculty for making a burial vault for JOHN DORRIEN Esq<sup>r</sup> and his family for ever, exclusive of all other persons.* The mid 19<sup>th</sup> century saw a renewed enthusiasm for brass and there are 22 memorials dating from 1865 to 1914. The last substantial memorial brass dates from 1920 and is in the north aisle commemorating the three Sprunt brothers, all killed in the First World War, aged 24, 22 and 21 – *Three Gallant Sons ... They died that we may live.* An adjoining brass commemorates their parents. It is hard to believe that there are another 40 memorial brasses in St Peter's Church, but there are. They are almost all inconspicuously small. One is on a bench in the churchyard, five are fixed to the choir stalls and 32 are fixed to chairs in the North Transept which were given by parishioners in memory of family and friends.

The very latest brass was put in place earlier this year in the north aisle, marking the gift of the Millennium Window by the congregation and friends of the church.



## True commitment

**...Bailey & Sons**

BERKHAMSTED'S JEWELLER SINCE 1872

9 Lower Kings Road  
Berkhamsted  
Herts HP4 2AE  
**01442 863091**



## ROBIN RILEY

HOME MAINTENANCE



WINDOWS - DOORS - CONSERVATORIES  
FASCIAS & SOFFITS



Tel/Fax: **01582 485643**

Mob: **07730 361671**



26 Crosslands, Caddington, Beds

Email your letters to the Editor at [editor@yourberkhamsted.org.uk](mailto:editor@yourberkhamsted.org.uk) or post them to: Your Berkhamsted, Parish Office, The Courthouse, Berkhamsted, HP4 2AX

## MRS DOOLITTLES EXPERIENCED ANIMAL CARE

Whilst on holiday  
At work or during  
Illness at your home

- All animals
- Fully insured
- References available
- 4½ years of veterinary nursing experience

Ring Beverley Cornthwaite  
on 822191 or 0796 7019031

## A B W Services Ltd Plumbing & Heating



**Are you fed up searching for a reliable Plumber  
Tired of waiting in vain for promised appointments?  
Call us now for a friendly, prompt and reliable  
service.**

We are a Studham based and registered Plumbing and Heating Company, with many years experience in the industry. If you have a plumbing and heating problem, whatever the size, we will be more than happy to help remedy it. We specialise in all aspects of plumbing and heating including new bathrooms, new boilers and heating systems, servicing, upgrades to the latest building regs, high pressure hot water systems, and not forgetting water treatment. This can be in the form of water softeners installed or replaced, to special *house filtering* systems to remove sediment and odours. This is especially important if you suffer from dry skin or eczema, these filtering systems really help.

**For any further information or to organise a  
quote, please contact Andy Warwick on:**

**07775 853448 or 01582 873448**

## *Contribute to Your Berkhamsted!*

We welcome your letters and emails, local news items and suggestions for future articles. We are also keen to hear from readers who enjoy writing short fiction and poetry. The Last Word is available for readers to send in approx. 500 words on a topic of their choice, and one that may stimulate debate in further issues.

## *Your Berkhamsted Contacts*

### **Editorial Team**

Ian Skillicorn 862628, [editor@yourberkhamsted.org.uk](mailto:editor@yourberkhamsted.org.uk)  
Fiona Powell 872338, [fiona@yourberkhamsted.org.uk](mailto:fiona@yourberkhamsted.org.uk)  
Cathy Edmunds 07900 490169, [cathy@yourberkhamsted.org.uk](mailto:cathy@yourberkhamsted.org.uk)

**Advertising:** Rowena Pike [advertising@yourberkhamsted.org.uk](mailto:advertising@yourberkhamsted.org.uk)

**Circulation:** Sheila Miller 31 Lincoln Court, HP4 3EN (864277)

**Treasurer:** Joanne Byrne. Post c/o Parish Office  
[treasurer@yourberkhamsted.org.uk](mailto:treasurer@yourberkhamsted.org.uk) (0796 444 3939 )

**Copy Dates:** 8 April 4 May 3 June

## ***The Alternative Vote—Yes or No?* by Bruce Nixon**

The sudden wave of largely non-violent uprisings in North Africa and the Middle East emphasises how fortunate we are in the UK. After decades of tyranny, people are bravely risking their lives on the streets, demanding democratic government, fair elections and freedom of expression.

However, our democracy for which, over the centuries, men and women have fought, sometimes losing their lives, is far from perfect. Dissatisfaction with and disengagement from politics here is high. Turnout in UK elections is one of the lowest in Western countries, especially amongst younger people. The composition of Parliament does not reflect the wishes of the people as expressed in elections. Under a fair voting system, the seats in parliament would reflect votes cast. Yet in 2005, Labour with 35.2% of the vote secured 55.7% of the seats in the House of Commons.

Reform of democracy matters to us in Berkhamsted since how we are governed affects our ability to make Berkhamsted the place we want it to be.

The Parliament Act of 1911, under which the power of the House of Lords was curbed, was intended to be a temporary prelude to establishing a more democratic Second Chamber. A century later, the House of Lords is still mainly comprised of appointed peers, with some hereditary peers. A national women's suffrage campaign began in 1872 but it was not until 1918 that women over 30 got the vote providing they were householders,

married to a householder or if they held a university degree. Universal suffrage for all adults over 21 years of age was not achieved until 1928. Proportional representation has been under discussion in Parliament since 1917.

A fair voting system would enable a far wider spectrum of information and opinion to be contributed to policy. Arguably, there would be better dialogue, leading to better decisions. Parties would be forced to collaborate and reach consensus. Parties would no longer be able to inflict extreme policies on us - in effect, dictatorship by the party that unfairly wins most seats. Proportional representation would enable smaller parties, like the Greens, to gain more seats and a greater diversity of parties would be able to contribute. More people would feel their votes counted and their views were represented. They would have an incentive to vote for the party of their choice, rather than voting tactically or not at all.

AV and Proportional Representation are widely used. Coalitions have been successful and stable. In Germany it is the norm. AV is not a proportional system, but it is a step in the right direction. Surely, we cannot let this historic opportunity to end First Past the Post pass in May in our first national referendum in 35 years?

Bruce Nixon is author of *A Better World is Possible* – what needs to be done and how we can make it happen available as free PDF at <http://www.bruce-nixon.com/betterworld.html>. yB

