

the magazine for town and parish

your **Berkhamsted**



The highwayman on Boxmoor Common
The Berkhamsted Audio Trail
News from around the town
The South Berkhamsted Concept

March 2012

50p

From the Editor March 2012



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

Welcome to the March issue of *Your Berkhamsted*.

In recent months we have had a very encouraging response to our request for contributors to *Your Berkhamsted*. As well as our regular columns our aim is to bring readers articles of local interest from a wide range of writers and organisations. In fact, we had so many contributions for this month's issue that my own article following on from last month's recycling piece will now appear in April. If you would like to write an article for the magazine we would be pleased to hear from you. We are also very interested in receiving photographs of Berkhamsted past and present.

In late May we are publishing a special edition of *Your Berkhamsted* which will celebrate the Queen's Diamond Jubilee and also compare Berkhamsted in 2012 and in 1897, during Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee. We would be delighted to hear from anyone who has information or photographs/illustrations of Berkhamsted during late Victorian times.

Ian Skillicorn, Editor

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Your Berkhamsted Leader by Canon Anthony Lathe



You might need to know where I am coming from. I have known the author of the book I am recommending to you for

nearly forty years. She won't exactly become suddenly rich if you all rush out to buy it, nor will she pass me a back-hander.

Ruth Burrows has written the Archbishop of Canterbury's Lent book. Yes, it is quite a good idea to read a serious "spiritual" book in Lent. She has written several books and many articles on prayer and the spiritual life. If you think that being enclosed in a monastery for over 70 years somehow makes you unrealistic or a kind of religious zombie, read and think again!

In this book, *Love Unknown*, Ruth Burrows sets out from the point that there is a vast difference between religion and faith in the God revealed in Jesus Christ. Naturally, she knows all about religion as the life of a convent is governed by its rules. Before the second Vatican council (1962-1965) it was particularly oppressive. Ruth Burrows helped her monastery with the transition from the old regime, basically set in the early seventeenth century, to new and kinder ways. Her writings, particularly this book, enable us to see where religion might get in the way of a belief in the unconditional love of God, but also, indeed, where it can help us.

For the Christian person the goal must be an encounter with the Lord. If that sounds like a Baptist or an evangelical writing

rather than a Roman Catholic, you get the idea that this is a book for all Christian people, being rooted in scripture and worship.

Of course, there are plenty of indications of the author's background. Living in a community which spends a lot of time in church she shows how the services can bring us an awareness of what faith is all about. A nice illustration of this is how the Church in its worship holds up the mystery of God like a precious jewel against the light so we may see it ever anew.

The key is to get out of our heads the notion that God is a tyrannical, demanding despot or simply uninterested. It is a pity, then, that in the Introduction the word "repent" in Jesus teaching is rendered as "do penance". However, illustrating though scripture, Ruth Burrows shows that there have always been some people, often very few, who have clung on to the vision of a loving God even in the most brutal times. So she can tell us that prayer is not self-improvement, nor is this world a spiritual gymnasium where we exercise ourselves to fit us out for heaven.

All this does not mean it is really easy. It is hard to persist, it is hard to let God be God, it is hard to be loyal to Jesus, but this serious, encouraging book, *Love Unknown*, can really help.

Love Unknown Ruth Burrows OCD
Burns and Oates 2011

The Archbishop of Canterbury's Lent
Book 2012. **JB**

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Around the town

The latest news from around Berkhamsted

Events at St Peter's Church and The Court House presented by the Cowper Society

Thursday 1st March: 1.10-1.35pm - RECITAL: Berkhamsted School Instrument Recital to include piano. Free admission – retiring collection, The Lady Chapel, St Peter's.

Saturday 3rd March: 7.30pm - CONCERT: Bridgewater Sinfonia – conductor Adrian Davis
Verdi Overture: La Forza del Destino, Haydn 'Cello Concerto in C (Clare O'Connell 'cello), Bartok Concerto for Orchestra. Tickets: £15, U18s free from Aitchisons or www.bridgewatersinfonia.org.uk or tel: 01442 875945, St Peter's.

Monday 5th March: 7.30pm for 8pm - TALK: Cowper Winter Talk – Prof. Jonathan Morris
Coffee: A Global History. There will be wine beforehand. Free admission - retiring collection, The Court House.
Monday 12th March: 7.30pm for 8pm - TALK: Cowper Winter Talk – Pam Wallace, who lived through the Blitz in Stepney, Remembering the Blitz. There will be wine beforehand. Free admission - retiring collection, The Court House.
Monday 26th March: 7.30pm for 8pm - TALK: Cowper Winter Talk – The Ranger Ashridge Deer.
There will be wine beforehand. Free admission - retiring collection, The Court House.

Berkhamsted Citizens Association

On Thursday 8th March BCA will hold its AGM and Environment Awards at 8pm in the Great Hall, Town Hall. There will be an AGM business meeting

followed by a drinks reception and then presentation of Environment Awards, topical speaker and Open Forum.

Christian Aid Lent Lunches

Tuesdays 6th March and 20th March from noon to 1.30pm. Do something different for Lent! Come to the Court House for soup and crumble and support the work of Christian Aid to help some of the poorest communities in the world. Margaret Burbidge tel: 862139

Letting Children be Children

Wednesday 14th March from 7.30pm to 9.30pm at the Civic Centre, Old Welwyn, AL6 9ER. Explore the issues surrounding the commercialisation of childhood with Reg Bailey, the MU Chief Executive and author of the government review, Letting Children be Children. It is open to anyone who is concerned about children and is your chance to contribute to the debate.

To reserve a seat, email sec_mustalbans@btconnect.com or phone 01727 858979 and visit this website www.byebuychildhood.org Margaret Burbidge tel:862139

Oxfam Children's Wear Event

March is Mothers' Month. International Women's Day at the beginning of the month is followed by Mothering Sunday and on Friday 23rd March the Oxfam Children's Wear Event will enable local mothers (and dads) to purchase new season children's clothes at bargain prices. Held in the Civic Centre from 9am to 11.30am, all ages and occasions will be catered for.

Service of Wholeness and Healing

Sunday 25th March at 4pm at All Saint's.

JRB

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Read all about us!

Julian Dawson takes a look at varied and surprising references to our town on the internet

I have a thing about lists. As I grow older the lists help me to remember what it is I have to do. And act as a comfort blanket to stress. Write down what it is you have to do and somehow it relieves the worry wondrously. I'll worry about trying to find the list later. But I am also a fan of lists and rankings. And Wikipedia is a great place for those. So it is that we start this month's internet ramble, with their list of Victoria Crosses by school. Eton tops the list with 37, but it is interesting to note that three Berkhamsted School pupils were in receipt of this honour. Arthur Mayo won his gallantry medal in the Indian Mutiny on 22nd November 1857. He was an Indian Navy midshipman, and only 17 years old when he charged two six-pounders 20 yards ahead of everyone else. The second recipient was George Randolph Pearkes, later 20th Lieutenant Governor of British Columbia. He won his distinguished medal leading a capture of objectives beyond his allocation in the battle of Passchendaele. And the final winner was Sir Brett Mackay Cloutman, who received his accolade on 6th November 1918 clearing the explosive charges from a bridge under fire. His award is particularly interesting as it was the last act to win a VC in the Great War.

A blog entitled *Jon's Place* (very imaginative title there!), shares a fascination for the furthest end of the London Underground. And also where the Underground might have ended up. In the 1930s there was a plan to extend the

Northern Line to Bushey, town of my birth, which was halted by the outbreak of war. There still remain some brick structures marking the initial works, and you can view an unused Bushey Heath station sign at the Quinton railway museum. Yet I never realised that the Metropolitan Line was going to be extended from Chesham to Berkhamsted. I thought that this might have been some blogosphere ravings, but this fact is more or less corroborated on the Metroland website, which states that there were in fact proposals to link Chesham to the main London Euston to Birmingham line around the Tring area and that some land north of Chesham station was acquired for this purpose. Talking of Metroland reminds me of the wonderful John Betjeman film about the railway which is well worth a watch.

And from moving pictures to sound. The vagaries of radio reception in the town continues to cause furrowed brows. Nomie44 plaintively posts on Berkhamstedpeople.co.uk that he loses Three Counties Radio as he drives down the High Street, and suspects that radio silence has been declared. N Cutting responds that depending on what side of the High Street one lives depends on what transmitter you receive the signal from, implying that there is indeed no reception in the dip. "The problem is that the valley is in the wrong place and orientated the wrong way." So when in doubt just blame geology. **JB**

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We do right by you

The robbery, the highwayman and the ghost at Boxmoor Common

Dan Parry writes another fascinating tale from our local history

In driving south from Berkhamsted towards Hemel, it's easy to overlook Boxmoor Common, the home of the familiar black and white Belted Galloway cows grazing beside the A41. At first glance it appears to be an idyllic scene. But the truth is that amid the wallowing cattle stands a small triangular white stone marking the execution site of James Snooks, reputedly the last highwayman in England to be publicly hanged - and the spot where his remains lie to this day.

Around 10.15pm on the evening of Sunday May 10th, 1801, John Stevens, a postboy, was carrying mail south from Tring along the stagecoach route from Aylesbury to London, the modern-day A4251. Travelling through the remote meadows of Boxmoor, still largely unpopulated today, John was carrying an unusually large sum of money, one letter alone reportedly containing more than £500. It was getting dark when he was suddenly confronted by a highwayman on a grey horse, who stole his six bags before fleeing into the night.

Generous rewards for information, £100 by Parliament and £200 by the Postmaster General, ensured that news of the crime spread across southern England. But in trying to lie low the thief created problems for himself when money he gave to a serving girl led to awkward questions. A man later identified as James Snooks had intended to give the girl a £5 note with instructions to buy some cloth but in fact he had actually given her £50 and such a

large note had inevitably aroused suspicion.

Born in Hungerford in 1761, Snooks had been a petty criminal and a horse thief before working as an ostler at the King's Arms in Berkhamsted. An article in the London Chronicle described him as 5 feet 10 or 11 inches high, has light brown hair cut short, is pitted with the small pox, has lived in and about Mary-le-bone, and is well known in the neighbourhood of Portland Place. He left his lodging at No. 3, in Woodstock Street, Mary-le-bone, early on Saturday morning, and was then dressed in a blue coat, with black velvet collar, marcella waistcoat, with blue and white stripes, velvet breeches, and dark-coloured stockings. At the King's Arms, the landlord John Page also served as the town's postmaster and it is conceivable that Snooks would have come to hear about the movements of the mail bags.

With questions being asked in Southwark Snooks fled back to Hungerford, though returning to his home town proved to be a fatal mistake for by December he had been recognised. William Salt, an old schoolfriend - now working for the General Post Office - was driving a chaise and four through Marlborough Forest when he spotted Snooks on foot. After a fight Snooks was overpowered, loaded pistols were found in his pockets along with an incriminating amount of money and he was quickly sent to Newgate where

(continues on page 11)

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continued from page 9

In March 1802 Snooks was tried at the Hertford Assizes where, according to The Times of March 12th, 1802, "a chain of circumstantial evidence was submitted to the Jury to guide their determination." The evidence included a broken saddle on a grey horse, both found at the scene and both previously associated with Snooks. Upon being convicted a sentence of execution was followed by the instruction that his rotting body be exhibited in chains. The residents of Boxmoor weren't as keen on this as the court and after organising a petition they succeeded in having the sentence reduced to execution followed by a straightforward burial.

On March 11th, 1802, a local holiday was declared in anticipation of the hanging. En route to the gallows, Snooks stopped for a final drink as was the tradition of the times before being taken to the scene of the crime. There a crowd was waiting for him - and after addressing his audience with a few short words he was hanged from a chestnut tree, possibly on a spot now occupied by the A41. Snooks had been unable to afford a coffin and so his body

was placed into a grave lined with straw, where one account suggests it was about to be stripped of its clothes by the executioner until he was stopped by the Constable for the Hundred of Dacorum John Page - Snooks's former employer.

In 1904 Snooks's grave was marked by two simple stones (mistakenly referring to Robert Snooks, said to be a corruption of 'robber'), indicating the spot where he lies in peace...or perhaps not. Legend has it that if you run three times around the stones at midnight and call his name, Snooks's ghost will reappear. Fun as this may sound, caution is advised as there have been reports of dogs freezing in fear when walking near the grave, and even of a body seen hanging from a tree after midnight amid a strange fog watched by cowering horses. One way or another the memory of Snooks lives on, and idyllic though the meadows may look today the stones serve to remind us of the area's unsettling and violent past.

JB

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An edible and beautiful garden

Bruce Nixon takes us on a tour of his edible and beautiful garden

As I write this early in the new year, my garden does not appeal. Most days it looks dank and uninviting. I dislike mud. The flourishing early summer garden is a distant memory. The lawn is compacted and it is better to keep off it. However, a lot is going on under the soil. Roots are growing; broad bean seeds and garlic are establishing themselves. Aconites, daffodils and snowdrops are beginning to appear. We have just used the last of our lettuce but still have some rocket. However new winter lettuce plants are gaining strength. Soon I shall get a load of local farmyard manure to spread where my soil is depleted.

Today there are many reasons for growing food in our gardens. Vegetables picked fresh from the garden are more delicious and nutritious and you know they are free of toxic chemicals.

We also know that with Climate Change, Peak Oil and Peak Everything there will be growing world food shortages and prices will rise. It is incumbent upon us to be more self-sufficient.

We save food miles. The supermarket system of food sourcing and

distribution causing a huge carbon footprint is unsustainable. It is responsible for enormous waste. The constant pursuit of cheaper food bears down harshly on farmers here and overseas and can undermine food security in poor countries. Growing food locally is far more sustainable. There is nowhere more local than one's own garden!

So, I try to make my garden beautiful and edible. I only grow things that thrive in our garden and do not take up much space.

To maximise the use of space, I follow the forest garden principle of growing upwards, using cane pyramids or trellises for squash, French beans and peas. In our fairly small vegetable patch we grow enough beautiful salad varieties to keep us supplied for nearly the whole year.



Vegetables are often as beautiful as flowers, so I grow some like rainbow chard amongst the flowers. I love heritage climbing French beans. They have interesting names, many different coloured flowers and pods and speckled or bi-coloured seeds.



I also grow broad beans – they improve the soil - squash, courgettes and fragrant herbs like basil and coriander. Nasturtium and borage flowers are both beautiful and edible in salads. Round the perimeter of our garden, I have planted various fruit trees. We have our own apples until the January.

I try to follow sustainable, organic and Permaculture principles (use your browser to find out more). Companion planting, i.e. growing different vegetables and other plants together, makes them less susceptible to disease and pests. The effect is more beautiful than growing them in regimented rows. I follow the cycle of Nature. Almost everything is re-cycled and stays within our space. So, all our compostable food and packaging waste goes into one of my four compost bins or two heaps as does almost everything from my pruning and tidying. We hardly ever use our green wheelie bin.

Neighbours give us their lawn mowings, garden waste and fallen leaves. I hardly ever use harmful chemicals. I plant flowers, wild and cultivated, that attract bees and other beneficial insects. I don't make my garden too tidy. I leave all the seed heads of flowers for the birds to feed on over the winter and I wait until spring to tidy up. I have little piles of untidiness in corners where frogs and other creatures can hibernate or hide. We burn wood pruned from our trees in our winter fireplace.

If you are interested in a wide variety of interesting and often organic seeds, try Garden Organic's Organic Gardening and Heritage Seed catalogues and, for interesting and unusual vegetables, the Real Seed Catalogue. **JB**

Bruce Nixon is author of *A Better World is Possible*.
www.bruce-nixon.com/betterworld.html

Peak oil and price at the pump

Seb Beloe of Transition Town Berkhamsted writes about peak oil as we approach Climate Week

For most readers, who all too regularly have to pull into their local filling station, today's petrol prices come as no surprise. But it is only just over three years since we were paying under £1 for a litre of unleaded. As I write this, the price at the Total garage on the High Street is £1.33 (or £1.42 if you are buying diesel!) with no prospect of prices going below £1 and every prospect of them climbing further. Of course it is not just petrol prices, but energy overall is increasingly expensive. There are many reasons for this, but the overwhelming one is the increasing wholesale price of hydrocarbons on global markets. For example, while average household electricity bills have increased from £605 in 2004 to £1060 in 2010, two thirds of this rise has come from increases in the wholesale cost of natural gas. If this wasn't reason enough to look for ways to become more efficient in our use of oil and gas (or better still, avoid using it at all wherever possible), then we also have to be concerned about the anticipated impacts of climate change. The media have become much less interested in climate change, but the science continues to show that our climate is changing, and that the cause is the accumulation of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere from human activity. In January, the government published its latest assessment of the expected direct impacts of climate change by the 2050s, which include hotter summers, more water shortages and increased damage from flooding and sea-level rise. More positively, the report suggests that we will also see milder winters and increased agricultural yields.

Globally and beyond 2050, though, the impacts are worse, with more drought, extreme weather events and food shortages. It is estimated that already 400 million people a year, many already in the world's poorest countries, are directly affected by climate change, with many more affected by indirect impacts such as increased food prices.

What is clear both from the anticipated impacts of climate change, and from the inexorable rise in the price of oil and gas, is that our use of, and attitude towards, energy is going to change radically.

Transition Town Berkhamsted (www.transitionberkhamsted.org.uk) is a local group that works to help educate and organise a constructive response to these challenges. We believe that there is an opportunity to build a more resilient, dynamic and closer community in response to the issues of peak oil and climate change.

In 2012 we will be hosting a range of events and activities, including during national Climate Week (see more at www.climateweek.com) which runs from 12th - 18th March. The highlight will be an expert Question Time style panel debate entitled "What On Earth Can We Do About Global Warming?". We will have expert panelists including Nick Robins the Head of HSBC's Climate Change Centre of Excellence and Martin Haigh, a strategist from Shell's scenarios team. The panel will take place on Wednesday 14th March at 7.30pm for 8pm. The event is free, but we anticipate places will be tight, so please e-mail WhatOnEarth@transitionberkhamsted.org

Quick Reaction Community Support Fund

Berkhamsted Rotary Club distributes large sums of money each year to support the many charities to be found in the town. However there are very many individuals who quietly do something for their fellow citizens without any fuss or recognition. It is to support these people that the Quick Reaction Community Support Fund was set up.

Do you know anyone who could with a little financial support to make their work easier and more effective? A typical example is a lady who was cooking meals

for two or three neighbours but needed larger cooking vessels than she had. By giving £50 this problem was resolved. Another person took her friend shopping once a week, pushing a wheelchair. It was hard work as the wheelchair was in need of an overhaul. Again a relatively small sum, of just over £100, did the trick. So do get in touch with the Rotary Club on 01442 862974. If you wonder whether your request falls within the criteria, do still call and discuss the issues. If it does not, there may be other funding available.

Parish Pages

Summer is coming

Stephen Lally bring us some Petertide News

Before we know it summer will be with us and, with it, another Petertide Fair. This year's 31st Fair, set for Saturday 16th June, will have many of the familiar features that people have enjoyed for years but with a lot that's new to keep it up to date, different and exciting.

If you can't wait until June there's a string of great events spreading from now to the big Fair day which promise good times as well as raising vital funds for the Petertide Fair causes. Last year, Petertide events raised £23,934 and it will be a real challenge to match that figure!

However, with your help and two worthwhile causes to support there's a real incentive to make 2012 our biggest fundraising year yet.

The Iain Rennie Hospice at Home, part of Iain Rennie Grove House Hospice Care

(irhh.org) is well known locally for the excellent specialist care and advice it gives in the homes of people with cancer and other life threatening illnesses across the Chilterns region. It follows this up with vital support to relatives and carers throughout the illness and bereavement.

Through Petertide, we will be raising money to contribute towards the work of a local nurse who will work with the charity's new night team to provide 24/7 support, 365 days a year. Iain Rennie is encouraging its supporters to take a 'Personal Challenge for Olympic Year' such as a marathon, triathlon or trekking in Thailand but, if you're not quite up to these, why not pledge to help at one of the Petertide events or at the Petertide Fair itself so you can do your bit.

Our overseas charity is the Nepali
(continues on page 16)



children accepted in local schools where they are eager to learn but they also need to set up a system so that other Nepalese disabled children can look forward to a bright future. With your help we can do so much.

Make a note of the Petertide events announced so far:

Friday 16th March - St

Patrick's Day Quiz Night.

Tuesday 1st May - Gatsby May Dinner. A sell-out event so book early.

Saturday 26th May - University of London Chamber Choir Concert

Saturday 16th June - The Big Day of the Petertide Fair

Saturday 24th June - St Peter's Patronal Lunch

Look out for more Petertide news and set a personal challenge to attend as many events as you can for the sake of the people who will be helped by our two charities. Not that enjoying yourself should be a challenge! All the events offer good company, good food, good music and a chance to be involved with big events in your church and town.

To offer your help at these events please contact Pru Murray on 871386 or prunellamurray@btinternet.com and thank God for all your blessings by helping to make a real difference to others in 2012.

JB

continued from previous page

Children's Trust

(nepalichildrenstrust.com), an English charity that supports 30 disabled children in Nepal. Disabled children are usually not wanted in Nepal and many end up begging on the streets. These thirty or so children lived in little more than a hovel with just one outside cold water tap for all washing and cooking so The Nepali Children's Trust is raising £250,000 to build and equip a new purpose built home for them. Whilst the children have already moved in and each now has their own bed and a small bedside cupboard for all their personal belongings (think what a challenge it would be to get all your personal belongings in one tiny cupboard!), the interior of the home is far from complete. More funds are needed to provide furnishings, medical treatment, artificial limbs, physiotherapy and emotional support, all of which has been lacking in the past for these deprived children. The Trust has now got all their

Mothering Sunday

By **Margaret Burbidge**

Cards and presents, visiting mothers and family meals are the stuff of Mothers' Day. Also known as Mothering Sunday, this has a long history. In the time of the Roman Empire, the 4th Sunday in Lent was a celebration to honour Mary, the mother of Jesus, and the "mother church". During the 16th century it was common for people to go to a service in their mother church, possibly the nearest cathedral. A later tradition was for domestic servants working away from home, to be given the day off to visit their families and to go with their mothers to their own mother church. That was often their only day off in the year. They may have picked wild flowers, or taken a cake with them as gifts for their mother. Many churches today make bunches of spring flowers or small cakes, which are blessed and given to children for their mothers and women in the congregation. Other practices associated with Mothering Sunday include making a Simnel cake, and a relaxation of the fasting of Lent. Rose Sunday is another name, when in church, the purple vestments may be replaced by rose-coloured ones.

In the last century it has become a celebration of mothering and an opportunity to express thanks for mothers. The emphasis on "mother church" seems to be less important.

The Mothers' Union, with its concern for family life, encourages the celebration of mothering on Mothering Sunday. Its Make a Mother's Day project invites anyone to buy an ethical gift for mothers, or in



memory of mothers, and so support MU work in this country and overseas, to help make another mother's day. See its website: www.makeamothersday.org

As an organisation Mothers' Union has throughout its history celebrated another day that usually falls in Lent. The Feast of the Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin Mary, known as Lady Day, is on the 25th March. It marks the story of the Angel Gabriel telling Mary she is to give birth to Jesus, and her acceptance in the words of the Magnificat.

Mothering Sunday this year is on the 18th March and Lady Day the 25th, though as this is a Sunday, the MU service will be on the following day. Mothering, and not just being mothers, is at the heart of all our lives as we care for and nurture others, and keep Jesus' commandment to love our neighbour as ourselves.

Make a Mother's Day

Buy a gift with a difference for Mothering Sunday and support the work of the Mothers' Union with families around the world. Order online at www.makeamothersday.org or phone 020 7222 5533 for a catalogue and help make another mother's day too. Margaret

Burbidge tel: 862139 **yB**

Regular Church Activities

3rd Mon	Pastoral Network, 7:45pm, The Court House. Contact Philippa Seldon 871534
Tue	Chuckles Parent & Toddler Group, 10-11:30am. All Saints Church Hall. Song Time or short service as announced. Contact Jenny Wells, 870981
Tue	St Peter's Choir, Children 5:15-6:15pm. St Peter's. Adrian Davis 875674 or Jean Wild 866859
1st Tue	Tuesday Club, 7:30pm A lively women's group with guest speaker. The Court House. Contact Barbara McKenna 871159
3rd Tue	Mothers' Union, meet in members' houses at 2.30pm. New members always welcome. Contact Kathie Lally, 863526
4th Tue	Mothers' Union Prayer Group, 2:30pm. 17 Shaftesbury Court. Tell us if anyone needs your prayers. Contact Jenny Wells 870981
Wed	Julian Meeting, meets about twice a month. 11:30am. All welcome. At Jenny Wells, 57 Meadow Rd, 870981 or at Ruth Treves Brown, 1 Montague Rd, 863268
Thu	Bellringing, 8pm, St Peters. Contact Helen Ruberry, 890949
Fri	Little Fishes Parent & Toddler Group 9:30-11:30am. The Court House. Weekly, with short service on 1st Friday in St Peter's (10am). Tracy Robinson 863559
Fri	St Peter's Choir, Children 7-8:30pm, Adults 7:30—8:30pm. St Peter's. Adrian Davis 875674 or Jean Wild 866859
3rd Sat	ABC Prayer Breakfast, 8am for breakfast & prayers. Various local churches.
1st Sun	Sundays Together Lunch 12.30pm Court House. For anyone on their own on a Sunday. Liz Jackson 864381

<i>Sunday Services</i>	St Peter's	All Saints' March
	<p><i>Sunday services</i></p> <p>8:00am Eucharist</p> <p>9:30am Sung Eucharist</p> <p>6:00pm Evening Prayer</p> <p>Sunday 11th March 6:00pm Choral Evensong</p> <p><i>Weekday services this month</i></p> <p>Morning Prayer: Mon – Fri 7:30am, Sat 9:30am.</p> <p>Eucharist: Mon 6:00pm; Tues 9:30am at All Saints' Shrublands Road; Wed 8:00am; Thurs 12:30pm; Sat 10:00am</p> <p>Evening Prayer: Mon 5:45pm, Tues – Thurs, Sat 5:00pm</p>	<p><i>March 4th Second Sunday of Lent</i></p> <p>10am Morning Worship</p> <p>Revd Rachael Hawkins</p> <p><i>11th Third Sunday of Lent</i></p> <p>10am Holy Communion</p> <p>Revd John Kirkby</p> <p><i>18th Mothering Sunday</i></p> <p>8am Holy Communion</p> <p>Revd Rachael Hawkins</p> <p>10am All Age Morning Worship</p> <p>Revd Rachael Hawkins</p> <p><i>25th Fifth Sunday of Lent</i></p> <p>10am Holy Communion</p> <p>Revd Tony Cavanagh</p> <p>4pm Healing Service</p> <p>Revd Rachael Hawkins, Tracy Robinson, Jenny Wells, and Audrey Cox</p>

March Parish Diary

Thurs 1st	1.00pm	Cowper Society Lunchtime Recital: Berkhamsted School
Sat 3rd	7.30pm	Cowper Society presents: Bridgewater Sinfonia concert. Verdi, Haydn, Bartok
Mon 5th	8:00pm	Cowper Society Winter Talks: ‘Coffee. A Global History’ by Prof. Jonathan Morris in the Court House
Sat 9th	7.30pm	Cowper Society presents: Bridgewater Sinfonia. Butterworth, Vaughn Williams, Brahms
Mon 12th	8.00pm	Cowper Society Winter Talks: East End Blitz
Fri 16th		Petertide St Patrick’s Day Quiz Night
Tues 20th	8.00pm	PCC Meeting in the Court House

Parish Diary information can be found at www.stpetersberkhamsted.org.uk

Registers	Baptisms	
	22nd January	Isabella Rose Smith Honor May Wensley Ava Rose Louise Lambley-Webb
	Weddings	
	None	
	Funerals	
	3rd January	Peter Anthony Caro (Chilterns Crematorium)
	9th January	Patricia Ann Pretorius McCowan

Key Church Contacts

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

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

The Revd Rachael Hawkins, All Saints’.

Further information available from our church websites:

www.stpetersberkhamsted.org.uk and at www.allsaintsberkhamsted.org.uk

Musical success at St. Peter's

Jean Wild, Assistant Director of Music, St Peter's, brings us music news

St Peter's Church Choir at Great Berkhamsted is delighted to announce the success of three choristers who received their Royal School of Church Music Gold Award in 2011 – from left to right in the attached photograph they are Jessica Malcolm, Christopher Limbert and Alice Jullien.

Following highly successful and memorable trips to Venice in 2009 where the choir sang in the Basilica of San Marco and to Vienna in May 2011 St. Peter's Church Choir have recently launched a CD "O Sing Joyfully", featuring a wide range of music from the Renaissance to Modern periods. This includes music by Tallis, Palestrina, Purcell, Monteverdi, Howells and a new work specially written for the choir by

Adrian Davis, Director of Music, and performed in St. Stephen's Cathedral, Vienna. The choir was also privileged to sing in the Chapel of Schonbrunn Palace and in St. Peter's Church, Vienna. The organ, originally built by Peter Collins in 1986, has recently been restored by Vincent Woodstock, the work being completed by St. Cecilia's Day in November, 2011. It is now being featured in a series of organ recitals, organised by Jonathan Lee, current organist at St Peter's Church with the help of the Cowper Society which organises regular concerts, recitals and other cultural events in the church.

More details and photographs can be seen in St Peter's Church, Great Berkhamsted website. **JB**



Seasonal Recipes: March

Joanne Lloyd-Evans continues her series of monthly seasonal recipes



Purple sprouting broccoli and red onion tart

Purple sprouting broccoli is in season from about February to April. It was originally cultivated by the Romans and although broccoli has been grown in England since the 18th century, the purple sprouting version has only become popular in recent years. This tart is very simple to make, but looks impressive and tastes delicious (eagle-eyed readers will notice I've used tenderstem broccoli in the tart in the photo as purple sprouting was not available at the time of cooking in January!)

Ingredients

1tbsp olive oil
2 red onions, sliced into half moons
1 tbsp balsamic vinegar

1 sheet of ready rolled puff pastry (c.320g)
200g purple sprouting or tenderstem broccoli
150ml crème fraîche
1 large egg
50g finely grated parmesan cheese

Preheat the oven to 220C (or 200C fan). Heat the olive oil in a small frying pan and gently soften the red onions. After a few minutes, add the balsamic vinegar and a little more oil if necessary. Cook over a low to medium heat for about 15 minutes in total.

Meanwhile, unroll the pastry sheet and put it onto a lined oven tray. With a knife, score a border all around the sheet, about half an inch from the edge.

(continues on page 23)

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Meanwhile, unroll the pastry sheet and put it onto a lined oven tray. With a knife, score a border all around the sheet, about half an inch from the edge.

When the onions are cooked and the oven is hot, spoon the onions onto the pastry (within the scored border) and pop into the oven for 10 minutes.

Trim the ends of the broccoli and blanch for 2-3 minutes in boiling water. Drain the broccoli, run it under cold water and drain again. Beat the crème fraiche, egg and parmesan cheese together and season with salt and pepper if desired.

After the tart has had 10 minutes in the oven, take it out and turn the temperature down to 200C (or 180C fan). Arrange the broccoli spears on top of the red onion, then spoon over the crème fraiche mixture. Put it back in the oven for another 15-20 minutes, taking care that the pastry doesn't get too brown. Serve hot, warm or cold. It will serve

about 4 adults as a main meal (with accompaniments) or 6-8 as a starter or snack. **yB**

Your Berkhamsted Needs You!

The editorial team of Your Berkhamsted is actively seeking new contributors for the magazine.

Did you know that everyone who works on bringing Your Berkhamsted to you each month is a volunteer? We would extend a warm welcome to anyone who would like to join us, whether you would like to contribute on a regular basis or just write a one-off article.

Features

We are always interested in discussing ideas for features about Berkhamsted life. These could be about the town's history, interesting modern day developments or local people of note (past or present). Articles should be 500 to 900 words in length.

Please email the editor for more details at editor@yourberkhamsted.org.uk.

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The Children's Society

Ann Browning, Chairman, Berkhamsted Appeals Committee, tells us about the Society's history and today's projects

The Children's Society was first known as "The Church of England Central Society for Providing Homes for Waifs and Strays"! Started in 1881 by Edward Rudolf to rescue orphans and destitute children from the streets of London, his revolutionary idea was to have small homes of 8 – 10 children, run like family units led by a master and matron. The Archbishop of Canterbury endorsed Edward Rudolf's aims and the main income for the charity has always come from the Church of England Parishes. House boxes were held by parishioners and emptied once a year, and special services and sales organised to raise money.

There were two homes nearby, at Princes Risborough and Leighton Buzzard. Parcels of clothing were sent from Berkhamsted parishes to help support the children and also toys at Christmas time.

In 1968 a Berkhamsted fundraising committee was formed, "The Church of England Children's Society Personal Endeavour Campaign, Berkhamsted Branch"! In their first year of activity they held a charity walk. The Berkhamsted Walk has been an annual event ever since, raising thousands of pounds. The Committee, under a simplified name, continues to organise a variety of events throughout the year, raising over £10,000 per annum.

Over the years, with radical changes in social attitudes the work of the Society has changed from providing homes for

unwanted children and overseeing adoption, to projects in the community which support those who fall through the net of governmental or charitable providers.

This January I visited one of the London centres from which the Society's many projects are run in the Boroughs of Greenwich, Southwark, Lewisham and Lambeth. One Co-ordinator and five senior project officers work from here.

Geraldine was the most impressive, having been in this type of work for 20 years. She heads London Youth at Risk to inform the young and make them aware of the dangers of certain behaviour and how to stay safe, deal with gangs and avoid going missing. She also runs Safe Choices which aims to reduce and prevent young women's violent offending; supporting the resources and resilience they need to make safe and healthy life choices. Lots of these girls have grown up in care and are vulnerable to being groomed into all sorts of situations, especially those from Children's Homes. Sexual exploitation is a huge risk for all young people living in poverty these days, yet is not an issue which attracts funding. She feels that Social Services have improved, working with the police and schools. The Police are better trained at dealing with the young.

To her the most irritating issue is the build-up of violence and sexual explicitness in the media. After the outcry from Mary



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continued from page 25

Whitehouse some years ago, TV particularly seemed to improve but of recent years the standards have got worse and worse, so the young assume this is normal behaviour.

Other project workers were involved in getting disaffected young who opt out of school, or may be are excluded, into social activities with the elderly who may have preconceived fears of teenage society. When an 84 year old former table tennis champion can beat a cocky teenager three times in a row it commands a lot of respect from the young, and a complete change in attitude on both sides.

Getting young people to stand on Greenwich Youth Council can lead to great things also. One young man with little interest in his future was encouraged to stand, then on the London Youth Council and now his ambition is to become an MP.

Another project works within schools. One initiative is with year 6 pupils who have learning difficulties or difficult home situations, helping their transition to the big secondary schools, building the resilience and coping strategies of these children before they enter the world of teenagers.

Of course, much work is done with children who are runaways, practically supporting and campaigning for the thousands of children and young people who feel forced to run away from home each year and are living scared and alone on the streets. Of these, 25% are thrown out of their homes by their parents or

carers.

The Children's Society's Safe and Sound campaign aims to ensure that every young runaway has somewhere safe to go and someone sound to turn to. Each project offers direct, intensive one-to-one work for as long as the child needs it, based on such issues as family relationships, substance abuse and staying safe. Family mediation and parent support workers help to restore children to their families if appropriate. Then counselling and mentoring services work with the children to stop them running away in future.

I went back into London with one of the HQ staff who told me that sadly all these project worker's jobs will be on the line on March 31st, because Government cuts are chopping into so much of the funding now. It makes one realise how vital it is to keep up the momentum on fundraising.

We are already working on this year's Berkhamsted Walk. The date is Sunday May 13th. Do put it in your diaries now! In addition to the excellent web site www.berkhamstedwalk.com donated by Ambrit three years ago, we are now on Facebook and Twitter. Just look at [berkhamsted-walk](https://www.facebook.com/berkhamsted-walk), "like it" and pass it on to all your friends. **JB**

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Introducing the Berkhamsted Audio Trail

Brian Shepard invites us to walk and listen around town

Wherever you live in Berkhamsted, just a few steps in any direction will take you away from it all and out into wonderful open countryside. There's no shortage of suggestions of where to go – walk books, maps, leaflets in profusion. And now, for anyone browsing Google and entering “walk” and “Berkhamsted”, the range on offer will include the Berkhamsted Audio Trail. Just go to berkhamsted.gov.uk and follow the links. But why add to what's already there? (“walk + berkhamsted” throws up 21,800 possible hits!) What is so different about this trail, unveiled in November 2011?

The Parish Paths Partnership (PPP or P3 for short - a bit about them later) identified a two-fold gap in the market: the medium and the message. Nowadays an audio guide, readily downloadable to an mp3 player or smartphone, is the medium of choice for an increasing number of people. It saves the hassle of

struggling with maps in the wind or, worse, rain. Whether you choose to walk alone or in a group, the commentary provides you with a knowledgeable virtual companion. At various places along the trail a friendly voice in your ear describes points of interest to look out for. The locations of these “audio points” (there are 16 of them in all), are conveniently identified on a map-diagram in a handy trifold brochure. You can pick one up in Berkhamsted Library or the Town Council office. For those who prefer the printed word there is an option to download a complete script of the commentary.

The Audio Trail has a message with a difference. Like any other good walk book, it gives clear basic directions. But that's only for starters. The commentary identifies wild flowers and trees en route and where to spot them and the birds and other wild life you may encounter. Where the trail follows the canal towpath, modern canalside

developments are set in a fascinating historical context, bringing to life the town's industrial heyday. Horticultural history, too, is given its due. Hands up who knew that Berkhamsted was a major centre of the watercress industry in the 19th century, or that Lane's Nurseries enjoyed an international reputation, supplying grape vines to France and Germany?



Other nuggets include the history and derivation of some local place names. Why was it called Bullbeggars Lane? What on earth can Sugar Lane and Shootersway, at opposite ends of the town, possibly have in common? Now we come to the really clever bit. Each audio point is downloadable separately. So, if you just have time to visit, say, the castle or St Peter's Church you can wander round them while listening to a description of the key features. Even a stroll along the short length of Castle Street is enlivened with a story about what happened when Graham Greene tried to pawn a broken cricket bat and Richard Mabey's singular description of the entrance to Berkhamsted School.

PPP is a group made up of councillors, officials at town, borough and county level, and members of Berkhamsted Citizens Association and the Chiltern Society. Funding provided by Herts County Council has been applied over the years to making improvements to local footpaths such as providing clear signage, replacing stiles with wheelchair and buggy friendly gates, or, better still, leaving gaps in hedgerows where stock-proof barriers are no longer needed. Other key improvements include providing benches at viewpoints. Two have been newly sited along the route of the Audio Trail.

For coming up with the



original idea of a Berkhamsted Audio Trail credit is due to Norman Cutting. The finished product is, however, the work of many hands. Apart from members of PPP, many individuals from specialised interest groups gave freely of their time and expertise by contributing to, reading and improving the commentary script. A full list of acknowledgements appears in the Berkhamsted Audio Trail brochure.

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The last word by Antony Harbidge, Chairman of BRAG, on the South Berkhamsted Concept

“**B**erkhamsted is at a critical point in its history.”

Well, that’s one statement from Grand Union Investments (GUI) that we can all agree with.

Regular readers of *Your Berkhamsted* (Aug 11 and Nov 11 issues) will be well aware of GUI’s “South Berkhamsted Concept” (SBC) and its efforts to get a near 100 acre land holding taken out of Green Belt with a master plan that promotes the building of 800 new homes primarily to the south east of Berkhamsted.

Let’s just take a check on what that means. Obviously it means a big chunk of Green Belt lost for ever, but also a population increase of 15+%, 1600+ additional cars and around 6000 extra vehicular movements per day, along with the associated additional burden on an already creaking infrastructure. And these figures are just for SBC, they are in **addition** to 1180 new homes argued for by Dacorum Borough Council (DBC) in its Core Strategy. DBC and Berkhamsted Town Council (BTC) are totally opposed to GUI’s proposals and agree that the *concept* would have a devastating effect on the town if adopted.

So what’s the problem? Simple, when DBC presents the Core Strategy to the Planning Inspectorate later this year, DBC is also obliged to submit GUI’s objections to the Core Strategy along with GUI’s full “Master Plan” and supporting documents. It is this Government appointed Inspector who holds all the power and GUI’s submission clearly panders to the

Government’s seemingly unshakable belief that building is one of the prime routes out of the current economic crisis.

GUI’s main argument is that over the period of the Core Strategy (2006-2031) DBC have underestimated housing requirements and argue that 2871 new homes need to be built in Berkhamsted “to meet the town’s **natural** growth”. That represents a staggering 37% increase on the 2006 housing stock. No, that isn’t a misprint GUI really is claiming that a 37% increase represents **natural** growth!

GUI also claims that **natural** growth will lead to a 24.4% population increase from the 2001 census to 2031, while Hemel Hempstead population will apparently grow by only 13.9%. GUI credits the source as the Office of National Statistics (ONS), however ONS only offer annual population projections for Dacorum as whole which shows a 14.5% increase for the Borough.

Clearly GUI has loaded the figures in favour of developing its land, but GUI has also changed the geographical boundaries to include Ashridge ward.

Yes, according to GUI the villages of Ringshall, Little Gaddesden, Nettledean, Frithsden and Potten End all lie within Berkhamsted Town boundaries. This effectively inflates the 2001 census baseline by over 17% and this loading *error* is compounded year on year by GUI’s exaggerated growth patterns.

So, the figures have been manipulated to

give pro-development politicians something to quote, but the sub-current of the text revolves around repeated use of the word “demand”. GUI asserts the Core Strategy “should look at demand (not just need)” and “development is required to meet more of local housing demand (with the emphasis on demand rather than need)”. In other words, GUI is telling the UK planning hierarchy and politicians that the land is available, the houses can be built and, what’s more, they can be sold.

Job done, money in the bank and economic crisis over. But we know it isn’t, don’t we?

Certainly, the simple act of removing land from Green Belt will likely increase its value between 60 and 100 fold. But, for every winner there is a loser. If GUI win, then the loser is clear - the historic town of Berkhamsted. The utopian image portrayed in the GUI “Master Plan” of a sustainable village extension to Berkhamsted is no more than PR guff.

Both the Hilltop and Chiltern estates offered hollow promises of community amenities, while the initial plans for affordable homes in Farm Place have been described as being more like “oppressive Satanic mills” rather than the “Utopian visions” of the artist’s impressions at concept stage.

Where are the core services to support this staggering expansion? The hardest question...when do we say enough?” The answer is this year, 2012. And it is we, the community, who can and should stand up to be counted. We need to preserve our much envied high street, and BTC and ultimately DBC need our support to protect the unique character of this historic market town.

It is no good sitting back doing nothing and then blaming the councillors if it all goes wrong. The fact that you read *Your Berkhamsted* shows that you are community minded, so please show your support and help protect Berkhamsted. This is indeed a critical time in Berkhamsted’s history. Berkhamsted Residents Action Group (BRAG) formed to repel SBC and Green Belt development in Berkhamsted. To this end BRAG made extensive submissions to the Core Strategy, but the fight has only just started.

For further information on how you can offer support go to BRAG’s website at www.NOsouthberkhamstedconcept.com.

yB

Write the last word

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

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Copy Dates:	2 March 2012	6 April 2012	4 May 2012
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Published by Great Berkhamsted Parochial Church Council. Registered charity no 1130108
Printing by Connekt Colour, Northbridge Road, Berkhamsted HP4 1EH



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