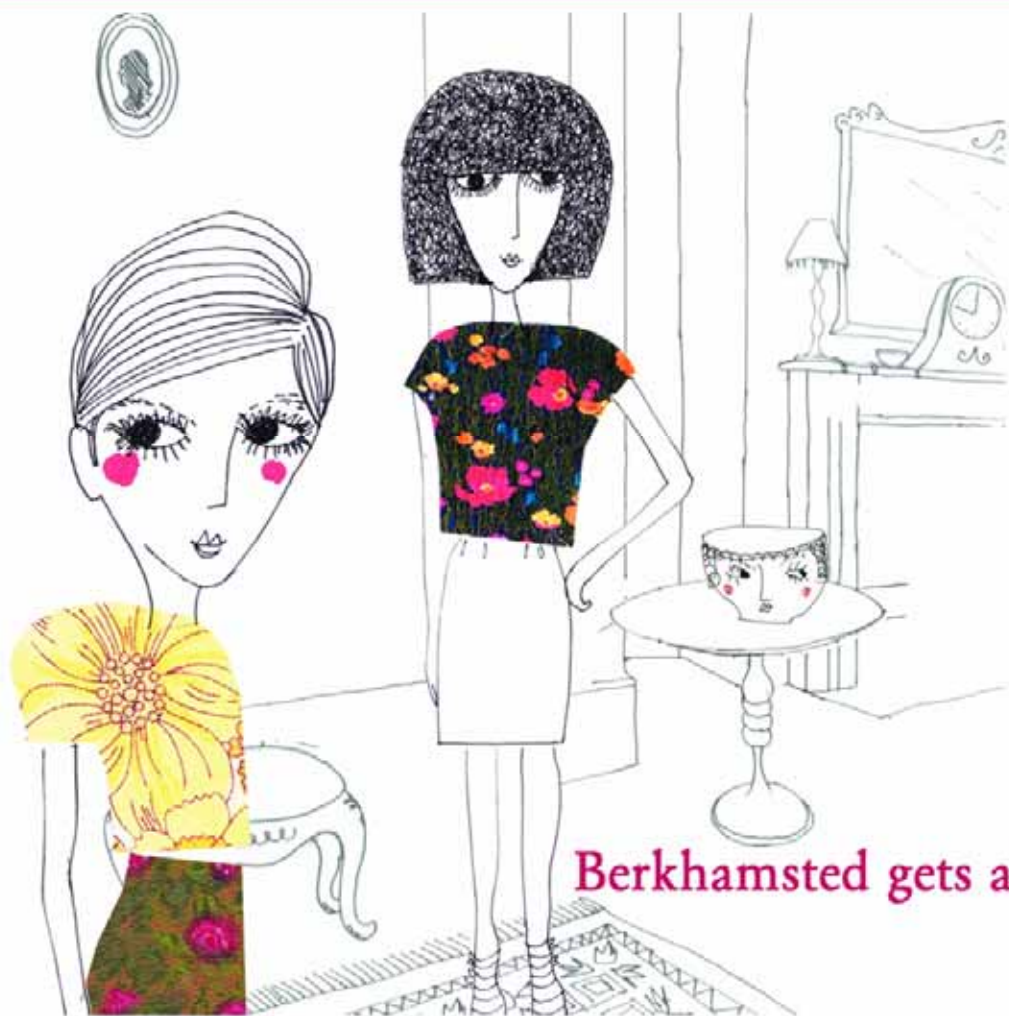


*the magazine for town and parish*

September 2012

# *your* **Berkhamsted**



**Berkhamsted gets arty**

Discover Bletchley Park  
A murderer in Berkhamsted!  
Competition winner announced

**50p**

## ***From the Editor*** September 2012



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

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

So, London 2012 has finally come to an end and whilst the Olympics may not be everybody's cup of tea, for those who have felt great excitement whenever we got yet another medal, it does seem to have had an effect on people that will hopefully continue beyond the two weeks that have just passed. It has brought people together and evoked a feeling of unity within society. There is also an increased sense of pride and enthusiasm that us Britons sometimes seem to lack, and are perhaps too modest to allow ourselves to feel. We seem to have realised that there is nothing wrong with pride in our achievements following hard work, effort and self-belief. It has also encouraged more people to become interested in sport and physical activity, particularly children, and all of this is surely no bad thing.

However, for those of you who have been awaiting the departure of Gary Lineker from your evening TV (or the rest of us who feel lost without his daily round-up of events), we turn to more local matters. September sees Hertfordshire turn into 'Art-fordshire' with the Herts Open Studios event and this month's front cover features one of Katy Leigh's works. Dan Parry reveals a murderer in our midst (albeit in 1845) and Ian Skillicorn provides ideas for days out at Whipsnade Tree Cathedral and Bletchley Park. With all of our usual features too, there should be something for everyone!

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As always, we'd love to hear from you if you have anything interesting that you would like us to include in future issues.

**Helen Dowley, Editor**

Credits: Front cover – "I wish I had a bowl like that" by local artist Katy Leigh.

# Your Berkhamsted Leader by Fr Tom Plant



Although I have only just started at St Peter's church, I write not from Berkhamsted, but from the middle of a very wet field in Norfolk,

surrounded by teenagers. There's music going on in the Big Top and dancing, as they work against the weather to keep their spirits up. We are at the annual youth pilgrimage to the Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham: the one whose statue was processed around town last year. This year's pilgrimage is Olympic-themed, and despite my complete aversion to sport, it would be churlish of me to write this month without mentioning the Games. Not, I'm afraid, that I have seen any of them. In fact, the only effect on me that they've had so far is to deter one semi-apologetic parishioner from Mass so that he could go to a women's volleyball match. Surely an experience, if not a strictly spiritual one.

Celebrations of youth and beauty can be somewhat trying for those of us who are all too aware that we are neither as young as we once certainly were, nor as beautiful as we like to think we were. Yet while we may feign shock at the overexposure of the young athletes' trim torsos, and cynicism at their youthful earnestness, might we not learn something from the openness of their ambition not just to run the race, but to win it?

Early in the games, the Mayor of London

commended the British side for their hospitality towards the guest teams: how very English, he tweeted, to let our foreign friends win so many of the games. A Christian virtue, to be sure, and perhaps even an Olympic one. After all, the ancient Greeks had one word for both 'guest' and 'stranger': *xenos*, from which the only derivation in the English language is the less delightful 'xenophobia.' But now, it seems, the English gentlemen and women have loosened those erstwhile rigid upper lips and turned cad, rotter and bounder, in shameless hubris daring even to claim several Golds. An Englishman myself, I have often found ambition and enthusiasm somewhat vulgar, not just in sport, but all the more in religion. Yet here I am, in a field full of ambitious young enthusiasts who, like the Olympians, want not just to run the race, but to take the gold prize. Full of joy and passion, these will settle for nothing less than spreading God's love throughout the world: the prize of the heavenly Kingdom, which shines brighter in the hearts of those who have glimpsed it than any earthly gold. It's easy to be an armchair cynic; far more difficult to run the race. I salute them for choosing to take the harder path.

Follow Fr Tom on Twitter @FrThos

JB

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## Around the town

### OXFAM Children's Wear Event

When Nicky Evans and her valiant team of volunteers close the tills at the end of the Autumn Oxfam Children's Wear Event on Friday 7<sup>th</sup> September, their first thoughts may not be of the beaming smile on the face of Zimbabwean farmer Ipaishé Masvingise as she harvests her maize crop. But underpinning all their hard work is the knowledge that they are making a difference.

Ipaishé was one of the first farmers to benefit from an Oxfam-funded scheme which piped water from the Ruti Dam at Gutu in Zimbabwe to the fields with stunning results. From dried-up desiccated crops to thriving lush green fields – the transformation was amazing. Now Ipaishé has been able to feed not only her own family, her mother and sisters but also give some as gifts to neighbours and even sell some to fund a vital grain storage facility. Events such as the Children's Wear Event help not only hard-pressed families here but also enable Oxfam to extend such irrigation schemes to benefit more families. The next move is to install a solar-powered pump. The doors to the Children's Wear Event in the Berkhamsted Civic Centre will be open from 9am-11.30am on Friday 7<sup>th</sup> September and there will be a huge choice of new season clothes as well as toys and games. Benefit yourself and others by coming along.

### Events presented by the Cowper Society

Sat 8<sup>th</sup> Sept at 7:30pm: CONCERT – Berkhamsted Choral Society and Chorley Choral Society directed by Graham Wili. Summer tour Programme including Vivaldi's *Magnificat* and works by

Brahms, Haydn, Lotti and Palestrina.

Tickets: £13/£11 & U16s free, Students & Dacorum Card holders £6 from Cole Flat & Partners.

Sat 22<sup>nd</sup> Sept at 7:30pm: CONCERT – Bridgewater Sinfonia Director Adrian Davis Mozart *Overture: Il Seraglio K384*; Mozart *Piano Concerto in C minor K491* Florian Mitrea *piano*; Beethoven *Symphony No 3 in E flat Op 55*. Tickets: £15, U18s free, Dacorum Card concessions; Seasons (4 concerts) £45 from Aitchisons or [www.bridgewater-sinfonia.org.uk](http://www.bridgewater-sinfonia.org.uk).

Fri 9<sup>th</sup> Oct at 1:00pm: RECITAL – Anna Le Hair *piano* and Helen Godbolt *cello*, Free Entry. Retiring collection.

Sat 13<sup>th</sup> Oct at 7:30pm: ORGAN RECITAL – Sarah Soularue gives the Celebrity Organ Recital to start *The King Of Instruments' Recital Series 2012*. Tickets: £10 on the door.

Sarah Soularue is one of the world's foremost organists. A former student of Maurice Durufle and subsequently *Organiste titulaire* at St Etienne-du-Mond in Paris, she is now Head of Keyboard at Gisors Conservatoire. It is of great excitement that such an eminent organist is coming to play for us in Berkhamsted. Renowned for her playing, this is a unique opportunity to hear an organist from the French school on our doorstep, playing on the newly restored organ in St Peter's Church. The opportunity will not occur again any time soon, and promises to be a fascinating and unmissable opening to the 2012 organ recital series.

JJB

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## *Read all about us!*

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

By the time you read this the Olympics would have been and gone for another four years, but proponents of less mainstream sports will hope for legacy of interest, not least archery. According to Hemeltoday.co.uk a combination of The Hunger Games, a sci-fi movie with lots of bow and arrow fights, together with the likely interest after the Olympics, will provoke interest in the sport, though the Berkhamsted Bowmen believe that movies have less of an influence. The Dacorum Heritage Trust's Museum Store in Berkhamsted made a rare appearance on the blogosphere on RootsChat.com. This unsung repository of local archives provides much of the material for our historical features in this publication, and we hope to have a more in depth feature on this fascinating place soon. Sometimes following the blog postings that pop up on the journey of Berkhamsted highlights is like reading a foreign language. Perhaps the petrol heads amongst you can translate this from Pistonheads.com – "Wondered what a 996 turbo chrome wrapped would look like..." (well, no actually, but now you mention it..) and the reader is taken through to an Ebay page with a "2002 Porsche 911 996 Turbo, chrome wrapped (in time for Christmas presumably) manual, satnav, aero kik, 19" alloys." Phwoarr! Now I have your attention. Apparently one was spotted passing down Berkhamsted High Street recently; and in the gloom that passed for our summer at time of writing it must have appeared like a small star from the nearby galaxy of Andromeda. You will recall the lather of excitement that followed the announcement, subject to planning machinations, of the arrival of an

M&S food store in the town. Metric Property Investments have announced the submission of planning permission in their First Quarter Interim Management Statement, reported on amongst others fool.uk-wire.com. But perhaps I was naive to imagine that this would be universally welcomed. According to *Berkhamsted Today* a gentleman whose identity I had better protect, claimed that the 22 parking places allowed for the development would be wholly inadequate and believes a multi-storey car park should be included in the plans. Which would of course be almost as in keeping with the character of the town as the South Berkhamsted Concept. Not surprisingly the director of Property and Marks and Spencer retorts that "It is envisaged that the majority of our customers will combine their visit with a trip to other parts of the town, and we therefore expect a minimal effect on overall volumes of traffic". Which is probably not an unfair forecast.

And whilst we are discussing matters of business, Richoux Group, who you will recall own relative newcomer Villagio, announced an expected profit in a trading update announced on investagate.co.uk. Apart from Villagio, they also own the alarmingly entitled Zippers in Chesham. Now fully open one presumes. And so to architecture, the appropriately named blog WowHaus enthuses about a modernist house in Water End designed by Eades Hotwani Wilkinson. It not only looks good but is eco-friendly too. Although one can't help thinking that these pristine contemporary homes are for a three-dimensional art gallery rather than for living in. I mean, there is not a dishevelled newspaper, disassembled lego, or scattered

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# Artistic Berkhamsted

## John Gerry

After the Jubilee, the European Cup, the Olympics and the Paralympics, it's got to be time for art and culture. Sure enough,



Hayley Gerry

absolutely on cue, the Herts Open Studios Event comes to Berkhamsted from the 8th - 30th September.

After cool Britannia, cool Berkhamsted!

Throughout Hertfordshire, hundreds of artists and craftsmen of all types exhibit in their own homes or in local galleries. In Dacorum, there are 200 exhibitors, but I want to concentrate on the 12 artists from



Allison Sherburne

Berkhamsted, and, in particular, on the Upstairs gallery.

The Upstairs gallery (above the Post Office in the High street) is run by the

Way Inn Trust, a charity set up in

1988 as a centre for the local community providing post office services, counselling, a bookshop and, now, of course, a gallery to showcase local artistic talent. As a Berkoite, I'm thrilled that this community project has resulted in such a cool gallery.

This is the first year that the Upstairs gallery has been involved in the Herts Open Studios, and it is featuring the works of five artists. If you like abstract painting, you will love Allison

Sherburne's highly colourful works, and, should you prefer landscape art, then look at Ruth Brown's untamed pastel landscapes. A more unusual



Ruth Brown

offering from Katharine Paton-King whose stitched textile sculptures "explore human anthropology through the juxtaposition of concepts and humour". Hayley Gerry designs

unusual contemporary jewellery in silver, gold and mixed media. Much of her work has been influenced by walks in Ashridge forest, so locally made and locally inspired! Last but not least are the ceramic, hand-painted designs of Katy Leigh. I already eat my breakfast eggs from Katy's egg cups, so I am looking forward to seeing her new designs.

We must not forget that there are another seven artists in Berkhamsted, so please pick up a copy of the Herts Open Studio brochure to find

out where they are exhibiting (usually in their homes). These include painting, ceramics, photography and textiles. Looking at the wider Dacorum picture, and for those who would like to see many of the exhibitors, there will be a competition to enter with a prize based on observations made at various studios. Details will be announced in the next week or two, so keep an eye on

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

So to see or buy some great artistic products, be sure to visit the Upstairs gallery and the homes of the other artists taking part. Enjoy! *yB*



Katy Leigh



Katharine Paton-King

## Your Berkhamsted Needs You!

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

### Local groups

Bringing news from local groups to our readers is an important function of Your Berkhamsted. If you belong to a local group please let us know about your latest news and events. Please consider sending us an article about what your group does. Articles should be 500 to 900 words in length.

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## ***Berkhamsted Local History & Museum Society***

**6<sup>th</sup> - 9<sup>th</sup> September 2012**

Once again the Berkhamsted Local History & Museum Society is giving the people of Berkhamsted and further afield the opportunity to learn about Berkhamsted's 'Hidden History' by opening and providing guided tours of a number of historical buildings in Berkhamsted, which are not normally open in this way. All tours are FREE.

**Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> Sept:** four guided tours of the British Film Institute at Kingshill.\*

**Friday 7<sup>th</sup> Sept** there are two tours at 10am and 12pm of the Dacorum Heritage Trust Museum Store, the accredited museum in which collections from different parts of Dacorum are housed, including a very large collection relating to Berkhamsted's history and archaeology. Bookings required to 879525 or [curator@dacorumheritage.org.uk](mailto:curator@dacorumheritage.org.uk).

**Friday 7<sup>th</sup> Sept** at 10am - guided tour (new for this year) entitled, 'A Walk into the Past: Berkhamsted Place, successor to the Castle.' This will also include the opportunity of visiting the Great Barn. Bookings to Jenny Sherwood 865158 or [KShew9100@aol.com](mailto:KShew9100@aol.com). This tour is repeated on Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> Sept with the tour starting at 1400. Bookings as above.

**Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> Sept** – an opportunity to learn more of the hidden history of a number of historic sites. These include Berkhamsted Castle: tours at 10.30am, 12.30am, 3pm and the Old Hall and Chapel of Berkhamsted School: tours at 10.30am and 2.30pm.

Berkhamsted Town Hall: tour at 11.30am, St Peter's Church and the Court House: tour at 3pm, and Claire Lloyd Properties:

open from 10.30am – 4pm with small group tours at regular intervals. This building is the oldest known urban jettied building with timbers dating back to the late thirteenth century.

Sunnyside Church: enjoy a guided tour of this beautiful church - open from 2pm - 4pm, Ashlyns School: visit this former Foundling Hospital, open from 1pm – 5.30pm with tours at 1.30pm and 3.30pm. Booking is requested from Jenny Sherwood. For enquiries or further details, contact Jenny Sherwood or visit the BLHMS website, [www.berkhamsted-history.org.uk](http://www.berkhamsted-history.org.uk) or [www.heritageopendays.org.uk](http://www.heritageopendays.org.uk).

\*Unfortunately these tours are already fully booked.

### **Percy Birtchnell Memorial Prize 2012**

The Percy Birtchnell Memorial Prize took place this year for the 12th year running. Two prizes are awarded annually to pupils in Year 4 of Victoria School in memory of Percy Birtchnell, an Old Boy of Victoria Boys' School and a founder member of the Berkhamsted and District Local History Society (now the Berkhamsted Local History and Museum Society) which awards the prizes. Percy first became interested in local history while he was still at school and wrote his first articles on local history when he was in his teens. The topic is based on National Curriculum work covered in school but the project is written in the children's own time. This year's topic was Berkhamsted during World War II'. Seven children submitted projects. Prizes were awarded to Nancy Allsop for her project 'World War II' and to Harriet Beadle for 'My Diary'. Louisa Rollit and Annie Furmidge were highly commended for their projects 'WW2 Information Booklet' and 'World

# *The well, the lepers, and the long lost hospital of Berkhamsted*

**Dan Parry**

Where's the most sacred corner of Berkhamsted? Perhaps St Peter's or one of the other churches, or maybe the castle given its ancient role in our history. Surely the King's Arms ranks highly due to its traditional use as a virtual town hall where major issues have long received a public airing. The national implications of the Berkhamsted revolution of 1866 were ironed out here, though that's another story as readers may recall. For me, the title should go to the old post office. Not just the post office, (along St John's Well Lane), you understand, but the old and wrinkled telephone exchange too. The fading buildings, the scrubby grassed areas, the air of neglect....to me this is a sacrosanct corner that's long been in need of due recognition, a commemorative blue plaque, and a lawn mower. The same seasoned readers may also recall previous questions about the missing bit of the William the Conqueror story. That William ventured into Berkhamsted, nicked the crown off the nobles, and lo, became King of England is a tale often repeated, though less so perhaps is the question 'why did he bother with Berko'. It was no accident he went first to Wallingford then to Berkhamsted, both later noted for their prominent, medieval castles. Wallingford's was built on the site of Saxon fortifications and there is speculation that ours was too. The point is the site's history is older than William. So is this the spot where the long story of Berkhamsted began? I'm not so sure. This is probably a good moment to stroll beyond the castle and peruse the tatty corner up the road.

The clue's in the name. St John's Well Lane – better known to posterity as that little turning you go down to get to Waitrose – is a whole story captured in a short name like an insect in amber. A source of clean water is always an important feature. But the religious significance of the water here, as preserved in the name, is an ancient story possibly beginning in pre-Roman times. When the High Street was still just a Belgic track winding its way through the Iron-Age forest, here in this part of the valley abundant spring waters bubbled to the surface. In the Celtic way of belief, spring waters were associated with spirits and it is possible that the spring here attracted some spiritual significance stretching through to Saxon times. Indeed human burials have been found in this area and it is believed that the town's first chapel existed not on the central site of St Peter's, but here among the nettles in post office corner.

Although its exact site has not been precisely identified, the chapel was named in a manorial survey of 1616, as being dedicated to St James and having its own burial ground. Parishes traditionally held their annual fair on the day of the local patron saint and for centuries Berkhamsted's was held not on St Peter's Day but on St James's. The spring waters long continued to be associated with spiritual significance, even possessing the power to heal. Which is probably why the town's first hospital occupied this site, incorporating the chapel, and built between 1213 and 1216 in the reign of King John.

Dedicated to the care of lepers returning from the crusades, the monastic Hospital of St John the Evangelist was founded by Geoffrey Fitzpiers, Earl of Essex. In 1227 Henry III ordered the constable of the castle to supply the monks and their lepers with four quarters of corn from the grange and two 'bacones'. In 1391 the site was described as the Hospital of Brothers and Sisters of St. Thomas the Martyr and St. John the Evangelist. Throughout the medieval period the spring served as the town's principal source of drinking water and two wardens were employed to protect it. The patients had apparently left by 1516, and according to the Victoria County History 'in September 1533, the place was made over to Thomas Jakes of Berkhamstead, gentleman, who in January 1536 disposed of a gilt chalice, a mass-book, three vestments and other ornaments, and in September 1539 sold the lead roof of the chapel and its bells. The existence of the house was over long before the king granted it and its lands in June 1540 to Robert Horderne.' In Victorian times people continued to bathe their eyes in the 'holy water' though urban development lowered the level of the water table to the point that by the 1940s the spring had dried up. In the modern era the land was used by Lane's Nurseries and later by the Post Office, and today the most familiar relic of the sacred well that once served the town is the street name. It's all a far cry from lepers, monks and Geoffrey Fitzpiers but it's something to ponder should you fancy a dose of watery healing while wending your way to Waitrose.

### ***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).

### **Local groups**

Bringing news from local groups to our readers is an important function of Your Berkhamsted. If you belong to a local group please let us know about your latest news and events. Please consider sending us an article about what your group does. Articles should be 500 to 900 words in length.

### **Arts and culture**

Would you like to write a review of an arts event taking place in or nearby to Berkhamsted? Let us know!

E-mail [editor@yourberkhamsted.org.uk](mailto:editor@yourberkhamsted.org.uk)

# ***An interview with the Chairman of Berkhamsted Raiders***

**Matt Dawson**



## **Berkhamsted Raiders CFC**



**B**erkhamsted Raiders is the biggest football club in the local area, and recently one of the most successful clubs as well. Lots of children from all over the county participate week in, week out for Raiders from September through to April which is when the domestic season finishes for most teams. The club has also won a host of awards. That is something which Keith Pollard told me about when I interviewed him recently.

### **How big of an honour is it to be chairman of a club which is so big within the local community?**

Winning the Herts FA and FA Eastern Region Community Club of the Year reflects all the good work that has been put in to develop the Club. We are one of the six clubs shortlisted for the National FA Award. It's not all down to the Chairman! I am very proud of what the Raiders team of parents who are Committee Members and Managers has done to create a club which is one of the biggest and most respected in the country.

### **What does your role as chairman involve?**

I oversee the running of the Club supported by 17 volunteers on the Club Committee and... the 55 Team Managers....55 Assistant Managers....55 Parent Reps. We have more "staff" than

most small businesses! Parents probably don't realise how much work the Committee and Managers put in. The Club costs over £120,000 to run. With 55 teams from U7 to U18 and 700 boys and girls playing football, there's quite a lot to do. We provide 25 pitches in eleven different locations in Berkhamsted, including many of the schools such as Ashlyns, Greenway, Egerton Rotheray, Westfield, Bridgewater and Thomas Coram. These pitches, goals and nets are funded by Raiders. We have a team of external coaches, we buy kit and equipment for all of the teams, we manage registrations with the leagues, we CRB check all involved. We have to raise around £40,000 each year to plug the gap between membership subscriptions and the running costs.

As Chairman, I am involved in many of the initiatives run by the FA and the Herts FA, and in the BerkoAstro partnership project with Ashlyns School. Lots of meetings! Because of my background, I've been quite keen to see the Club exploit the power of technology to make the running of the club and communication more effective – e-newsletters, Twitter, Facebook, SMS messaging, the website all play an important part nowadays.



**You also manage one of the Raiders teams, how have you found that experience?**

Great fun.... even though my team has yet to win a Cup or a League!

I try to achieve a balance between participation and winning. In youth football, winning isn't everything. The youth football manager's job is not an easy one. You have to do the best for the kids... and keep the parents happy.

**What is your personal opinion of Berko Raiders as a club?**

Our motto is "Combining excellence in the community with excellence on the pitch" and I think we manage to achieve that. We are open to all abilities, and with the developing of our training resources, we are beginning to create some Cup and League winning teams.

**How long have you been involved with Raiders as a parent, a manager and as the chairman?**

I started as a "Parent Manager" at U8, so I am coming up to my eighth year. I took over from former Chairman Paul Beard when he died suddenly three years ago. I have tried to continue his philosophy and turn his dream of a youth football centre at Ashlyns School into reality. The new Paul Beard Centre at BerkoAstro is the latest part in this plan.

**What effect would you say Berko Astro has had on the club?**

It has been great for the Club and the local community. Over 1,500 people use it every week. Plus, it's used regularly by Ashlyns school children and other schools. We have the best training facilities in the local area, and children are able to develop their skills on a superb playing surface in all weathers.

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# *Whipsnade Tree Cathedral*

**Ian Skillicorn**

**M**any of us have enjoyed a windy afternoon on Dunstable Downs, but not too far from the crowds of day-trippers, and a sky heavy with kites and gliders, you can find a unique place of tranquillity, spirituality and natural beauty.

Whipsnade Tree Cathedral is a large garden of trees, planted in the form of a cathedral. There is a wonderful variety of species, such as ash, beech, cedar, oak and willow. The layout includes a nave, chancel, transepts and four chapels (one for each season). The avenues of trees provide a haven for birds and there are wooden benches where you can sit in quiet contemplation, listening to birdsong.

A local landowner and lawyer, Edmund Kell Blyth (1898 - 1969), created the Tree Cathedral as a memorial to three of his friends, who were killed towards the end of the First World War. Blyth had been a cadet at Sandhurst, where he became firm friends with Arthur Bailey, John Bennett and Francis Holland. After their deaths, Blyth felt compelled to honour them in, as he described it, an act of "Faith, hope and reconciliation".



Blyth had already commemorated his friends in 1925, when he turned some cottages into holiday homes for the poor of London, and named the dwellings after the three men. But the desire for a further memorial remained.

Inspiration for the Tree Cathedral came from a visit with his wife to the new Anglican cathedral in Liverpool (which was consecrated in 1924 but only completed in 1978). Blyth explained: "As we drove south through the Cotswold hills on our way home... I saw the evening sun light up a coppice of trees on the side of a hill. It occurred to me then that here was something more beautiful still and the idea formed of building a cathedral with trees."



Although work on the cathedral began in the early 1930s it took many years to complete. Planting was halted during the Second World War, during which time the garden became overgrown.

Blyth's legacy to the area can also be found nearby at Windy Sayles, a holiday park for the Guide Association which was built on land gifted by Blyth in memory of his mother. After Blyth's death, the cathedral was managed by his son, Tom. When Tom Blyth died in 1978, a hornbeam avenue was added to the cathedral in his memory.

The Tree Cathedral is now owned by the National Trust, while Whipsnade Tree Cathedral Fund is the independent body responsible for religious uses of the cathedral. Religious services, carried out by a number of denominations, have been held on the site since 1953 and continue to this day.



### **Directions and opening hours**

There are leaflets and directions at the National Trust information centre at Dunstable Downs. From there, the cathedral can be reached on foot. If going directly to the cathedral by car, it is off the B4540. There is a small car park, but check the website for opening hours. The cathedral is open from dawn to dusk every day. [www.nationaltrust.org.uk/whipsnade-tree-cathedral](http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/whipsnade-tree-cathedral).

After visiting the Tree Cathedral you can leave the car park and cross the road towards the perimeter fence of Whipsnade Zoo. It is possible to walk around the perimeter and you will be rewarded with glimpses of some of the animals inside!

yB



Photo credits: Whipsnade Tree Cathedral photographs by Tony Jones; Whipsnade Zoo photographs by Ian Skillicorn

## *Regular Church Activities*

3rd Mon	Pastoral Network, 7:45pm, The Court House. Contact Philippa Seldon 871534
Tue	Chuckles Parent & Toddler Group, 10-11:30am. All Saints' Church Hall. Song Time or short service as announced. Contact Jenny Wells, 870981
Tue	St Peter's Choir, Children 5:15-6:15pm. St Peter's. Adrian Davis 01296 632263 or Jean Wild 866859
1st Tue	Tuesday Club, 7:30pm A lively women's group with guest speaker. The Court House. Contact Barbara McKenna 871159
3rd Tue	Mothers' Union, meet in members' houses at 2.30pm. New members always welcome. Contact Kathie Lally, 863526
4th Tue	Mothers' Union Prayer Group, 2:30pm. 17 Shaftesbury Court. Tell us if anyone needs your prayers. Contact Jenny Wells 870981
Wed	Julian Meeting, meets about twice a month. 11:30am. All welcome. At Jenny Wells, 57 Meadow Rd, 870981 or at Ruth Treves Brown, 1 Montague Rd, 863268
Thu	Bellringing, 8pm, St Peters. Contact Helen Ruberry, 890949
Fri	Little Fishes Parent & Toddler Group 9:30-11:30am. The Court House. Weekly, with short service on 1st Friday in St Peter's (10am). Tracy Robinson 863559
Fri	St Peter's Choir, Children 7-8:30pm, Adults 7:30-8:30pm. St Peter's. Adrian Davis 01296 632263 or Jean Wild 866859
3rd Sat	ABC Prayer Breakfast, 8am for breakfast & prayers. Various local churches.
1st Sun	Sundays Together Lunch 12.30pm Court House. For anyone on their own on a Sunday. Liz Jackson 864382

### **St Peter's**

#### **Regular Sunday services**

8:00am Eucharist

9:30am Sung Eucharist with crèche, Sunday school and Pathfinders

6:00pm Evensong

#### **Regular weekday services**

Morning Prayer: Monday – Friday 7:30am, Saturday 9:30am

Eucharist: Monday 6:00pm; Tuesday 9:30am at All Saints' Shrublands Road;

Wednesday 8:00am; Thursday 12:30pm; Saturday 10:00am

Evening Prayer: Monday 5:45pm, Tuesday – Thursday, Saturday 5:00pm

**All Saints'**

September 2<sup>nd</sup> – 10am: Thirteenth Sunday after Trinity, Morning Worship, Revd Wilf Bahadur

September 9<sup>th</sup> – 10am: Fourteenth Sunday after Trinity, Holy Communion, Revd Rachael Hawkins

September 16<sup>th</sup> – 8am: Fifteenth Sunday after Trinity, Holy Communion, Revd Rachael Hawkins, 10am: Morning Worship with Holy Baptism, Revd Rachael Hawkins

September 23<sup>rd</sup> – 10am: Sixteenth Sunday after Trinity, Holy Communion, Revd Vindra Maraj-Ogden

September 30<sup>th</sup> – 10am: Seventeenth Sunday after Trinity, Holy Communion, Revd John Kirkby, 4pm: Wholeness & Healing Service, Revd Rachael Hawkins, Jenny Wells, Tracy Robinson and Audrey Cox

**St Peter's**

Sat Sept 8<sup>th</sup> – 7.30pm: Cowper Society presents: Berkhamsted Choral Society concert

Sat Sept 22<sup>nd</sup> – 7.30pm: Cowper Society presents: Bridgewater Sinfonia concert

**Baptisms**

22<sup>nd</sup> July - Amelie Rose Bunn (St Peter's)

29th July - William Henry Roberts (All Saints')

**Weddings**

21<sup>st</sup> July - Drew Frederick Martin and Joanne Rose Bennett (St Peter's)

**Funerals**

25<sup>th</sup> July - Robert Lloyd Myddleton Ledger (St Peter's)

12<sup>th</sup> July - Anthony Maurice Bandle (All Saints')

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

# *A day out at Bletchley Park*

**Ian Skillicorn**

We are lucky enough to live fairly close to a place of great importance in our country's history, but I am often surprised at how many people living in Berkhamsted have never been to visit it. Bletchley Park, just a short car or train



Alan Turing Office

activities, as well as being the birthplace of the modern computer.

The Bletchley Park estate had originally been home to the family of a wealthy City financier, but during the Second World War it became the first "Station X" - the secret home of top code-breakers from the Government Code and Cypher School. It was here that, with the help of Polish mathematicians, the code of the German's communications cypher, Enigma, was broken. This enabled enemy radio messages to be decoded at Bletchley Park, which is credited by many historians as shortening the duration of the war by two to four years.

The father of computer science, Alan Turing, worked at Bletchley Park for a number of years. He was the head of Hut 8, where German naval codes were broken. His brilliance was key to the

success of Bletchley's code-breaking achievements. This year is the centenary of Turing's birth, which is another good reason to visit Bletchley Park and see the office of a man who, until relatively recently, was one of our nation's most neglected heroes.

There is lots to see and experience on a trip to Bletchley Park. In fact one visit might not be enough to fit it all in, but fortunately your admission ticket to the site is valid for one year, during which you can come back as many times as you like. This article cannot do justice to everything worth seeing, but hopefully will serve as a summary of some of the key attractions. If you haven't been to Bletchley Park before, a guided tour is recommended.

## **Bombe Rebuild Project**

This permanent exhibition holds a reconstruction of the machine, developed by Turing and Gordon Welchman, which decrypted the Enigma messages. There were

over 200 Bombe machines which were all destroyed after the war. The rebuild project

was completed in 2007. There is more information about it here:  
[www.jharper.demon.co.uk/bombe1.htm](http://www.jharper.demon.co.uk/bombe1.htm)



Bletchley Cottages





Bletchley WWII kitchen

### **Enigma Collection**

Bletchley Park has the largest public display of Enigma machines in Europe.

### **Colossus Rebuild Project**

As described on the Bletchley Park website, this is "an authentic rebuild of the world's first semi-programmable computer." Tony Sale, the man behind this project, used to give visitors a fascinating talk on how it came about. Sadly, Tony died in 2011. His legacy can still be viewed today but you're advised to call **01908 640404** to check for availability before your visit.

### **The Churchill Collection**

A very impressive collection of Churchill memorabilia which has been curated over many decades by Jack Darrah. (Closed Thursdays).

### **Bletchley Park Post Office**

Recreation of a wartime sub-post office and display of first day covers.

### **Block B Exhibition Centre**

The exhibition tells the story of Bletchley Park, with many photographs and original artefacts.

It includes the "Home Front" display with recreations of a wartime home and many household items of the era. The site of many " *My granny/my mum/we had one of those!*" moments!

### **The Projected Picture Trust**

Exhibition of cinema projectors through the years, and a small cinema showing wartime newsreels. (Only open at weekends).

### **The Toys and Memorabilia Collection**

A vast array of toys, clothes, books and comics from the 1930s to mid-1940s. (Mansion building collection only open at weekends).

And don't miss: **The National Museum of Computing, Bletchley Park Garage, Diplomatic Wireless Service, Maritime Display, Model Railway, Pegasus Bridge Display, Pigeons at War, Spy exhibition, The American Garden trail and much more!**

For more information visit:

[www.bletchleypark.org.uk/](http://www.bletchleypark.org.uk/) yB



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## ***Festival celebrates Chilterns countryside***

The National Trust and Chilterns Conservation Board will be bringing countryside fun to the magnificent Ashridge Estate on Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> September. Mouth-watering local produce stalls, fascinating craft displays, forestry demonstrations and children's activities are just some of the things to discover. The Chilterns Countryside Festival is open from 10am - 4pm. Parking is free and admission is £3 for adults with children under 16 free (must be accompanied by an adult). There will be a small charge for some activities. Now in its sixth year, the Festival demonstrates the various activities, crafts, industries and wildlife associated with the Chilterns countryside. There will be over 100 stands packed with locally produced food and crafts and displays from a host of local environmental organisations. There's plenty for kids to do with craft activities and

story telling and firm favourites including ferret racing, live owls and sheep shearing demonstrations.

A new attraction this year is the music stage, sponsored by Launchpad Live Music and Entertainment. Local acts will include Sparkies Jazz, Brian Heywood, Palmerston, Kirsten Lutz and Julian.

For more information, call the National Trust Ashridge Visitor Centre on 01442 851227 or the Chilterns Conservation Board on 01844 355 506. *yB*



**Chilterns**  
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# *Halton House Open Day*

*Sunday 9th September, 2012 10am – 4pm*



On Sunday, 9<sup>th</sup> September 2012 Halton House will be opened to the public in a rare opportunity to see inside this lasting reminder of Victorian decorative style. A team of guides, many of them serving RAF personnel, will be on hand to elaborate on the history of the House both in the Rothschild era and in RAF hands. A shuttle bus will run between the House and the Station's Trenchard Museum, where more can be learnt about the history of the Station and the RAF's Apprentice

Halton House has been used extensively for filming and in 2009 was the venue for the 'Great British Menu' and the TV programme 'Flog It'. Scenes from 'The Queen', the highly acclaimed 'The King's Speech' and some from 'Downton Abbey' were also filmed at the House. The Sky TV Playhouse with Emma Thompson was also recently filmed in one of the Drawing Rooms.

*The House has very limited disabled access with no disabled toilets. Parking is available. Refreshments and souvenirs will also be on sale.*

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The painting 'Spitfire over Halton House' reproduced by kind permission of Michael Turner ©



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# *Don't Forget The Learning*

## **Unlock your child's brain potential in the new term, says SuperKids**

**W**ith the new school year just beginning, Berkhamsted SuperKids coach, Beth Parmar, is urging parents to prepare their child's mind for learning, while getting used to juggling the new term's routine.

Certified Master Practitioner of Neuro Linguistic Programming (NLP), Beth says, "Starting afresh in a new school year and for many, a new school, is really exciting for children. Parents know all too well, however, that the excitement can bring with it anxieties and concerns. With the new academic year comes a host of issues, from altered friendship groups to different afterschool activities. We're so busy being 'SuperMum' or 'SuperDad', juggling new routines we're not all focused on preparing our child's mind for learning." Beth, who already works closely with Bridgewater School, will be helping children understand how they can use their brain to learn more effectively, in fun SuperKids clubs. SuperKids understands the pressures placed on children and their teachers nowadays to deliver results.

Understandably, classroom time is taken up with learning and not teaching children **HOW** to learn, which is fundamental for them to know. The SuperKids courses use recognised NLP techniques. "Most people don't know what NLP is and can be put off, thinking it's 'hippy' or might mess with their child's brain. But it's really simple. I often describe it as an 'owner's manual' for the brain; a set of skills

everyone can learn to actively control your own mind and help you run your life more effectively."

Even young children can feel pressures these days leading them to lose belief in themselves, think they are not clever, or popular enough. SuperKids aims to teach children thinking techniques to increase their confidence, focus and motivation and help with learning, like spelling. These techniques include, 'grounding', which helps children to remain focussed, 'anchoring' to help them control their emotions and confident body language tips.

The SuperKids courses are ideal for children in the eight to twelve year old age bracket. For the older children who might be taking the 11plus, Beth can also teach skills to help with motivation and confidence during the final leg of preparation before the exams in October.

Beth concludes: "It's important that children get the most out of their new school year. Our courses can help with that and are designed so they don't feel like 'work'. For the price of a new pair of school shoes, parents can give their kids a learning boost and the children have a great morning out!"

For further information and course details please call Beth Parmar on 07775 565220 or e-mail [beth@superkids.me.uk](mailto:beth@superkids.me.uk). Alternatively visit [www.superkids.me.uk](http://www.superkids.me.uk)

yB

# *Blackberry, fig and apple tarte tatin*

Joanne Lloyd Evans



**B**lackberries and figs are in season in early autumn; figs mostly come to us from Mediterranean areas but blackberries are obviously available all over the place! New season apples are available in September and this recipe is best made with sweet eating apples, rather than tart cooking apples. It is an easy, more rustic variation of the French classic dessert of tarte tatin but is absolutely delicious, especially when served warm with lots of cream.

## Ingredients

100g cold butter for the pastry + 60g butter for the fruit  
 200g plain flour  
 2 tsp lemon juice  
 70g muscovado sugar  
 4 figs  
 3 sweet apples  
 100g blackberries  
 Make the pastry, either by rubbing the

butter into the flour until it resembles breadcrumbs, or by using a food processor to easily combine the butter and flour.

Add 2 tsp lemon juice and 2 tbsp of cold water to bind the pastry. Add a little more water if needed until the pastry starts to come together. Lightly knead until it forms a smooth dough, but don't overwork it. Form the dough into a flattish disc, wrap it in cling film and place in the fridge or freezer to firm up.

Pre-heat the oven to 200C (with fan) or 210C (without fan) and then grease a cake, tart or pie tin.

Slice the figs in half length ways and heat about 20g of butter in a frying pan. When the butter has melted, place the figs in the pan skin side down. Cook for 2 minutes over a medium to high heat, then add about 20g of muscovado sugar and turn the figs over to cook on the other side for 2 minutes. Place the figs skin side up in the bottom of a 20cm shallow cake tin or tart tin.

Peel and core the apples, then cut into eighths. Melt the remaining 40g of butter in the frying pan and add the apples to the pan. Cook for a few minutes and then add the remaining 50g of muscovado sugar and let the sugar melt. Stop the apples from sticking by shaking the pan, but try not to stir too much. When the apples appear to have slightly softened and have turned a nice golden colour, add the blackberries to the pan, shake it all around a bit, and then turn off the heat. Add the apples and blackberries to the tin on top of the figs and scrape all of the butter and sugar in with the fruit.

Roll out the pastry so that it forms a circle larger than the tin, so that you have about 2cm overhang at the sides. Place the pastry on top of the fruit and tuck the edges down the sides. Place in the oven and cook for about 30 minutes, or until the pastry is golden. Using oven gloves, place a large dinner plate or serving plate on top of the tin, then quickly turn it over and the tarte tatin should have come out beautifully and be ready to serve!

JB

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# *Berkhamsted's Quaker Murderer*

## **Dan Parry**

If asked the name of the first murderer to be caught through the aid of telegraph, you might be tempted to rush into an instinctive cry of Dr Crippen. As every big book of facts will tell you, in 1910 Crippen poisoned his wife then fled to Canada after her friend Vulcana the Strongwoman reported him to police. Officers telegraphed the ship whose captain confirmed Crippen was aboard before personally handing him over to detectives after the vessel docked in Quebec. But fifty years before Crippen another young woman was poisoned by a former convict who had previously been transported to Australia, a man who had come to reside in a comfortable High Street house in Berkhamsted and who, Crippen schmippen, was in fact the first murderer to be arrested following a telegraph message.

Today the Red House, a stone's throw from St Peter's, is occupied by independent financial advisers but it was once the home of John Tawell, a Quaker with a chequered past. Born in 1784, in 1814 he was convicted of forging a £10 bank note for which he was sentenced to 14 years transportation to Australia. In 1820, Tawell was given a ticket of leave, allowing him some degree of probationary freedom, and he worked as a chemist in Sydney until 1831 when he brought his wife and their children to England, settling in Berkhamsted.

When, seven years later, his family became terminally ill, Tawell hired a nurse, 30-year-old Sarah Lawrence, to care for them. Tawell began an affair with Sarah, leading to two more children, and they maintained their secret relationship

even after he married again in 1841.

Changing her name to Hart, Sarah moved to a cottage at Salt Hill, near Slough, quietly paid for by John. In 1844 Sarah wanted to make the arrangement official and she took out a court order for maintenance for her and the children. But by putting their affair on the record Tawell feared she would be compromising his position in his church, in business and in society.

On January 1<sup>st</sup> 1845, he bought a treatment for varicose veins called Scheele's Prussic Acid – fundamentally hydrogen cyanide, the deadly chemical compound used in the Nazi gas chambers. In Sarah's cottage Tawell mixed the poison in a drink which she then consumed, her screams and cries being heard by a neighbour, Mary Ann Ashlee. Mary Ann tried to help Sarah, assisted by a vicar, the Reverend Champnes. They tried to give her water but could do nothing but watch as she died in agony in front of them.

Champnes alerted the local constable who pursued a man that Mary Ann had seen leaving the house, but Tawell fled to the station and boarded the train to London before he could be caught. The station-master was asked to send a message to the police in Paddington using his newly-installed Cooke-Wheatstone two-needle telegraph system. The machine could not transmit the letters J, Q or Z so the final message read:

A MURDER HAS GUST BEEN  
COMMITTED AT SALT HILL AND  
THE SUSPECTED MURDERER WAS  
SENT TO TAKE A FIRST CLASS  
TICKET TO LONDON BY THE

TRAIN WHICH LEFT SLOUGH AT 742  
PM HE IS IN THE GARB OF A  
KWAKER  
WITH A GREAT COAT ON WHICH  
REACHES NEARLY DOWN TO HIS  
FEET HE IS  
IN THE LAST COMPARTMENT OF  
THE SECOND CLASS  
COMPARTMENT

At Paddington Sergeant William Williams awaited the arrival of the train and followed Tawell to a lodging house in Cannon Street where he was arrested by City of London police officers. At his trial in Aylesbury in March, Tawell was defended by the eminent Sir Fitzroy Kelly who optimistically claimed that the hydrogen cyanide found to have killed Sarah came from the pips in apples she had eaten. Tawell denied visiting Slough that day, but despite the South Seas adventurer Peter Dillon serving as a character witness, the telegraph message and the pursuit by Sergeant Williams were sufficient to convict him. At 8am on Friday 28<sup>th</sup> March, a crowd of 2,000 people watched his execution. He was of slight build, and the hangman did not allow sufficient 'drop'; instead of Tawell's neck breaking he took ten minutes to slowly strangle to death. The Times reported that: "Had it not been for the efficient aid of the electric telegraph, both at Slough and Paddington, the greatest difficulty, as well as delay, would have occurred in the apprehension". The two telegraph instruments used in the arrest of John

Tawell were presented by the firm that made them, Reid Brothers, to the Science Museum in London in 1876, where they were put on show to the public at a shilling a head. There they remain to this day, evidence of the first time wireless communication was involved in the arrest of a murderer.

*With thanks to research by The School of Computing, Science and Engineering, University of Salford.*

<http://www.cntr.salford.ac.uk/comms/johntawell.php>

### **Your Berkhamsted Competition News!**

Congratulations to Jane Morgan who wins the prize of a set two-course lunch for two people (excluding drinks) at Berkhamsted's newest restaurant Bluebella Roo's.

The answers to the locations of the Berkhamsted landmarks on the front cover of July's magazine are as follows:

Top row: Sayer Almshouses; Foster's Brewery, now the Chapel Lane scout hut; the old town hall.

Middle row: Berkhamsted School lych gate; the Baptist Church; the Rex.

Bottom row: Claire Lloyd Properties; former Bourne School; formerly Dean Incent's house.

### **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.*

**Copy Dates:**      5 October 2012      2 November 2012      7 December 2012

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# **BerkoFest**

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**THE BERKHAMSTED MUSIC AND COMEDY FESTIVAL**  
**SATURDAY 15TH SEPTEMBER 2012**

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