

*the magazine for town and parish since 1872*

YB

Your Berkhamsted

December 2016



What's on in December

Short Story by Sue Hampton

Reflecting on the year in  
Berkhamsted

50p

Exploring the past, reflecting the present and looking to the future in Berkhamsted

# In this issue...



**Welcome to the December edition of Your Berkhamsted.** It seems Christmas is upon us again and the lights are up, all the festive preparations are in full flow – it is also a time to remember those who do not have families and are alone - whilst tempting to succumb to the delights of Christmas food, drink and festivities because these things are wonderful. I suspect we will enjoy them even more if we devote some part of our attention to those who, for whatever reason, have only an empty Christmas to look forward to. It is also with great sadness that David Pearce passed away in November, there is a brief tribute on David on page 5, but we will have a full eulogy in the January edition. In our history article we are reflecting on Berkhamsted's historical moments. *Our what's on page shows events in December in and around Berkhamsted, also look out for YB tweets on @Yourberkhamsted. Please see email below and get in touch if there are any ideas or stories you may have, either to publish or additions/changes to the magazine for consideration.* Have a great Christmas and New Year!  
Jacqueline, Editor - [editor@yourberkhamsted.org.uk](mailto:editor@yourberkhamsted.org.uk)

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**Front cover:** Thank you Mary Casserley for the lovely picture of Dean Incents House 1933. See Mary's work on [marycasserley.com](http://marycasserley.com) or cards available at Berkhamsted

## ***The Town and Parish Magazine of St Peter's Great Berkhamsted***

Responsibility for opinions expressed in articles and letters published in this magazine and for the accuracy of any statements in them rests solely with the individual contributor.

# Berkhamsted in the News

By Julian Dawson



Berkhamsted seems to be gaining a habit of turning out fine young woman golfers. The latest to hit the big time is Hannah Screen. [hertfordshiremercury.co.uk](http://hertfordshiremercury.co.uk) reports that she won the girls competition at the Telegraph BMW Junior Championship in Portugal by two shots. She is already playing for England, and had the honour of being presented with her trophy by Ryder Cup captain Paul McGinley. The Daily Telegraph, not surprisingly, also reported on this. But that is not all. [hert-sandessexobserver.co.uk](http://hert-sandessexobserver.co.uk) tell us of the exploits of Ben Piereoni, also of this town, who came second in the Hertfordshire Boys' U16 championship. But enough of golf. I know that the reason you turn breathlessly to this column every month is to discover the latest on Bunting Magnetics. Well, their attendance at the K2016 plastics show in Dusseldorf (I know, wish I could have been there) surpassed all expectations attracting over 200 leads and sales of "four Quicktron metal detectors, one P-Tron metal detector and 13 FF drawer magnets". So explains [eurobulksystems.com](http://eurobulksystems.com), this month's feature site. It is good to know our local industrial star is giving us something to cheer commercially about. On from plastics and onto bones. Specifically osteology, otherwise known as the wonderful world of archaeological bones and skeletons. [berkhamsted-history.org.uk](http://berkhamsted-history.org.uk) were hosting a talk on this

very topic in early November. Many of the large infrastructure projects of recent years uncovered such discoveries, including the Crossrail project on which archaeologists have been making significant finds that enhance our understanding of the past.

[watfordobserver.co.uk](http://watfordobserver.co.uk) continues its excellent reporting of local sport with its coverage of the Herts Senior Cup. Berkhamsted are marching on as they defeated Potters Bar. That's senior in terms of quality rather than age by the way. [herts.police.uk](http://herts.police.uk) appealed for help after a forgetful shopper left their precious cargo of replica WWII clothing in a bag on the M&S till in the town. By the time they remembered someone else had rushed off with it, and CCTV footage appears to indicate someone the police wish "to help with their enquiries". Report of a Sherman tank receiving a parking ticket in the locality is yet to be confirmed.

Let us spin dizzily onto our next topic of dog fostering. Woof! [dailymail.co.uk](http://dailymail.co.uk) reports on organisations that place abused dogs with foster homes before they can be found a permanent home in a caring family. Julie Cochran and her banker husband Steven from the town have turned their own home into a dog sanctuary. Many years ago my brother owned a dog that had been abused by previous owners, and she was a wonderful placid friendly animal.

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Last month's history article reported on the missing pieces of the Bayeux Tapestry that had been recreated by a team of stitching aficionados from Alderney. As I write I have just returned from viewing this work alongside an excellent history of the town. [berkhamstedtoday.co.uk](http://berkhamstedtoday.co.uk) reported on this explaining that one of the scenes depicts the surrender of the Saxons to the Normans in Berkhamsted. Sometimes I think we underestimate the historical importance of the town we are proud to call home.



Drawings of Berkhamsted by Jenni Cator, Art at 88,  
8 High Street,  
Berkhamsted, HP4 2BW Tel. 01442 769110  
[info@artat88.co.uk](mailto:info@artat88.co.uk).

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## Remembering David Pearce

David Pearce passed away on Armistice Day, 11 November 2016. David had lived in Berkhamsted for almost 50 years and for 33 years, he occupied a special place within Berkhamsted School, holding positions of Head of English for 30 years as well as Housemaster of first Adders and then Incents. David continued his involvement with the School even after leaving.

David was a Church Warden at St Peter's Berkhamsted and was an avid community stalwart – for this he received The Berkhamsted Community Award. He helped establish the Graham Greene Festival and helped organise many cultural events in and around Berkhamsted.

The funeral of David Pearce took place in St Peter's Church, Berkhamsted, on Monday November 28. A requiem mass will be held in St Peter's on Saturday 3 December at 11:00am. All are welcome.



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# What's on

Berkhamsted Artisans, Arts & Crafts Market (**1<sup>st</sup> Saturday every month**)  
10am to 4pm. The Town Hall, 196 High Street, Berkhamsted, Herts, HP4 3AP  
Through the double doors above Carluccio's on the High St. Lift access at back. If you would like a stall contact Claire - Mob: 07968 627 179; Email: [berkhamstedmarkhire, HP4 3QWet@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:berkhamstedmarkhire@3QWet@hotmail.co.uk);  
[www.greatmarkets@vpweb.co.uk](mailto:www.greatmarkets@vpweb.co.uk)

Tring Farmers Market (**Alternate Saturdays**). The Marketplace, Brook Street, Tring 9.00am - 12.15pm. Tring Farmers Market promotes local food for local people For more info email: [enquiries@tringfarmersmarket.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@tringfarmersmarket.co.uk)

**For Ashridge and a full list of events please visit [www.nationaltrust.org.uk/ashridge](http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/ashridge) or to book your place contact the Visitor Centre on 01442 851227.**

**Amchor. Sat 3 December** Haydn The Creation St Mary's Church, Amersham. Tickets for all events from [www.WeGotTickets.com/amchor](http://www.WeGotTickets.com/amchor) Tel 01494 785822 for bring and sing event only Tel 07702 608314 for other concerts Amersham and Chesham Bois Choral Society

**FIVE LIVE AUTHORS is an afternoon of readings and discussions with:**

- BARBARA TOWELL, author of *A Little Piece for Mother*, a novel about Jewish immigrants struggling to settle in London after WW2.
- NEIL BEARDMORE, author of *Lemon Seas*, a novel set in India, and winner of The Sussex Playwrights Prize.

- MARJORIE LAZARO, author of *A Person of Significance*, a novel about a talented young Burmese pianist arriving in 1950's London and facing racial prejudice.
- SUE HAMPTON, author of 27 novels, reading from her short story collection *Ravelled*. [www.suehamptonauthor.co.uk](http://www.suehamptonauthor.co.uk)
- LESLIE TATE, the author of the novels *Purple* and *Blue*, discussing *Heaven's Rage*, a collection of his lyrical essays. [www.leslietate.com](http://www.leslietate.com)

Dec 3rd 2.30–4.30 Friends Meeting House  
289 High St Berkhamsted HP4 1AJ FREE ENTRY

**Saturday 3rd December** Christmas Wreaths: We'll provide all the materials you need to create your very own bespoke Christmas Wreath to hang on your door. Christmas Decorations: Discover how to needle felt a bespoke Angel and Robin to go on your Christmas tree. Enjoy a glass of mulled wine and mince pie then let the creative juices flow!! 10.00 am – 12.00pm Wreath Making 12.30pm – 2.00pm

Angel & Robin Christmas Decorations 2.30pm – 4.30pm Wreath Making Workshop Prices: Wreath Making £25 Felt Decorations £20 Book two classes for £40  
How to book: To book your place email: [publicity@sunnysideruraltrust.org](mailto:publicity@sunnysideruraltrust.org) or Telephone 01442 863364 Your booking will be confirmed via email. Please note there are limited places so book early to avoid disappointment. There are no refunds if you cancel your reservation.

(Continued on page 8)



## **Advent - Taizé Service**

**Sunday 4 December  
2016 at 6.00 pm**

St Mary's Church,  
High Street, North-  
church, Berkhamsted,

Hertfordshire, HP4 3QW

A quiet meditation service with chants and silence to celebrate Advent. Tea/coffee and mince pies to be served afterwards. All welcome

**Thur 1<sup>st</sup> to Sat 3<sup>rd</sup> - The 39 Steps** Mix a Hitchcock masterpiece with a juicy spy novel, add a dash of silliness and you have "The 39 Steps", a fast-paced whodunit for anyone who loves the magic of theatre! Berkhamsted Youth Theatre. Court, Pendley. **7.30pm (& 2.30pm Sat)**. [www.courttheatre.co.uk](http://www.courttheatre.co.uk) Thu £5. Fri & Sat £10, £8 conc. DC [info@courttheatre.co.uk](mailto:info@courttheatre.co.uk) 07543 560478

**Sat 3<sup>rd</sup> - Victoria and Albert: A Musical Romance** The Ridgeway Ensemble, a local group, will play music by Prince Albert and read Victoria and Albert's letters. There will also be contemporary music by better known composers. Civic Centre 7.30 – 9.30pm.

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

Annual sub: £48; visitors £14 at the door, under 18 free. Tickets: 862798 or [kennedyn@btinternet.com](mailto:kennedyn@btinternet.com)

**Wed 7<sup>th</sup> - Archaeology along the Bourne Valley.** Alex Thompson's talk on Roman excavations at Bridgewater School, Northchurch and Cow Roast is followed by Christmas drinks.

Town Hall **8 – 10pm**. [www.berkhamsted-history.org.uk](http://www.berkhamsted-history.org.uk). Annual sub: joint £12, single £7, visitors £2.50 (no conc); DC. [KSherw9100@aol.com](mailto:KSherw9100@aol.com) 865158

**Woods Gift and Garden Centre Late night Christmas shopping event**, October 8th 6-8pm. 10% off everything in store, 15% off everything for loyalty card holders.

A proportion of takings going to **Pepper Childrens Hospice at Home**. Entertainment from the superb Gobstopper Singers.

The Old Iron Works 292-294 High Street, Berkhamsted. HP4 1BJ. 01442 863159.

## **Willow Wreath and Garland Workshops Various dates**

**December 10th**—Haresfoot Brewery, Berkhamsted . Willow Wreaths 10-1pm  
Door Garlands 2-5pm

**December 11th**—Haresfoot Brewery, Berkhamsted . Willow Wreaths 10-1pm  
Door Garlands 1-5pm

Apple Tree Cottage & Haresfoot Brewery workshops are £35  
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All materials, flowers, berries, seed heads, cones, greenery are sourced locally from grounds & gardens I work in-no nasty chemicals or imported plastic garbage. The willow is grown & cut locally by The Sunnyside Rural Trust in Berkhamsted Workshops can also be booked at your place anytime outside of the dates above in December up to **Friday 16th** including evenings.

**For Ashridge and a full list of events please visit [www.nationaltrust.org.uk/ashridge](http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/ashridge) or to book your place contact the Visitor Centre on 01442 851227.**



## Art Review

by Julian Dawson

### Portals – Njideka Akunyili Crosby at the Victoria Miro Gallery

I recently had the good fortune to visit, for the first time, the Victoria Miro Gallery in north London, just up the road from Old Street. It was hosting the first European exhibition by the up and coming American Nigerian artist Njideka Akunyili Crosby. She has won many awards, but she is deliberately pitching the price of her art so that it is available to public galleries first. After that, prices already garnered at auctions show that the sky could be the limit once her work is on the open market.

The artist draws on many influences, from art history, politics and family, to paint, or more correctly, create a many layered work of art that reveals more and more the longer you look at it. She uses an acetone transfer technique throughout her pictures that uses montages of images from the internet and her own personal photographic collection. They appear both as background and on other elements of the picture's subject. This gives her work the cultural overlap that her own life reflects, from her Nigerian upbringing, the influence of British colonialism and of course her current life in Los Angeles.

Some of her work is extremely moving. *Ike Ya*, which uses both herself and her husband as models, demonstrates a vivid, tender and affectionate portrayal of love that is very real and is perhaps one of the most moving pictures I have seen in an art gallery. It is something that you can truly relate to in the way that some historical art cannot.

### What's on cont...

#### Sat 10th - Enrico Tomasso Swing Sextet -

Enrico Tomasso (tpt), Trevor Whiting (sax, cl), Olly Wilby (sax, cl), Colin Good (p), Jerome Davis (b), John Sutton (d). Civic Centre 8 – 10.30pm.

[www.berkhamstedjazz.co.uk](http://www.berkhamstedjazz.co.uk). Visitors £13, members £10. Annual: couples £15, singles £10. DC. SAE to Berkhamsted Jazz, 6 Longfield Gardens, Tring HP23 4DN.

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#### toria Miro Gallery

#### Mon 12th - AGM & Sing Street - Pre-

ceded by a short AGM. A funny, boisterous and joyously uplifting musical comedy/romance set in 1980s Dublin. Dir: John Carney /2016/ Ireland,USA,UK /Cert 12A/106min. Civic Centre 8pm

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

Annual sub: joint £65, single £35, visitors £5 at door (no conc). 863155

#### Sun 18th - Christmas Concert - Music for

the festive season incl 'The Snowman' (Howard Blake) and carols and Christmas Music for All, with musicians from Hemel Hempstead School. Narrator Michael Bernstein, conductor Thomas Loten. Rudolf Steiner School, Kings Langley. 3.30 – 5.30pm. [www.dacorumso.org](http://www.dacorumso.org). Tickets see Sun 16 Oct. 01494 727240

**Mon 19th - Pilgrimage, Faith and Archaeology -** Peter Clayton, FSA, Chairman, BDAS. B'sted School 7.45pm.

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

Annual sub £15, Family £17.50, junior £5. Members £1, visitors £3, DC. 254801



## **SOME HISTORICAL THOUGHTS IN DECEMBER**

2016 is drawing to a close. It has been a momentous year in many ways. A number of important events, which took place in Berkhamsted have been remembered and in some instances commemorated with special events, which in their turn will be remembered. At a recent Berkhamsted Citizens Association event Bill Willett reminded us that very often events, which took place in our little town, affected not just the people of Berkhamsted but were of national significance. In the same way local people, who received recognition here as writers, artists or were recognised for their prowess or achievements were similarly recognised on the national or even international stage. Other events are however, just as important in local history, to those whom they directly affected, for example the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the opening of Greenway School, which occurred this year. It had no national significance but an interesting history when put in its local context.

The site on Greenway Common where now Greenway School and Thomas More School stand was the site scheduled for the new Secondary School, whose pupils could not be accommodated either in Park View School or Victoria School. The plans were drawn up by Noel Ackroyd Rew, the local architect, and approved. Then the outbreak of World War II intervened. By the time the provision of the necessary secondary places could once

more be considered the Education Act of 1944 had been passed and additionally ideas of fostering in families rather than accommodating disadvantaged children in vast institutions meant that the large building at the top of Chesham Road had become redundant. Lengthy negotiations over a lease and eventually the sale of the Thomas Coram Schools' building by the Foundling Hospital to Herts County Council in 1955 led to the opening of a bilateral Grammar and Secondary Modern School, Ashlyns School. Consequently the building of a new school was no longer required.

The local event of national, and even international significance, is of course the submission of the Saxons to Duke William of Normandy, which took place here in Berkhamsted, following on from the defeat of King Harold at the Battle of Hastings. There are those who say we should not commemorate a defeat but the fact remains that the Norman Conquest was the last time that our island was successfully invaded and a new regime established here, a regime, which was to have repercussions for many years to come. Admittedly we came dangerously near to being successfully invaded on at least three other occasions; in 1216, when Prince Louis of France invaded at the invitation of English barons; in Napoleonic times, marked by the series of Martello Tours around our coast; and finally during the Second World War when things could so easily have turned out differently. In connection with this momentous event Mr Jonathan Culverhouse has commissioned a bronze bust of William the Conqueror, which he wishes to be displayed in an appropriate and safe position in the town.

This bust was unveiled on 14<sup>th</sup> October in the Castle grounds by Professor David Bates of the University of East Anglia, who has recently carried out new research on William and the Conquest. Professor Bates will be giving a talk on his research next April in the Old Hall, Berkhamsted School, an event arranged jointly with Mr Culverhouse, Berkhamsted School and the Berkhamsted Local History and Museum Society. Full details of this event will be available shortly. Berkhamsted School, founded by Dean John Incent in 1541 commemorated its 475<sup>th</sup> Anniversary this year. To mark this momentous occasion the School and the people of Berkhamsted were able to welcome Her Majesty the Queen, since she visited not only the School but also St Peter's Church, thus involving the whole community.



December is the time of year when our thoughts turn here in Berkhamsted and in towns and villages throughout the Christian world to the commemoration of the birth of Christ. However difficult a year this has been and all the tragic aspects of war and loss, poverty and personal bereavement we have remembered, the birth of Christ brings the hope of new beginnings and better times to come.  
Jenny Sherwood



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## Short Story/Poem

*The short story holds an important place in English literature. From Edgar Allan Poe to Kate Mosse, writers down the ages have turned their attention to this form. It's now "Your Berkhamsted's" turn! We are asking our readers to let us publish their work. Don't let inexperience put you off trying. Your subject can be humour, adventure, love, fun, mystery or just an intriguing situation. Around 700 words, and anonymous if you wish. Let's write lots of stories and enjoy the reads. Over to you all!"*

### Delivery

Judith always appreciated the tastefulness of Christmas on the high street, the lights low-key and traditional. One could walk into the centre (which on a day like this would be much faster than driving) without wincing at inflatable Santas bobbing on rooftops or Rudolf noses flashing. She liked her mulled wine to be just as her grandmother used to simmer it, so there were oranges and cinnamon sticks on her shopping list amongst the high-fat treats. A real nutmeg too, if Sainsbury's had such a product – what a thrill that would be, to sniff its scent, and hold it in her palm. Given her tendency to fill up these days over Silent Night she'd probably cry!

Pulling into the crowded car park, she realised she couldn't remember the nursery rhyme now, not in any sequence, and hoped that one had nothing to do with a chopper to chop off

heads. Judith felt lucky to have been a child when wars raged across the world without breaking in between red velvet curtains or spoiling the taste of buttered crumpets on a fork by the fire. These days all that was everywhere, and a festive Facebook offered her a dusty city bloodied with corpses above a cat with glittered antlers and a recipe for chilli chocolate sauce perfect for drizzling turkey. *Don't forget the foodbank*, she thought, locked the car and entered the fray.

Her phone startled her as she registered queues at the checkouts. Carys! Nothing wrong, she hoped.

"Grandma," she heard, and a sniffy, earnest, six-year-old voice. "I want to send a present to the jungle and Mummy won't let me."

"Do you mean for a baby elephant, darling?" she asked, smiling. She raised a hand to greet an ex-neighbour in a hurry and began to hope the call wouldn't be long or difficult.

"No, Grandma, for a girl with no home and no parents or toys. Daniel made a shoebox at Cubs and he wouldn't let me help."

*The Jungle?* Why children so young had to even know such dreadful places existed in the world was beyond Judith. What exactly was she supposed to say? "Darling," she said, "I can't really hear you. Can I speak to Mummy?"

But the line went dead. Oh dear. She hoped there wasn't a scene at the other end. When she was a girl Daddy didn't let her read the newspaper. Children should be protected from the harsher realities

but sometimes she thought today's parents had given up, as if there was nothing they could do but surrender to all-powerful devices.

She'd only just begun on the wines when her phone rang again. Preparing to tell Carys that Grandma was very busy just now, she saw her husband's name and hoped he hadn't locked himself out again.

"Don't forget the whisky, will you? Look out for offers!"

And he'd gone, presumably back to BBC2 and *It's a Wonderful Life*, allowing no opportunity to remind him what the doctor told him, or the bathroom scales. Not such a *Well Man* these days. Irritated, Judith wondered whether there was any point in taking him on again, battles at Christmas not being anyone's idea of fun.

"Judith!" cried someone whose name she couldn't quite recall. "Well this is Hell, eh?"

By the time she turned into her road, Judith had a sardonic thought that she could do with a whisky herself. It would be nice to count on some help with all those plastic bags to be parted from the boot but he'd probably be at the pub by now. Looking down the path towards her front door, she saw something on the doorstep and wondered what Peter had been ordering from Amazon now. A robin landed in the bird bath, reminding her that he hadn't cleaned it out, any more than he ever made sure the pool in Brittany had been cleared of leaves and scum before they arrived.

Struggling a little with the shopping, Judith looked again and wasn't sure what had been delivered. It was an odd, bumpy

shape – more like a puppy asleep. But her glasses were in her bag and her hands were full.

She left the first couple of loads on the path and stepped cautiously towards her own door. Whatever it was had left marks, and she'd only just mopped...

"You signed a petition."

Judith looked around but the voice was disembodied. Peter must have the television on too loud. The bundle on the doorstep rearranged itself. A child, black-haired and dark-eyed, stood in soiled clothes that hung longer and wider than his thin body.

Like Paddington Bear he wore a label, printed large.

## YOUR CHRISTMAS REFUGEE

By Sue Hamptom





## Bike and Hike Event Review by Verse

The Beds and Herts Historic Churches Trust  
In September held its "Bike 'n Hike" event.  
Riders and walkers carefully plan their day,  
then call in at churches on their route.

This year, I thought that I would plan a route  
of the same number of churches as my age.  
It's not a formula that stands the test of time;  
As age increases, ability declines.

But as the days before the ride passed by  
The weather forecast gradually got worse  
With "heavy rain" predicted from the start  
Right through to latish-afternoon.

So, heavy hearted, my bold plan was binned,  
a more modest one prepared to suit the day:  
A morning walk round local churches, then,  
Afternoon train to Kings Langley, cycling back.

Preparations at the Court House now complete,  
I visited All Saints on foot as their first guest.  
Then Northchurch Baptists, and St Mary's too,  
High Street Baptists, School Chapel, making five.

Back at base, the morning soon went by,  
Receiving riders, walkers, on their routes.  
The rain still fell, quite heavily at times,  
And riders' sodden forms were duly signed.

Alas, through chatting on for far too long,  
The Fifteen Thirty One train was just missed!  
A rapid change of plan had to be made:  
Cycle to Kings Langley, then train back.

Sunnyside first, then St Johns Bourne End,  
puddles right across the lane beyond Pix Farm.  
St Stephens, and St Georges up Long Chaulden  
hill  
Then brand new Methodists in Northbridge  
Way.

Uphill to St Marks in JFK,  
Then several more through Hemel Hempstead  
town.

Uniquely, no wedding at St John's this year,  
Instead an unexpected shower soaked me  
through.

The last few churches now were quickly done,  
Kings Langley Methodists and Christ Church  
rushed.

Zion Baptists reluctantly was passed;  
The half past five train back had to be caught.

Caught it was with just three minutes wait.  
Back at the Court House Alan booked me in.  
Twenty three the total, not the hoped for Sixty  
Nine,  
But caution had prevented harm to health.

Thank you helpers at St Peter's church  
And those at other churches on my route.  
Your welcome smiles and welcome food and  
drink  
Helped make the day despite the awful rain.

Thank you too to all who sponsored me;  
Benefitting both St Peter's and the Trust.  
I had a most enjoyable day  
On this most friendly Bike 'n Hike event.

Chris Clegg



## Your Berkhamsted Clergy

Most of my life I knew that Jesus was born in a stable. Isn't that what the bible says? Isn't it repeated in countless nativity plays, and in the best known carols? So, in middle-age it was a bit of a shock to go to a meeting with an American professor, (with a few others who were teaching people training for the ministry), and be persuaded that Jesus almost certainly wasn't born in a stable. Well, I knew the Koran says he was born under a palm tree, but that was written about 600 hundred years after the Gospels. I also knew of other accounts amongst which Jesus is born on the way to Bethlehem in a cave.

The Gospels of Matthew and Luke describe, (well, kind of), the birth of Jesus. Matthew says, simply, that Jesus was born in Bethlehem. When the wise men turn up they go to the *house* where the child was. Luke tells us that when Jesus was born he was laid in a manger because there was no room for them in the inn. That is where we get the stable from. We assume a manger is in a stable, and stables are separate from houses.

Suppose the assumption is wrong. Two things might be taken into account. The first is that the word for *inn* in Luke's Greek might not actually mean the kind of public house we have in mind. Yes, there is one of those in the parable of the Good Samaritan when the injured man is taken to an *inn* to be looked after. That is a different word altogether, more like our *public* house. The second is that many simple village houses in Palestine were built on the principle of one large room, with live-stock housed along with the people. The cattle had a space a bit lower, separating

them from the family. The advantage is the cattle are safe at night, and they provide free central heating into the bargain. The mangers were arranged along the edge separating the cattle and people areas.

So what was the *inn*? Well, the inn was a separate space for visitors and, no doubt, for storage; sometimes screened off from the main room. When the Holy family come to their relatives in Bethlehem, there is no way the culture for hospitality would allow them to be turned away. Because there is no room in the guest-space (the inn) as it is already being used, what happens is that the family are invited into the main part of the house where Jesus is born. The manger, very close at hand, is an ideal cradle. Does that make sense? To me it does.

Can it possibly matter? Well, it roots the birth of Christ in a real situation amongst people going about their everyday lives. It makes Christmas a real family occasion from the very first. And it is about hospitality.

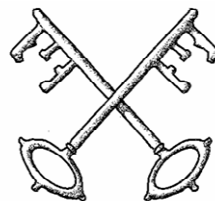
It is wonderful that Christmas remains an important time for families, even if it puts a strain on them, especially if there are visitors. It remains a strong reminder of the **opportunities** for hospitality. It continues to point to the need for helping the homeless. Above all, it is about making Jesus, and all he means, part of everyday life, not put out in a separate stable. So, where Jesus was born seems to me to matter a great deal.

Have a good Christmas!

Anthony Lathe



## ADVENT AT ST PETER'S



### **Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> November** **6.00pm Advent Carol Service**

A candlelit service of readings and music sung by the choir, with congregational hymns.

### **Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> December** **2.00pm-4.30pm An Advent Celebration.**

Come along and have some fun exploring the Advent Story! A workshop for children aged up to 10 years. *All children aged 5 years and under must be accompanied by an adult.*





# CHRISTMAS AT ST PETER'S



## Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> December



**9.30am Scratch Nativity** during our service. Never had the chance to be Mary or Joseph? Now's your chance! Come along dressed as your favourite character and join in the nativity. Costumes will be available in the Court House from 9am if you don't have one (or forget!). All children (and adults) are invited to come dressed as a character from the Nativity, and together we will tell the story. ***No rehearsals needed, you choose your part! All nativity characters welcome.***

## **6.00pm Carols by Candlelight**

A traditional style carol service with many carols to join in.

## Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> December Christmas Eve

**4.00pm Crib service**

**5:15pm Crib service**

**11.10pm Choir carols before**

**11.30pm Midnight Mass**

## Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> December Christmas Day

**8:00am Said Eucharist**

**9:30am Family Eucharist with carols**

*Please bring a new toy to show Fr Tim and Fr Simon*



## Regular Church Activities

3rd Mon	Pastoral Network, 7:45pm, The Court House. Contact Philippa Seldon 871534.
1st Tues	Tuesday Club, 7:30pm A lively women's group with guest speaker. The Court House. Contact Rosslyn Laidler: tel 01442 879992
Tues	Chuckles Parent & Toddler Group, 10–11:30am. All Saints' Church Hall. Song Time or short service as announced. Contact Jey Wells, 870981.
Tues	St Peter's Choir, Children 5:15–6:15pm. St Peter's. Adrian Davis 01296 632263 or Jean Wild 866859.
3rd Tues	Mothers' Union, meet in members' houses at 2.30pm. New members always welcome. Contact Kathie Lally, 863526.
4th Tues	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, 3 Sherwood Mews Park Street, Berkhamsted HP4 1HX
Thu	Bellringing, 8pm, St Peters. Contact David Burbidge 862139.
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	Berkhamsted Churches Prayer Breakfast, 8am, The Way Inn. Rachael Hawkins 866324.
1st Sun	Sundays Together Lunch 12.30pm, Court House. For anyone on their own on a Sunday. Carolynne Charman 869003

## Regular Church Services

### St Peter's

#### Regular Sunday services

8:00am Eucharist

9:30am Sung Eucharist and Sunday School

6:00pm Evensong

#### Regular weekday services

Morning Prayer – Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday 9:00am (St Peter's), Tuesday 9am (All Saints' Shrublands Road)

Eucharist – Tuesday 9:30am (All Saints'); Wednesday 8:30am, (St Peter's)

Evening Prayer Monday – Friday 5.00pm – Saturday 6:00pm (St Peter's)

#### Key Church contacts:

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

Fr. Tim Pilkington, 01442 879739, (day off Friday), Team Rector, St Peter's.

Simon Vivian, Assistant Curate

The Revd. Rachael Hawkins, All Saints' 01442 866324.



## This Month's Diary

### Your Berkhamsted December 2016 edition

#### **Events at St Peter's Church or the Court House, Berkhamsted, presented by The Cowper Society supported by the Friends of St Peter's**

Sun 4<sup>th</sup> Dec 7.30pm: CONCERT in St Peter's Church. Berkhamsted Choral Society. Conductor Graham Wili. Seasonal music plus audience carols with brass ensemble. Tickets: £15, student £8, DC. 07500 431643 or [www.berkhamstedchoral.co.uk](http://www.berkhamstedchoral.co.uk)

Mon 12<sup>th</sup> Dec 8.00pm: ORGAN RECITAL in St Peter's Church. Benjamin Woodward, St John's Fulham. Free Entry. Retiring collection.

Fri 23<sup>rd</sup> Dec 7.30pm: CONCERT in St Peter's Church. Chiltern Chamber Choir with soloists & Bridgewater Sinfonietta. Praetorius Mass for Christmas. Director Adrian Davis. Tickets in advance £15, £13 seniors, U18s free from Brown & Merry, 124 High St, Berkhamsted or [www.chilternchamberchoir.com](http://www.chilternchamberchoir.com); or on the door £16 & £14, U18s free

#### **St Peter's**

##### **Baptisms**

9<sup>th</sup> October Amber Tangye Fullerton, Poppy Tangye Fullerton

23<sup>rd</sup> October Connor Alexander Walker, Holly Rose Charman,  
Isabella Emily Rebecca Price

##### **Weddings— None**

##### **Funerals**

3<sup>rd</sup> October Jacqueline Jill Boulter (Chilterns)

26<sup>th</sup> October Brian James Redman (St Peter's and Chilterns)

#### **All Saints**

4th		Second Sunday of Advent
	10am	Morning Worship - Revd Rachel Hawkins
	4pm	Messy Church - Revd Rachael Hawkins & Messy Church Group
11th		Third Sunday of Advent
	10am	Holy Communion - Revd John Kirkby
	4pm	Praise and Reflection for Advent - Tracy Robinson
18th		Fourth Sunday of Advent
	10am	All Age Morning Worship - Revd Rachael Hawkins (with Nativity)
	4pm	Carol Service - Revd Rachael Hawkins
24th		Christmas Eve
	4pm	Crib Service - Revd Rachael Hawkins
	11.30pm	Midnight Holy Communion - Revd Rachael Hawkins
25th		Christmas Day
	10am	All Age Morning Worship followed by Holy Communion - Revd Brian Tebbutt

#### **Further information available from our church websites:**

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

# News from the Hospice of St Francis



**December  
2016**

## **Christmas Care**

The Hospice of

St Francis continues to care for and support patients and families over the Christmas season, with patients staying with us during this time receiving a handmade blanket and stocking and a Christmas meal with all the trimmings available to families during the day. In addition, children we have supported during the year are invited to our Childrens' Christmas Party where Santa makes a special appearance.

At this time of year we also hold our annual Light up a Life celebration and appeal - a special time, which provides a valuable opportunity to reflect on the lives of those whose memory we treasure.

Anyone in our community is welcome to **Light up a Life** by dedicating a light on our Hospice Remembrance Tree, which will burn brightly throughout the festive season, symbolising the brightness and joy that special people have brought to our lives.

Special star dedication cards - to be displayed in the Hospice - are available at the Hospice and online at [www.stfrancis.org.uk/Lightupalife](http://www.stfrancis.org.uk/Lightupalife) where you can also make a donation to our Light Up a Life appeal, helping us to raise the over £5 million we need every year to provide our free care to local people and their families.

## **Last Call for Santas and Jingle Dogs!**

Gather up your friends and family and join our sea of super Santas to walk, sprint, scoot or jog around our festive 2.5-mile Santa Dash through Hemel Hempstead on Sunday 11th December starting at 10am!

We'll supply you with your Santa suits (reindeer ears for the little ones) and greet you at the finish line with a mince pie, hot drink and shiny medal. **Registration costs £15 for adults, £5 for children or bring the whole family plus the dog for just £35.** Sign up now at: [www.stfrancis.org.uk/santadash](http://www.stfrancis.org.uk/santadash)

## **Hospice Christmas Cards**

Buy some of our beautiful **Christmas cards** for sale at our shops and online! Browse our catalogue of Hospice Christmas cards or download a brochure here [www.stfrancis.org.uk/christmascards](http://www.stfrancis.org.uk/christmascards) . 100% of the profits go directly to the Hospice.



## Christmas Trees

For the second year running, from 1st-18th December we'll be selling top quality Nordmann Fir, non-drop, Christmas trees. Visit us at Spring Garden Lane, off Shootersway, Berkhamsted, Hertfordshire, HP4 3GW every day from 9am-6pm (excluding Sun 4<sup>th</sup> Dec when sales will end at 12 noon). They'll also be on sale at Sainsbury's in St Albans.

## Wear it Festive – Friday 16<sup>th</sup> December

From full-on festive frocks to subtle snowman socks, anything goes! Simply donate a £1 for the privilege and get all your friends, fellow pupils or colleagues involved in the fun too!

Just £66 could pay for 12 patients in our Inpatient Unit to have a Christmas lunch, complete with mince pies, mulled wine and festive crackers. Your support could have a huge impact on our patients and their families this Christmas.

[www.stfrancis.org.uk/wearitfestive](http://www.stfrancis.org.uk/wearitfestive)

## Spring Centre Courses

Our Spring Centre helps individuals who have a diagnosis of a life-limiting illness through workshops, specialist clinics, exercise classes and therapies. Our new **SMILE course** - a rolling programme of four workshops on the first and third Thursdays of every month - focuses on self-management skills and is open to patients, carers and the bereaved. The next session, on sleep and relaxation, is on 15<sup>th</sup> December from 1-2.30pm. Visit [www.stfrancis.org.uk/springcentre](http://www.stfrancis.org.uk/springcentre) for more details.



## Volunteers

If you have some spare time and would like to give something back to your local community, why not check out our volunteer opportunities at [www.stfrancis.org.uk/volunteers](http://www.stfrancis.org.uk/volunteers) ? We're currently looking for complementary therapists, gardeners, shop volunteers and Home Box collectors.

## 2017

If you're planning New Year's Resolutions, the Hospice can help you achieve something amazing for yourself - and for us!

- ◆ Sign up by 23<sup>rd</sup> December to **Skydive** for us on Saturday 25th March 2017! Visit [www.stfrancis.org.uk/skydive](http://www.stfrancis.org.uk/skydive) if you're feeling daring or after that perfect Christmas present for a thrill-seeking relative or friend.
- ◆ Change your life forever in just 12 weeks by joining our **Biggest Loser Challenge** in conjunction with Sportspace, Hemel Hempstead. We're looking for 20 individuals to commit to getting fitter, healthier, losing lbs and raising ££s for Hospice care. The application process is now open so don't miss out - apply today! [www.stfrancis.org.uk/biggestloser](http://www.stfrancis.org.uk/biggestloser)

For further details on all Hospice events, visit: [www.stfrancis.org.uk](http://www.stfrancis.org.uk) or call 01442 869555 or follow us on **Facebook/ TheHospiceofStFrancis** **Twitter: hospicstfrancis**

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## Your Charities



### OXFAM AND CHRISTMAS

Oxfam has been hard hit by the fall in the value of the pound since the referendum. The bulk of its income is raised in this country and spent overseas so any drop in the purchasing power of sterling has an immediate effect on its overseas aid programme. Coming at a time of exceptionally urgent needs with vast numbers of refugees fleeing conflict in such diverse areas as Syria, Yemen, Iraq, South Sudan and the Lake Chad district, this

has serious consequences.

Buying your Christmas cards and gifts from Oxfam and selecting one of the Oxfam Unwrapped alternative gifts will all help. If you are a taxpayer, filling in a Gift Aid form adds 25% to the value of any donation you make at no extra cost to you and helps overall income.

### Appledown Rescue's Dog of the Month



Beautiful Hella is a Rottweiler cross who was born in 2015. This affectionate girl is looking for an active home with owners willing to invest time and energy into her training. She is good with other dogs and could probably live with a male pending introductions.

If you can offer Hella or any of our other dogs a forever home, please call in at the kennels any day between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. or phone for more details. Please note that there are restrictions on rehoming dogs to families with children under seven years of age. Full details of the rehoming process can be found on our website, or please contact the kennels.

**Appledown Rescue and Rehoming Kennels, Harling Road, Eaton Bray, Beds**

**LU6 1QY**

01525 220383 e-mail: [appledown.kennels@btinternet.com](mailto:appledown.kennels@btinternet.com)

Website: [www.appledownrescue.co.uk](http://www.appledownrescue.co.uk)



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## Your Garden

### Adventures in Boots December



December is a quiet time for flowers in the garden but it's a very aromatic time for winter flowering shrubs. Even though it isn't winter just yet, this week I spotted a *Viburnum x bodnantense* whilst working in a garden. The blossom wasn't quite fully open but the scent was sweet & pleasant. These stems can be pruned & bought into the house to add some lift next to ever-green swags.



Winter offers clear crisp days, perfect for photography plus the woods are much quieter with the kids indoors on their screens. Nothing quite like a silent walk in the forest on a sunny, crisp day tuning into the sounds of the birds & trees. Here are some photos I took whilst out walking a heritage trail around Latimer House near Chesham. That's mistletoe growing high up in the poplar tree if anyone fancies a challenging kiss.



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## Letter to Vernon Mildew

Dear Vernon,  
I have had a lot of hits on my blog, and I now get money from 'U Tube' when people watch me. I thought this was a plumbing accessory that collected a lot of unwanted waste (which it does) but I would have thought there is also a lot of stuff more interesting than watching an old lady doing her cooking and sewing, dancing with her mop or trying to sing or conduct along to the radio. I have also opened a Twitter account, but I never look at it. Somebody else writes it for me and I don't have to read all the horrid comments.

One of the responses to my blog was that I should have a VC meeting with some young man from California who wanted to 'buy in to what I have done'. I have always kept my wartime exploits to myself, so I don't know how he found out, especially as I was disguised as a man at the time. It really is the only thing I have worth stealing. They don't know down at the Legion, and I don't want Lord Ashcroft to find out.

Still, it turned out that VC refers to what they call a video conference. He looked about 15 years old, with curly hair and a grey T-shirt and was from something which seems to be all about getting as many people as possible to click on the word 'like'. I didn't say this because he wanted to give me money. I declined as I did not want my readers (not 'followers'!) to be told by adverts that they are the focus group for funeral insurance and stair lifts.

I know I should have more security at home as my unarmed combat skills are a little rusty, but it is nice to have people call around, even if they only want to sell me vastly overpriced tea towels or check out if I have anything valuable. I have little dog, but I don't think that is much of a deterrent nowadays, I think she is as keen for some different company as I am. I may be able to get a trainer sole imprint from one her patio deposits, but that is about it.

Some have spy holes, intercoms, and lots of notices like 'no free newspapers, no hawkers' etc. I don't think we get free newspapers delivered anymore and anyway, I would quite like a hawker to come and get the pigeons away from my sweet peas.

I am a member of my local Neighbourhood Watch though, which gives me an excuse to keep my covert surveillance skills up to scratch. I was concerned when I got a neighbourhood watch email warning that an unidentified female has been seen acting suspiciously and had 'made off in an unknown direction'. Clearly I am not as good as I was, and would now have been in the hands of the enemy.

Vera



**Join the RAF 1113 (Berkhamsted) Air training Corps Squadron** as Adult Volunteer, there are currently 3 vacancy's for this interesting and rewarding role to start asap. We are looking for energetic enthusiastic and reliable people, who enjoy or have experience of working with youngsters at an age range of 12-19. The Squadron has recently grown largely in numbers and the group needs extra help to give all the Cadets the best experience possible.

We parade two nights a week on Mon & Weds 7-9.30pm.

Full training is given. The role will involve delivering instruction on aviation related topics to young people, supervising Cadet training activities and working as part of a fun Staff team in a great buzzing atmosphere. Read more about the fantastic organisation Based at Ashlyns School on the website [www.berkhamstedaircadets.org.uk](http://www.berkhamstedaircadets.org.uk) and see them in action this Sunday at St. Peters remembrance service.

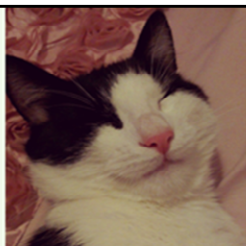
" Last month saw the unveiling in Berkhamsted Town Hall of two very special chairs - chairs that celebrate the contribution to the Town of Ron Cowie . At the time of his death in 2014, Ron was Mayor of Berkhamsted, a Town Councillor, Chairman of the Chamber of Commerce and of the Town Hall Trust. his obituary talked of "the unsung hero of the town". It was the Town Hall Trust that decided to commemorate Ron's public life by commissioning a pair of hand-carved wooden chairs to take pride of place in the Town Hall. The unveiling took place in the presence of Ron's widow, Christine. who has taken Ron's place on the Trust. Also pictured in the photograph are Peter Elsworth, current Chair of the Trust and Ian Lang, a Trust member who arranged the sculpture."

John Gerry



Pictures by David Guest of Berkhamsted Living





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# Your Sports

By Matthew Dawson

## Wok-ing in a Winter Wonderland

It's got to that point of the year again when the weather is rather horrible and cold, so as Christmas approaches and snow becomes a real possibility, I've looked into the most bizarre winter sports.

The first crazy sport I discovered was ice diving, and yes it's exactly as it sounds. Whoever in their right mind would want to do that is anyone's guess, but nonetheless it is a sport. It usually consists of putting on scuba diving equipment and carving a hole out to dive into the icy abyss below to discover spectacular ice formations. There are however competitions in the sport. The world's first under-ice free-diving competition took place in 2009 in Norway. As it was free-diving though, they didn't have the luxury of oxygen tanks to help them out and were therefore diving without equipment as what was previously a hobby, became a sport. Fancy trying it out? The Grand Union Canal is probably cold enough at this time of the year, but I wouldn't recommend it. Another weird winter sport is something called Skijoring and if it snows this Christmas, even you could try it out, however you'll need a dog or horse. It comes from the Norwegian word 'skikjoring' which means ski driving. Essentially, you put on a pair of skis and then get pulled along by either a dog or horse. It's quite similar to cross country skiing in a sense, and there are both long distance and sprint distances. The International Federation of Sled-dog Sports sanction the World Cup in the sport, as the first World Championship was held in 2005 in Canada. Therefore if you're snowed in this Christmas,

have a dog and a pair of skis but need to go shopping, how about trying this around town.

The simply named Bandy, is another bizarre winter sport. It is actually the world's second most popular winter sport, behind Ice hockey, which bandy is extremely similar to. The sport is considered a form of hockey, but combine it with football and in its simplest terms, you have the game of bandy. On each team are 11 players who compete in two 45 minute halves on an ice rink the similar size to a football pitch. However instead of kicking something the players use bowed sticks and instead of a puck like in ice hockey, a small ball is used as teams try to find the oppositions goal. A bizarre mix of sports, but one I'm sure would be highly entertaining.

Now if you've been left wondering what the title of this article is about then the final sport I discovered, the funniest and most wacky yet, will reveal all; wok racing. No I'm not making this up either. Remarkably, something you would traditionally use to cook a stir-fry in can also be used to race, albeit slightly modified, which has been demonstrated since 2003 when the first World Wok Racing Championship took place. The sport takes place on a bobsleigh track in one of two disciplines; the one person wok-sled event or the four person wok-sled, where they compete to see who can get the quickest time down the track, usually racing at speeds of 60mph. If you don't believe me, just search some videos. Next time it snows then, rather than using a sledge, try sitting in a wok and seeing what happens.

# 1<sup>st</sup> Berkhamsted Scouts overcome the ultimate in Scout challenges.

Six scouts from the 1<sup>st</sup> Berkhamsted Scout Group finished in the top 10 of the 121 teams who completed the Hertfordshire Green Beret Challenge last weekend. Over 150 teams entered the two day Challenge, which was held on the 18-20 November at Lees Wood Scout & Guide Activity Centre in Chandlers Cross and is organised every year by Hertfordshire Scouting volunteers.

Promoted as ‘the ultimate in Scout Challenges’,

teams from across Hertfordshire plus other counties competed in four areas: Orienteering, an Assault Course, Challenge Incidents (Daytime)



and a Night Exercise. The Challenge is deliberately held at this time of year, when cold and wet weather is expected. It is designed to test Scouts in a range of physical and intellectual activities and is intended to be a significant challenge for their leadership and teamwork skills.

All teams camp for the weekend and, inspite of the duly cold temperatures and heavy rain on Saturday night & Sunday, the

1<sup>st</sup> Berkhamsted team came in 8<sup>th</sup> on the Day Basis and 9<sup>th</sup> overall for the competition.

“It was very tough”, said Scout team member Sophie Armstrong, “but we were well prepared for the weather and we survived. I really enjoyed it.”

“This outdoor Challenge is a great example of how Scouting builds children’s life skills and confidence”, says Paul Chambers, 1<sup>st</sup> Berkhamsted Scout Leader. “Self-reliance,

resolve and team-working are all life-long skills that we work hard to develop in our Scouts”.

This month the 1958 National Child De-

velopment Study was published, which suggested that people who were in the scouts or guides in childhood have better mental health in later life. Analysis of 10,000 people found ex-members were 15% less likely than other adults to suffer anxiety or mood disorders at the age of 50. Researchers believe it could be the lessons in resilience and resolve that such organisations offer that has a lasting positive impact.

## Copy Dates:

11 Dec

11 Jan

11 Feb

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