

The

CRAYFISHER

September 2015

40p



The parish magazine of the Cray Valley Benefice

No. 4

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Front cover picture: Bridge on the River Cray by Brenda Smith

PARISH LETTER



Last month I had the opportunity to visit my parents in Folkestone. It was a chance to walk the North Downs, go to Deal for fish and chips and visit friends whom I had not seen for quite a while. My friends live in Sandgate, a few miles from Margate, so on a warm Tuesday afternoon I set off to make the hour and a half journey by two buses. The first bus took me from Folkestone to Canterbury, hardly stopping as it whizzed along country roads. When it reached Canterbury, it was a quick change before I was off again on the remainder of my journey.

The bus to Sandgate wasn't like the bus rides around Orpington. It was one straight direct route, hardly stopping to pick up passengers; in fact for most of the journey we travelled along a country road with cornfields on either side, and not a soul in sight. Soon however, the sight of the sea came into view, a small half-moon patch of blue nestling in the yonder green hills.

Since last September it has certainly been a journey for everyone within both our churches. On 21 September 2014 Jane was welcomed into St Andrew's as the curate, and then as the curate within the benefice which came into being in May 2015. We are starting as a Christian community to adjust to what it is like to co-exist with each other; our journey has only really just begun!

Unlike the bus ride, there is no real sense of destination. There is however the ups and downs of travelling together, to walk together as Christians into the unknown, confident that God is always by our side.

You may not like to hear this, but it is now September, and wait for it, yes, it will soon be Advent and then Christmas! Our journey certainly has gathered momentum. During this year we have also shared the experience of pilgrimage, in fact there is an article about our pilgrimage to Walsingham in this very edition. A pilgrimage takes us into a journey with God that is uplifting, stimulating and at times tiring. We walk it together, with God by our side, as pilgrims on a journey.

Amen.

*Yours in Christ,
Paul*

THOUGHT FOR THE MONTH

THE LADY WHO SAID YES

What would you have said? Firstly an angel appears; not your normal everyday visitor. Are you... listening, hoping it will go as quickly as it arrived, willing yourself to wake up, for it must be a dream? Then the angel gives you a message from God. Are you... still listening, worried you are losing the plot, just plain scared? It gets worse; the angel asks you to risk everything. Your reputation, your family's reputation, your very life. Would you say yes, knowing that you could end up homeless and rejected by your family, or more likely killed by them?



'Yes' was not a flippant or easy answer for Mary. That very small word demonstrated a very big trust in God. Her 'yes' saved the world through the birth of her son our saviour Jesus Christ.

Mary's reply was one 'yes' in a long line of positive responses to God. Abraham said 'yes' and God started to create his covenant people. Ruth said 'yes' and made it possible for God's covenant to extend beyond just the Hebrew community. Isaiah and Jeremiah said 'yes' and stood against the injustices of poor political leadership. Mary's 'yes' released God's potential for saving humanity.

God still calls and however long it takes for us to be convinced that the risk will be O.K. because it is part of God's plan for us and for the world, God still waits for our 'yes'. What will we say today?

8 September is the feast of the Nativity or Birth of the Blessed Virgin Mary. We shall keep this festival at St Mary's church on Sunday 6 September.

Blessed is she who believed that what the Lord said, he would accomplish.

Luke 1:45

Rev. Jane Winter

REGULAR EVENTS

REGULAR WEEKLY SERVICES AND EVENTS AT ST ANDREW'S

- Sundays** 09:00 Said Eucharist in the Lady Chapel.
 10:30 Sung Parish Eucharist.
 (On the first Sunday of the month, the 10:30 service is an All Age Family Eucharist.)
- Mondays** 17:00 Rainbows in the hall, excluding school and bank holidays.
- Tuesdays** 09:00 Said Eucharist in the Lady Chapel.
 Please note: 8th there will be no 09:00 Eucharist at St Andrew's this will be at St Mary's at 11:00 followed by Open Door Lunch.
- Wednesdays** 09:30 Funshine Club in the church excluding school holidays.
- Thursdays** 19:00 Said Eucharist in the Lady Chapel with homily.
- Fridays** 12:00 Said Eucharist with Healing and Wholeness, followed by the opportunity for a cup of tea or coffee and a chat.
- Saturdays** There are different regular Saturday events throughout the month. See the following 'What to look out for this month'.

THE DEADLINE FOR THE MONTH OF OCTOBER WILL BE 8 SEPTEMBER AS PRINTING WILL NEED TO BE DONE ON 16TH. PLEASE GET YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS IN BY THEN OR EARLIER

WHAT TO LOOK OUT FOR THIS MONTH

Sat 5 th	10:00	REQUIEM EUCHARIST Service being taken by Rev. Brian McHenry, vicar of All Saints
Mon 7 th	12:00	SINGLETON'S LUNCH at Petts Wood. Please speak to Jill Renwick
Wed 9 th	09:00-11:00	FUNSHINE CLUB returns after the summer break
	15:00	Afternoon tea at Apsley Court - Please join us
	19:45	HOME GROUP - Please speak to Malcolm Deering and/or Jean Pailing for details.
Sat 19 th	19:30	Confirmation Service at St Barnabas - Candidates from St Andrew's and St Mary's attending
Mon 21 st	09:00	FEAST OF ST MATTHEW Eucharist
	TBA	GOING PLACES! Possible Trip to New Romney. Details to be advised and a possible visit to Peter and Pauline Sedgwick for those who wish.
Wed 23 ^d	19:00	LOCAL CHURCH COUNCIL Meeting at the vicarage
Sat 26 th	11:00	Rev. Jane Winter's Priesting Ceremony Rochester Cathedral (Coffee Morning cancelled)
Sun 27 th	10:30	HARVEST FESTIVAL
Tues 29 th	19:00	St Michael and All Angels Sung Eucharist (Rev. Jane Winter's first Eucharist at St Andrew's) Light buffet to follow Service.

READINGS FOR SEPTEMBER

Sun 6 th	THE FOURTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY ALL AGE FAMILY EUCHARIST Isaiah 35: 4-7 and Mark 7: 24-37. (Good News Bible)
Sun 13 th	THE FIFTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY Isaiah 50: 4-9, James 3: 1-12 and Mark 8: 27-38.
Sun 20 th	THE SIXTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY Jeremiah 11:18-20, James 3: 13 to 4: 3 & 7-8 and Mark 9: 30-37.
Sun 27 th	THE SEVENTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY HARVEST THANKSGIVING ALL AGE FAMILY EUCHARIST 2 Corinthians 9: 6-15 and Luke 12: 16-30 (Good News Bible)
Tues 29 th	ST MICHAEL AND ALL ANGELS Genesis 28: 10-17, Revelation 12: 7-12 and John 1: 47-51.

REGULAR WEEKLY SERVICES AND EVENTS
AT ST MARY'S

Sundays	10:00	Holy Communion
Mondays	09:00	Morning Prayer
	17:30	Evening Prayer
Wednesdays	12:00	Midweek Eucharist (except the second week of the month, when it is on Tuesday at 11:00)

WHAT TO LOOK OUT FOR THIS MONTH AT
ST MARYS

Sun 6 th	10:00	BLESSED VIRGIN MARY Patronal Festival - Celebrant - Rev. Chris Kitchener
Mon 7 th	12:00	Singleton's Lunch at Petts Wood. Please speak to Jill Renwick
	19:30	Restoration Committee Meeting
Tues 8 th	12:00	Open Door Lunch Ploughman's lunch with dessert. £5.00 with your reservation by Sunday 9 th . Please inform Rosemary Lathey 01689 872742. Thank you.
Sat 12 th	10:00-12:00	Coffee Morning in the church centre (hall)
Mon 14 th	09:00	HOLY CROSS - Morning Prayer
	17:30	HOLY CROSS - Evening Prayer
Tues 15 th	19:30	Prayer Group at Muriel Unsworth's house
Sat 19 th	19:30	Confirmation Service at St Barnabas - Candidates from St Andrew's and St Mary's attending
Sun 20 th	15:30-	At the vicarage
	17:00	HOUSE GROUP on Gender and Sexuality
Sat 26 th	11:00	Rev. Jane Winter's Priesting Ceremony Rochester Cathedral
Sun 27 th	10:00	Rev. Jane Winter's first Eucharist at St Mary's

MOTHERS UNION

First Sunday of the month - 11:30 in the church centre (hall).

First Tuesday of the month - 13:30-16:00 at various venues. Please listen to notices and see the notice board.

Just four members of St. Mary's Mothers' Union met at Muriel's home on 4 August. The meeting started with the usual opening prayers led by Muriel. After which I explained the differences between our services at St. Mary's and the service Tony and I attended at the East Croydon United Reformed

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Church the Sunday before. The different way the bread and wine (fruit juice as the U.R.C. are teetotal) were given at the once a month communion service; the fruit juice in small individual glasses and small cubes of bread. Also, there was no peace exchanged during the service and the Gospel was read to a sitting congregation. The preacher started to tell the congregation about the formation of the United Reformed Church after a short sermon but he is doing this over a number of weeks so we learnt very little about this coming together of the three denominations. After the service almost the entire congregation slowly moved into the adjoining church hall where tea/coffee and cake was enjoyed by all. We were made most welcome and extended a welcome from our churches and invited them to visit us.

After my little talk Muriel served us with tea and cakes, whilst other matters were discussed. We wished Muriel a speedy recovery and thanked her for her hospitality.

The next Mothers' Union meetings are on Tuesday 1 September at 14:15 at Grace and Ayo Fayomi's home and on Sunday 6 September at 11:30 in the church centre (hall). There are still some spare seats in cars for the meeting at Grace and Ayo's. If you would like to be considered please speak to me.

Rosemary Lathey

ADVANCE NOTICES

4 October	10:00	HARVEST FESTIVAL
17 October	09:30-	autumn members meeting at St Columbus School
	14:30	Bexleyheath (bring your own lunch)

OPEN DOOR LUNCH

Tuesday 11 August saw 16 Open Door diners enjoying a ploughman's type lunch, followed by spotted dick and custard made by Myra.

The next lunch will be on Tuesday 8 September at 12:00. (Please remember the **mid-week Eucharist is now every Wednesday at 12:00**, there is NOT one on a Tuesday anymore.) The menu will be pizza and salad, followed by one of Myra's delicious trifles. Please let me know if you would like to join us, payment of £5:00 in advance for the shopping helps. Thank you to all who helped.

Rosemary Lathey (01689 872742)

SOCIAL CLUB

Second Tuesday of the month 13:30 to 16:00

Six people enjoyed each other's company and a film followed by tea/coffee and biscuits at the August Tuesday Social Club on the 11 August. The next Tuesday Social Club will be held in the church centre (hall) opposite St Mary's on 8 September at 13:30 until 15:30, all are welcome. For further details please contact me.

Tony Lathey (01689 872742)

COFFEE MORNING

Second Saturday of the month 10:00 - 12:00 (Cost £2:00)

OTHER NOTICES

FRIENDS OF ST MARY'S

We have formed a Friends of St Mary's as an offshoot of the Friends of Cray Valley, who have been doing the odd litter pick of the churchyard. The main reason is to try and keep the church and churchyard in a reasonable state of appearance as there is no longer anybody responsible for this task available from the congregation on a regular basis. The Friends of St Mary's membership is open to all willing helpers whether members of St Mary's or other churches or just interested members of the public who feel the church and churchyard is worthy of looking after. To start off we are meeting on the first Saturday of each month from 14:00 till 16:00 and will be doing litter picking, removing greenery from the graves where possible and removing growth from the base of the trees: gloves and equipment provided. Please pass this information on to your neighbours, they might like to help. For further details please see me.

Tony Lathey (01689 872742)

A JAR OF JAM

JESUS AS KING

During July JaM children have been looking at the story in John's gospel of Jesus feeding the five thousand. Here is a reflection on John 6:15 by Maya Akhigbe aged 9.

When Jesus realised they were about to come and take him by force to make him king, he withdrew again to the mountain by himself.

I think the crowds wanted him as king because he was like a father to them. He didn't just shut them out and be conceited and obstinate, however he helped them, fed them and nurtured them.



The majority of people would probably moan about the time or give up all of it. They wouldn't teach the callow or allow ease to the naïve. Jesus did that and much more. He didn't care if they thought him ludicrous or crazy, he cared for them and he loved them. No matter how noisesome, or smelly or rude or obstinate they may be, it melted their hearts to see how humble he was. That is

something truly special.

In summary I think they chose him as leader because of his traits and personality. Not to mention his generosity and knowledge. We should all be a bit more like that, caring, kind and peaceful. Maybe, just maybe our world would be an even better place.

Rev. Jane Winter

ST MARY'S RESTORATION NEWS

Our building plan

This past month has seen continued activity in the tower in preparation for the building works. A platform has been added above the bells which will make it easier for the repairs to be carried out. All the pigeons have gone and netting has been installed which should prevent their return. This is only a temporary measure; it will not cure the problem long term.

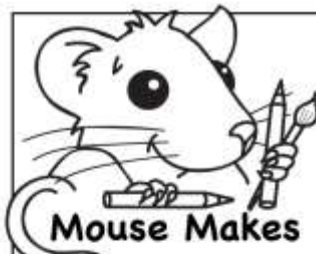
We have had a bat survey and although there are bats in the area we were very pleased to hear there are none in the church, perhaps the bells put them off roosting in the tower. We are getting quotes for an asbestos survey - something we need to have done for the whole church not just the project, but contractors will need to see it before they can start work.

Our activity plan

Heritage Lottery also require us to have an activity plan of how we are going to make the history of the church more accessible for everyone. We are currently completing the updated history book. We have identified someone who will train people to be guides and tell people about the church history - **would you like to do this?** Speak to Jane or Peter if you are interested. We have created a tender for a new website that will help us promote the church building on the great work Sallyanne has already done. Sallyanne is heading up this plan. Jackie has taken the lead for our fund raising activities. We are currently planning a concert in partnership with local resident Dave Silk who used to work for the BBC and has a huge network of performers to draw from. The concert is on Sunday 25 October 15:00. Please put the date in your diary **Live Music for a Lazy Sunday Afternoon**. Tickets will be available from Jackie £7 including complimentary refreshments.

Rev. Jane Winter

FOR THE YOUNG AND YOUNG AT HEART



Mouse Makes

Use the picture clues to solve the harvest crossword puzzle, then using the words in **bold** from the Bible quotes, fill in the remaining squares

HARVEST PRAISE

"Shout out praises to the **Lord** all the **earth!**
Worship the Lord with joy! ...
Acknowledge that the Lord is **God** ...
... Enter His gates with **thanksgiving**
and His courts with praise!
Give Him thanks! **Praise** His name.
For the Lord is good, His loyal love endures
and He is faithful through
all generations."
- from Psalm 100

1 across

2 across

3 down

4 across

5 down

6 down

7 across

8 across

9 down

10 across

11 across

12 across

13 across

14 across

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2 down

3 down

4 down

5 down

6 down

7 across

8 down

9 down

10 across

11 across

12 down

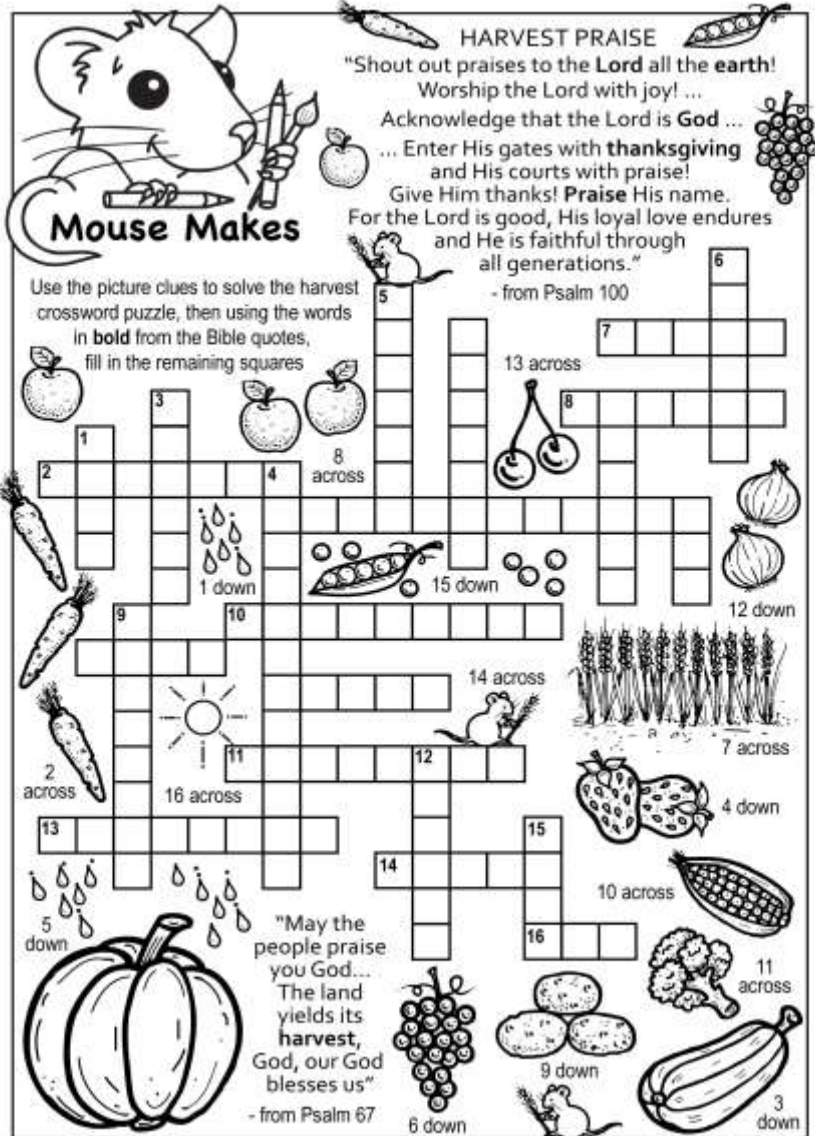
13 across

14 across

15 down

16 across

"May the people praise you God...
The land yields its **harvest**,
God, our God
blesses us"
- from Psalm 67



8th THE NATIVITY OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY

In both eastern and western churches, Mary has always been held as pre-eminent among all the saints. The unique, extraordinary privilege of being the mother of the One who was both God and Man, makes her worthy of special honour. Thomas Aquinas believed she was due hyperdulia, or a veneration that exceeds that of other saints, but is at the same time infinitely below the adoration, or latria, due to God alone.

The gospels of Matthew and Luke give Mary most mention. Luke even tells the story of Jesus' infancy from Mary's point of view. Her Song, or Magnificat appears in Luke 1:46-55.

The virginal conception of Christ is clearly stated in the gospels. But after Jesus' birth, Mary fades quietly into the background. During Jesus' public life, she is mentioned only occasionally, as at the wedding at Cana. She reappears at the foot of the Cross (John's Gospel), and is given into John's care. In the early chapters of Acts, Mary is with the Apostles, and received the Holy Spirit along with them on Whitsunday. But her role was not the active one of teaching and preaching.



Mary's significance grew with the centuries. By the fifth century she was called Theotokos, The Mother of God, and from the seventh century onwards, she was given four festivals: the Presentation in the Temple (2 February), the Annunciation (25 March), the Assumption (15 August) and her Nativity (8 September).

Marian devotion has played an enormous role in the church down the years. Mary has been the object of countless prayers, accredited with performing many miracles, and the subject of thousands of artistic endeavours. She has had hundreds of chapels or parish churches named after her. During the Reformation many images of Mary were destroyed. The Second Vatican Council 1962 made an extended statement on her, stressing her complete dependence on her Son, and regarding her as a model of the Church.

Principal Marian shrines of today include Lourdes (France), Fatima (Portugal), Walsingham (England), Loreto (Italy), Czesochowa (Poland) and Guadalupe (Mexico).

Courtesy of www.Parishpump.co.uk

ANOTHER RIB TICKLER?

In July, Ray Page quoted a sign 'God first created man and then had a better idea'. The following was found on the web.

Adam was walking around the Garden of Eden feeling very lonely, so God asked Adam, 'What is wrong with you?' Adam said, 'Lord, I don't have anyone to talk to.'

God said, 'Then I will give you a companion, and she will be called a woman. This person will cook for you and wash your clothes, she will always agree with every decision you make. She will bear your children and never ask you to get up in the middle of the night to take care of them. She will not nag you, and will always be the first to admit she was wrong when you've had a disagreement. She will never have a headache, and will freely give love and compassion whenever needed. She will never question your behaviour or the company you keep. She will support you and understand that you have important decisions to make throughout your life and don't have time for nonsense!'



Adam asked God, 'What will this woman cost?'

God said, 'An arm and a leg.'

Adam said, 'What can I get for just a rib?'

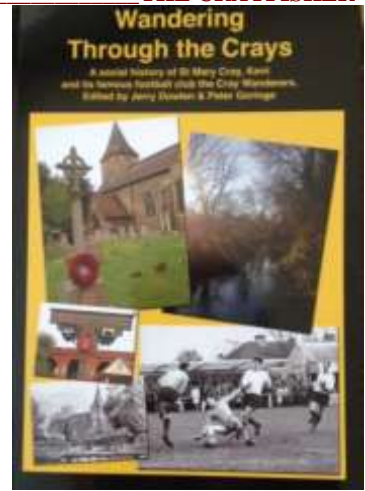
Malcolm Deering

Everyone is invited to Jane's Priesting in Rochester Cathedral on Saturday 26 September 2015 at 11:00. Please sign the list in either church if you plan to come so Jane can let the pub know how many people to cater for.

BOOK REVIEW

WANDERING THROUGH THE CRAYS

This is a delightful and informative book which focuses on life in the Crays by Jerry Dowlen and Peter Goringe. We are taken through the centuries and given an insight into what life was like many, many, years ago. A description and explanation of how the river got its name is quite fascinating. We are told that the Cray is ‘a chalk stream fuelled from the aquifer of the North Downs.’



There are many pictures taken in times gone by in and around the High Street and it is really interesting to look at these pictures and pick out where they were taken and to compare then and now.

For the football enthusiast there are many memories of the local football club, Cray Wanderers, which played a large part in the life of the Crays. It was founded over 150 years ago and is the second oldest football club in the world! The story of the club’s fortunes and misfortunes over the years is told with much affection and passion.

St Paul’s Cray has a really ancient history. The Romans camped along the river banks. Sir Simon de Cray held the manor in Edward I’s time, taking his name from St Paul’s Cray. We are told that St Paul’s Cray has no connection with St Paul the apostle. It is simply an abbreviation of St Paulinus Cray, the name of the parish church, which sadly became redundant in 1978.

As you read through the book, you are taken on a journey through the two World Wars and the formation in 1925 of St Mary and St Paul’s Cray Women’s Institute, which is still going strong.

There is a lovely picture of the May Day celebrations at Joyson’s Mill in the 1890s. How different that is from the sort of things we do in this day and age to celebrate anything, let alone May Day,

The last chapters are written by people who have lived and worked in the area, recounting their experiences, views and memories.

Altogether a truly fascinating and interesting book.

Brenda Smith and Evelyn Magee

Copies of the book can be purchased (price £9.95) from the Croft Tea Room

DISCOVERING ORPINGTON!

It was the Christmas holidays of 1967 and there was snow on the ground. I was ten years old and bored, so was my best friend David. We didn't really know what to do with ourselves so my mum suggested a 'Red Rover'. This was a daily ticket obtainable from bus stations providing unlimited travel on the good old red London Routemasters. I think they cost five bob (shillings) at the time if my memory serves me well, which unfortunately isn't always the case. Anyway, that would be twenty-five pence in today's money and yet it still sounds like a lot for those days. David never had any trouble getting money from his mum. His dad ran a fruit and veg stall in Brixton market and was a bit of a Del boy in his time!

We had bought Red Rovers during the summer holidays and used them to travel into and across central London, hopping on and off buses at random, thanks to the open platform at the back. We never got lost. We were typical south-east London street urchins. On this occasion we decided to go in the opposite direction. We wanted to see if we could actually get out of London. We had no real concept of London as a city and Greater London as a county.



We left Peckham bus garage on a 36 bus, I think. We then changed buses a couple of times and eventually found ourselves in Orpington. We had never even heard of Orpington! We got off somewhere near to Priory Gardens. We looked at the nearest street sign and were excited to discover it did not have a London postcode. We had escaped from London; we were in deepest darkest Kent!

We went into the gardens and started mucking about, like you do, but soon got bored again. We decided to spend some profitable time chucking snowballs at passing buses from our location outside the public toilets opposite Carlton Parade. We were really enjoying ourselves when we were suddenly startled by a hand being forcefully pressed on our shoulders. We jumped out of our skins, dropped our snowballs and turned round. A local beat bobby had crept up behind us!

'What do you think you're doing?' This was obviously a rhetorical question.

'Nothing'. The standard reply to such questions.

'Where do you live?' Assuming we were local lads?

'We're from LONDON!' Not the answer he was expecting?

'Then get on the next bus and go back to LONDON!'

And we did.

We had been a stone's throw from St Andrew's church in Lower Road. The rest, as they say in the trade, is history.

Bill Willis

PCC VACANCY

Due to unforeseen personal circumstances, a member of the current PCC has found it necessary to resign. This has created a vacancy which needs to be filled. Is there anyone who would be willing to take this on? We meet about 6 times a year. If you are interested please speak to me and I will provide you with details. Many thanks.

*Brenda Smith
PCC Secretary*

A PILGRIMAGE IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF THE NORTHERN SAINTS

Part One

The moment I received the invitation from McCabe travel to join this pilgrimage, and read the itinerary, I knew I wanted to go. It began from Durham where we would be based at the university so, along with three companions, on Monday 13 July we set off from Kings Cross full of curiosity and excitement. On arrival at Durham it was a short taxi ride to St Aidan's College where we would spend the next four nights. Our accommodation, in single rooms all with en suite facilities, was very comfortable - what a change from student accommodation when I was studying, where four shared a room with countless numbers sharing very few bathrooms!

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Dinner on that first evening indicated that we were to be well fed - and we were! A talk followed and then off to bed in readiness for an early start the next morning. At breakfast on Tuesday we were able to choose the contents for our packed lunch - superbly organized - and then left by 07:00. We were off to Lindisfarne, or Holy Island, and had to fit in with the tides. On arrival we had a choice of walking across the three miles of sand, mud and water or staying on the coach and being driven across. It has long been a dream of mine to do this pilgrim walk, barefoot, as

pilgrims through the ages have done. Having suffered a small stroke in March, I had feared I wouldn't manage to get there at all but I recovered well enough and here I was. I'd prayed about this next bit: 'Father, if you don't want me to do this walk then you've got to make it impossible for me to set foot on the causeway otherwise I'm doing it.' He didn't and I did! It was a wonderful experience although the approach to the causeway was on a freshly tarmacked road and very painful - not as bad as the suffering of Jesus I kept telling myself. We plodged, waded and walked the three miles and were the first to arrive on the island, being greeted by some who had crossed by coach. I was on a *high* for several days after this as people at St Andrew's will confirm! The rest of the day was spent exploring the island, castle, priory, shops and cafés until we met at St Mary's Church for a eucharist - celebrated by the Bishop of Durham who had accompanied us on our walk. After the service he blessed my pilgrim shell and seemed genuinely interested in us - why, where and so on. When the tide allowed we left the island and headed to Seahouses, via Banburgh castle, where we had the most wonderful fish and chips I've ever eaten. We were 104 in number so they had closed the restaurant to the public and we filled it - how they managed I will never know but the food kept coming, the cooking never stopped and the last serving was as fresh as the first. Well replete, we had a quick look at the harbour before getting back on the coach and heading for Durham. I, for one, was exhausted but we had walked about 10 miles and the sense of achievement sustained us.



To be concluded next month

Jill Renwick

JOHN BLUNDELL HONOURED IN NEW ROAD SIGN

A new road sign recently unveiled in St Mary Cray High Street provides a fitting and worthy tribute to John Blundell. The commemoration beneath the name Blundell Close reads as follows:

'In recognition of John Blundell, founder member and past chairman of the St Mary Cray Action Group, and of the huge contribution he has made to the quality of life in the Crays.'

The Action Group was founded in 1971. John, a keen conservationist and environmentalist, is the author of *An Illustrated Guide to St Mary Cray*. Most recently reprinted in 1999, it is still the definitive guide to our area and it contains many of John's skilful architectural drawings.

John provided the sketches and drawings for the short guide brochure to St Mary's Church to go with text written by Sue Mandry-Smith. John also provided colour illustrations for St Mary's former parish magazine *Millstream*.

John is unfortunately not in good health these days but his wife Jennie informs us that when she told John about the new road sign, he beamed.

John is much loved and respected by all of us who care about the Crays, and this new road sign is a most heartening visual tribute to him. The sign is unusual and special for two reasons. Firstly, it commemorates a living person, whereas similar signs are usually posthumous. Secondly, it provides descriptive narrative detail about the achievements that led to the sign being requested by John's many friends in the local community.

Jerry Dowlen

BLUNDELL CLOSE

During the notices before a service in July, it was announced that there is now a BLUNDELL CLOSE off the High Street, opposite Red Lion Close.

The sign has a citation on it. This was in recognition of John's work with St Mary Cray Action Group.



St Mary Cray Action Group was founded as an offshoot of the Orpington and District Amenity Society by Ivor Stanbrook MP and local councillor Doris Partridge.



Monthly meetings are held with a speaker. Interest in the built environment together with planning issues has always been a priority.

During the early years exhibitions of the history of the Crays were held together with walks. Walks these days are led by Tony Lathey. St Mary Cray Market took place for a number of years.

In conclusion I would like to express our gratitude for this honour to Councillor Christopher Pierce, John Love and Jim Cook who made this possible.

The site is most appropriate as we lived in Red Lion Close for 25 years.

Jennie M Blundell

A 'WELL' TRODDEN WAY

On Thursday 6 August - The Feast of the Transfiguration of Our Lord, nineteen people from St Andrew's, St Mary's, Christ Church and St Martin's set off from St Andrew's Church by coach to the Anglican Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham in North Norfolk. In the coach before leaving, we said Psalm 97 and a prayer that we be filled by the Holy Spirit and catch something of the glory of God, which the disciples saw when Jesus was transfigured before them.

The origins of the shrine can be traced back to 1061, when, tradition tells us that the Virgin Mary appeared to Richeldis - a Saxon noblewoman and 'took her in spirit to the house in Nazareth, where the Angel Gabriel asked Mary to become the mother of Jesus'. Mary asked Richeldis to build a replica of that house in Walsingham. In 1150, a priory was founded and, in 1226, King Henry III became the first monarch to visit the shrine. The shrine was a regular place of pilgrimage until destroyed by King Henry VIII in 1534.



In 1921, pilgrimage to Walsingham was re-introduced. In 1931, the Holy House was built and the statue of Our Lady of

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Walsingham was moved there from the local parish church. In 1938, the extension to the shrine was completed.

We arrived at Walsingham about 12:30. We read from 2 Peter 1: 16-19 and prayed, giving thanks for our safe arrival and remembering that we were walking on holy ground in God's presence. After a little leg-stretching, we went into the shrine church.

Apart from the high altar, there are fifteen chapels, including an Orthodox chapel. Near to the west end of the shrine, is the Holy House - built to the measurements of the original Saxon shrine - where pilgrims light candles or may make private prayer. To the north west of the Holy House, there are steps leading down to the Holy Well fed

by a natural spring.

At 13:00 we celebrated our eucharist for The Transfiguration, led by Fr Paul in one of the chapels in the shrine church. After receiving bread and wine for the soul, there was the chance to sustain our bodies and enjoy our lunch and a little more exploring before returning to the shrine church to join others who were present for the daily service of sprinkling at 14:30 in the main seating area between the Holy House and the central altar.

The priest, who led the sprinkling, explained at the beginning of the service that we would not be sprinkled but be given water to drink, and have water poured on our hands. Towards the end of the service, everybody proceeded to the steps leading down to the Holy Well to receive the water and return by the steps at the other side for the conclusion of the service.

We then had free time subject to the strict instruction that we be at the coach by not later than 17:00.

One group went to the Slipper Chapel, and the Roman Catholic shrine, a mile out of the village. Some returned walking the route in pilgrimage tradition - barefoot. Another group walked to find the Pan Orthodox chapel not far from the shrine church, which had a collection of icons. Although it is an Anglican shrine, the request to allow the building of the chapel was readily accepted. Indeed, the Anglican shrine is welcomingly open to all.

We all reached the coach by 17:00 and, after a reading and prayer for our return, we set off home. We arrived back in Lower Road at about 20:15 and, after the reading from John 17: 22-24 and a final prayer, we made our farewells

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and returned to our respective homes as a - perhaps weary but certainly - happy band of pilgrims.

During our short visit, I believe that we all absorbed much of the atmosphere and spirit of the place. I heard various comments about going again for a day or spending a few days at Walsingham.

Pilgrimages to places such as Walsingham, quiet days and taking time for reflection are opportunities for refreshment and recharging of our lifetime pilgrimage. I believe this was true for the Walsingham Pilgrims. .

Malcolm Deering

(If you would like more information about The Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham, you can go to www.walsinghamanglican.org.uk)

I am very grateful to Rev. Jane Winter for her contribution in producing this article.

GOING PLACES VISIT KNOLE

On 18 August some of the members of Going Places visited Knole Park to view the house and gardens.

While the weather was not summery, indeed it could have been late autumn as there was a chill in the air, we enjoyed 'lording' it around the grounds and wishing we could have lived there above stairs.

The house and its past were fascinating, the house dating back to 1456 when the then Archbishop of Canterbury built it as a medieval archbishop's palace. In 1603 its association with the Sackvilles began when Thomas Sackville, 1st Earl of Dorset, took ownership of Knole. The deer park is Kent's last medieval deer park, and is also a Site of Special Scientific Interest.



In 1946 the National Trust took over the running of Knole, but the Sackville family still live there.

To honour our visit a fly-past by the World War II flight crew flew over Knole Park while we were sitting eating an alfresco lunch. Well, we like to think it was in our honour!

Trevor Taylor

JAM

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