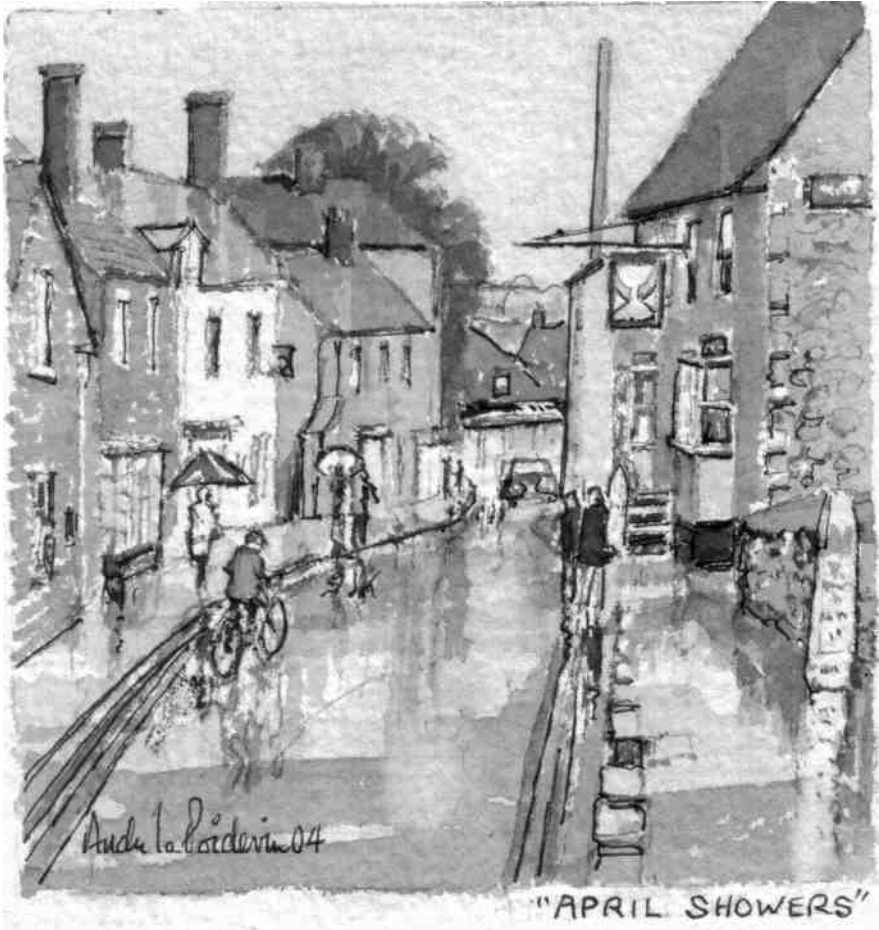


Purton Magazine



April 2004

40p

LOCAL CHURCHES

CHURCH OF ENGLAND

PARISH CHURCH OF ST MARY

Vicar: Rev Jane Haslam (from 5 May 2004)
www.communicate.co.uk/wilts/stmaryspurton

Churchwardens: Gladys Legg
Graham Quincey

Secretary: Sheila Fowler

Sundays

8.00am Holy Communion
10.30am Parish Communion
10.30am United Junior Church (except 1st Sunday)
10.30am 1st Sunday: Family Service - all ages welcome
6.30pm Evensong

METHODIST CHURCHES

Ministers Rev Jan Partridge (Purton)
32 Bodiam Drive, Swindon, SN5 8BE tel 534992
Rev Stephen Cullis (Purton Stoke, Braydon, Leigh)
1, Garraways, Woodshaw, Wootton Bassett, SN4 8LT
tel 583197

PURTON

Sundays
10.30am Morning Worship
10.30am United Junior Church
(except 1st Sunday)

PURTON STOKE

Sundays
10.15am Sunday School
11.00am Morning Worship

BRAYDON

Sundays
6.00pm Evening Worship

CATHOLIC CHURCH

CHURCH OF THE SACRED HEART, WOOTTON BASSETT

Parish Priest Father J Reville
Church of the Sacred Heart, High Street, Wootton Bassett
tel 852366

Saturdays

6.00pm First Mass of Sunday For times of weekday services
Sundays please see Church notice board

10.00am Mass

ST MARY'S CHURCH, CRICKLADE

Priest Father Richard Barton
St Mary's Church, High Street, Cricklade
tel 01285 712586

Holy Days

7.00pm Mass

Sundays

9.30am Mass

From the Editor

Spring is such a wonderful time. In our village the snowdrops have been followed by so many daffodils heralding longer, warmer days with their trumpets sometimes waving alarmingly in the still brisk breezes. The countryside may be slowly waking up to a new growing season but the winter hibernation has not stopped numerous developments and improvements in Purton.

PC Steve Harvey has returned to our beat as well as our pages with another unprompted and independent comment about the quality of our village. When his secondment to Chippenham was finishing he specifically asked to come back to Purton believing that it is “a fabulous village with plenty of Character” – with the ‘s’ being diplomatically absent.

Purton Age Concern has reached the ripe old age of 40 and it begs the question about when old age starts. But whenever it starts in Purton, villagers will have this active and caring organisation in support – and this wonderful organisation must be in the back of some villagers’ minds as their birthdays continue to click round.

The Parish Council continues on its busy way, helping us villagers. Improvements continue to appear around us, this time with two new bus shelters. Even more encouraging is that, following the piece in the February issue, no less than 7 kissing gates have been sponsored from within our community. Perhaps another example of what makes Purton so special.

Even our first football team is playing their part by reaching their cup semi-finals and remain top of their league. No wonder they are attracting such large crowds and long may their success continue.

Our painting of “The Last Supper” that was stolen from St. Mary’s church as long ago as 1994; recovered in Florida in 1998 but in such a bad condition that it taken another 6 years to restore, now proudly hangs back in its original position. Again this is an example of our special community. A substantial fund-raising effort was cheerfully undertaken and the target gratifyingly achieved.

Shortly after the theft, another talented Purton artist, Leslie Holland, created his own “Last Supper” painting – literally to fill the gap. Although moving aside to make room for the returning original, Leslie’s painting now has its own place of honour on the West wall in the church.

Andy Le Poidevin’s series of magazine covers continues this month with a familiarly wet view of the High Street outside the Angel as a reminder that whatever the weather, Purton is still an attractive village.

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Floodlighting: *Pages 8, 11, 22, 25, 31, 42*

Purton
Magazine

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Typeset & Printed by: **In Touch** Services

Advertising enquiries and copy for contributions by 10th of each month to: Purton Magazine, c/o In Touch Services, 115 Pavenhill, Purton SN5 4DB 01793 772954 email: mail@intouchpurton.co.uk

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Distribution: Avril or Jacqui

Purton Historical Society

The Society had a good evening, listening to Mrs Iris Smith talking about her Grandmother - Emily the Victorian Cook. One of the enjoyable parts of the evening was again being able to handle so many historical artefacts. So once again we had trouble closing up the hall, everyone was having such a good time.



Meeting: Our next meeting is on Thursday April 22nd at St Mary's Upper School Hall at 7.30 pm. Brian Edwards will be telling us of 'The Trouble with Silbury Hill'. This will deal with the hill since 1776 and will consider the effect of the hole that appeared in 2000.

Cricklade Historical Society: Their talk on Thursday April 22nd at the Town Hall at 7.30pm is entitled 'Magistrates Past and Present'. Reg Coole and Vince Foley will describe how local justice has been administered for the protection – usually – of the ordinary citizen's rights.

Spring Day School: The Wiltshire Local History Forum is holding a Day School on Saturday April 17th at the New Baptist Church, Sheep St., Devizes from 10.00 am. The subject is 'How to Read a Church'. It will examine the changing architecture of English churches, copiously illustrated and with many Wiltshire examples. Judith Patrick, an eminent architectural historian, will take a chronological approach from medieval to Victorian times. Archivist Steve Hobbs will introduce documents that relate to each period. The day school will finish with tea at 3.00pm, followed by the Forum's AGM which you are invited to attend. Admission by ticket at the door is £5 including tea & coffee. For further information phone 01722 328922.

Visit: With the success of the talk on Cogges Manor Farm. I am trying to arrange an evening visit, probably in early September. Details will be announced later.

EVE BOOY, Secretary

Purton Historical Society - Annual Coach Outing

This year's outing is to Worcester on 19th June where we will visit the Commandery as our first port of call. This magnificent historic building is set within peaceful gardens yet only 3 minutes walk from the city centre. It was the headquarters of Charles II during the final stages of the Civil War and houses a major exhibition telling the story of this turbulent time.

There will be free time for lunch in Worcester before we go to Elgar's birthplace just 3 miles from the city. This museum gives a fascinating insight into the life and music of one of England's greatest composers. There will be time for afternoon tea at a local garden centre before our return home.

Inclusive cost to members and friends: £15.00 (£13.50 for Seniors)

Departing Purton 9.00am / Pick-up in Cricklade if required

Return at approx 7.00pm

For booking or further details email: mail@purtonquarry.fsnet.co.uk

From Cricklade Fire Station

During February, crews from Cricklade attended 9 emergency calls as follows:

2/2/04 at 0741 Road traffic accident, persons trapped, B4553 Crosslanes
4/2/04 at 1812 Automatic fire alarm, elderly persons' flats, Purton
8/2/04 at 1119 Emergency special service call, flooding, Gosditch, Ashton Keynes
12/2/04 at 1246 Reported property fire, false alarm with good intent
19/2/04 at 1327 Barn fire, Hayes Knoll, Cricklade
21/2/04 at 1222 Automatic fire alarm, residential school, Cricklade
24/2/04 at 1533 Bus fire, The Peak, Purton
26/2/04 at 1001 Standby duties, Stratton Fire Station
26/2/04 at 2202 Emergency special service call. Diesel spillage, Calcutt Services, A419.

We have two fund-raising events in April, the first being Easter Bingo at the Town Hall on Tuesday 6th April starting at 8pm. The second will be a car boot sale at the Fire Station on Saturday 24th April starting at 1pm.

If you would like further fire safety advice, like to book a free Home Safety Check, have information on events or are interested in becoming a retained firefighter, then please call any of the personnel below.

Sub Officer Neil Vigor 07971 547069
Leading Firefighter Rob Milican 751482
Leading Firefighter Brian Francis 750535

Fire Safety Advice - Smoking

- Never leave a lit cigarette or pipe unattended – it can easily fall onto an armchair or carpet.
- The armchair or carpet could later catch fire and start to give off dense smoke and fumes. THE SMOKE AND FUMES WILL KILL YOU AND/OR YOUR LOVED ONES.
- Never smoke in a chair if you think you may doze off in it.
- Extinguish cigarettes at bedtime and follow a bedtime routine.
- Never smoke in bed.
- Always keep matches and lighters completely out of the reach of children.



March 17th

The Church was floodlit in memory of Brian Simpkins on the 9th anniversary of his death.
Loved and remembered always by Chris and all the family

ON PATROL WITH PC HARVEY

Hello and welcome. My name is Steve Harvey and I am the local Community Beat Officer for Purton. Quite a few of you will remember me from the last time I was patrolling these streets.

I have been away for about a year and a half as I was seconded over to Chippenham for a period. When my time was finished I asked to come back because I really enjoy working in the Community of Purton. I have always thought it is a fabulous village with, in my opinion, plenty of Character!!

I don't intend this being a long article as it is the first one and is really to re-introduce myself.

I work from Cricklade Police Station and you can contact me on 01793 – 751680 or by e- mail at stephen.harvey@wiltshire.pnn.police.uk.

Please do not be put off if the phone is answered by someone from Devizes. We have a message switching system and believe me **I WILL GET THE MESSAGE**. If I am not on duty they will leave me a message. Obviously anything of an urgent nature should be called in on 999.

I also have a colleague PC Stewart Hulmes who covers Purton and he can also be contacted at Cricklade Police.

One of my main messages I wish to put across is to encourage you all to call if you see anything suspicious or hear about anything going on that needs Police intervention. You are all very much the eyes and ears of the village. I am not on Patrol 24hrs a day so need you calling with information. When I know where things are happening I can tailor my patrols accordingly. When you see me in the street then please stop and talk to me.

An initiative I started last time was a 'Police Surgery' at the Village Hall. I intend to re start this so that local Purton residents can come and talk to me in confidence.

Shortly there is to be a Crime Prevention stand coming to Purton where you can get crime prevention advice. Watch this column for dates.

I will not be asking for information on specific crimes in this column as it will always be a month behind. I would therefore encourage you to read the local newspaper as I quite often ask for information on recent crimes in those publications.

Hopefully we can all work together to continue to make Purton a pleasant and safe environment to live and also assist each other in catching any persons who attempt to disrupt that.



Thanks
P.C. STEVE HARVEY

Purton Museum - Exhibit Of The Month

Purton's Funeral Bier

One of the largest exhibits in Purton Museum is the vehicle shown in this month's picture. It is Purton's Parish Funeral Bier. It was made in about 1900 by Mr Harry Smith, a coach builder and wheelwright of Station Road in Purton. It is highly polished, has shiny brasswork, rubber-tyred wheels and a turnable front wheel bogey so it is easily manoeuvrable in tight spaces. There are two rollers to make it easy to slide a coffin on and off – and therefore six metal pegs to hold a coffin in place so it would not fall off unexpectedly!



Until shortly after the Second World War, the deceased person would remain at their home while neighbours and friends paid their respects. On the day of the funeral, the coffin lid would be screwed down and the coffin taken on the bier to the church, followed by a long procession of mourners on foot. The journey was sometimes long if made from a far end of the village. The bier was wheeled into the church up the central aisle and remained there throughout the service.

For expensive funerals, horse-drawn hearses sometimes came out from Swindon, but more humble Purtonians made their final journey on this bier, guided by either Mr Shurey or one of the Barnes family, the village undertakers. In those days, undertakers had more than one line of business, Mr J. Shurey describing himself on his 1890s calling card as also carpenter and joiner, while Mr E. Barnes was a carpenter, builder and wheelwright – “ladders and wheelbarrows kept in stock”.

Although undertaking had ceased to be a local trade during the 20th century, coffin building was still done by local carpenters. A few years ago, and only shortly before he died, Harold Barnes passed some of his coffin accessories to the Museum. These included coffin plates, handles and linings. However they had been in his draughty workshop and open to the elements for some years so will need restoration work before any of them can be put on display.

Purton Museum is above the Public Library at 1 High Street and is also open during Library hours, that is: Tues 2-5 and 6-8 pm; Wed 10-1 and 2-5; Fri 2-5 and 6-8. Assisted and group visits can be arranged by phoning the Curator, Nigel Manfield or emailing curator@purtonmuseum.com. Alternatively you can visit us anytime on-line at www.purtonmuseum.com which includes Museum and Purton Historical Society news, events and information on the collection as well as the Exhibit of the Month.

RICK DIXON
Outreach Officer

News From Saint Mary's

Have you seen the churchyard recently? There has been a glorious display of snowdrops – easily visible from the road when you come round the corner from The Fox. We are so lucky to have a church and grounds so well tended by people who care for our lovely building. Sincere thanks to all helpers, whether they work 'hands on' to keep the building and churchyard in good order, or as friends of St Mary's whose financial contributions help us keep on top of repairs and maintenance

Some people go in for self denial during Lent. This can be a worthwhile activity if something positive is achieved and not just self-satisfaction at resisting temptation. An alternative way of marking Lent is taking on something extra like the Lent course. Perhaps you attended these discussions for the first time this year. If so I hope that you found them useful and full of thought-provoking debate. It is good to be reminded from time to time that other peoples' opinions are just as valid as our own and in some cases more tactfully expressed.

Did you manage to try a Lent Lunch? This annual event takes on a different aspect In Purton. A definite taking on something extra – I am of course talking about the Cake counter. It is always amazing and helps to swell the TEARFUND so much. Lent lunches are always enjoyable and we look forward to seeing old friends who support us year after year. We are grateful for their continued support. A big thank-you to all the ladies who help but especially to the core of helpers who do all the planning and preparation. This year, spare them a special thought as they work for the first time without dear Gwen Creasey.

We also celebrated Mothering Sunday in March. The tradition was that on the 4th Sunday in Lent domestics were allowed time off to visit their mothers. Today this festival has become rather commercialised with Mother's Day cards on sale the day after Saint Valentine's. Fortunately, for those of us whose mothers prefer the original name, one of our congregation, who keeps a card shop in Wootton Bassett, can always supply a traditionally named card.

I hope that you have seen the posters about the Activity Day on April 8th, Maundy Thursday. Again this is becoming a Purton Churches tradition. On the day before Good Friday the children of the village are invited to an action packed day – art, craftwork, cooking, drama and much more. This is organised by a group of willing helpers, mums dads and other adults. It takes place in St Mary's Church between 10am and 3pm. You don't have to be churchy, just between 7 and 11 years old. Hope to see you there.

VAL WALKER



The Church was floodlit

on March 11th, 12th and 13th

in memory of my late husband Peter Ovens,
on the first anniversary of his death.

Loved and remembered always.

Jean Ovens.

! Planning ALERT!

Planning – or is it? *Part 2*



You will all have seen the questionnaire that the Parish Council issued last month asking us all to say which site[s] (proposed by developers and/or landowners) we would prefer (if any) and why.

Just to reinforce what the Parish Council said – although the District Council is NOT recommending any of the proposed Purton sites for insertion into the Local Plan (and therefore for development in due course) there will be a public inquiry next year. At this inquiry the various developers/landowners will make very strong cases for their land interests to be included. At these hearings, which are open to the public and which *Ps and Qs* regularly attends, the developers usually each have their own lawyers and technical advisors – their arguments are often very compelling. The Planning Inspector listens carefully to all arguments.

So far, planning officers of North Wiltshire District Council have recommended that these sites (Restrop Road, Widham Farm/Grove, Witts Lane behind Jewels Ash, Hansells Farm near to Mopes Lane, and the land behind the new houses along Station Road) should not be incorporated into the Local Plan. The interesting point here, is that the main decision given not to approve was really made only on whether or not these sites would be needed to meet the District new housing target. Not on whether Purton needs housing (for instance there may be a good case for first time and last time buyers at least). Some of the land that was being proposed might have made some sense, in terms wider than house numbers alone – but wider criteria are not considered at this fundamental stage.

To decide the future shape of Purton without considering employment, shops, schools, medical facilities and so on seems a bit daft, but in reality this is what is happening. We should have some means of prioritising which of these parcels of land have the potential to add value to the village, and which merely aggravate existing problems or create new ones. To decide which bits of land to develop, merely on the basis of housing targets in the District is short sighted and, to use that word again, not **sustainable**.

Remember it is we, the people of Purton (and those that follow) who have to live with the results of that shortsightedness. Every problem we have – traffic, parking, closing of shops, poor drainage, flooding and so on can all be easily tracked back to lack of foresight in times past. Of course, it is a different world now. Much has changed, folk are necessarily not so relaxed about others taking decisions for them without challenging first. Decisions must be thoughtfully made based on as wide an understanding as possible.

Whilst we have no control over what land is offered for development we certainly DO have the possibility to influence how the decisions are made to take up these offers. This is vital because once a parcel of land has been allocated to the plan then, pretty much, it is out of our hands. The time to act is now, not in a few years time when the local land allocations come round again, and certainly not the week before the public inquiry next year. Responding to the Parish Council's

questionnaire is a first step – what we need now is to take that further, and develop a meaningful response that can withstand scrutiny at public inquiry and can champion the village aspirations for its future. We need a response to make the Planning Inspector stop and think. During the next few weeks and months, *Ps and Qs* will be working on that response, with as many village partners as possible. If you would like to register interest on behalf of your organisation or as an individual please contact Richard Pagett (advice@emt.u-net.com).

*Richard Pagett of Ps and Qs
Ps and Qs stands for Purton's Qualities
Valuing Community Life - Campaigning for Sustainable Communities
New members are always welcome
Contact: Jane Smith or Jacqui Lay*

Village Hall Fundraising

Our aim to replace the old trestle tables with lighter ones, by holding a variety of events, has been given a wonderful boost, as several groups who use the hall regularly have offered to purchase a table. Helping Hand, Age Concern and Vastern Lodge have replied positively and several other groups have appeared interested. (This was in response to a letter sent out by our very diligent secretary, Teresa Hartshorn.) Many thanks Teresa for this initiative. We are now in the position to purchase seven more tables in the very near future. We are all extremely grateful for the generosity of these groups.

Funding for village halls is an on-going problem for many villages and so we also thank those of you that signed the petition 'Funding for your Community Hall - Wiltshire Village Halls Association'. We were sorry to hear that some of you thought that it was a political petition. The trustees are certainly not a political group but are here to do the best we can for the village; and to do that, we need funding from as many sources as possible.

The table top sale on February 28th was very well supported: 24 tables were taken. The Trustees had a table, held a raffle and did light refreshments: with the excellent turn out of people that came along to buy goods, £230.95 was raised to enhance the table fund.

Our next event is a production by Beverage Productions called *PASS the PORT* which should be a very enjoyable evening. Posters, flyers and tickets are all already available from the office or any Trustee. We hope this will be well supported. If our regular supporters encourage more of their friends to come along we should be able to sell all the tickets before the night. For Fire and Safety reasons the seating capacity of the hall is limited so it is best to buy your ticket in advance – there may be a few tickets available on the night but don't rely on this as we aim to sell out!

Friday 16th April is the date.

*SUSAN MATTHEWS
on behalf of the Trustees*

Purton And District Age Concern



We were all saddened to hear of the death of Peter Blackford. The news was brought to us as we were sorting out the shortbread biscuits for distribution to our elderly, the day after our celebration party. Well, I was stunned and did not know whether to carry on or not, but, knowing Peter like I did, he would have wanted us to carry on.

Peter was a self made man who was very enterprising. He lived in Argyle Street when he was a child, going to Gorse Hill school and, later on, to Ferndale, and this is where his enterprise started to happen. He started to keep pigs. I suppose he could not have been much older than twelve when he was doing this, because it is said he spent more time with his pigs than at school. This certainly did not affect his business brain. He went on to start the Argyle Cash and Carry stores. I presume he sold the land where he had his pigs and from there he started Blackfords as we know it today, also moving to Hook in the bungalow at Flaxlands before moving to his final home at Hayes Knoll, Purton Stoke. What a man he was – the people whose lives he has touched and the charities that have benefited from his input, are countless.

I first got to know Peter, along with his great friend the late Ted Potter, when I wrote to North Wilts Rotary Club asking if they could help us with a donation towards our first minibus. They were our contacts, and you can tell what excellent contacts they were as North Wilts Rotary Club have supported every one of our minibuses. Peter was a unique person – whenever you met him you always felt uplifted and better for it – he made you feel special to him, and he was certainly somebody special to Age Concern. He was one of the people I often speak of when I say that the help we get from people outside of Age Concern is unbelievable.

On a personal note, as I have said, North Wilts Rotary Club have supported all of our minibuses and I have had the privilege of going along to their meetings at Blunsdon House Hotel to receive the cheque. It was always a bit daunting for me, speaking to these people and telling them about our organisation, because of the respect I had for them and their members. My word, they do so much good, not only locally but worldwide and that was what made me feel that way. However, Peter would always come and meet me and never leave me on my own. He introduced me to everyone and made me feel as though it was a pleasure and honour to have me there, instead of the other way round. Instead of the meeting being an ordeal for me, it became a pleasure to be there because of Peter.

We felt it was a real honour for Purton Age Concern to have donations in lieu of flowers coming to us in memory of such a lovely, remarkable man, and we thank his family for this. Our thoughts and prayers are with them and with his many friends at this sad time. We sincerely hope that all the happy memories you have of Peter will help you to see a little light at the end of the tunnel. He was a man who gave so much and asked for so little. What a privilege it was to have known such a gentleman.

By the time you read this, we shall be looking forward to our first mystery tour of the year – Wed 7th April, 10.00am. start, with lunch provided. There might still be room if you are interested. The cost is £9, inclusive of lunch. Following on from this we have an afternoon trip on Wednesday 5th May, starting at 2.00pm. with tea provided this time. The cost again is £9 and, as with any of these trips, please book with your street warden.

Congratulations to Alice Shailes on the occasion of her 90th birthday. Alice is what I term a 'behind the scenes worker' in Age Concern, folding tickets, putting paperwork together, all the type of jobs you can do sat at home, which saves us all from hours of work. So many thanks Alice, I know you had a lovely birthday, which is no more than you deserve. Well done!

We were all treated to a lovely evening of music by the Kentwood Choir and the Cricklade Band at Bradon Forest School. What an enjoyable evening – these are two sets of talented quality entertainers that I never tire of listening to. So thanks to the British Legion for putting on this excellent show.

As you can guess, we have been rather busy in Age Concern during the last month. First we had our jumble sale, which was our best ever, raising £339 for our funds, so thank you to all who supported that, either by giving, buying or helping. It was brilliant.

Our Auction – wait for it, yes, our best ever. We had very many items given to us and some made a lot of money. You are so very kind. As I've said in the past, it is a well run auction, some bargains were to be had and anything of value made a fair price, like the hunting pictures that sold for £300, so start thinking about next year – the first Saturday in March. There are several reasons why we do so well. I have mentioned the donations, then there are the other items brought in to be sold, where we get 25%, Vic Cook who does the transport, with Alan Webb helping out with his van, Graham Price sorting all the money out, Maureen, our treasurer, along with Arthur, delivering peoples' dues, but the most important man of all is Roderick Wightman, our auctioneer. He has been determined to make the £1,000 and he has done it this year. Well done, Roderick, you are a genius the way you extract money from people. Your Dad would have been proud of the team achieving that £1,000 mark. While you are the team leader, Roderick, I think you would be first to admit it was a good team effort and all voluntary. Well done, everybody.

I have saved the best piece for last – our forty year celebration. What a weekend it was to remember. The party went with a swing, thanks to Swindon Brass. We sat down the most people ever for any of our events, 190 in all. All our helpers were brilliant. All the food and the system of working was co-ordinated by Rita Webb, who takes charge of all our catering functions, but this was by far the biggest thing she had undertaken. It all went like magic, but, as she said, it was one big team effort and without everyone's input it would never have worked. We had a nice surprise for her as I had the pleasure of presenting her with a bouquet of flowers from Age Concern for her organising such lovely food and making it all go without a hitch. Thanks Rita, I know it was a pleasant surprise for you, the same as it was for me when Miss Elizabeth Ward, our president, presented me

with some garden vouchers – I was lost for words and felt quite emotional. Elizabeth, I might add, has been involved with Purton Age Concern, formerly Care of the Elderly, ever since the word go. What a record! Congratulations to you, Elizabeth, we are so lucky to have person of your calibre to be our President. I then made a personal presentation to Sheila, my wife, because it is only me who knows of her dedication, the prompting (and nagging!) and support she gives me, especially when it comes round to the tenth of the month and I haven't started my piece for the magazine – like today – it is six o'clock and I haven't finished yet. It was something I felt I wanted to do and that was the appropriate place to do it as a thank you to her, but mind, I think everybody deserved a bouquet that day, the way they all worked.

I said in the March magazine that we had one or two surprises and I hope that, when Warrant Officer Ibbs, assisted by Joe Ricketts, brought that huge celebration cake in to the tune of the RAF march, you were surprised. My word, what a size! – enough to cut 900 pieces. The last one, when we celebrated 25 years, was enough for 750 pieces. When you consider that Warrant Officer Ibbs had done everything, the mixing, the cooking, the icing and all the flowers, what a perfectionist he must be, a real credit to the RAF. So our thanks go to him and to his wife, who accompanied him and, of course, the Commanding Officer at Lyneham for giving his permission for it to be made. While the cake was being cut up for us by Warrant Officer Ibbs, we all drank a toast to Purton Age Concern, everyone had a piece of cake and it was the end of a fantastic day, one to remember. Could I just thank Maggie Mullard, who owns Occasions at Wootton Bassett, for giving us the decorations for the hall and also Malcolm and Lynda Warren for providing us with a speaker system. A special mention for all who helped that day. They couldn't sit down to have a sandwich or a cup of tea. All they were concerned about was that it should be a special day for you, the elderly people of Purton, your special party, and I am sure they certainly did that.

The following day was our surprise number two, when we sorted out the short bread biscuits. We had ordered 900 boxes and wanted a fork lift truck to off load them from the lorry that had brought them down from Scotland. Who did I know that had a fork lift truck? Eric and Paul Booth down on Hills' industrial estate, and, as usual, they said 'yes, only too pleased to do it. If it's wet, you can come inside and sort them out and then load them on to your vehicles'. When the biscuits arrived, Jenny Barnes stored them for us, as they came about a month before the celebration, so, on the Monday morning, we met at the Silver Threads Hall to count out the numbers for the street wardens and to stick the labels on – these were kindly printed for us by In Touch Services. It was a big task but here again it went like clockwork, so our thanks to the street wardens for delivering not only the biscuits, but cake to those who were not at the party. You all did a brilliant job.

Could I just thank everyone again who worked so hard to make sure our ruby celebrations were so successful. I have mentioned one or two people, but it was a real team effort of which I am very proud to be chairman. Also I would like to thank all the people who sent us cards, letters, donations and verbal thanks – I don't think our telephone stopped ringing for three days! When we knew how much you appreciated it, all the hard work was well worth it. THANK YOU.

TONY PRICE

Purton Rainbows, Brownies & Guides



A major event for the guiding units in the last month has been Thinking Day. This marks the joint birthday of Lord and Lady Baden-Powell who founded the scouting and guiding movements and it is a day when we focus particularly on the world-wide family of Guiding. Around 175 girls from the neighbouring towns and villages gathered in Cricklade for a celebration event. We began with a service in St Sampson's Church before each age group went to a separate location for activities appropriate to their group. Rainbow and Brownie activities included crafts, games and singing whilst the Guides were challenged to a quiz round the town. It was a lovely afternoon and a wonderful opportunity for the girls to see a larger part of the organisation to which they belong. Very often an individual Rainbow or Brownie isn't aware of the full extent of the guiding family and occasions such as this give some insight.

Thinking Day and international activities have been a part of the programme at unit meetings too – 2nd Purton Brownies all completed the *World Cultures* badge as part of their celebrations. They came dressed in foreign costumes, played games from other countries and learnt lots of facts about rice.

2nd Purton Brownies also went to Bristol for a special Brownie event where they had the opportunity to do the *Stargazer* badge.

1st Purton Brownies held a promise ceremony with Kelly, Amber, Marianne and Bethany all making their promises.

Rainbows have made daffodils for St David's Day and pot pourri bags as Mothering Sunday gifts.

More cupboard technology challenges for the Rainbows and Brownies this month: decorating candles, origami cats, making and racing camels. Guides are working on a new set of challenges entitled *You and Me Together*, a disability awareness resource. This month they've played a mixture of games exploring what it might be like to have a physical disability, chosen suitable toys for young children and explored different methods of communication. The Guide unit was also delighted to welcome back Jo Hugill who is back as a uniformed leader on an alternate week basis.

JO SULLY, District Commissioner

Christian Aid Week 2004: 9th - 15th May

As some of you will know, if you have lived in the village for a while, Purton usually has a very busy Christian Aid Week with several activities, large and small, taking place over the 7 days. This year, we are concentrating most of our efforts into one great *Food And Fun Day* on Saturday 15th May. There will be a Quiz on sale from local shops and church members early in April. We shall still be holding the popular Home Made Cake Stall on Saturday 8th and *any* contributions of cakes, pies and biscuits etc. would be much appreciated – contact Lucy. The United Service will take place on Sunday 9th and, of course, the well known Red Envelopes will be dropping through your door. More details of all these next month plus look out for posters around the village.

VAL DAVIES

Women's Institute



Whatever you may think of the Women's Institute, never let it be said that the members of Purton are afraid to make fools of themselves. So it was, after our speaker Maurice Tate on beating Chronic Fatigue Syndrome. Mr Tate after suffering for 30 years from this terrible illness eventually found what caused it for him. A reaction to yeast. So out went all food and drink that contained yeast and, voila! he is better.

But back to the fools! Our entertainment group put on their pantomime for us – Cinderella 20 Years On. It was great fun and always more so when the people taking part are your friends and acquaintances in real life. They were joined by two of the husbands, a sight to be seen dressed as fairies in pink floaty costumes with pink fluffy headdresses and loud pink and white striped stockings. A lot of hard work and effort went into it and we say a big thank-you to them all for giving us such a happy light-hearted hour.

It was lovely to welcome some guests too with the hope that they liked us enough to want to join soon.

You will be reading this in the April magazine by which time we shall have held our AGM and your new committee will be in place and working hard for you so keep coming and supporting them.

Our next meeting, on 21st April, will be John Matthews on *Lawn-Care Revisited* plus *The Chemicals in your Garden Shed*. It is quite important to know now just what we are legally allowed to store. See you then!

VERONICA GARSIDE

St Mary's Church

will be holding a

Quiz

Saturday 24 April

7.30pm at Silver Threads
Hall

Tickets £5 including supper



*St Mary's Church
Social Events 2004*

Friday 17 September 7.30pm
Black Sea Don Cossacks Choir
at St Mary's Church

Saturday 25 September
Bazaar at the Village Hall

Saturday 2 October
Harvest Supper at the Village Hall

Purton & District Gardeners' Guild

As usual there was a good attendance at our February meeting and it was nice to see new members. Anyone is welcome to come along to our meetings and join if they would like to, whether they have a garden or are just interested in gardening.

Mr Jeff Bolton was our speaker this month speaking on 'Garden Vegetables' and very interesting he was too. He is a flower show judge and also shows his vegetables. He was brought up on a 4-acre smallholding and was not very interested in gardening, but later on his father gave him some land which got him started.

Mr Bolton told us that the most important factor is preparation of soil. He puts 4 loads of manure on his land every September and has been doing this for the last 20/25 years, so you can imagine how fertile his garden is now. He said it is advisable to double dig at least one rotation plot. Everything can be shredded, except diseased material, and put on the compost heap. When growing beans the trench should be finished by Christmas to enable the goodness to rot down ready for when the beans are sown. Keep the good seed for next year. Potatoes should be chitted now. Summer cabbages are greedy feeders and need organic highly fertile soil. Winter cabbages require no fertilizer. Always harden off plants before planting out. Onions need a weed free plot to grow, so they get benefit from sunlight. They will fall over when they are ready, so do not bend them over. The best thing is to store them in a net. Shallots should be planted the shortest day and harvested on the longest day. Peas and runner beans should be kept dry until they bloom, then water well. Peas can be successfully grown in guttering then carefully slid out into a trench in the garden.

As you can see we learnt a few tips from Mr Bolton and his garden (38/39 St Phillips Road, Upper Stratton) is open to the public, proceeds to the Hospice, on 24th and 25th July. I am sure quite a few members will be going.

Our outing to Ball Colegrave will be on 3rd August – names in as soon as possible please. The cost will be £10.50.

Competition winners - Photograph of my garden

1st: Tony and Sheila Price 2nd: Nigel Bunce 3rd: Valerie Hunt

Raffle winners: Alan Webb Diana Thombs Moira White Ivy Venn.

Our next meeting will be on 27th April 2004 at the Silver Threads Hall, 7.30pm, speaker Mr Bunn - 'Practical Fruit Growing'. Competition Homemade Easter Bonnet.

MARY JONES, Secretary



St. Mary's Church was floodlit

on February 22nd

in memory of Ray Suddaby,
on the eighth anniversary of his death.
Always in my heart and my thoughts.

From your loving wife Pat

Mattford Dairy

In the past we have, with your help, supported the NSPCC. This year the McMillan Cancer Relief charity has approached us so we have decided to support them, as they have a big campaign locally. We hope that you will support this cause with us as well as you supported us previously. The week that they have allocated is 23rd-30th May.

Some of you are lucky enough to be taking holidays so can I please remind you to cancel milk in advance so that we don't over order and also so that unwanted milk is not left on your doorstep. Please also put out bottles daily.

TONY & SUSAN MATTHEWS



April 13th, 14th and 15th

The Church will be floodlit in memory of
a Very Loved Mother, Mother-in-law and Brother-in-law.
Remembered always: Dorothy and Eric Collier and their families

The Prower Tomb

Purton's parish church, St. Mary's, is Grade I listed. Its exceptional feature is that it has a tower and a spire; only two other churches in the country have both. Visitors come from around the world to see the building with its fine, rare wall paintings. Ten listed tombs are in the churchyard, the most famous being that of Nevil Maskelyne, Astronomer Royal, who died in 1811.

Next in importance is the Prower Tomb, a very unusual if not unique monument. It lies to the south of the church under a yew tree. Approximately two metres tall, it is three-sided, made of sandstone from the Forest of Dean and commemorates the service to the parish of a father and son who were both vicars for almost a century, from 1771 to 1869.

At present the tomb is in a dilapidated state. It has suffered structural damage, with corroding iron cramps and decaying stonework and is in danger of collapse. In the interest of health and safety, the area has been fenced off while the Parish Council seeks funding for restoration.

The monument has been examined by experts and it is estimated that approximately £3,500 would secure and preserve it for another hundred years. A full restoration would be very costly and the general feeling is that such a large sum could not be justified at this time. As it would cost £1,000 to demolish it and display the parts in the church it seems sensible to do all we can to obtain a grant to repair the damage to the tomb so that the public can gain access to it once again. It is part of our heritage; a memorial to members of one of the most significant families in the history of our village.

JEAN THOMAS
Chair, Purton Historical Society

PURTON PLACARD

Groups are invited to submit to the Editor details of forthcoming events in, for and on behalf of our community.

Beverage Productions presents
PASS THE PORT

Relive Noel Coward's magical evocation of the historic P&O route home to Britain from the Far East – when a voyage took weeks rather than hours. In this nautical musical comedy featuring Coward's P&O 1930, come on board to sample another side of The Master's lyrical genius alongside classic songs by other masters (and mistresses!) of the period, such as Ivor Novello and Joyce Grenfell.

FRIDAY 16TH APRIL 2004

7.30PM at PURTON VILLAGE HALL

TICKETS: £6 / £3 CONCESSIONS / £7.50 FAMILY
PURTON INSTITUTE AND VILLAGE HALL CHARITY



EASTER CRAFT SHOW

SUNDAY APRIL 4

VILLAGE HALL, STATION ROAD, PURTON

10am to 4.30pm, Admission 50p

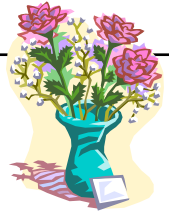
Raffle, Refreshments, including Lunches

Don't forget the Easter Craft Show on Sunday April 4. If you are interested in having a stall at the show please contact Lynda Warren for details. Crafts must be hand made and additional space is available if you would like to demonstrate. Tables are £10 each and must be booked in advance. Our craft classes are open to all ages with egg painting at 10.30am, Easter egg making at 11.30am, 3D spring pictures at 2pm and Easter cards at 3pm. It is strongly recommended you book well in advance, as places are limited to 8 per class. The cost is £2 per person, inclusive of all materials. Donations of craft materials and raffle prizes would be very much appreciated. All is in aid of Purton Helping Hand.

St. Mary's Fellowship of Women

You are invited to an open evening on 19th April, in the Chapel at 7.00pm. to raise funds for the mini-bus.

A talk and slides by Owen Collier from the 1685 Society. 'All Aboard the Mayflower' destination Plymouth, New England 1620. Entry is by ticket only – £4 – to include a three course supper. Details and tickets are available from Marjorie Shailes or Sheila Price. Tickets are limited to 50, so don't delay.



Royal British Legion Horticultural Show

Yes! Believe it or not, it's time to start planning your entries for the Royal British Legion Horticultural Show! This is being held at The Red House Club on Saturday August 21st. So come on gardeners, artists, cooks and photographers – get your thinking caps on and have a go. It's a fun day for all the family! For further details, contact: David Herbert, Chairman or Heather Harris, Secretary



MAUNDY THURSDAY ACTIVITY FUN DAY



St Mary's Church, Purton, on
Thursday 8th April

10.00am - 3.00pm, for 7-11 year olds

Friends of the Cedars Coffee Morning

on Saturday 3rd April at 10.30am at the Cedars

Raffle Tombola Bric-a-Brac Easter Cards
Easter Egg hunt for children
Guess the quantity of mini eggs
Coffee/Tea with Cake or Hot Cross Bun

We would welcome anything for the Bric-a-Brac stall and any contributions for the raffle would be greatly appreciated.

RAY THOMAS, Chairperson

Purton Diary Page – April 2004

April:

- | | | | |
|-------|----|---------|--|
| 2 | F | 9.30am | (approx) Age Concern Concessionary coach to Swindon |
| 3 | Sa | 10.30am | Friends of Cedars Coffee Morning with raffle, bric-a-brac etc |
| | | 1.30pm | Table Top sale at Village Hall (Helping Hand) |
| <hr/> | | | |
| 4 | Su | 8.00am | Holy Communion at St Mary's |
| | | 10.00am | to 4.30pm: Easter Craft Show at the Village Hall |
| | | 10.30am | Palm Sunday Service at St Mary's with Bishop Michael |
| | | 10.30am | Service at Methodist Church |
| | | 6.30pm | Evensong at St Mary's |
| 6 | Tu | 7.30pm | Age Concern Committee meeting at Silver Threads Hall |
| 7 | We | 10.00am | to 12.00 noon: Coffee and Chat at Silver Threads |
| | | 10.00am | Age Concern Mystery Tour |
| | | 7.30pm | RAOB Excelsior Lodge at The Ghost Train |
| 8 | Th | 10.00am | Maundy Thursday Activity day (age 7+) in St Mary's Church |
| | | 7.30pm | Service and Vigil in St Mary's Church until 9pm |
| 9 | F | | Good Friday |
| | | 9.30am | Procession of Witness beginning at Pavenhill shops |
| | | 2.00pm | Final Hour meditation at St Mary's Church |
| 10 | Sa | 8.00pm | Easter Eve Service of Light at St Mary's Church |
| <hr/> | | | |
| 11 | Su | | Easter Day |
| | | 8.00am | Holy Communion at St Mary's |
| | | 10.30am | Holy Communion at St Mary's |
| | | 10.30am | Service at Methodist Church |
| | | 6.30pm | Evensong at St Mary's |
| 13 | Tu | 11.00am | Songs of Praise at Ashgrove House |
| | | 2.00pm | Silver Threads Club - <i>Musical Companions</i> |
| | | 7.30pm | Purton Yacht Club |
| 14 | W | 10.00am | to 12.00 noon: Coffee and Chat at Silver Threads |
| | | 2.30pm | Methodist Women's Fellowship at Hooks Hill. |
| | | 7.30pm | RAOB Excelsior Lodge at The Ghost Train |
| 15 | Th | 10.30am | Songs of Praise at The Cedars |
| 16 | F | 7.30pm | "Pass the Port": play by Noel Coward at Village Hall |
| <hr/> | | | |
| 18 | Su | 8.00am | Holy Communion at St Mary's |
| | | 10.30am | Holy Communion at St Mary's |
| | | 10.30am | Service at Methodist Church |
| | | 6.30pm | Evensong at St Mary's |
| 19 | M | 7.00pm | St. Mary's Fellowship of Women at Playclose Chapel: 'All Aboard the Mayflower' - Owen Collier - Open evening by ticket |
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- 8.00 pm NWR: *Research Your Favourite Author* - Life and books led by Sue at her house.
- 20 Tu 7.45pm Royal British Legion at The Red House
- 21 W 10.00am to 12.00 noon: Coffee and Chat at Silver Threads
- 2.15pm Pram Service at St Mary's
- 7.30pm Purton Evening W.I. at Purton Village Hall: *Lawns Revisited*
- 7.30pm RAOB Excelsior Lodge at The Ghost Train
- 22 Th 7.30pm Purton Historical Society at St Mary's School Upper Hall - Speaker: Brian Edwards - *The Trouble with Silbury Hill*
- 24 Sa 7.30pm Quiz in Silver Threads Hall
-
- 25 Su 8.00am Holy Communion at St Mary's
- 10.30am Holy Communion at St Mary's
- 10.30am Service at Methodist Church
- 6.30pm Evensong at St Mary's
- 27 Tu 2.00pm Silver Threads Club – AGM
- 7.30pm Purton Helping Hand Club at Silver Threads Hall - new members welcome
- 28 W 10.00am to 12.00 noon: Coffee and Chat at Silver Threads
- 2.30pm Pram Service at Methodist Church
- 7.00pm Annual Parochial Meeting in St Mary's School Upper Hall
- 7.30pm RAOB Excelsior Lodge at The Ghost Train
- 30 F 7.30pm Bingo at St Mary's Upper School Hall.

May:

- 2 Su 12.00pm 2nd Purton Tug of War at the Red House Playing Fields
- 5 W 2.00pm Age Concern Mystery Tour
- 7.30pm *Induction of Rev Jane Haslam and Rev Michael Haslam at St Mary's***

If your Club or Organization's Events are not included, let us know:
 Purton Magazine c/o In Touch Services, 115 Pavenhill



March 14th, 15th, 26th

St. Mary's Church was floodlit in the memory of Keith Shailes,
 on the first anniversary of his death.
 His funeral date, on the 26th, was also remembered
 by his family.
 Always in our thoughts.
 Monica, Stephen, Teresa, Christine and Glynn and family.

2nd Purton Tug of War

Sunday 2nd May 2004

The Red House Playing Fields

12.00 noon onwards

First tug 13.00 Teams of 8



Fun for all the family with Bouncy Castles, BBQ etc

Enter a team or come and watch

£10 before 2nd May per team – or £12 on the day

Entry forms now available from:

Keith Taylor Paul Clifford

The Spar, Purton Purton Pubs & Clubs

Proceeds going towards a new children's slide at the Red House Playing Fields

Chiseldon Travel Club

Thank you to all the readers of this magazine who have contacted us in the last couple of months and we look forward to welcoming you to the Club.

Thirty-three of us have just returned from our fourth holiday in New Zealand. We have varied the itinerary each visit and never tire of this ultimate holiday destination. Ian and David Attridge (formerly of Wroughton) took the ultimate plunge on this trip and made a bungee jump – whatever next! We broke the journey with stopovers in Singapore, seeing Chinatown, Little India, Mount Faber, The Botanical Gardens and lunching in Raffles Hotel. In New Zealand, among many activities, we sailed on a racing yacht in Auckland, swam with dolphins in the Bay of Islands, made a snow landing on a glacier in Franz Joseph and white water rafted in Queensland. Most of the crew were over 60 for this little adventure! We laughed, sang our hearts out and partied together all in the spirit of friendship which is what the Club is all about.

Future Plans: there are still six places on the Canadian Rockies tour for September 2004. New Zealand will go again in November 2005 and those who are already wait-listed for this trip will hear from us in the next month or two with the itinerary. The destinations are chosen by the membership and numbers are building up on Australia and China as well. New members are always welcome.

Why now come along to one of our coffee mornings. These will be held at Norton House, 46 Draycott Road, Chiseldon on Saturday April 3rd 2004 and again on Saturday 8th May 2004 between 10am and 12 30pm. We will be showing a video on New Zealand, answering questions, there will a chance to meet some travellers from previous trips and we will have information on future plans. A small charge will be made for refreshments which will be donated to charity. We do hope to have the pleasure of your company.

SHARON AND IAN DIXON, 01793 741210

Useful Purton Numbers



Doctors	Purton Surgery	770207
Dental Surgery	Philip Cooke	771022
Library	Librarians	770870
Mobile Library	Sarah Reed	01249 650536
Police	Cricklade Police Station	750207
Post Office	Susan Budd	770346
Purton Age Concern	Tony Price	770696
Minibus	John Blackwell	771138
Purton Helping Hand	Pauline Ward	770251
Purton Parish Council	Shirley Bevington	771066
Veterinary Surgery	Purton Surgery	771869
Schools		
St Mary's Primary	Secretary	770239
Bradon Forest Comprehensive	Secretary	770570

Swindon Croquet Club



April opens the eighteenth season for Swindon Croquet Club. The club is repeating its offer for anyone interested in playing Croquet to come along on a Tuesday or Wednesday evening after 5-30. Partnered by a coach, you will be introduced to the sport, playing a game of Golf Croquet, a quickly learnt social fun game that all the family can play on equal terms.

For players with a more competitive instinct a more challenging game of Association Croquet can be played, where skill and tactics once mastered provide immense satisfaction. Friends or relations introduce most new-comers taking up the sport but, if you haven't any friends or relations that play croquet, don't worry – just contact your club friend, John, for a free session of Croquet at Moredon Playing Fields opposite Manor Garden Centre

JOHN AIREY

www.swindoncroquetclub.org.uk

John & Sue Clark

On Friday 13th (!) February we moved to 35 Sprats Barn Crescent in Wootton Bassett. Both Sue and I would like to thank all our friends and neighbours who have supported us with warmth and understanding during our 20 years in Purton. We shall miss you all.

You will always find a welcome, so pop in for a chat as we hate to miss out on any news!

We look forward to seeing you.

JOHN & SUE CLARK,

Purton Tennis Club

Sunday morning sessions have been less well attended recently which is disappointing as the weather is occasionally just perfect for playing. But perhaps with the longer lighter days things will improve.

We plan to celebrate the start of the season on Friday 16th April with a social evening which we hope all members will support so that we have a good mix of players for what we expect to be a good evening of non-competitive tennis – that is if the game is ever non-competitive!

The teams will be chosen early this month after our selection sessions and then we expect everyone to be out practising like mad and aiming towards another successful season in the Swindon & District League. As I write our winter team is unbeaten – an inspiring role model for us all.

Membership forms should be in by now in order to qualify for the early payment discount but you can still join up. Contact Janet Saunders for a form if one hasn't reached you.

CAROLINE McLEAN

St Mary's School Bingo

Friday 30th April at St Mary's Upper School Hall at 7.30pm

Donations of prizes welcome

Children welcome

Cash Prizes

Anyone requiring transport to the event should call John Butcher

Riddle-Me-Ree

From each line take one letter from the underlined words to make the name of a place.

Can you solve it?

My first is in RIGID, FLEXIBLE is out

My second's in MONEY and in an ACCOUNT

My third is in VALUE, in CREDITS denied

My fourth is in CHEQUES, that love to be SIGNED

My fifth is in SHARES, in the MARKET it's true

My whole is a port, so can you solve this clue?

Where am I?

Answer in next month's issue

Compiled by Bookworm



March's Riddle

The answer was:

Chard

PURTON POSTBAG

[Extract from a letter sent direct to Mark Johnson and copied to the magazine.]



Mark,

A monthly magazine is not a convenient vehicle for a running discussion so I [have] respond[ed] to you personally with a copy to the Committee members. But I was delighted you took the trouble to write and that your letter was published. We who dabble in words are in sacred trust to write from the heart, however it may offend political correctness, and although I find myself in disagreement with almost everything you say I would defend to the death your right to say it.

But instead of recoiling from my robust use of language, (and who would take a blind bit of notice if it were more pedestrian?), why not come aboard and help to change the world whilst there may yet be time? I have the lonely feeling at times that if you were to do so it would double our numbers.

With warm regards,

PERAMBULATOR

Sir,

Traditionally, The Purton Magazine has been a means for various organisations in the village to report on their activities and to give notice of future events. Articles by other societies in the area, thought to be of interest to Purtonians, e.g. Friends of Prospect and Wilts and Berks Canal Trust, have also been given space. As the magazine is Church based – the vicar was at one time editor – it has been customary to print a letter from the vicar. An editorial on the first page has summarised the contents of the magazine as well as making topical comments.

It was a gentle publication; controversy was seldom found therein. There are plenty of other publications and places where the disputatious may find a platform.

The egocentric 'Perambulator' has sought to upset this happy situation by writing vexatious and controversial matter in his articles. Mr. Johnson, in the last issue of the magazine noted Perambulator's cultural snobbery when writing about television. I wonder what the letter writer and others thought of Perambulator's gleefully recorded insulting behaviour to a Japanese person in the same article.

In the March issue Perambulator enters the fox hunting controversy. This question divides the population fairly evenly and has been well aired in many newspapers, the situation is still unresolved.

In a healthier-than-thou article last year, Perambulator wrote 'Today there is a little remarked epidemic of cancer, Alzheimer's, diabetes and obesity, none of which would happen at all if we ate decent food and exercised more.' This sweeping assertion is of little comfort to someone having a family member struck down with one of these random illnesses.

Perambulator is proud to display his ignorance of nature – he doesn't recognise a heron or a cuckoo. He is less conscious of his ill informedness when

writing on local matters like Ringsbury Camp.

Many must tire of his naughty dog stories month by month and the repetitious, feeble jokes like Mr. Harris's sign, 'Family Butcher'. Perambulator often writes condescendingly about local people. This was noticed by a correspondent to last August's magazine who wrote in the vernacular, 'I do wonder if he da think all of us Purton folk be idiots.'

That was one of several letters that have been written in criticism of Perambulator's offensive remarks. I have not seen a letter to compliment him. Comments I have heard from many people reassure me that I am not the only person who would wish that Perambulator could be persuaded to take a very long holiday.

Yours sincerely
E.G.Ball

Dear Sir,

The new magazine committee have certainly achieved a smooth changeover, so thank-you for that and so far I have had no complaints from the people that I deliver magazines to which is a good sign. Another big thank-you to the committee for organising the very pleasant social gathering for those of us that deliver the magazines each month it was good to see who else makes sure that these little gems get to all parts of the village and I'm sure much further away. Carry on the good work it is appreciated.

SUSAN MATTHEWS, distributor

Dear Sir,

I think the magazine is excellent and really representative of the village. Well done!

*Caroline McLean
Former Editor*

Dear Sir,

It is good to know that, after all this time, the painting of *The Last Supper* is to appear again over the altar in St Mary's Church.

I would be interested to know what is to happen to Leslie Holland's painting which has been taking its place meanwhile. His *naïve style* picture is a striking work of art that should be treasured.

I would also be interested to know what has happened to the tapestry which filled the space so well after the original painting was stolen. That picture, incidentally, was the mirror image of the painting by Leonardo da Vinci! The tapestry had graced the altar of the smaller Lady Chapel since, I believe, someone brought it back from the Holy Land. Perhaps it will appear in the Church again.

David Pope

[Leslie Holland's painting is already installed on the West wall and the intention is for it to remain in St. Mary's. Sadly the tapestry was also stolen from the church.

Ed.]

On 18th March 2004 PEST presented Purton Helping Hands Club with a new Bouncy Castle. We would like to thank everyone who helped, donated or took part in the various events to enable this to happen and hope children young and old around the village have a lot of fun playing on it.

Don't forget the Tug of War competition due to be held on 2nd May. Teams of 8 can take part either for fun or more seriously. There will also be a bouncy castle, BBQ, bar etc. so even if you're not taking part come and watch. This year we are raising money for a new slide to be erected at the Red House Playing Fields.



PURTON
EXTREME
SPORTS
TEAM



Carnival Week 18-26 June

There are some changes this year. On 26th June, the Procession will start at the top of the village at 2.15pm and proceed down to Fete Field in Vasterne Hill off Witts Lane. Floats will be able to go straight to the field where the Fete, Evening Disco and entertainment will be held. Below is a list of events for you to put in your diaries. The programme will be on sale in the village from mid-May. The theme this year will be ***Britain Through The Ages***.

Fri	18 June	Coffee Morning at Silver Threads
Sat	19 June	Mile of Coins through the village evening: Team Quiz at Village Hall
Sun	20 June	Car/Walking Treasure Hunt
Mon	21 June	Concert (to be confirmed)
Wed	23 June	Bingo at Village Hall
Thur	24 June	p.m: Teddy Bears' Picnic and Junior Disco (Village Hall) evening: Fashion Show Plus at Village Hall
Fri	25 June	Carnival Lunch at Village Hall
Sat	26 June	Procession, Fete and Evening Fun

Helpers are urgently required, especially on Saturday 26th. Any enquiries, offers of help or donation of prizes for Raffles or the Grand Draw to Pauline Ward.

PAULINE WARD, Secretary

Perambulator



THE LETTER FROM THE POST OFFICE said that their second delivery accounted for 20% of their costs, that it was little used and that as a result in future there would only be one delivery a day. That seemed quite sensible, especially as it would surely lead to a reduction in the price of stamps. But some days later another letter announced that postal charges were to go not down, but up! Much worse was to follow. They proceeded to abolish the customary early morning delivery altogether! So the only mail now arrives around midday, or even late in the afternoon.

What on earth is going on here? That early morning post has been a proud Post Office tradition since the Royal Mail was started, since, as they used to say, 'the time whereof the mind of no man runneth to the contrary'. What has prompted this major break with tradition? Was our local M.P. or our elected Parish Council consulted? I find it deeply disturbing that long-cherished features of our lives should suddenly be wiped out as though we are numbers on a computer screen rather than mortal flesh and blood. I hope all our elected representatives make it their business to insist quite adamantly that the abolition of this early morning delivery service is quite unacceptable and should be restored without delay.

THE QUOTE OF THE MONTH must surely be from our own, soon to leave for pastures new, Bishop Michael; writing in a church magazine called "Three Crowns" – a title they must have pinched from a pub, (or did the pub pinch it from the Church in the first place?), he declares. "I long for a church which recognises that the greatest need of our shallow, selfish culture is not yet more emotion and propaganda but rather space, silence, surrender and sacrament." For many of us any mention of church matters or of religious belief is just a turn-off; we want to live for today, to hell with tomorrow, or anything that many have happened yesterday. People who believe in religious faith are simply half-wits who know nothing of science. Well, who was it who said, "Science is the new religion, and disinfectant is its holy water"? This secular disposition to regard religion as some sort of mental aberration and the province of emotional misfits is very widespread, it is one which betrays our heritage, betrays our children and betrays ourselves as we insist on abolishing all the ancestral furniture of our minds, clearing all the ornaments off our metaphorical mantelpiece so to speak and generally making life as bleak and as empty as we can.

Those so disposed might do worse than reflect that ours is the first civilisation in all history which has wilfully sought to destroy the mythical basis of its own morality and to abolish any concept of the sacred, especially in relation to the ultimate meaning and purpose of life. When they look around them today at the results, are they, I wonder, happy with what they see? They might also do worse than consult a report by an unusual commission in the USA called "Wired to Connect". The high powered doctors, scientists, psychologists and social workers who comprised the membership of the commission state, among their many remarkable findings, that there is chemical and psychological evidence that warm, stable, nurturing

relationships within the family *and the community*, (my emphasis), coupled with an assured connection with transcendent verities of belief, are essential for a child's normal intellectual and emotional development. They further conclude that it is the frequent absence of these needs in formative years which accounts for the high rates of adolescent suicide, which in less than fifty years has quadrupled in the USA, and the general drift of our societies into a drug dominated culture. In this light perhaps our sceptical friends might take another look at Bishop Michael's plea.

PASSING THE GATES OF ST. MARY'S SCHOOL, the playground its usual playtime bedlam of noise and energetic running around, I saw a teacher emerge from inside carrying a large brass hand-bell, probably of Victorian origin. It took me back all those decades to my own childhood, when the first sound of a vigorously shaken such bell brought the whole playground to an immediate silent halt. There is something very symbolic about that bell, as much as anything of authority, of control, of warning perhaps, but in any case of order and a sense of limits and of security. Children need a sense of such things today more than anything. But watching the energetic play of those small children it suddenly struck me; now, if only all that energy could somehow be conducted into some channel or other, half our energy problem might be solved. So why not playgrounds sprung on platforms? So as the children rush out they press it down and create electrical energy which is then channelled into some useful function of lighting or heating? And as they leave the platform rises again and creates more energy power. Have I perhaps discovered half the secret of perpetual motion?

IN ANY CASE I AM BEGINNING TO THINK I have missed my vocation. Instead of being a scribbler perhaps I should have been a physicist. I think I must consult my career adviser about this, especially since I seem to have discovered a brand new law in physics. In accordance with tradition, e.g. 'Newton's Law Of Gravity', I hereby name it 'Perambulator's Law Of Dishwashing'. Like all such laws it is essentially quite simple to state and I hereby stake my claim to immortality with the following: "When washing dishes, on turning on the tap the jet will infallibly contrive to land in the middle of a spoon and bounce back to give you a face full of water.

Purton Bowls Club

Good news for all bowlers! Our green opens for the forthcoming season on Saturday, 17th April at 2.00pm. This will be a friendly roll up and everyone turning up will play. What a treat it will be to get outdoors again.

Also, on the following Sunday 18th, starting at 2.00pm, we are holding an Open Day when everyone turning up will be invited to play. Just turn up in a pair of flat-soled shoes – members will be on hand to provide bowls and tuition.

Come along and enjoy this very social activity and meet our Members and friends over a cup of tea.



SID WALKER

Purton Football Club

Purton's Hellenic side have reached the semi-finals of the Cherry Red Records Challenge Cup after a 1-0 away win over Prestwood. They remain top of their league, undefeated, with an 8 point lead over their nearest rivals, in what has been an incredible season for Manager Alan Clark and his team. Their recent league game with Shrivenham attracted 203 spectators to the match and caused havoc with parking problems at the Red House ground.

Purton Reserves currently lie 2nd in the Wilts Premier League, but may drop a bit when the other sides below catch up on their games in hand. However it has been a good season for them, with a mixture of youth and experience in the side. They are still in the Wiltshire League's Corsham Cup to boot.

Purton "B" hold a six point lead at the top of the Cirencester League and are in the semi-finals of their league cup. They have also enjoyed a fantastic season so far and many of their remaining games are home fixtures.

At youth levels the Under-15s have secured the Cirencester Under-15 League title and have been unbeaten all season except for defeats in the Cup. Of the others, Mark Carson and his Under-10s have the highest placing in their league in the North Wilts but went out of the Cup in their semi-final tie with Highworth Juniors 2-0.

Malcolm Corcoran and his Under-9s and Steve Hazell with his Under-11s are placed mid-table, while Gary Norman and his Under-12s are bottom of their league in the North Wilts League but faring much better in the Cirencester Under-12s League with some good wins under their belt. John Hayden and his Under-8s who play games, but have no league set up, have won nearly all their games.

Some important dates coming up are our Easter raffle at the Red House on Saturday night 10th of April. Many prizes can be won, so see any player or Committee member and they will fix you up with tickets. The annual Presentation Night will be taking place at the Cricklade Country Club on Friday 21st May – tickets will be available soon at a cost of £16.50 per head for anyone interested and will include a sit-down meal, the presentation and a disco. The date of the A.G.M. has yet to arranged – details hopefully in the next issue.

*ALAN EASTWOOD,
President/Hon Sec/Press and Programmes*



St. Mary's Church was floodlit

on February 23rd

in memory of Earle Reiley (late of College Farmhouse),
who died on Wednesday 18th February 2004.

From his friends in Purton

Hook School Ex-Pupils

The Hook Ex-Pupils Committee are organizing a Day Trip on Saturday 22nd May to Minehead, which will include a Steam Train journey on the West Somerset Railway. Friends will be welcome. If you would like further details of this bargain Day Out, please contact Mrs. T. Collis or Mrs. P. Little.

The Lydiards Twinning Association

The Annual General Meeting of the Association was held in February, attended by approximately 30 members.

The Chairman, Bob Penfold, welcomed members, after which the minutes of the last AGM, which had been previously circulated, were accepted.

A report by the Chairman covered the year's activities and was followed by reports from the Secretary and Treasurer, Terry and Debbie Dawson. The Treasurer reported the Association was in a healthy financial position but recommended a £1.00 increase in members' fees, to cover increased administrative costs.

The Officers were re-elected, together with the present Management Committee. The President, Tony Jepps, who had been in office since the formation of the Association in 1990, was asked to continue as long as he felt able. Under *Any Other Business*, further details of the D-Day trip were discussed. Arrangements for the Skittles Evening on 18th March were finalized. A Silent Auction had been arranged for 24th April at Hook Village Hall. The meeting was closed and was followed by light refreshments. Visitors are always welcome to our functions, and details can be obtained from our Chairman, Bob Penfold.

JOHN WHITTAKER

Purton Guide Dog Appeal

Hopefully it wasn't due to my opening sentence last month that we have since had some sharp frosts and also a sprinkling of snow, but hasn't the sun been lovely. With the clocks now moved on we can really look forward to some warmer weather.

The Punnett family (puppy walkers) have been bringing us money again. Their own box of small change held £13.11, Nythe Ladies Group gave them £47.85 and Bassett Pet Shop's box contained £26.59. Our stall at the Table Top in February made £10.20. These amounts bring our funds to £2268.11 – almost up to the annual target figure of £2,500 – and another photograph to hang in the Village Hall! Brian took 103 kilos of crushed foil and aluminium cans to Holland's last week, so we should receive the money for this and previous deliveries soon.

We have no events planned for this month but may do another Table Top stall. On May 22nd, we shall be having our usual Spring Jumble Sale. All contributions gratefully accepted but *nearer to the date* please. May I take this opportunity to wish you all a Happy Easter – and not too much chocolate, mind.

VAL DAVIES
Guide Dog Support Group



Induction of our new Vicar

Rev Jane Haslam

and also of her husband

Rev Michael Haslam

Diocesan Ecumenical Officer for Swindon and North
Wiltshire

and Honorary Assistant Priest at St Mary's

Wednesday 5 May

7.30pm

St Mary's Church

*All will be welcome at the Service and to refreshments
in the Village Hall afterwards
to meet Jane and Mike*

The Last Supper - (see panel left)

For those of you who may not know the history of *The Last Supper*, the following might help.

The painting was possibly painted by the Flemish artist Jacob Jordaens or a pupil of his around 1655 – there is another copy from that date in Antwerp. It was given to St Mary's Church in 1782 by the Countess of Shaftesbury, that family having long associations with Purton from the early 17th century up until the early 20th. At one stage they even had the right to choose the vicar.

The painting hung in the reredos below the east window in the church but was stolen in 1994, together with two smaller pictures. In 1998, the picture was found in the possession of an art thief in Florida and therefore recovered. When returned to England, the painting was sadly in poor condition. Not only had it been cut from its frame when stolen, but the painting had also been rolled up inwards rather than outwards damaging the surface very badly.

The painting has been returned to St Mary's from restoration in Bristol, and will be re-dedicated in the church on 4th April during the 10.30am Eucharist.

RICK DIXON

from notes by Hector McLean

Purton Parish Council News

Staff changes - The sudden untimely death of Sonia Hunt in October left us without a cleaner for the village hall. This position has now been filled by Mike Canter who decided that he would like to reduce his hours. Mike will be taking on not only the cleaning but other caretaking duties as well. This obviously left the Groundsman job vacant. We advertised the post and received a lot of applications and after shortlisting and interviews the position has been offered to Mr Ken Parrett who has a wealth of experience in the work we require. He will start work on Monday 15 March. We therefore wish Mike well in his new post and welcome Ken onto the staff.

There will be another change shortly in that Bryan Archer is intending to retire as assistant groundsman. His post will have been advertised by the time this article goes to print, if you are interested in applying for the position which is for 20 hours per week please contact the Council Office for more details. Bryan has worked for the Parish Council for nearly 10 years. He has done a sterling job in that time and we wish him well in his retirement.

Local Plan – following our article last month about the present stage of the Local Plan process and the availability of questionnaires to complete to give your views on possible building sites, we are pleased to say we have received a reasonable response. It is still not too late however to make your comments known. Questionnaires are still available from the Council Office. We look forward to hearing from you.

Traffic Matters – over the past few weeks we have been pursuing various traffic matters with the County Council. It is in March that the County's relevant committee meets to decide on their programme of work for the coming financial year. It has been established that during 2004/5 in the main they will be implementing 30 mph speed limits in the vicinity of schools. Some 20mph limits are being considered but very few. This programme is already agreed as the necessary investigative work was carried out during 2003/4. We do however feature in next years budget in that it has been recognised that the B4553 (road through The Pry to Cricklade) is in need of attention due to the vast number of accidents that occur along this stretch of road. A resurfacing/lining and signage programme is in hand. We do not have specific details of the extent of the work yet but we are hopeful that it will make some significant improvements.

During 2004/5 the County's Traffic Officers will be considering their works programme for 2005/6 and carrying out the necessary investigations to establish priorities for implementing speed limits away from school sites. We are encouraging them to consider speed limits for The Fox, C34 (Manor Hill) the B4553 and B4696 Braydon Road; to extend the 40mph limit from Greenhill Cross Road to meet the 30mph speed limit at Purton on Restrop Road and to extend the 30mph limit on the C414 (Widham to junction with B4553). As a matter of interest, each Traffic Regulation Order which includes yellow lines and speed limits, new or extended, costs around £3,000. It is the County Councillors when setting their budgets who determine at the end of day how much work can be done within a year. Obviously if

continued overleaf

less money is available then less orders will be implemented.

We are also in discussion with the County about introducing footpaths from the bottom of Manor Hill to the entrance to Pear Tree Hotel and possibly towards the cemetery.

Kissing Gates - we had a very good response to our request last month for people to sponsor kissing gates. Thank you to all of those who have offered to donate £110 for a gate. We are hoping to install seven gates during the coming months. This has proved to be a very popular project as the gates make it so much easier for people to gain access to the rights of way.

Litter – you may recall that last year we won a prize for our litter picking endeavours. However the improvement was short lived as this year the village appears to be strewn with litter. Have you noticed? It could be that some hedges have been cut back revealing new deposits as well as old ones but what ever the cause it does make the village look very untidy. Anything which you can do to help the situation including perhaps picking up litter in your vicinity and encouraging tidiness in others would be appreciated.

Overgrown shrubs/trees – we receive complaints from time to time about overgrown shrubs and brambles hanging over walls or bows of tree hanging low which cause obstruction to the pavements and roads. Please can you have a look around your property to see if you have any plants that are overhanging and causing a problem to others and arrange for them to be cut back. Thank you in anticipation.

Kennet and North Wiltshire Primary Care Trust – consultation on Maternity Services and Outpatient Services. We have been asked to raise awareness of this consultation process by informing you that you can attend a meeting at Purton Village Hall on 7th April at 7pm where the proposals will be discussed and you can make your views known.

Approved Planning Applications:

N03/02565/FUL - *Land at 39 Witts Lane* - Detached House

Conditions: Prior to commencement a sample panel of external stonework is to be made available on site. Roof tiles to match existing. Prior to first use or occupation two parking spaces shown on the plan D.G.1/C shall be provided and thereafter kept available for the parking of vehicles. There shall be no extension of any building forming part of the development. No garages, sheds or other ancillary domestic outbuildings shall be erected anywhere on the site edged in red on the approved plans. No gates, fences, walls or other means of enclosure shall be placed or erected anywhere on the site. Work can not commence until details of the landscaping of the site has been approved.

N03/03411/FUL - *13 Restrop View* - First floor and ground floor front extensions/alterations

Conditions: The brick and roof tiles to match existing. No windows or other form of opening above ground floor level shall be introduced into the western elevation of the building.

continued overleaf

N03/03149/LBC - *Manor Farm, Purton Stoke* - Internal and external alterations, including replacement of all windows; alterations to boundary wall.

Conditions: Unless previously agreed in writing when replaced the uPVC windows to the front elevation shall be replaced with timber casements to match the detailing to the existing front elevation windows. Prior to commencement details of the following to be submitted for written approval: (a) Large scale details of proposed internal joinery (b) a full schedule and specification of repairs including the boundary wall; chimney stacks and masonry repairs; and internal works. (c) large scale details of proposed boundary wall. Samples of materials to be used externally must be approved. Sample panels of brickwork and stonework to be prepared for approval.

N03/03376/FUL - *Copperbeech - 84 Pavenhill* - Conservatory

N03/03188/FUL - *Land at Bagbury Lane* - Two stables and tack room

Conditions: Details of landscaping to be approved. Development shall only be used for the private stabling of horses and the storage of associated equipment and feed, and shall at no time be used for any commercial purpose whatsoever. There shall be no parking of horse boxes, caravans, trailers or other vehicles during the hours between dusk and dawn. No portable buildings, van bodies, trailers, vehicles or other structures used for storage, shelter, rest or refreshment shall be stationed on the site.

N03/03410/S73A - *31 Restrop View* - Rear conservatory and canopy, extension (retrospective).

Note: The proposal is considered to be acceptable in terms of its design, height, and scale, and it is felt that it will not have an adverse impact on any adjoining properties.

Refused Planning Applications:

N03/03322/COU - *West Marsh Farm* - Convert redundant barns to three dwellings.

Reasons for Refusal: The buildings to be converted are not considered to be of a form and design which is in keeping with their surroundings. Consequently, the proposed development does not accord with Policy RH12 of the NWLP 2001. The buildings by reason to their proximity to a landfill site, and LPG bottling plant would cause harm to the amenity of future occupiers contrary to Policy RH12 of the NWLP 2001. The proposal located remote from services, main employment opportunities and not served by public transport is contrary to the key aims of Planning Policy guidance Note 13 and Policy DP1 of the Wiltshire Structure Plan which seeks to reduce growth in the length and number of motorised journeys.

Withdrawn Planning Application:

N03/00573/FUL - *109 Reids Piece* - Erection of a storey side/rear extension to form garage, lounge and kitchen. Date withdrawn 04/03/2004

How to contact the Parish Council:

Telephone number 01793 771066 Fax 772646 email address:

clerk@purtonparishcouncil.fsnet.co.uk

Our website is www.communitate.co.uk/wilts/purtonparishcouncil. It contains all sorts of information including an up to date list of planning applications.
