



Purton. Magazine

February 2020

As winter moves towards spring, Michael Woodward is preparing for another lambing open day at Rogers Farm. See Page 48.

50p

Purton Contacts

Wiltshire Councillor	Jacqui Lay	770704
Doctor	Purton Surgery	770207
Dental Surgery	Church Street	770532
	Philip Cooke	771022
Junior Church	Mary Hodges	770505
Library	Librarians	770870
<i>(Mondays 2-5pm; Tuesdays 2-7pm; Wednesdays 10am-5pm; Fridays 2-5pm)</i>		
Luncheon Club	Pat Suddaby	771331
<i>(Tuesdays and Thursdays, 12 noon, Silver Threads Hall)</i>		
Museum	Curator: Beth Farnham, bethaney23@icloud.com	
Police/Fire/Ambulance	Emergencies	999
Police	Non-emergency	101
Age Concern Minibus	Hazel Woodbridge	770862
Purton Parish Council	Deborah Lawrence	771066
Purton Silver Threads	Brenda Cook	770431
Recycling Centre, Mopes Lane, <i>(10am-4pm: Mon, Thurs, Fri, Sat, Sun)</i>		
Veterinary Surgery	Purton Vets	771869
Pips Community Café	Duty volunteers	07498 526872
<i>(Tuesday-Friday 9am-4.30pm, Saturdays 10am-2pm) www.facebook.com/purtoncommunitycafe/</i>		
Schools & Playgroups		
Bradon Forest School	Secretary	770570
Pear Drops at Playclose	Sarah Grigg	950159
Pear Drops Pre-School (formerly Under 5s')	Sarah Grigg	978536
St Mary's Primary School	Secretary	770239
Church of England - Parish Church of St Mary www.stmaryspurton.org.uk		
<i>For information about services, see the diary pages in the centre of the magazine.</i>		
Vicar: Revd Ian Tweedie-Smith	email: vicarage@stmaryspurton.org.uk	
	Tel: 770077, 773031 (emergencies only)	
Curate: Revd Judith Wells	email: judithwells36@googlemail.com	
	Tel: 770627	
Wardens	Sandra Horsnall:	Jane Smith:
	770157	772422
Administrator: Rosie Harris	administrator@stmaryspurton.org.uk Tel: 773035	
Methodist Churches <i>For information about services in Purton, see the diary pages in the centre of the magazine. Braydon: Sundays 6.00pm Evening Worship</i>		
Minister: Revd David Perkins	Tel: 853197, 1 Garraways, Woodshaw, Royal Wootton Bassett SN4 8LT	
Catholic Church - Church of the Sacred Heart, High St, Royal Wootton Bassett		
www.thesacredheartparish.co.uk		
Priest: Revd Father Lucas Rodrigues	Tel: 852366	
<i>Services: Holy Mass Sunday 11.00am. Mon, Tues, Wed 9.30am. Fri 7.00pm</i>		
Catholic Church - St Mary's Church, High St, Cricklade		
Priest: Father Michael Robertson	Tel: 01285 712586 St Mary's Church	
<i>Services: Holy Days 7.00pm, Sundays 9.30am Mass.</i>		

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Purton. Magazine

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INTouch
Design & Print

From the Editors

Yet again we are happy to confirm that “the sense of community here is unique” and that “moving to Purton was one of the best decisions” made by Margaret Gregory when she moved into Witts Lane over 60 years ago. On page 20 we learn about her busy life, not least managing in an otherwise all male house, particularly with four men variously practicing the piano, a guitar and a drum set while the youngest was head down in his homework.

In this issue readers will find several more examples of why our community is so special. With the January issue being distributed before Christmas, this is the first opportunity to report on a wide variety of many events that have happened and announce many more coming up in the next several weeks. Villagers have been very generous in response to a range of fundraising event, high among which is on page 34 and describes the £615 that was collected by the One Stop fundraiser from the sale of many tempting sounding homemade goodies and given to Jerry and his family following his recent leg amputation.

The United Crib Service at St. Mary’s church involved many dressing up to tell the Christmas story and the Cricklade Band playing all the carols; all of which raised £542 for the work of Mercy Ships UK – with more details on page 39. Also in St. Mary’s church was the annual Christingle service from which Children’s Society will receive £268 – see page 56. Not to be outdone, on page 30 St. Mary’s Primary school raised over £200 for Julia’s House and a letter on page 40 thanks everyone who contributed £140 for the Wiltshire Air Ambulance from a display of Christmas lights. All quite exceptional for a community the size of Purton.

Looking forward, the PADS production of Sleeping Beauty begins on 6th February with three other performances described on page 12. Readers wanting to express an interest in buying a redundant pew from the renewal work at St. Mary’s church should turn to page 55 where details about registering an interest – not an immediate commitment – can be found.

Readers can also contribute to the community activities on page 29 as a distributor for Purton Magazine; on page 45 an accompanist is needed for the 4/4 Community Choir and anyone who can carry a tune in a bucket ought to read page 35.

100+

Girls between the ages of 5 and 18 are members of Girlguiding in Purton – see page 42

25th

May is set for Purton Cricket Club to play a against the world famous MCC – see page 50

170

Bradon Forest students saw a new production of A Christmas Carol – see page 32



Welcome

Purton Parish Council is delighted to announce the co-option of a new Councillor Mr Shawn Hindon.

We are aiming to co-opt one other member of the community in the coming months which will bring our total to full quota (15). Thank you to the Councillors who serve this community as volunteers.

Diary Date – VE Day Celebrations

Saturday 9th May 2020 2pm to 4pm in Purton Village Hall, a free community event celebrating the end of World War II – sandwiches, cake, tea, dancing by Purton School of Dance and music by Purton Village Voices – FREE to all residents who wish to attend

Cemetery

Please be advised we will be removing all Christmas wreathes/flowers and plants commencing February 2020. If you wish to keep any items, please remove them before this date.

Parking in Purton

Do you have spare capacity on your drive to allow those commuting to or those living in Purton who do not have a parking space to space share? Purton Parish Council are acting as a “go between”; passing information across for those who wish to use a space and those who have a space free. Working as a community, I am sure we can ease congestion, ensure parking is kept to the allocated spaces, with no illegal or unauthorised parking. Please email the office if you need assistance or can provide assistance.

Community Award Scheme

The date is now closed for nominations. A huge thank you for all those who have nominated. All nominees will receive an invitation to attend the Annual Parish Meeting on Monday 6th April and the chosen nominee will receive a trophy in recognition of their work in the community. The Annual meeting is open to all to attend.

Donations - Working With The Community

Purton Parish Council is permitted under Section 137 (1) Local Government Act 1972 to provide donations to groups/causes for new projects within Purton and the surrounding areas that will be of benefit to all or part of the community (not individuals).

A form is available from our website, our offices or via email. For more information please do not hesitate to speak to the Clerk. Donations are considered twice yearly in February and July. www.purtonparishcouncil.gov.uk/Financial-Details.aspx

The next round of applications will be heard in February 2020.

Grants have been awarded in (June 2019):

Swindon Dial a Ride, Purton Toddlers and Wiltshire Council Fun In the Sun

Gulley Rescue Project – Can you help?

We are looking at creating a gulley map of Purton to aid the flow and management of water within our beautiful village. If you are walking and notice a gulley is blocked, overgrown or in need of repair, drop us a line, email, phone call, Facebook message, whichever is easiest, giving us the exact location and issue and we can then map and arrange its clearance with the necessary bodies. What we need: Picture and exact location or what you can see if you have no pictures (ie: mud/grass/broken etc)

This gulley project is a small step towards ensuring our village can manage the changes in weather and subsequent water flow, working with the relevant responsible bodies (Wiltshire Council and Thames Water). So, pull on your walking boots, put the kids in their water proofs and let us know when you see a gulley that might need some help! Thank you

Post Office Times Of Operation

Village Hall Car Park - Tuesday 13.45-14.45.

Purton Youth Club For School Years 4-7

Residents only - Wednesdays in the Village Hall from 6.15pm to 7.45pm

For more details please contact the Youth Leader Tamara, Telephone: 01242 224 509; Mobile: 07787821798 Website: www.communitymas.co.uk. A Facebook page has also been set up under Purton Youth Club.

Youth Provision – Are you interested?

Council are looking into options of running not only the current 8-11 year old youth club but also a group for the next age group up until 18 years old. If anyone would be interested in attending, could they drop the Council a note via Facebook, Website or email.

Councillors 2020-21

Chairman of Council/Charities Finance & General Purposes	Ray Thomas	01793 951520
Vice Chair of Council/Chair of Burials	Neil Hooper	01793 771066
Councillor	Helen Hicks	01793 778207
Councillor	Geoff Greenaway	01793 771140
Councillor	Kevin Law	07768 456989
Councillor	Vicky McKerrow	01793 778190
Councillor	Julie Ann Hurwood	01793 771066
Chair of Staff Sub	Paul Grigg	01793 771066
Chair of Recreation	Sue Relfe	01793 771066
Councillor	Emily Seabrook	01793 771066

Councillor	Grant Seabrook	01793 771066
Councillor	Jim Reid	07785 267985
Councillor	Gavin James	01793 771066
Councillor	Shawn Hindon	07734 943212

Council Meetings in February

Commencing at 7pm in Purton Village Hall. All our meetings are open to the public apart from the Staffing committee.

Monday 3rd February	Finance and General Purposes meeting
Monday 10th February	Full Council meeting
Monday 24th February	Village Centre and Play Close Charity meeting

Public Convenience

For information the Public Toilets located to the side of the Village Hall are open 6am to 6pm Monday to Sunday.

Memory Stones

We provide a service to place memorial tribute stones at the front entrance to the cemetery. If you are interested in a memorial stone to honour a loved one who was a resident in Purton at time of death, please contact the Clerk on 771066 or email deborah.lawrence@purtonparishcouncil.gov.uk

Planning Permission - Approved Applications

19/09672/FUL	36 Cob Hill. Proposed single storey kitchen extension.
19/10412/FUL	36 Willis Way. Partial garage conversion.

Refused Applications

19/09547/CLE	Lower Farm, Purton Stoke. Use of land for stationing mobile home, used for independent residential use.
19/03620/FUL &	
19/03621/FUL	4 New Road, Purton. The appeals are dismissed.

Charities - Fundraising Diary Date

Purton Village Hall Fundraiser - Friday 6th March 2020, quiz night in the Village Hall commencing at 7.30pm sharp, tables of 6, £12. Support this local charity and keep this facility operational for all.

Advertising - Village Hall Railings/Village Centre Fencing

If you wish to advertise or promote an event being held in Purton, please ensure you apply for prior approval from the Trustees before placing banners and advertising. Unauthorised banners will be removed. There have been a few instances where approval has not been sought. These areas are on private land in a conservation area and therefore tight restrictions are adhered to.

We have set up a "GIVEASYOULIVE" site for the Purton Institute and Village Hall Charity which once subscribed allows donations to be generated through online

shopping. No fees, no charges, free to register. Please take a look, share the link between family and friends and let's raise some pennies. www.giveasyoulive.com/

How to contact the Parish Council

Tel: 01793 771066, Email: deborah.lawrence@purtonparishcouncil.gov.uk

Website www.purtonparishcouncil.gov.uk

The Parish Council's letter box: can be found on the wall adjacent to the side door (entrance door to the Parish Council offices) to the rear of the Library/Institute.

Facebook, Twitter and Website

Just one click will see you interact with the Parish Council. Events, road closures, meet the staff, "did you know", photographs and much more. If you have an event in the Parish that you would like us to promote on any of our media platforms please contact the Clerk on deborah.lawrence@purtonparishcouncil.gov.uk or call 771066. Find us on: Facebook – Purton Parish Council Twitter - @PurtonPC

On our website you can sign up to receive regular updates which will keep you informed of things happening in and around the village such as planning information and road closures, etc. Please have a look at the site: www.purtonparishcouncil.gov.uk and sign up today.

Purton Amateur Dramatic Society

It's Panto Time!

PADS members are currently busy preparing for our 2020 pantomime - Sleeping Beauty - which will be staged from Thursday 6th through to Saturday 8th February. With three evening performances, starting 7.30 p.m. and a Saturday Matinee at 2.30 pm, at the Village Hall, Station Road, Purton.

Tickets are on sale from:

Purton Library, The Co-op, Flawless Floors, and Dora's Dairy in Purton;

Or book tickets and pay by emailing: padstickets@gmail.com Or by calling:

Kate 771442

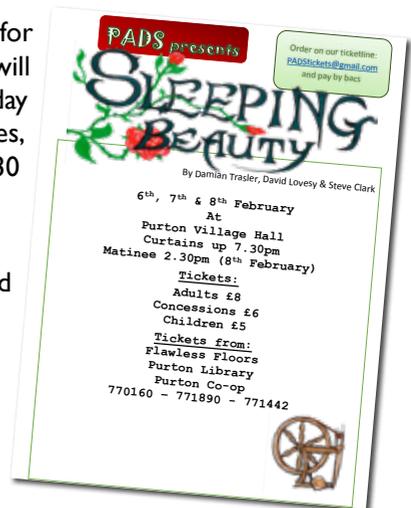
Lindsey 771890

Barbara 770160

Ticket prices are £8 Adults, £6 Concessions and £5 Children.

Please come and join us for an evening/afternoon of fun and entertainment. For further details on any of the above, you can contact us via the Purton Amateur Dramatics Society Facebook page.

Kate Bath 771442



Events

Minibus Shopping Trips - Hazel is organising shopping trips on Friday 31st January to Cirencester and Friday 14th February, which will be to Stow-on-the-Wold, and to Cirencester on the 28th February all of which will leave the village at 9am. For more details and to book your place on the minibus please contact Hazel Woodbridge on 770862.

Christmas Eve Carols at the Red House - What a night! I can honestly say that it brings out the best in a village like Purton. So many people came to enjoy Mark Blackwell and his brass band playing all the favourite carols and sang along with gusto on what was one of the few dry nights of the month. I don't know how many people attended but we ran out of mince pies and mulled wine and that has to be a first for us. Thank you to Mark for organising the band, to everybody who helped set up the lighting and the tree, and to all of you that turned up to sing and enjoy the music; it has to be one of the highlights of the year.

Jumble Sale - 1st February. Jumble to be left outside between 12 noon and 1pm only please. Doors open 2pm there will be snacks and a raffle.

Coach trips this year - We have a list of coach outings this year that are all clearly marked on the Purton Age Concern calendar, and if you haven't got one of those you can still purchase them from me or any of the committee members for £6; how can you organise your life without one! Our first outing will be on the 1st April and is a mystery trip with lunch. The cost for this will be £15 for pensioners and £17 for non-pensioners and people that live outside the village. This year you will be able to use your £5 voucher for one of the trips, and I ought to explain that the voucher will entitle you to £5 each if you are a couple, just put both names on the voucher and we will adjust. Yes even we make mistakes sometimes, sorry, it wasn't made clear on the instructions. Book through your street wardens.

Latest News



Tai chi sessions are as usual, each Thursday at 2pm in the Millennium Hall. There are places available so if you would like to give it a try, just turn up at the Millennium Hall. The first session is free, then the cost is currently £4 per session.



Purton & District Age Concern are looking for new committee members to join us. We need people who are willing to help out at events, attend monthly meetings and contribute to the continued success of the charity. If you are interested in joining us, please contact Peter on 778119.

Information

Luncheon Club - This is held at the Silver Threads Hall. Please give Pat Suddaby a call on 771331 for information. They are looking for more people to join them on Tuesdays and Thursdays each week for a two course lunch with tea/coffee starting at 12 noon. Minibus available if you need it.

Minibuses - Please contact Hazel Woodbridge on 770862 if you would like to book the minibus. If you are thinking of volunteering as a driver or "shotgun" (driver's assistant) on the minibuses please contact Andy White the minibus secretary on 771656 or email him at andywhitepacmb@gmail.com (New volunteers are always welcome).

Swindon West, Dorset and Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Service - offer a dedicated & free service for safe and well visits and fitting smoke alarms on a more proactive approach in the Purton area. Visits can be booked through their website or by calling 0800 038 2323 www.dwfire.org.uk/safety/safe-and-well-visits/

Bobby Van - If you need the Bobby Van to replace batteries or smoke alarms if they are not working properly please call them on 01380 861155.

Bradies - Each month we will mention Bradies, now known as Phoenix, as they will continue to cover the Purton area. You need to ring 01249 890794 to book with them. Remember if we don't use it, we lose it!

Cold Callers - We have had several reports of cold callers moving around the village, be aware of people knocking on your door and offering to do garden work for cash, or any other jobs when you don't know who they are or where they have come from. We are lucky that we have local tradesmen in the village, look in the Purton Magazine for details. Always be vigilant and be wary of strangers. Contact your street warden if you need a 'no cold calls' sticker for your door.

Website - Visit our dedicated website www.purtonageconcern.com to find all the details you need about our contacts, events, news and links to other websites in the area. We also have a Facebook and Twitter account which can be found at Facebook: [purtonageconcern](https://www.facebook.com/purtonageconcern) and Twitter: [@Purton_AC](https://twitter.com/Purton_AC) Please visit our social media sites and let us know what you think.

We still have a couple of wheelchairs and some walkers, so if you think you might need these at any time then ring Tony Price on 770696 or Peter Berry on 778119.

Don't forget the minibus service we offer residents living in the Purton Age Concern catchment area. Surgery runs, coffee mornings, day trips or general get-togethers, for those aged 60 and over that have disability or mobility issues. Both minibuses have hydraulic lifts and wheelchair security. Call Hazel to book your place 01793 770862.



Peter Berry

Dartmoor Musings with Dr John Belt

On behalf of John's three sons-in-law, Nigel Hildick, John Worthington and myself, I am pleased to write a few words about John, our much loved Father-in-law. I am sure Nigel and John would agree with me, that our father-in-law quickly made us feel a part of the family as soon as we knew him, in his warm, generous and welcoming way. John could have conversations about, and be interested in, almost anything; he would gently question us, whether it was about science, or the latest farming market prices, or life on the Costa del Sol, or our latest travels, or our sporting passions (and of course he would have enjoyed watching and talking about the rugby world cup over the last few weeks, except for the final itself), and he would listen carefully to our answers and make intelligent observations or a little joke or ask further questions, usually rounding up the conversation with 'yes, well that all sounds very satisfactory'. He was always easy company and just good to talk with.

But the time when John was most at ease was in those countless weeks he spent at his favourite holiday destination – Dartmoor. He must have made that trip down the M5 about 100 times over the last 50 years or so, first with Margaret and then with Jean, and as Tertia remarked 'Sitting in the back of the car driving down the motorway you could almost see the weight lifting from his shoulders as we passed Sedgemoor Services and he started to think about those places on the moor he would visit - Sheeps Tor, Cranmere Pool or Nuns Cross Farm.

John had a real love of Dartmoor – its wild beauty, its sights, smells and sounds, and its history. It was the place where he felt relaxed and at peace with the world. In fact he was so relaxed that he didn't even bother to take his jacket and tie with him to Dartmoor and would wear the same shirt three days in a row!

People in the village would stop and ask him where he was going on holiday this year, but before he could answer they would say.... "Oh! No need to ask the doctor... I expect you'll be going to Dartmoor, won't you?"

Holidays were certainly not idle. Up until very recently he'd be out all day, walking miles across heath and boggy marsh, carrying a packed lunch in his rucksack, and a wooden walking stick in his hand, sometimes in the rain and wind. He always seemed to know where he was going and rarely looked at the map. Often the destination was what appeared to be a pile of stones, or a grassy mound. But John had carefully researched the history and knew these were ancient burial sites, stone circles, stone crosses or ruined cottages.

We remember walking miles one day, hardly seeing any other people, when John suddenly stopped by a large stone in the middle of nowhere and put down his rucksack and walking stick saying 'Well, here we are'. Clearly we had arrived somewhere... but to us it was just another big flat slab of Dartmoor rock. But John smiled at our puzzlement, and explained with gentle authority 'Ah yes, well this was a place where historically those carrying a coffin across the moor would place the coffin on the stone while they had a rest.'

An important part of his, and our, days out on Dartmoor for many years was searching for Dartmoor Letterboxes* – there were (and still are) hundreds of these out on Dartmoor, and these typically consisted of a metal box or plastic container – perhaps an old ice cream tub – hidden in a crop of rocks where casual passers-by would not notice it. The only information about its whereabouts might be a grid reference, or a set of clues such as ‘walk 100 paces from the path junction at 279 degrees to a crop of small rocks.’ And sometimes they were very difficult or impossible to find. But if you did manage to find a box, [and John found hundreds] you would be rewarded by finding inside it an ink pad and a unique rubber stamp, a copy of which John would collect in a notepad, sometimes commenting on the quality of the stamp design. And if you left behind a postcard or letter in the box with a postage stamp on it, then someone else finding it should know that they had to pick it up and take it to a postbox in the nearest town.

For many years John maintained his own letterboxes on Dartmoor, four of them, and we particularly remember one at Eastern Whitebarrow, which was several arduous miles from the nearest car park, but a real Dartmoor walk. It was such a far flung location that he once left a postcard for us there in September and it didn’t arrive until the following April.

John’s love and quiet enthusiasm for letterboxing was introduced and passed on to children and grandchildren and anyone who joined him there in Dartmoor – and we were certainly always very welcome to join him... as long as we were all prepared to put our boots on every day!

On holiday, he was the family doctor through and through. Out walking, his rucksack was half filled with emergency medical supplies, morphine injections and so on - and all walkers in his party were expected to carry a survival bag and a whistle - just in case the mist came down unexpectedly and we got stranded.

In recent years John’s walks became a little shorter, and later, when he could no longer spend hours walking each day, he and Jean enjoyed holidays at the Dartington “Ways With Words” literary festival – combining his love of books with being on Dartmoor.

To mark his love for Dartmoor, I will add a few concluding lines from a poem by Anthony Foster called ‘A Walk on Dartmoor’

*A biting wind assailed us as we left the Tor, to thread our way down the well worn path,
Following the course of a leat, where an ancient stone-cross emerges from the grass,
We turn our direction unto the west towards the tannery town of Tavistock below,
Off the moor, narrow lanes lined with mossy stone walls, descending as we go,
This walk, these many miles, has left our bodies gently aching, feeling tired,
While our souls they seem to feel refreshed, uplifted, and inspired.*

Tim Softley, November 2019

*Letterboxes are now more commonly known as Geocaches. www.geocaching.com/

Remembering Mum - Margaret Gregory

Although it may not have been noticeable through her speaking voice, Margaret was Welsh and was born in Merthyr Tydfil in South Wales on 2nd January 1925.

Her father Percy was the manager of a grocery shop and at the height of the great depression in 1936 he relocated the family to Swindon, to take over the management of a green grocery store.

Mum attended The Commonweal School in the Mall, as did David and two of her grandchildren, James and Glenn. Her father died in 1944 when Mum was just 19 years old.

During World War II, Mum enlisted as a volunteer Nurse, working night shifts (after a full day's work) at the now sadly gone Princess Alexandra Hospital in Wroughton, treating injured servicemen.

Her mother Mable was a rather domineering figure who blocked Mum's ambition to go to University to train as a teacher and she was made to get a 'proper job', joining the Inland Revenue as a filing clerk, a role well beneath her intelligence and ambition.

As her responsibilities with the revenue increased, one of her clients was the (then unknown) TV presenter Johnny Morris, a farm manager at Aldbourne, who Mum took a bit of a shine to, being a fellow Welshman. She frequently told us of his wonderful sense of humour which no doubt led to him becoming presenter of the long running television series 'Animal Magic'.

At around this time she discovered one of her great passions, amateur dramatics, something that stayed with her for the whole of her life, and very good she was too. She made many great friends via the Western and Phoenix Players. How she was able to learn lines, attend rehearsals, do performances several times each year, and raise a family is quite beyond me.

Mum met Dad via his brother Jack, after being 'set up' by Jack's wife Jean just after the war, and they found that they had a great deal in common. Their wedding was in September 1948 and the marriage lasted for 68 years. They celebrated silver, pearl, ruby, gold, diamond and sapphire anniversaries – quite some achievement. They shared a love of canal boating, completing trips on most of the UK Inland Waterways. They were both members of the tennis club, with just a short walk over the football field behind the house to get to the courts. Mum continued playing tennis well into later life.

As a newly married couple they came to Purton, initially living in Shell Cottage in Witts Lane, and with the arrival of the young family moved to a brand-new house in 1957 which was built on the site of the mysterious Prisoner of War camp in Hyde Lane. Thankfully Mum was able to remain living in the family home right up until her passing.

Mum gave up work to bring up her three boys, but once they were self-sufficient, she returned to work as an assistant to Purton builder Clifford Climpson, later moving to the electronics firm 'Semitron' at Cricklade, and finally to the Wiltshire Constabulary in Swindon where she was employed in the Courts Office preparing statements for court appearances (which must have made very interesting reading). Sadly, we didn't get any 'gossip' about this because she took her 'Official Secrets' oath very seriously. She finally retired in 1987.

Mum always said that moving to Purton was one of the best decisions she ever made – the sense of community here is unique and we were indeed very fortunate to grow up in such a lovely place.

Mum was an interesting character – she was gregarious and lovely company with a keen sense of humour. She was a great cook, always trying new and adventurous dishes on maybe not always so adventurous recipients! During her final years she was always delighted to welcome many of her friends who would pop in to see her. She never once complained about her 'lot' despite being in what must have been a great deal of discomfort. She was well supported during this time by family, neighbours and her professional care team from Purity Care.

Both Mum and Dad were lifetime church goers until Mum's disability prevented this. However, the Vicar was kind enough to arrange monthly communion services at the Vicarage – just a very short trip in her wheelchair – and she really enjoyed these social get-togethers (and wheel chair maintenance!)

Mum was a very kind and caring person, and she was a great role model to us. She was after all a lady in a house full of blokes – noisy ones at that. When we all lived at home, just after 6 pm was her dreaded time – Dad doing his piano practice, David on his guitar, and me bashing the drums, – not together you understand – in separate rooms of the house - with poor old Bob trying to do his homework.

Mum was the last surviving member of six children, her sister Betty passing away in August last year at the age of 98, she was 94 and her mother made it to 93, so the females in the family were very long lived indeed.

It will be very hard to adjust to Mum not being around after nearly 95 years, almost 70 of them being in this village. We will miss her greatly – her kindness, her sense of humour and above all her warmth, but her life was happy and extremely well lived.

Ian Gregory, December 2019

Purton Memories of Margaret

Margaret was the first person I was introduced to when I came to Wiltshire in 1966 as we shared an interest in tennis and amateur dramatics. She belonged to the Purton Tennis Club and the Phoenix Players in Swindon so through her I joined both groups. It was largely due to Margaret that I settled down quickly and happily to enjoy life in Purton.

Roy and Margaret were keen members of the Purton Historical Society. She served on the committee from 2006 until 2009 and was a member of the team responsible for cleaning duties in the Museum. Twice a year a small group attended a day's course in Devizes, and later Bromham, organised by the Wiltshire Local History Forum. After lunch Roy retired to the car for a snooze while the rest of us returned for the afternoon session of talks.

Occasionally Margaret and I were called upon to entertain at village functions to mark national celebrations when we read poems or performed sketches. She served as part of the "Meals on Wheels" team, taking people to the Luncheon Club and delivering meals to the housebound. Some of her clients were much younger than she was!

Margaret was very sociable and liked company. Once a month we have coffee mornings, meeting in each other's houses. Until quite recently she joined in, coming to Ringsbury Close in the Age Concern mini-bus when she became confined to her wheelchair. It is exactly six years since she became incapacitated and being unable to walk was devastating but she didn't mope or moan. "What's the use of sitting around getting upset and being miserable?" she used to say, making the best of her situation. She was always interested in what we were doing, our families and who was in the next play. Her sense of humour was infectious; she often had a twinkle in her eye when something quietly amused her. She liked to be smartly attired for her visitors. Indeed Roy and Margaret had always been a very good looking couple.

Daphne Breakspear writes that Margaret was a member of the Phoenix Players for over fifty years. She first appeared as Miss Prism in "The Importance of Being Earnest" in 1963. She took part in more than forty plays and was a most versatile performer, donning whatever costume was required, from a duchess to a bag lady, and carrying all her roles off to perfection.

In 1976 when Margaret took the part of Grace in "The Winslow Boy" her youngest son, Robert, played the fourteen year old Ronnie. Her last role was in 2003 when she appeared as the eccentric old lady in "Cold Comfort Farm" and spent the entire play hidden behind gauze but still gave the usual outstanding performance.

She helped with backstage jobs or front of house duties too. Many Phoenix Players members have happy memories of time spent with her. Daphne knew her for fifty two years and her reminiscences conclude with the words "She was a lovely lady and a true friend."

All her Purton friends and those in the Phoenix and Western Players will miss her greatly.

Jean Belt, January 2020

**Quiz Evening with a Fish and Chip Supper,
Friday 27 March, Silver Threads Hall, Purton**

We will be holding another Quiz evening with a Fish and Chip Supper on Friday 27 March. Doors open 7pm for 7.30pm start in Silver Threads Hall, Purton. Teams of six. Please bring your own drinks and glasses. Tickets at £9 each are limited and will be available from Purton Surgery from the beginning of February.

Information evening - Thursday 19 March, Dr Gomara, Mindfulness

Our next Information Evening will be on Thursday 19 March when Dr Gomara will be talking about Mindfulness. This will be in Purton Surgery from 7.30-9pm. Tickets (free) are needed to manage numbers and will be available from Purton Surgery from beginning of February.

Parking at Purton Surgery

Can we remind those driving to Purton Surgery to please be considerate when parking. There are frequently cars parked on the pavement approaching the Surgery making it extremely difficult, and potentially risky, for pedestrians - in particular those with wheelchairs or pushchairs.

As always, your support for our work to both inform and support patients and the practice is much appreciated. If you know of anyone who would like to be included in our email list (all sent bcc) then please ask them to contact via groupforpatients@gmail.com

*Serving patients in Purton, Cricklade & surrounding communities
Sheila Fowler, Secretary, Purton PPG*

Church Floodlighting

Jan 17 The church was floodlit in loving memory of our dear Mum, Nan and Great-Nan, **Mary Woolford**, on what would have been her 97th birthday. Loved and missed by all her family



Jan 28 St Mary's was floodlit in remembrance of **Susan Morley** on her birthday. Remembered with much love by her family and friends.

Feb 17 St Mary's will be floodlit in memory of **Mary Mills** on her birthday. Very much loved and always remembered by Karen, Garry, Amy, Martin, Jay, Harry and Lydia.

If you would like the Church floodlit for a special date, occasion, or memorial, please contact Libbie on 771018. The cost is £20 for one evening and it would be helpful if the date is booked at least a month before the chosen night. A short announcement can also be published in this magazine at no extra cost.



Have you read a book that you will always remember, either recently or many years ago, serious or funny, fact or fiction? Each month we are publishing a review of a book that has meant a lot to a particular reader, especially the reason why it was so memorable. Purton Magazine readers are encouraged to send in a personal review of their favourite book; it need not be very long. As usual,

A Book I will Always Remember
the copy deadline is the 10th of the preceding month and our contact details are on Page 4.

Byzantium by John Julius Norwich

When I was at school, History and Geography were listed as Humanities. History, to me, was just an irreconcilable list of dates and, being a stamp collector at the time, I had a much better understanding of geography. However, retirement re-energised my interest in history and 'Byzantium' doubled the size of my 'known world'. I would like to be able to say that it was a tour of the classical sites of Greece or the mosaics of Paphos that inspired my choice of reading, but it was more likely a happenstance Christmas present. John Julius Norwich, the author, who passed away last year at the age of 88 years, issued his book in three separate publications: - The Early Centuries, The Apogee and The Decline and Fall.

To quote from the author's Introduction – "The Byzantine Empire, from its foundation by Constantine the Great on Monday 11th May 330 to its conquest by the Ottoman Sultan Mehmet II on Tuesday 29th May 1453, lasted for a total of 1,123 years and 18 days; that sort of span simply cannot be dealt with in one volume of manageable size". The timespan is more than twice that of the Latin Roman Empire of the West (27 BC – 476AD), although the Kingdom of Rome dates back to the 8th Century BC. Byzantium has always had a 'bad press' in the Western world, but as a buffer between Europe and the Middle East it offers interesting questions: for example, why would Cyprus vote with Russia against international sanctions approved by the West? Answer – Because they share the Cyrillic alphabet and an Orthodox Christian faith, (Missionaries, Cyril & Methodius visited the Bulgar Khan, 864AD).

Constantine the Great can be seen, with the exception of the founders of the various religions, as one of the most influential men in history. He adopted Christianity, banned the paganism of Rome and established the cornerstone of a new empire on the site of old Byzantium. By carrying his name, Constantine, Constantinople stood for sixteen centuries; for half of that time defending the Empire and Christianity against Goths, Huns, Vandals, Arians and Arabs. Constantine was born at Naissus in the Roman Province of Dacia (until recently Yugoslavia) in 274AD. His father, Constantius 'Chlorus' was, at the time of Constantine's birth, one of the most successful generals in the Empire. His mother was an innkeeper's daughter from Bithynia.

As early as 286AD Emperor Diocletian had appointed Maximian to rule the West from Mediolanum (Milan), while he himself ruled the Eastern half from Nicomedia (Izmit), on the Sea of Marmara. Later, the Empire was further divided by the appointment of a Caesar, Constantius 'Chlorus', based in Gaul and responsible for Britain, while another Caesar, Galerius took charge of the Balkans. Constantine, as a young man enjoyed a series of campaigns with the army of Diocletian, thus becoming more Greek than Latin. However, he later joined his father to drive the Picts back over Hadrian's Wall. In July 306, Constantius 'Chlorus' died at York. Constantine was lauded as the new Augustus in his father's place. He continued to rule in Gaul for about six years. When Galerius, ruler of the Balkan Peninsular died, Constantine faced the challenge of three other contenders for absolute control of the two Empires.

In 307, in order to make an alliance with the house of Maximian, Constantine put away his first wife, Minervina, and married Fausta, the daughter of the old Emperor. Unfortunately, his new brother-in-law, Maxentius, ruling from Rome, who had adopted the title "Ruler of the Romans", was seizing territory and was totally hostile to Constantine. Constantine now sealed an arrangement with Licinius in the East by arranging a marriage to his half-sister Constantia. With his diplomatic ground prepared, he set off in the autumn of 311 for Colmar with an army of 8000 cavalry and 90,000 infantry to deal with Maxentius.

In the early summer of 312 he marched, crossing the Alps. He took Susa and Turin in quick succession. He then took Milan, Brescia and Verona, turning towards Rome only on reaching Aquileia. The two armies met on 28 October 312 – the 7th anniversary of Maxentius' seizure of power – at Saxa Rubra, some 7 or 8 miles north-east of Rome. Eusebius account tells of Constantine seeing the vision of a cross in the sky, before routing Maxentius' army and driving it back across the Tiber at the old Milvian Bridge. Maxentius with many of his army were drowned in the river.

The Battle of Milvian Bridge made Constantine absolute master of all Europe from Atlantic to the Adriatic, from Hadrian's Wall to the Atlas Mountains. It also marked if not his actual conversion to Christianity, at least the moment when he set himself up as a protector and active patron of his Christian subjects. It is also about this time that Chi Rho, the Christian symbol, first appears on the shields of his soldiers.

Constantine, in his early twenties, had accompanied Emperor Diocletian on his campaign to Egypt in 295-6 AD, on the return journey passing through Caesarea in Palestine. Here he made a lasting impression on a young Christian scholar named Eusebius, a disciple of Pamphilus of the Origenist Theological School of Caesarea. This encounter seems to have shaped Constantine's character.

By 320AD, Licinius, ruler of Thrace and the Balkan states, was conducting a reign of terror, persecuting Christians, expelling Bishops and encouraging the old pagan worship. To Constantine, society should give fair consideration to all of its subjects, but Licinius would never be persuaded; the two were therefore at war. Licinius

marched his army of 170,000 men north while Constantine, from his capital at Serdica (modern Sofia), led a smaller but battle-hardened force out to meet him. The battle took place near Adrianople on 3rd July 323, and after Licinius had lost 34,000 of his men, he retreated into the peninsular of Byzantium.

Constantine dug in and waited for his fleet, which he had entrusted to his son Crispus, now a man of twenty. 200 war galleys were backed by many more transports. Unfortunately, Licinius' fleet were guarding the Black Sea entrance to the Bosphorus and took no part. The city of Byzantium fell, Licinius was exiled and Constantine immediately recognised its suitability as a defensible capital for his Empire. It was here that he announced "Thy people should enjoy a life of peace and undisturbed concord".

The above covers briefly Chapter I of "The Early Years". This volume ends 470 years later with the coronation of Charlemagne as Roman Emperor of the West on Christmas Day 800. Since the fall of Rome, 476AD, this is the first appearance of a rival to the old imperial throne on the Bosphorus.

The tragedy of Constantinople and the demise of Byzantium is wound up in the schism between the Catholic Church and the Orthodox Church which had already begun in 325 AD, when Constantine called the Great Council of Nicaea, hoping to reconcile the two churches. Unfortunately, the Roman Church and the Greek Church had different understandings of the Trinity. Nuance could also have been lost in the translation of Latin to Greek, and further councils did not seem to resolve the problem.

Pope versus Patriarch reached a climax in 1203AD, when Pope Innocent III called for the 4th Crusade to retake Jerusalem from its Muslim overlords. Dandolo, the Doge of Venice, contracted to provide the ships to carry an army, comprised mostly of Franks, put in at Constantinople and allowed the troops to run riot, abandoning the Crusade for immediate profit. The horses over the entrance to St. Marks are one of the Prizes taken from Constantinople. The weakened Empire lasted another 250 years, by which time Anatolia had been lost to the Saracens. Mehmet II took the almost impregnable city by the trick of transporting his ships over a hill into the Golden Horn. Constantinople became Istanbul. This gave the Saracens a very small foothold in Europe and resulted in the eventual exile of the Orthodox Church.

PS. If the Reader is interested in more recent history with humour, try "The Churchill Factor" by Boris Johnson (2014).

Bob Stevens

The Purton Magazine team needs your help

We are looking for people who could spare just an hour or two a month to deliver perhaps 30 magazines. One of our loyal distributors has suddenly been taken ill and others are always needed to fill in from time to time. For more information please contact Sandra (01793) 770157, e-mail distribution@purtonmagazine.co.uk.

St Mary's Primary School

Happy New Year from everyone at St Mary's. The children have settled into Term 3 and we started the new decade with us all considering how a new year is like a stepping stone to the future. We decided that good choices make for excellent 'new year resolutions' and that being kind, helpful and persevering would help us all to shine brightly.

We have received a lovely letter thanking everyone for the generous nativity donations of £202.95 for Julia's House Children's Hospice. This money provides vital support for families in Wiltshire with terminally ill children.

By the time you read this, the applications for September 2020 intake will have closed.

We do have spaces in some year groups, so should you be considering St Mary's for your child, then I would be delighted to show you around our school. Visits can be arranged through the school office admin@st-marys-purton.wilts.sch.uk or by phoning us on (01793) 770239.

For more information about our wonderful school and all the exciting learning opportunities that take place, visit our school website www.st-marys-purton.wilts.sch.uk

Mrs Naomi Clarke, Head Teacher

Purton Tennis Club

Purton Tennis Club hosted the annual presentation evening for the Swindon and District League at the Red House on 4th January. We had an excellent evening – and thanks go to our committee and club members, and to the Red House, all of whom helped make this an enjoyable and successful event.

It is the time of year for renewing tennis memberships - or perhaps joining for the first time, and anybody who is interested in taking up tennis, or perhaps returning to tennis, is very welcome to get in touch. Throughout the year we play in summer and winter leagues (hence the presentation night at the end of the season); host open and closed tournaments and, of course, have social tennis. Anyone who is a member of PTC can have access to the courts at anytime – there is usually a court free. It is a great way to enjoy the fresh air, get fit and to make friends, and, as a bonus, we have lovely surroundings in which to play.

Nicola Gardner will also be running her very popular Saturday morning sessions for our younger members, starting in April. These sessions are free for any junior member between the ages of 7-11.

For more details please get in touch, we will be pleased to hear from you.

*For further details please visit our web site: purtontennisclub.com
Or contact Janet Saunders (secretary) 01793 77214*

Bradon Forest students learning about democracy



Bradon Forest held a mock election process, that ran parallel with the UK general election. Last month we reported how students were first educated on the basics of a general election and the processes within the UK Parliamentary system.

Students who volunteered to take part were set a weekend homework that included researching party manifestos and creating policy specific questions to ask to each of the candidates. We were delighted that all four of the North Wiltshire candidates visited the school and spoke with the same group of students.

The week of the election saw our students conducting hustings in the canteen before voting took place. We were truly thankful to all the candidates for taking part as it enriches the education we give our students on the parliamentary process.

Assistant Headteacher Paul Dipple said: “The children have been brilliant, I’m so proud of them. All the candidates said they had visited sixth-form groups that were less impressive in terms of how well-prepared they were. I was a politics A-Level teacher at my last job so I think it’s important that pupils are well-informed. If society is going to keep arguing that young people don’t care about politics, then education’s job is to help them get involved.”

Young Enterprise team at first trade event

Mrs Hawley, Business Studies teacher, reports:

Our team this year is called Emberossa and they make decorative plaques using a technique called pyrography. This involves burning images onto wood using a

special pen. They also sell keyrings made from wood. The team performed well at their first trade fair held at the Nationwide headquarters on Friday 13 December, selling £30 worth of their products. They also received some lovely feedback from consumers. Their next venture will be in February/March when they will experience another selling opportunity at the Swindon Outlet Centre. www.young-enterprise.org.uk/



English Literature trips

This term the English Department has taken, not one, but two trips with over 100 students to see adaptations of our GCSE Literature texts.

In November, Year 10 and 11 travelled to Malvern for the first time to see a re-release of Stephen Daldry's National Theatre production of *An Inspector Calls*. This famous production sees the (literal) destruction of the Birling family as a direct result of their collective failure to take responsibility for those less fortunate. Students showed exemplary behaviour and were a worthy audience for such an excellent production.

On 16 December, we took 170 students to Cirencester to see a new production of *A Christmas Carol*, starring Patrick Ryecart. This visually stunning production boasted an ensemble of actors, who sang and performed their own music on stage. Although the ending of the play was somewhat different to the text we had studied, pupils enjoyed the production. All agreed the energy on stage was infectious and we were certainly all in the festive mood on the way home!

The English Department would like to thank all staff involved. A huge amount of organisation from teachers, administrative staff and parents goes into making these trips a success.

Students entertain Purton Silver Threads



We were delighted to be asked to help with the Christmas lunch at the Silver Threads luncheon club last month. Six Year 10 students and Mrs Davies served lunch to over 40 guests. Everyone was then entertained by a selection of Christmas songs and music performed by Bradon Forest students.

Basketball Champions!

Our Key Stage 3 Girls Basketball team won the Swindon Championship recently, beating Dorcan in the final! By the time you read this, they will have played in the county finals at Marlborough. Brilliant result!



BRADON FOREST SCHOOL

SPRING OPEN MORNING

Monday 16 March 2020
9.15am - 10.30am

Book your
FREE place here:
[tinyurl.com/
BradonForest2020](http://tinyurl.com/BradonForest2020)

www.bradonforest.org.uk



Ten Years Ago...

In February 2010, Purton Magazine's editorial opened with the statement that it was "full of challenges yet to come". The Editor could have had no idea of the challenge we face this February as we commence to detach ourselves from Europe. We are told by the Prime Minister that we will be entering a "Golden Age". In October this column suggested, among other changes, that we would revert to £sd, now it seems that a further step back is being taken to the Gold Standard, perhaps as the only way of securing our money's long-term value.

A different challenge arose from our correspondent's second report from the climate change conference in Copenhagen. Nothing was achieved. The Americans (pre-Trump, remember) weren't to blame because of the nature of their democracy while the Chinese weren't to blame because they didn't want others poking noses into their affairs. The article praised the efforts of our then Prime Minister, Gordon Brown, but as it turned out he lasted only a few more months. It looked forward to a time when "our island would experience blackouts, fuel and food shortages, overcrowding and natural disasters". Ten years on, nothing has changed.

There were lighter items. Two intrepid cyclists were planning a trip from Land's End to John o'Groats on a tandem with the novelty that the rear one would be facing backwards without a handlebar to hold. The Editor called it downright daftness but we may see in future magazines whether the project was accomplished.

It gets dafter – an American study demonstrated that anything that requires conscious attention, increases one's willpower with the result that, when offered, one chooses gooey chocolate cake rather than healthy fruit salad.

One Stop Christmas fundraiser

The team at One Stop are grateful for all the support received on 20 December at the latest fundraiser. A wonderful £615 was raised. The sale of pickles and jam, cheese scones, mince pies and cakes, all homemade, along with a raffle saw another successful event. All proceeds were given to Jerry Crispen and his family to help them out at Christmas, following the amputation of Jerry's right leg a few months ago. The usual fun was had by the team, and we are very proud of what we achieved. Special thanks must go to Jean and Deb for the lovely mince pies and cakes that you made to help us reach this fantastic total.

We would like to wish all our loyal and valued customers a happy new year and look forward to seeing you all again soon. We hope to have another fundraising event around Easter, and as usual the proceeds will go back into the village.

Zac, Pearl, Zita and The One Stop Team

After 8 Christmas Social

On the evening of December 10th, Mary Smith graciously opened her home to host our Christmas sing a long. As we arrived in festive attire, Mary invited us to hang lovely traditional decorations on her tree which got us all in the spirit of Christmas.

Avril started the proceedings by reading us the storey of the Nativity written in Yorkshire dialect - it was fortunate that we knew the tale as the language could have been from another country rather than another county!

Favourite carols were sung before we partook of a bring and share supper. It was a wonderful festive spread as usual and gave us all a chance to chat, swap recipes and catch up with each other before the exciting part of the evening - Santa's gifts...

Each year we arrive with an unwanted gift which we have wrapped and placed in 'the sack' which is then passed around for us to take out a gift. The secret is to remember the wrapping paper you have used so you don't go home with the gift you brought! There was a selection of toiletries, Christmas themed plates, china mugs, scarves, chocolates, perfumed sachets among other things that, for some reason, people didn't want, but delighted the recipients; recycling at its best!

We rounded the evening off by singing more carols and a short 'light hearted' quiz, which proved to be rather taxing...Well do you know which Christmas custom was invented in 1847 and you whom?*

A jolly time was had by all. Thanks to Mary for hosting and to our resident pianists Barbara and Marion, who do their best to keep us in tune and time - not an easy task as one or two of us would have trouble carrying a tune in a bucket.

*The Christmas Cracker, invented by Tom Smith.

Wessex Male Choir

The Choir goes from strength to strength with 18 new singers coming along to rehearsals since September.

This boosts the number of likely members to around 70 (too many to get into the picture) Several told us that they want to join because of our reputation for combining high quality singing and fun. They were brave enough to jump in and give it a try – and they are glad they did. They discovered that



you don't need to be a super singer to join us. Typical blokes are welcome, so why not give it a go. What have you got to lose?

For more information please contact membership@wessexmalechoir.co.uk

Purton Village Diary - February 2020

Sa 1	2.00pm	Age Concern Jumble Sale at the Village Hall (Jumble to be left between Noon and 1pm)
Su 2	8.00am	Communion at St Mary's Church
	10.30am	Morning Worship at Purton Methodist Church
	10.30am	Family Service at St Mary's Church
	6.00pm	Evensong at St Mary's Church
M 3	7.00pm	Finance and general purpose Parish Council meeting at the Village Hall
Th 6	to 8th	PADS perform their Pantomime 'Sleeping Beauty' at Purton Village Hall
	10.30am	Communion at the Vicarage
Su 9	8.00am	Communion at St Mary's Church
	10.30am	Morning Worship at Purton Methodist Church
	10.30am	Communion at St Mary's Church
	4.00pm	Messy Church at St Mary's Primary School
	6.00pm	Ignite Youth Service at St Mary's Church
M 10	7.00pm	Full Parish Council meeting at the Village Hall
Tu 11	10.00am	Purton & Dirstict Probus meet at The Red House lounge for a talk entitled 'The Crocus and the Cornflower'
	11.00am	Songs of Praise at Ashgrove House
	2.00pm	Ashgrove Choir entertain at Silver Threads Hall
	8.00pm	After 8 late Christams meal at the Bolingbroke Arms
W 12	2.30pm	Methodist Women's Fellowship at Purton Methodist Church
Th 13	11.00am	Songs of Praise at The Cedars
F 14	9.00am	Age Concern minibus trip to Stow-on-the-Wold
Su 16	8.00am	Communion at St Mary's Church
	10.30am	Morning Worship at Purton Methodist Church
	10.30am	Family Communion at St Mary's Church
M 17	2.00pm	St Mary's Fellowship of Women meet at Purton Methodist Church for a talk on K9 Paws for fun from Tracey Camp
W 19	2.30pm	Communion at Ashgrove House
Su 23	8.00am	Communion at St Mary's Church
	10.30am	Morning Worship at Purton Methodist Church
	10.30am	Communion at St Mary's Church
		Deadline for staking your claim on one of the St Mary's Church pews.
	4.00pm	Messy Church at Ridgeway Farm Primary School
M 24	7.00pm	Parish Council Village Centre and Play Close Charity meeting at the Village Hall

Tu 25	10.00am	Purton & Dirstict Probus meet at The Red House lounge for a talk entitled 'GWR – the holiday line'
	12noon	Networking lunch for Purton's small businesses at Pips Community Café
	2.00pm	Dorcan Choir entertain at Silver Threads Hall
W 26	7.30pm	Ash Wednesday Communion at St Mary's Church
	7.30pm	Gardeners' Guild meet at the Silver Threads Hall for a talk from Margie Hoffnun entitled 'Garden visiting – a very British thing'
Th 27	7.30pm	Purton Historical Society meet at the Village Hall for a talk on St Dunstan and the Miracle of Calne
F 28	9.00am	Age Concern minibus trip to Cirencester
Sa 29	2.00pm	Jumble Sale at Silver Threads Hall

Every week

M	7.00pm	to 8.00pm Purton Village Voices choir practice at the Red House Skittle Alley (term time)
Tu	9.00am	to 11am: Purton Toddler Group at the Village Hall (term time)
	12 noon	Luncheon Club at Silver Threads Hall for over 60s
	1.45pm	to 3.45pm Post Office van stops at Purton Village Hall car park
	7.30pm	Bridge Club at the Red House
W	10.00am	to 12 noon: Coffee and chat at Silver Threads Hall
	2.00pm	to 5.00pm: Purton Museum open, free of charge (Apr-Nov)
	6.15pm	Purton Youth Club for school years 4-7 at Purton Village Hall
Th	12 noon	Luncheon Club at Silver Threads Hall for over 60s
	2.00pm	to 3pm: Age Concern Tai Chi at Millennium Hall (term time)
	2.20pm	Pram Service for pre-school children at Purton Methodist Church (term time)
F	10.00am	to 11.30am: Tea, coffee and cake at The Cedars
Sa	10.00am	to 12.30pm: Purton Museum open, free of charge (Apr-Nov)

Every month

1st Wednesday	10.00am	Story Time at Purton Library for pre-school children
2nd Wednesday	2.30pm	Methodist Women's Fellowship at Purton Methodist Church
2nd & 4th Tuesday		Purton Probus meet in the Red House lounge
2nd & 4th Tuesday		Purton Silver Threads meet at the Silver Threads Hall
3rd Monday		St Mary's Fellowship of Women at Purton Methodist Church
3rd Tuesday		Royal British Legion meet at the Red House
3rd Wednesday	2.15pm	Rhyme Time at Purton Library for babies, toddlers and their carers

March

F 6 7.30pm Purton Village Hall Quiz Night Fundraiser in the Village Hall
M 16 tbc After 8 trip to Swindon Arts Centre to see 'Wanted'

If your Club or Organisation's events are not included in the Diary pages, contact Purton Magazine c/o In Touch Design & Print, 2 College Road, Purton, Tel: 772954 or email: mail@purtonmagazine.co.uk

Moon Phases

- New moon: 24 Jan ● 1st Quarter: 2 Feb ○ Full moon: 9 Feb
● 3rd Quarter: 15 Feb ● New moon: 23 Feb

Purton Methodist Church

Our new year began with our Covenant Service, led by Rev David Perkins, and our friends from St Mary's Church joined with us. The Covenant Service was inaugurated by John Wesley, who was instrumental in founding The Methodist Church in the 18th Century. The service is held annually and gives us an opportunity to focus on God's love for us and to renew our commitment to Him. The service was followed with tea, coffee and biscuits and an opportunity for a time of fellowship together.

At the first meeting of Methodist Women's Fellowship for 2020, Rose Stump brought along a selection of bells that she had accumulated over the years and had been given to her by family and friends, as well as bells that were souvenirs of her own holidays. As she explained about the bells, several from different parts of the world, she related interesting and sometimes amusing anecdotes about them. The next Women's Fellowship meeting will be on Wednesday February 12th at 2.30 p.m. at Purton Methodist Church and ladies of any faith or none are welcome to join with us.

On both these occasions presentations were made to Linda and Bob Tinson as they stand down from their various responsibilities and move from the village in due course. We wish them well.

Heather Hunt

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Parkinson's UK Cricklade Café.

At our November café there were thirty people present and at the December café there were twenty eight people present. At our first ever café, there were three people who turned up and we wondered if it was all going to be worth it!

Well I can tell you that with your help, those local people with Parkinson's and their carers have all learned of our drop-in café and all have benefitted greatly from it.

Just for your information as we are really proud of this:

We have campaigned for better Parkinson's Care for North Wiltshire residents when we discovered that others nearby currently get far better care. Since December 2018, we have banged on the doors of Councillors, the NHS, our MP and just about anyone else who might listen. Amazingly, we have got a great result!

From April 2020, a jointly funded scheme between Wiltshire NHS and Parkinson's UK will provide additional Parkinson's Nurses at the Great Western Hospital, Swindon. Jointly, funded, recruited and trained as required. This means that more than 500 North Wiltshire residents with Parkinson's will now receive the quality care to match that of our neighbours in Swindon.

We are grateful to all of those concerned who listened to our plight and responded so positively towards achieving a more than satisfactory resolution. So with your continued help, we can keep spreading the words and helping those who need coffee, cake and a good chat!

Thank you again for your support to date and a Happy New Year to you all.

Vincent and Maggie Mobey, Parkinson's UK - Cricklade Café Co-ordinators

The United Christmas Crib service

Many thanks to all who came and made the United Crib Service at St Mary's Church on Christmas Eve so enjoyable!

To Mary Hodges and the ladies who dressed up the children and adults to tell the Christmas story. To the Cricklade Band who played all the carols for us. Thank you!

To those who knitted beautiful angels for the children and those who made the paper angels to hang on the tree and on which we could write the names of those who we love, who have died and miss particularly at Christmas. These have been removed now and a prayer said for them all.

And to all of you who came and contributed so fantastically generously to the work of Mercy Ships UK, a charity that provides free surgery in Africa. It also improves local healthcare and transforms peoples' lives. You raised £542.46 - a sum of money we hope would be doubled by the government by the end of 2019.

Many thanks to everyone and a Happy New Year!

Mary Hodges, Revd David Perkins, Libbie Sheppard and Revd Judith Wells

Purton Post Bag



The editors reserve the right not to publish letters received where space and content dictate. No correspondence can be accepted for publication without the proper name and address of the correspondent being supplied. However, these details may be withheld from publication if requested.

Light Fantastic!

We are really pleased to reveal that our Christmas Lights donation box raised the sum of £140.27 for The Wiltshire Air Ambulance. Many thanks to all those who made donations and we hope you all enjoyed the display.

Sue and Barry, Vasterne Close

Drive by pooping

I repeatedly find someone else's dogs mess on my drive, after speaking to other people who live in Blacklands, a number of other people are also suffering.

We are all reluctant to put out signs!

I walk my dog behind the allotments and dogs also foul the path up to the allotments and all over the field. Families with children also use the field, it is not just for dog walkers. I believe it to be only 2 or 3 dog walkers who don't clear up, all with 2 large dogs.

A kind soul provides poo bags at the start of the field, but obviously they are not appreciated.

Name and address supplied

Appreciated support

Marjorie, Julie and family would like to thank their friends and neighbours for all the lovely cards and kind messages of sympathy following the passing of Anne. We really appreciated all the support and help, which was given when Anne was in hospital and at the Prospect Hospice. We'd especially like to thank Revd Judith Wells for her help and support and a lovely service.

Marjorie Shailes

Bowled over by new book

Can I recommend the excellent story compiled in the book "200 Not Out" about Purton Cricket Club. It is clear that Francis Sheppard has a great love of the game, and the club, but the book also provides a glimpse into how society in general, and the village in particular, has moved on over the last 200 years. With profits going to such a good cause I would encourage cricket and non-cricket lovers alike to buy a copy.

Mike Stannard

We welcome submissions for publication in the next edition of *Purton Magazine* from the local community and from readers further afield. Copy deadline is the 10th of each month. Please email mail@purtonmagazine.co.uk

Calling all small businesses in Purton and surrounding areas

Do you run a small or micro business in the village or nearby? Are you a freelancer, sole trader, entrepreneur or work for a larger organisation from home?

We'd like to start a group for anyone who falls into any of these categories to socialise, network and share skills and expertise. Perhaps we could invite speakers to run workshops on tax and finance, marketing, presentation skills, social media, managing stress (or demanding customers!), HR, or any other subjects you'd like to find out more about; we are open to suggestions!

Working in a very small team or alone can be a challenge and leave you feeling isolated - even lonely - without the buzz of a busy office environment. Deadline pressure, work stress and financial worries can leave you a bit overwhelmed, and it takes its toll on your mental health and relationships with families and friends. So why not get together with others who are in a similar situation?

We'd like to invite you to a networking lunch on Tuesday 25 February, 12pm at Pips Community Café, Purton Club, Station Road.

IT consultants, farmers, plumbers, web designers, bookkeepers, electricians, writers, landscape gardeners, artists, mechanics and anything in between are all welcome to join us. We'd like to find out if a group like this would be useful in our community, how often we want to meet, and what direction the group would like to take. Please RSVP to either Karen or Heather so we can give the café an idea of numbers. We hope you can join us.

Karen Valdez, KV Accountancy, karen@kv-accountancy.co.uk

Heather Ponting-Bather, In Touch Design & Print, heather@intouchpurton.co.uk

Purton & District Gardeners' Guild

As there was no meeting in December my report this month is a brief affair and just takes the form of a reminder that Margie Hoffnung will be joining us as speaker on Tuesday 26 February, to present her talk entitled 'Garden visiting - A very British thing.' The competition will be 'A Vase of Snowdrops'. The meeting will be held as usual in the Silver Threads Hall at 7.30pm. If you have an interest in garden related topics why not come and join us? We are a friendly group and are always happy to welcome new members and visitors.



Margaret Goodall, Secretary Tel 770906

Prayer for Purton

This month the churches in Purton are praying for everyone who lives or works in: *Blacklands, Red Gables Close, Highridge Close, The Masons, (and from Ridgeway Farm) Upper Mill, Ray Close and The Buffer*

Rainbows, Brownies, Guides and Rangers



Although Christmas already seems so long ago, the Rangers' last meeting of term in December is worthy of note, as they cooked a full Christmas dinner to share. Their Yorkshire puddings were enormous! At the time of writing not all the units have started back after the Christmas break. 2nd Purton Brownies were first off the mark and completed an activity called 'Demanding Designs'. In their sixes, the girls had to design a Brownie uniform for Brownies in 50 years' time. Sounds straightforward enough, but at various points as they were planning their outfits, the brief changed and they had to amend them, as happens with clothes designers keeping their customers happy.

Guides were next to start, and their first activity was 'Happy Thoughts'. The girls had empty jars which they decorated, and they then had to think about what makes them feel happy. This could be an activity, a special person, a food, a pet or a place. They wrote down their happy thoughts and put them in their jars along with some blank paper so that they could add new happy thoughts throughout the year.

To keep the balance, this calm mindfulness activity was then followed by a lively game of Bus Passengers which sounded very frenetic with passengers disembarking, then racing back to their seats when being called back by the bus conductor. Of course, today's Guides would never have experienced a bus with a conductor in real life!

We are looking forward to an exciting term of activities with our units. Did you know that we have over 100 girls aged 5-18 who are members of the units in Purton? Purton has a long and strong tradition of guiding and this is only possible due to the commitment and enthusiasm of our volunteers. Some have been volunteering for a long time (30+ years) whilst others have come to the game of guiding more recently. I think it would be safe to say that we all get something out of it ourselves.

All volunteers are valued, whether their role is short-term or long-term. If you're interested in volunteering with Girlguiding, please have a chat with one of our existing volunteers, or contact district commissioner Janet Abbott by phone on 07454 384763 or by email at braydondc@wncounty.org.uk. You can also register interest in joining at www.girlguiding.org.uk/get-involved/

Guide Dogs for the Blind Purton Support Group

I have completed the stocktaking for 2019, forms filled in and trading goods packed back in their boxes; just have to carry them upstairs for storage. We shall just have to wait and see what opportunities there are for stalls in 2020. Many thanks for your continued support.

Brian Davies. On behalf of Purton Support Group

Royal Wootton Bassett Environmental Group

We've not had any events in the last month so I thought I'd focus on an environmental issue that everyone is concerned about - plastic!

Many of us tried to go 'Plastic Free' for Christmas but how successful were we? Never being that organised, by the time I went shopping for cards I found all those in cardboard boxes had sold out and I had to buy plastic wrapped cards! I also found that wrapping paper was encased in plastic too.

It's not easy. Being in retail myself, I know how difficult it is to keep goods clean on the shelves. But we really need to try harder. Cards in cardboard boxes are a great idea and if demand increases I'm sure the supply will go up too. I'll get more organised next year!



Where I work at Purton Farm Shop, keeping leafy greens fresh is difficult and we were still using plastic bags until last year. But because of the images of marine animals suffering from plastic ingestion we decided we needed to reduce our plastic dramatically. We tried a couple of ideas, including arranging spinach in flower vases to allow them to

'drink' water like cut flowers - didn't work! But with perseverance, we eventually found the very simple solution of using storage tubs (still made of plastic but long lasting). We think they look great in the shop and they have the added benefit of allowing customers to take as much or little as they like.

Paper bags are an alternative to plastic but, although they are biodegradable and don't end up in the ocean, they use 3 times more energy to make than the equivalent amount of plastic - sometimes you feel you can't win! But everything we use has some impact so the answer is to use less. Most produce can go straight in a shopping bag or basket and reusable produce bags are becoming the latest 'must have' accessory!

Refilling glass bottles and jars is another plastic saving method being brought back by popular demand. Small businesses are adapting more quickly as it is easier to manage returned bottles in small quantities. Glass is heavy and would use too much fuel if transported long distances. But a small producer such as Rosemary's Preserves and Highgate Juices can just stick the empties in the back of the van

when delivering. Similarly, Jon and Sara at Dora's Dairy can do the same and The Town Pantry does refills of food and cleaning products. I make no apology for name dropping these local producers as they need all the help they can get in today's market!

The Royal Wootton Bassett Environment Group meets once a month at the Cross Keys Pub on the High Street - see dates of meetings and events on our new website <http://ecorwb.org> or ring me to find out more. We also have an active Facebook page - search Royal Wootton Bassett Environmental Group and join the many Purtonians taking part in discussions!

Kate Robinson, Email: purtonfarmshop@gmail.com Tel. 01793 772930

Purton Historical Society



Thursday 27th February 2020 at 7.30 pm in the Purton Village Hall: Nick Baxter – St Dunstan and the Miracle of Calne

In the year 978 Dunstan, the Archbishop of Canterbury, presided at a state council, or witan, at a two-storied royal hall in Calne. The teenage king, Edward, was absent, "on account of his youth". A heated debate flared up as Dunstan's reforms were roundly attacked. The sticking point was the question of clerical celibacy. Dunstan gave the case for adherence to the Benedictine Rule of poverty, obedience, and chastity but was losing the argument amidst shouts and jeers. Suddenly, and without warning, the floor collapsed plunging Dunstan's

opponents to injury and death: Dunstan was miraculously preserved as he was standing on a beam. It was deemed to be a signal from God. Within a year the king was murdered to be followed by 36 years of continuous and sustained Viking attack. In 1016 King Cnut established Danish rule over England. Cnut made Dunstan a saint because he wanted to be associated with a great, holy, and good man. What happened in Calne was a turning point in national history.

Thursday 26th March 2020 at 7.30 pm in the Purton Village Hall: Annual General Meeting, followed by Joe Gardner – Purton Cricket Club Bicentenary

In March 2020 the Purton Cricket Club will celebrate its two-hundredth anniversary with an exhibition of some of the club's history. Founded by the Vicar of Purton, John Mervyn Prower, only members of the upper classes, the landed gentry and the clergy, were able to play. It was to be thus for the first fifty years before, in 1870, the local residents; the farmers, shopkeepers and railway workers, replaced the upper classes.

It is hoped to present the story of cricket in Purton in four fifty year sections. Also available will be the two hundredth anniversary book compiled by Francis Sheppard.

The membership hopes that local people will support the exhibition and share in the history of the last two hundred years in Purton.

Joe Gardner, Purton Cricket Club

The Cricket Bicentenary Book will be on sale at PHS monthly meetings – price £10.00

Thursday 23rd April 2020: Salisbury Cathedral – Paul Smith
Preview prior to Annual outing – Saturday 27th June 2020

Purton Museum news

Purton Cricket Club Exhibition

A new exhibition to celebrate the bicentenary of the Purton Cricket club will be on display when the Museum re-opens in the spring on 28th March 2020.

The Angel Public House Sign

Following the recent refurbishment of the Angel in Purton High Street, it was noticed that a new 'pub sign' was being displayed. The Society contacted Arkells' Brewery with a view to finding the whereabouts of the previous sign. Eventually it was located and the Brewery very kindly agreed to donate the sign for display in the Purton Museum. At the same time Libbie Sheppard made enquiries with Arkells to ask if the sign could be used at St Mary's Church recent Festival of Angels. Libbie collected the sign and it was displayed in the church porch as part of the excellent and successful 'Festival of Angels' held just before Christmas. Following this it was transported to Purton Museum and will be on display in the spring when the museum re-opens.

The Society would like to thank Arkell's Brewery for this very kind donation to the village. We hope to publish further information about the sign, e.g. how long it was on display at the Angel in a future magazine.

Janet and Tony Neate

Tel: 01793 770117 Email: tjneate57@gmail.com

Can You Help The Sing 4/4 Community Choir?

Thank-you to Sing 4/4 Community Choir for a wonderful evening of Christmas music, held in Cricklade United Church on Saturday 7th December 2019. Spirits were high as the 40 enthusiastic members shared this celebration, enhanced by solos from Rob Felstead, the Swindon-based tenor, accompanied by Vanessa Harris and led by Mary New. The concert was sold out and Sing 4/4 are very happy to donate £200 to the Food Bank, based in Cricklade.

Unfortunately, we now face a difficult future as our accompanist has had to retire due to family commitments to elderly parents. Is there anyone out there who could step forward to save the day? Please contact Mary on 01793 770630 – you would be so welcome.

The other side of the gate

How much rain does anyone really need?! I'm fed up with it now. I'm fed up with the mud. The majority of the cows are still not in. I've shoehorned 20 into the sheds, those with calves and sore feet. They love it and the calves do too. The ones that have to go back out do not love it at all though; I open the gate and they just stand there looking at me. I can feel their resistance to go back along the muddy track to the even muddier fields! I don't blame them. It's awful and I will put this down as one of the worst experiences in my farming career. It's also probably the most ridiculous time to try and build new cow housing.

The new sheds are coming on, but the weather is a huge factor in getting it done. The chalk that the cows will lay on is sodden at the moment. It needs a lid over it to give it a chance to dry so I can then roll it in firm and flat, ready for the wood chippings and straw. Whilst it is wet it behaves like soup, and you can't roll soup! The wood chippings should soak up some moisture and also protect the chalk from poaching feet.



During the Christmas period, I had a few days with people volunteering to help with the shed construction. I must admit to being rubbish at remembering to take photos. I did get one good one of Frank Wales from Hyde Lane, his daughter Kerry, son Tom, and his wife. In a few short hours they'd managed to get one complete wall up and secured. Thank you again to everyone that came and supplied labour and tools. I'm sure I'll forget someone, but in no particular order thanks to Paul Clifford, Nick Dowling, Tris Heal, Michael Woodward, Scott

Harflett, Claire Toyn, John Halstead, Aaron Read, Malcolm and Margaret Pearson, Karen and Ian Jones, Val Stump, Georgina Povey, Glen Wonfor, Vanessa Eve, Daniel Harris, Warren Read and Dave Fearon.

We killed the chickens a few days before Christmas. It was quite a sad day as I'd spent some time with them as they became older. The biggest cockerel would always "Cock-a-doodle-do" when he saw me and flap his wings. His crowing was out of tune and would fade off towards the end. He always made me smile. I'd go in to the pen and pick him up and although I'm sure he hated it I'd stroke his comb. I miss hearing his regular announcement of the new day.



The old skills soon came back and with the help of Aaron and my friends, Nick and Camilla Town, we processed the birds quite quickly. Plucking was interesting and took us about 20 minutes per bird. As the birds were quite old, the feathers were

well attached. We all managed to rip the skin in a few places! The birds were then eviscerated and weighed. Weights as predicted were good: the smallest bird was 6.1kgs (13lbs 7oz) and the largest, the cock, 8.3kgs (18lbs 4oz). They all had fantastic breast shape, a good fat covering and ours was a particularly juicy bird. Sarah was surprised at how big the cock had got and only just managed to squeeze it in the oven!

I will be doing more batches this year, but plan to do these outside in the fields. Scott Harflett kindly dropped off an old caravan for me to convert in to a mobile chicken house. I'll be featuring the conversion as it progresses. Birds reared outside, getting a fresh salad bar everyday, are some of the healthiest meat you can get. Chickens are omnivores and should eat a mixed diet of insects and seeds and whatever else they can scavenge. I'm so looking forward to having a regular supply of my own. The next batch we do I will be using Chris Rummings's (Lydiard Turkeys) mobile slaughtering trailer. It's quick and efficient and much less messy than the way we did it. He also has his own butchery so we can get through the numbers much quicker.

At the start of January, we were invited to BBC Wiltshire Radio to talk to Sue Kinnear on her Wild about Wiltshire show. It's great fun going to places like that and seeing behind the scenes. We had a great interview and it's available on catch up if you'd like to listen.

Our last load of animal feed before Christmas was our first soya free feed. For many years, soya by-products have been used as a source of protein in animal feed. Over the last few years we've become increasingly aware of the number of times we've been asked 'Do you feed soya?' One of my friend's wives explained that her child had a reaction to anything soya fed, milk

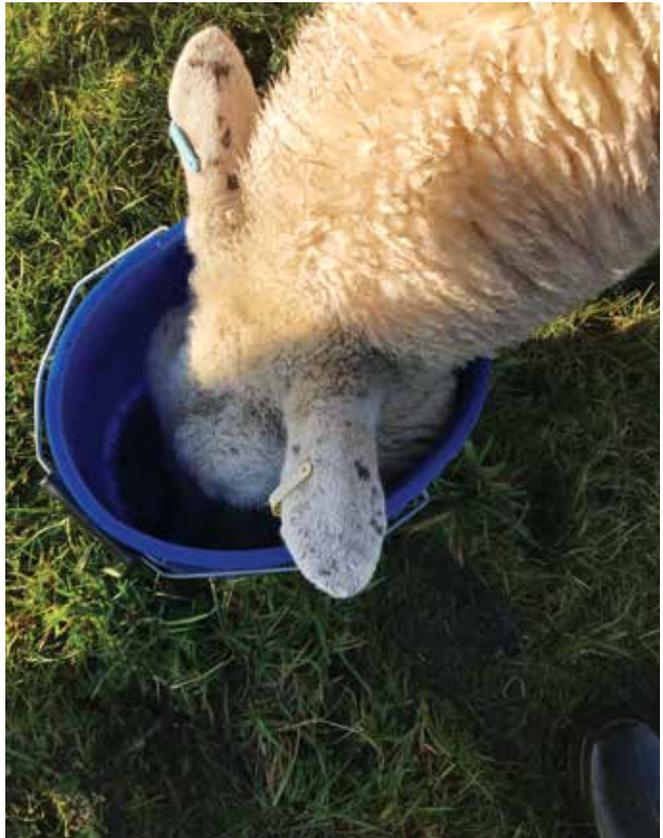


being one of those, but most interesting was the fact that she's breast feeding and if she eats soya, then the baby has the reaction! There isn't a massive choice of feed available, but my feed supplier is rapidly adding more soya free feeds to their range. I'm not sure how this will affect the markets. Farmed animals have done a good job of 'clearing' all the waste materials from the extraction process of soya milk and protein for human food. So with the increase in plant based nutrition, it'll be interesting to see what they do with it all!

Jonathan Cook

Beneath the Wool

In this last month, not a great deal has happened as it's the quiet time of year for sheep. The ewes have started being fed round bale silage, which was made in College Farm. They have been enjoying it as there hasn't been much grass where they are. The ewes are supposed to be moved to another field for winter grazing but have had to wait where they are, as there have been 300 ewe lambs the other side of the hedge and I didn't fancy having them all mixed up and I didn't want Grenville having a field day with them! he's already in enough trouble for breaking his raddle!



On Christmas Day all the sheep had a little treat of some course mix, which is a supplement food for them and they always enjoy it. The fattening lambs and the odd ewes have been having this feed every day as it helps the lambs grow. Big Face is part of the group and she enjoys a little treat out of my hand each time. The other two ewes are a bit on the crazy side, but are getting a bit more trusting of me, though I can't see it sticking.



I intend to do another lambing afternoon this year, which is fast approaching and am currently working on a date for it. I hope to let you all know when that is in next months issue. All I hope for is that the rain will have stopped by then and it will be a bit dryer. Also in next month's issue I hope to tell you the scanning results as Bob Blandan will have been. He normally comes around the end of January. I've been speaking with Bob on a few occasions and he's been telling me the overall scanning results are fair but he's unsure as to how the later lambing flocks will do as the wet weather might have affected them.

Last year Bob took a trip to Australia, as his daughter lives there. He has shown me pictures of sheep farms out there as well as a brand new sheep market which can hold up to 30,000 lambs in one auction. It always amazes me as to how large the scale is in Australia, but at this time I do feel sorry for them with the bush fires. Having seen some of the videos and pictures, it certainly makes us realise how lucky we are even though it does seem to have rained nearly every day since October.

Michael Woodward, Rogers Farm, Purton



Purton Cricket Club



Almost as if in preparation for the club's centenary year in 1920, a year earlier Mr and Mrs Walsh presented the paved way, known as Church Path to the village. The Evening Advertiser reported the following on 18th July 1919:

'The gift includes a stretch of land eight feet wide on either side of the path and it is proposed to convert that into borders to be planted with various shrubs and bounded by privet hedges.' Seats were placed on either side of the path and it became a pleasant walk to the church and beyond to the cricket field.

To celebrate the centenary year, a Ladies' team played the Men's team and won by six runs.

The men's teams had another successful year, including games against Fairford, Cirencester, Highworth, Swindon Victoria and Swindon Olympic. Awards made at the AGM included: A. Woolford (best batting 1st XI), J. Staley (best all rounder 1st XI), G. Smith (best batting 2nd XI) and A. Shailes (best all rounder 2nd XI).

A hundred years later, plans are in preparation to play an M.C.C. team on Monday 25th May, when members hope the game will be well supported. Other special matches are in the pipeline including, hopefully, a present XI against an Old Boys XI of P.C.C.

Please come and support the club celebrate this special milestone in the club's history and consider buying the book written by Francis Sheppard: 200 NOT OUT – The Bicentenary Story of Purton Cricket Club. I have plenty of copies!

From the Cricket Club Archives

These photos are believed to be from around 1935 and the only one identified in them is Brick the dog! If anyone can put names to the cricketers, please let me know.

Joe Gardner 770681



Purton's Sporting Past

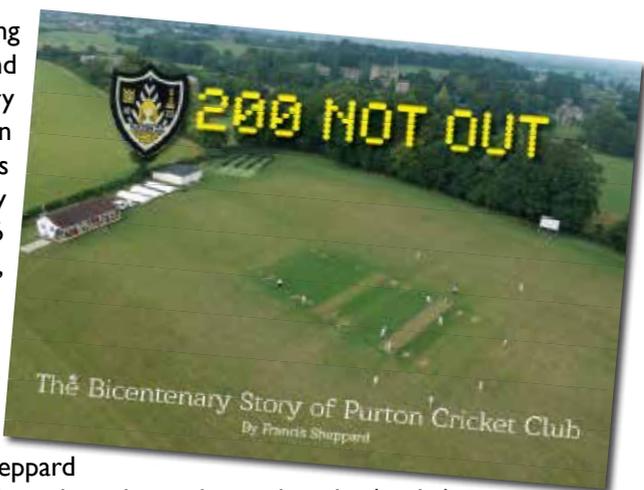
For a small village, Purton has produced some notable sportspeople over the years. Born in 1866, James (Jimmy) Kibblewhite followed many of his contemporaries into the Swindon Railway Works where he was employed as a machinist. Unlike everyone else, he also found considerable fame – and a little extra income – as a successful middle distance runner between 1884 and 1894. He won many international trophies but reached his peak just before the Olympic Games were revived by what we now know as the Modern Olympic Movement. It was initially agreed in 1894 that the revived Games should be held in Paris in 1900 but six years seemed too long to wait. Such is the power of a new Prime Minister that when a new Greek Prime Minister took office, the first games of the modern Olympic movement were opened by the King of Greece in the first week of April 1896, just two years after our local hero had withdrawn from international competition. We wonder who, among the Great British team at the Tokyo games later in 2020, will turn out to be the competitor with family links nearest to Purton.

Even earlier than the 1890s, much prestige was bestowed on Purton cricket club in 1825 by the arrival of the Ben Stokes or the Ian Botham of his day. E H Budd retired from the War Office (at the age of 36!) having played many first class games of cricket in London and many for significant wagers. Among his many achievements in the game, he scored the first hundred at the Lord's ground – 105 in 1816 – and club records show that his arrival encouraged rather a high class membership to join our village club.

Purton cricket club is celebrating its 200th birthday this year and a book describing the story of the club has recently been published. It contains details both of E H Budd and Jimmy Kibblewhite among its 106 pages and 100 illustrations, many of which are entertaining team photographs showing current Purtonians back in their youthful days. Copies are available at £10 each plus P & P from the author, Francis Sheppard

(phone 01793 771018) with all surpluses being donated to the Ainslie's Pavilion Fund, of which further details are also included in the book.

Look out for details of several celebratory events being planned in the summer by the cricket club that will be included in future editions of Purton Magazine.



Purton in the time of Victoria

Part 8: Crimea and Quarries

The Crimean War in Russia and quarrying in Purton may not seem connected. Please bear with me!

The Crimean War was instigated by the 'perceived' rights of Christian minorities inside the Ottoman Empire, especially in what we tend to call the 'Holy Land' today. The Ottomans didn't like the Christians, the French didn't like non-Catholics, the Russians supported the Orthodox Christians, and Britain didn't really like the French or the Russians, especially since the Russian Empire was trying to take over the Balkan states of the crumbling Ottoman (Turkish) Empire. The alliances formed were on the basis of who you disliked least rather than the outcome you preferred and it was said that there grew 'a greater confusion of purpose that led to a war noted for incompetent international butchery'.

The various churches sorted out a compromise with the Ottomans (Turkey), though Tsar Nicholas I of Russia and France's Napoleon III didn't accept it, but for opposing reasons. Britain attempted a compromise accepted only by France and Turkey. The Russians occupied Ottoman territories in Wallachia (modern-day Romania) and Moldova in July 1853. With the support implied by the British compromise, Turkey declared war on Russia in October 1853. Britain joined the Franco-Turkish alliance.

Although the war started in the Balkans, the theatre soon changed to Russia itself and the Crimea in particular, as Sevastopol was the home of Russian Imperial Black Sea fleet and its only access to the sea that wasn't frozen up in winter. Plus ça change: In the days of the USSR, Stalin gave the Crimea to Ukraine, still a constituent part of the USSR. But in 2014 Russia wanted it back!

In British military folklore, the Battle of Balaclava looms large. That was the battle of the 'Charge of the Light Brigade' of Tennyson's poem. In the poem it was penned as a disaster and, in lives lost, it was. There were 278 casualties in the 700-man unit of the Light Brigade alone. However, the Russian forces were terrified and fled the field. The British and French allies didn't have the forces available to follow up on the Russian rout and an even bloodier battle was fought at Inkerman.

Prince Albert suggested a plan to win the war by besieging Sevastopol and cutting Russia off economically. The siege lasted 11 months and Russia sued for peace in March 1856. The Treaty of Paris (1856) denied Russia the right to base warships in the Black Sea. The Ottoman vassal states of Wallachia and Moldavia became largely independent. Christians there were granted a degree of official equality, and the Orthodox Church regained control of the Christian churches.

The military forces used naval shells, railways and telegraph systems for the first time in the Crimea, making gunpowder obsolete after many centuries in warfare. The bright red British uniforms were shown to be an aid to riflemen with good

long-range weapons, especially when a set of white cross-belts, interspersed with bright brass buttons showed exactly what to aim for. Between the Crimea and the Boer Wars, the British field uniform evolved via local regiments' adoption of drab and khaki issue, to a less obtrusive but universal uniform by the time of the First World War.

Nitroglycerin had been invented as an explosive in 1847 but was notoriously unstable and could explode above 10°C even if just knocked. A Swedish chemist and engineer, Alfred Nobel, developed dynamite (patented in 1867) as a stable form of nitroglycerin needing a fuse and a detonator cap. Mining was never the same again, nor were Wild West films! Nobel set up in his will (1895) the institution that awards the Nobel Prize. The first prizes in 5 categories were awarded in 1901.

There have been many quarries in Purton where stone was extracted to build the houses in the village one of which was at Quarry Farm and its immediate vicinity. That included my own garden, when I lived there up until 2017, the garden being some ten feet lower than the next-door field! The quarry is supposed to date back to Anglo-Saxon times and there is an old name associated with it... Puck Pitt or goblin pit. I don't believe it was ever exploited commercially and it ceased operation in the 18th century.



There is a much larger former quarry behind Church Path. This quarry was operated commercially until the early 20th century. Most of the buildings in the High Street owe their appearance to stone extracted from that quarry during the 17th and 18th centuries. Quarrying depended upon hard manual labour using tools as pictured here. One of these is a pick, shown together with a 12-inch ruler [my messy ink blobs!] so you can see that the pick was little more than 14 inches long. The



Museum has a small collection of other quarrying tools including an auger bit (pictured) but there would have been no powered machinery in those early days for winning the stone.



Dynamite probably killed off the Purton Quarries. The local stone was strong but not tough ... it can bear great loads, and it will take a lot of knocks, but try to get it out with dynamite and you end up with dust and fragments. The coming of the railways and the easier extraction of 'bedded' stone from elsewhere brought its demise.

But Purton lies on the northern edge of the Marlborough Downs and the hill at Station Road takes you down from the ridge that runs through the village down to the valley of the River Thames. It also marks a transition from the upper level of corallian rag limestone down to clay. It was because of the abundance of suitable clay that Purton once had its own brickworks. There are even fragments of clay pottery in the Museum dating back to Roman times from kilns at Dogridge.

The brickworks were built in 1898 by Charles Plummer. Edward Hill saw the potential of this business and bought it in 1906. At that time, Swindon was still expanding rapidly - when isn't it? - and there were thirteen brickworks in and around Swindon. Many of these quickly became encircled by the newly built streets but Purton's still had room to expand. Five cartloads a day took 300 bricks weighing a ton from Purton to Rodbourne during the early years of the twentieth century. It was hard and heavy work for men and horses.

Expansion of the brick industry was helped by the same agent that had been the foe of quarrying. Railways brought in coal which replaced the firewood used before. Purton Brickworks flourished.



In 1912 Mr Hill installed a coal-fired continuous kiln to replace the old manual kilns (left) and production reached 65,000 to 70,000 bricks per week. In 1924 Hills installed a generator to produce their own electricity supply - the engine which powered this generator is now displayed in the car park at the Village Hall. A further continuous kiln was installed in 1933 increasing production

to 150,000 bricks a week and a gas-fired kiln was installed in 1975. The aerial view shows the works in its heyday.

Sadly, the works closed in the late 1970s due to cheaper mass production elsewhere and bulk road haulage. The hole left after clay extraction is now the landfill site.

Rick Dixon

Opportunity to buy a St Mary's Church Pew

For many it's going to be very sad to see the pews leave St Mary's Church – pews that have provided seating for so many services, weddings, funerals and baptisms in the Church over nearly 150 years. It will take time to adjust to the change but the Church PCC hope that people will come to appreciate the advantages that comfortable and moveable chairs bring, particularly for helping to build up a sustainable Church family and keep the Church going for many years to come.



The Church PCC is setting up a sales process for most of the Church pews and using all the proceeds to help fund the Renewal work. The process is designed to give people in and around Purton a fair chance to buy a pew if they wish. If you are (or may be) interested in buying a pew through this process this is what you need to do:

- Send us an email now to register your interest. Simply use the subject line 'Interest in pew sales', give your name and phone number and send to renewal@stmaryspurton.org.uk. We will acknowledge your registration. Registration does not place any commitment on you to buy – it simply gives you access to the sales process; only those registered will receive a priced pew catalogue and order form.
- Take a look at the pews for sale* – these pews are now labelled with reference numbers in Church. Measure up, take photos etc – and make a personal note of the reference numbers of any pew or pews that you might be interested in buying. We suggest you do this before 23rd February. (*Note: a number of the pews will not be in this sales process because they have been reserved for other uses).
- On or before 23rd February we will notify, by email to all those registered, the start date for the sale. (The start date is the date when we will send out the priced pew catalogue and an order form).
- On the start date look out for the email with the priced catalogue and respond by email with your order as soon as you can. This is important because pews will be allocated according to when orders are received on a first come/first served basis. The order form will also allow you to select 2nd and 3rd choices for your pew, should your first choice no longer be available.
- If your order is successful, you will be contacted for payment and to arrange a collection date. Please note the Church does not have resources to deliver the pews. If your order is unsuccessful, you will be contacted to discuss whether you want to proceed with any other pew, should one be available.

We hope this process will be as smooth as possible giving people in and around Purton wishing to buy a pew a reasonably fair chance of acquiring a piece of our local heritage. If you have any queries please contact us via renewal@stmaryspurton.org.uk or ask one of the church wardens – Sandra Horsnall, Jane Smith or myself.

Paul Dempsey, St Mary's PCC

Carried Home on Angel Wings

Last year, the BBC reported that although the rate of closures has slowed, seventy-six pubs each month call last orders for the final time.

Purton can therefore count itself very fortunate as last year saw both the reopening of The Royal George and the complete refurbishment of The Angel. With The Purton Club, The Red House Club and The Bell at Purton Stoke as popular as ever, Purtonians have plenty of options when it comes to enjoying a good night out. But if the thought of walking home in the dark puts you off, then The Angel brings you glad tidings.

Eagle-eyed readers will have spotted two black cabs parked in The Angel's car park, and the pub is now offering its patrons a free 'lift home' at the end of their evening out. The service is available on a Friday and Saturday for anyone enjoying food or a few drinks in the pub. They'll take you anywhere within a ten mile radius of Purton and there's no minimum distance either, so you can enjoy a relaxing drink or an excellent meal without needing to worry about how you're getting home.

So many of our television soap operas focus on close-knit communities centered around friends and neighbours meeting each evening in the local pub, but why stay in and watch actors in *The Rovers Return* or *The Queen Vic* when you could pop in to one of Purton's pubs or clubs and enjoy the real life version? Now, mine's a pint...

United Christingle service

Thank you to everyone who was part of the Christingle Service just before Christmas. Lots of families came along to get a 'Christingle' and hear what they tell us about the Christmas story. We sang carols old and new, and then we stood in a huge circle with our candles lit. We remembered that it is the light of Jesus Christ which shines in the darkness of our world. Plus we raised £257.80 for the work of the Children's Society - an organisation that seeks to support young people in difficult circumstances. You can check out their website for more details www.childrenssociety.org.uk.

Sylvia Freemantle

Advance notice

I wanted to let my local customers know that the In Tough Design & Print office will be closed from Monday 30 March and will re-open on Thursday 23 April while I spend some time with my sister and her family, who live in Australia.

I will be receiving submissions for the May issue of Purton Magazine by email but hard copies of articles and letters should be sent to 20 Hoggs Lane or 75 High Street for inclusion. Sorry for any inconvenience caused.

Heather

We Record ...



Funerals at St Mary's Church

12 Dec 2019 Ann Shailes (56)

17 Dec 2019 Edith Margaret Gregory (94)

Wedding at St Mary's Church

20 Dec 2019 Ryan Steven Cozens and Katie Marie Wright

In memory

Remembering James (Jim) Marsh who would have been 90 on 1st February. 'The years may pass, but still you stay, as near and dear as yesterday.' From Ann and family

Act now to advertise at 2018/19 rates!

Advertising in Purton Magazine really works! Hundreds of local business have found new customers by advertising with us. Indeed we know of two companies who have stopped advertising in Purton Magazine in 2019 simply because they now have too many customers. How many other companies would like to be in that position?

Our competitive advertising rates have been unchanged since 2017, but with the growth of the magazine, the costs of printing and production are rising, we need to increase our rates from 1st April 2020. All advertising arrangements with existing or new advertisers agreed before 1st April 2020 will be at the old rates.

Unlike online platforms, Purton Magazine is a locally run, non-profit community enterprise, which means we are always at the heart of our community. We print around 1,000 copies each month with over 85% delivered directly to our annual subscribers.

We are not a 'free sheet' throw-away publication and we know that our readers really value their village magazine throughout each month and rely on it as the leading source of information about what's happening in and around Purton.

Give your business a boost by advertising in Purton Magazine. Email us at advertising@purtonmagazine.co.uk for full details and to secure your success in 2020 at our current prices.

Please support our advertisers!

About 65% of the cost of your magazine is paid for by our advertisers.

When contacting any advertiser, please do tell them that you have seen their advertisement in Purton Magazine. Such feedback reminds them how cost effective it is to advertise in Purton Magazine and encourages repeat investments. Thank you..

Purton And District Darts League

Our league games started again on 9th January 2020. The Bees Knees are still flying high at the top of the league table, with Phoenix A a close second.

On 19th December we held our Charity Darts Tournament at the Purton Club. Winners of the charity darts were Jim MacDonald and Mark Northall, with runners up being Jamie Walton and Cy Ritchings. A good night was had by all and some quality darts played, with Jim MacDonald scoring two

180's. A total of £100 was raised on the night and this will go to Purton Age Concern, our nominated charity for this year.

POS	Team	P	W	D	L	F	A	W	D	L	F	A	F	L	D	L	F	A	PTS
1	Bee's Knees	14	6	1	0	83	31	7	0	0	95	38	13	1	1	0	178	69	178
2	Phoenix 'A'	14	6	1	1	96	37	4	1	1	72	23	10	2	2	2	168	60	168
3	Purton Club 'B'	14	4	1	2	66	48	5	0	2	76	57	9	1	4	4	142	105	142
4	Angel 'B'	14	3	1	3	58	56	5	0	2	76	57	8	1	5	5	134	113	134
5	Red House 'B'	14	5	1	2	73	60	3	0	3	57	57	8	1	5	5	130	117	130
6	Purton Club 'A'	14	2	0	5	64	69	4	1	2	60	54	6	1	7	7	124	123	124
7	Red House 'A'	14	2	0	4	57	57	1	1	6	55	78	3	1	10	10	112	135	112
8	Red House 'C'	14	2	1	5	52	81	3	1	2	49	46	5	2	7	7	101	127	101
9	Phoenix 'B'	14	2	1	3	37	58	1	0	7	55	97	3	1	10	10	92	155	92
10	Bell Inn	14	1	1	6	38	95	1	1	4	38	57	2	2	10	10	76	152	76
11	Phoenix 'C'	14	1	0	5	31	83	2	1	5	42	91	3	1	10	10	73	174	73

Sue Giles, Secretary

Purton Placard

PADS presents

Order on our ticketline:
PADStickets@gmail.com
and pay by bacs

SLEEPING BEAUTY

By Damián Trasler, David Lovesy & Steve Clark

6th, 7th & 8th February
At
Purton Village Hall
Curtains up 7.30pm
Matinee 2.30pm (8th February)

Tickets:

Adults £8
Concessions £6
Children £5

Tickets from:
Flawless Floors
Purton Library
Purton Co-op

770160 - 771890 - 771442



PURTON SILVER
THREADS
Jumble Sale
Saturday 29 February, 2pm
at
Silver Threads Hall

Purton and District
AGE CONCERN

Jumble Sale

Saturday 1st February, 2pm
(Jumble to be left between
Noon and 1pm)

Mystery Trip with Lunch

Wednesday 1st April 10am.
See notes for prices

Three Bs Evening at the Silver Threads

Friday 3rd April, 7 for 7.30pm.
£7 each

PURTON VILLAGE HALL
FUNDRAISER
Quiz Night

Friday 6th March 2020, in the
Village Hall commencing at 7.30pm
sharp. Tables of 6 at £12.
Support this local charity and keep
this facility operational for all.

Do you know how to play Mah Jong?

I have a Mah Jong set and would love someone to come and teach me how to play.

Please phone if you have time to teach me.

Maybe we could meet down at Pips and give it a go?

Thanks

Libbie: 771018

PARKINSON'S^{UK}
CHANGE ATTITUDES.
FIND A CURE.
JOIN US.



**CRICKLADE
PARKINSON'S CAFE**

10.30am-11.30am on the third Wednesday of the month at:
The Cricklade Club, High St, Cricklade SN6 6AY

Join us for coffee and a chat on: 15 Jan, 19 Feb, 18 Mar, 15 Apr, 20 May, 17 June 2020. Family and friends welcome.

Contact Vincent Mobey, Cafe Coordinator, on: 07951 944760

Registered charity in England and Wales (238197) and Scotland (SC037554). © Parkinson's UK, 11/16 (CS2514)

Credit: iStockphoto

Fundraising Dinner Night
7pm
Tuesday 11th February 2020
To be held at

Lalbagh Indian Cuisine
171 Rodbourne Road



Tasty
Two-course
buffet

Tickets
just £15
per
person

Raffle
with
great
prizes

To book please contact:
Info@madmarchhare.org.uk
Telephone: 0845 6808064
Info@lalbaghswindon.co.uk
Telephone: 01793 535577

Proceeds support the
Mad March hare event,
raising funds for...

**breast cancer
now**



Groups are invited to submit forthcoming events in, for, and on behalf of the community Email: mail@purtonmagazine.co.uk

Hello from The Cedars Care Home



Lights

Well the run up to Christmas was packed with joy, fun and laughter. A lovely tea party at Silver Threads started the run, many thanks to everyone involved. Residents, family and friends attended our lights switch on and enjoyed hot chocolate and mince pies. Continuing the fun, we had Christmas line dancing, a panto, Christmas bingo, Elf Day and choir performances. A thank you to the Beavers who came and sang some lovely carols and Christmas songs and presented each resident with a Christmas card that they had made. Residents loved it all. In fact, on our return from the Silver Threads party our Christmas lights served us well as the residents didn't like the dark but as we turned into the Cedars entrance, each one exclaimed how lovely our Christmas lights looked.



Camera

We also had a visit from two lovely penguins, who entertained us all with their funny walking, pecking of slippers under the tables and cuddles with residents. Another fabulously successful activity that will be repeated I'm sure. Also visiting during December were two beautiful reindeer who were happily waiting on our back lawn for our residents to feed and pet them. Residents really enjoyed meeting the reindeer and

all those involved in helping did too. Many photos of all our activities with residents were taken but due to Data Protection Regulations we can't share them publicly. However, we are compiling a photo album that will be available to residents and families, so the special moments that have been caught on camera can be enjoyed.

Action

We had a lovely trip to the OSJCT Christmas Party held in Trowbridge, where the entertainment had us all dancing and singing along. I had a lovely 'bop' with one of our residents who said, "I didn't expect to be dancing at a Christmas party at 91 yrs old; its filppin' great." Priceless! The Christmas line dancing had everyone moving and clapping along whilst the M4 Stompers got us in the festive mood and into Christmas action!

So, light the lights this is it... 2020 has arrived

Even though activities have been limited due residents and staff succumbing to chest infections, we are over the worst and slowly getting back to normal. All the usual activities are in full swing and we have already enjoyed trips to the Memory Music sessions at the Wyvern theatre and the Memory Cinema at the Arts Centre.

So, a belated HAPPY NEW YEAR from us at Cedars and don't forget, we'd love to hear from you with ideas you think will help us in our activities.

Our Full time Activities Co-ordinator is Christina Deriu Email: C.Deriu@OSJCT.CO.UK or Jane Pitcher j.pitcher@osjct.co.uk, or pop in for further details. THANK YOU SO MUCH.

Purton and District Probus Club



On the 3rd of December, the President's Lunch was held at the Wiltshire Hotel and Country Club. Fifty-four of our members and friends attended and we were joined, this year, by 32 members and friends of the Highworth Probus Club. Phil Davis, the President, welcomed members and guests. Hector called for the Loyal Toast. The Guest Speakers were; Jim Bullock, President of the Royal Wootton Bassett Probus Club, and Josh Walding, President of the Highworth Probus Club. A festive three course meal, with crackers, was followed by mince pies, chocolate and coffee. Our thanks go to Trevor, our General Secretary, who, with the help of Anne Marie, his wife, organised an excellent social occasion.

Our speaker on the 10th of December was Wing Commander (retired), Paul Shepherd, who gave a talk entitled "Operation Agila" - the peace-keeping operation carried out by the Commonwealth Monitoring Force in Zimbabwe/Rhodesia in 1979 – 1980.

Southern Rhodesia, from pre-war days, became the most prosperous and heavily settled of the UK's African colonies with a system of white minority rule (11,000, 70% of White Rhodesians served in World War II). In response to demands for greater Black African power in government, Ian Smith set up, in opposition, the 'Rhodesian Front', and in November 1965, made a Unilateral Declaration of Independence (UDI). After 14 years of isolation from the Commonwealth, early in 1979, Bishop Muzorewa won a majority for the United African National Council, but it was not recognised internationally because the parties of Mugabe and Nkomo had refused an invitation to take part. The 'Bush War' continued unabated between the Rhodesian Government Army and the Guerrilla forces of ZANU (led by Mugabe) and ZAPU (led by Nkomo). Sanctions imposed by the Commonwealth were not lifted. The British Government, (then led by the recently elected Margaret Thatcher), issued invitations to all parties to attend a peace conference at Lancaster House, London, in December 1979, which resulted in the Lancaster House Agreement. UDI ended, and Rhodesia reverted, temporarily, to the status of a British colony.

Paul's involvement in the operation began with the deployment of 800 soldiers and 300 RAF personnel, at first to Cyprus, and subsequently via Mozambique, to Bulawayo. This would be the British contribution to a Commonwealth Monitoring Force, made up of Australian, New Zealander, African and other Colonial forces, assisted by Rhodesian Government forces and the South African Airforce. The Task of the CMF was to ensure the maintenance of a total cease-fire, arrangements for a democratic election and an orderly transition of power. The situation on the ground would require strong-armed monitoring. After radio broadcasts and leaflet air-drops, a seven day Assembly Period took place during which all parties (guerrilla cells) were guaranteed unhindered movement into Rendezvous Points (RV's), and from these into Assembly Areas. By the seventh day 22000 communist soldiers had marched into 16 Assembly Points for Registration to begin. All would require feeding.

Paul, at this time, was serving as the Navigation Officer in a Hercules C130, the allotted task of which was to distribute supplies (including beer) and, at times, complete Monitoring Patrol Units quickly and effectively, wherever and when they were needed; not easy over jungle territory and having no accurate maps. Flying from Bulawayo to the Sarum Air Head, at Salisbury, initially required climbing to 18000ft to avoid ground-fire and descending only within the confines of the airfield. On arrival, on 21st December 1979, at a social with the Rhodesian Airforce, they were told "Brits not wanted – dead within 7 days!"

The mission of the RAF contingent, together with SAAF support, began on the 26th December. Its aim was to supply tactical control, food and deployment of CMF personnel, including ground-transport. Over 5 days, Paul's Hercules flew 26 mixed profile sorties in atrocious weather. The whole operation was by low flying air-drops into small, difficult to locate, drop-zones. On one occasion, a 250lb tent-bundle was seen to hit an unfortunate cow, which flew into the air. Casual ground-fire and bird-strikes were a constant threat; a Hercules and a Puma helicopter had crashed at separate times. The Navigator packed heavy bags around himself and, violating regulations, oxygen bottles were removed from the plane to avoid possible explosions. Towards the end, there was a media-frenzy by reporters to fly in the Hercules on live sorties. The final tally was only one sortie lost in 254, over the whole country.

New elections followed and a new Prime Minister took power. A new law disallowed white settlers from leaving the country with any more than 200 dollars. Mugabe failed, Zimbabwe wept. Paul's talk gave a new understanding of a colonial operation not widely discussed or remembered.

Purton Probus Club meets every second and fourth Tuesday of the month at 10am in the Red House lounge. Programme for February 2020: 11th The Crocus and the Cornflower, 5th GWR – The Holiday Line. Visitors and new members welcome.

Bob Stevens

Take on a life-changing challenge for Julia's House

Why not make the start of the next decade a life changing one by taking up a challenge for Julia's House? You can trek in deepest Peru, take a marathon walk along the coast, run a five or 10K or plunge through the skies on an exhilarating 120mph skydive - signing up to a Julia's House 2020 challenge event will ensure it's a year to remember. And, you will be helping the Dorset and Wiltshire children's hospice charity raise money to continue to provide its life-changing care to local children and families.

With over five events to choose from, on two wheels or on foot, with family, with friends or with four-legged friends, it's a great opportunity to step outside your comfort zone and achieve something truly amazing in 2020. Even more amazing when you know that while you are taking on your own personal challenge, you are

raising funds to help children living with life-limiting conditions and their families with the challenges they face every day. Choose from a once-in-a-lifetime trek to Machu Picchu through the Peruvian Andes mountain range, a walk along the breathtaking Jurassic Coast or among ancient Wiltshire landmarks, a tandem skydive from 13,000 feet, the Big Ride cycle challenge with a choice of three distances, or slip on your running shoes for the new look Run Bournemouth event with a range of distances, junior races and a new dog jog for 2020.

“Our challenge events are so rewarding as you know you’re not only challenging yourself, but you’re also making a life changing difference to local children and their families who face their own huge challenges every day,” says Hannah Miller, Challenge Events Manager for Julia’s House. “Our families are in desperate need of the very special support we provide out and about in the community or at our hospices. We need people to sign up, take a challenge and fundraise, so we can continue to make a life changing difference. There isn’t a better feeling than achieving a personal goal knowing that it is helping others. Spaces are limited so people need to register as soon as they can!”

The challenge season begins on Saturday 7 June with the Jurassic Coast trek along Dorset’s stunning coastline, followed by The Big Jump sky dive on Saturday 1 August. Find out more and sign up at juliashouse.org/events or call Hannah Miller on 01202 644262.

Don’t miss out on your chance to be a Julia’s House life changer.

Julia’s House is a local charity dedicated to supporting the families of children with life-limiting or life-threatening conditions in Dorset and Wiltshire. Many of these children require round the clock care, which has a huge impact on family life.

Julia’s House provides bespoke care for every family it supports. Parents can choose when, where and how they receive their care – at home, in the community or at one of the charity’s two hospices in Corfe Mullen and Devizes – making it a truly flexible service. Julia’s House is there for the whole family, not just the sick child, providing emotional support and social opportunities for parents, grandparents and siblings to help break the cycle of anxiety and isolation that can impact family life.

This regular respite and support, plus emergency and end-of-life care, is provided completely free to families thanks to the generosity of the local community. Julia’s House relies on public donations, fundraising and legacies for 95 per cent of the money needed to run its vital service. The charity currently supports 166 families across Dorset and Wiltshire and the number is rising as medical and scientific advances mean more children are being born and living longer with life-limiting conditions.

The service that Julia’s House provides has been rated ‘outstanding’ by the Care Quality Commission and the charity is a Sunday Times Top 100 Not-For-Profit Organisations to Work For. For more information visit juliashouse.org