

## **CLUBS TOGETHER in Purton**

**Cricket • Football • Bowls • Tennis,  
Air Rifle • Skittles • Tai Chi • Yoga.**

**Also Scouts, Guides, Bridge,  
Historical Society,  
Gardening Club & Womens' Institute.**

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Did you know that all these clubs, and many more,  
meet within the village boundaries?

We should be thankful for such a choice, but they  
need more members, so why not come along to the

**Millennium Hall on May 7th**

meet the representatives of all these clubs and  
get information on their activities.

This village is known for its support of anything local.  
Come along and enjoy sideshows and demonstrations.  
Food and drink available.

Free admission to all • 11am to 4pm

May 2016

## PURTON CONTACTS



Wiltshire Councillor	Jacqui Lay	770704
Doctors	Purton Surgery	770207
Dental Surgeries	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	
	<i>bethaney23@icloud.com</i>	
Police / Fire / Ambulance	Emergency number	999
Police	Non-emergency Number	101
Post Office	c/o Best One	770775
Purton Age Concern	Louise Tidman	772558
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 Veterinary Group	771869
Wiltshire Good Neighbours	Ellen Blacker	07557 110414

### **Schools and Play Groups:**

Bradon Forest School	Secretary	770570
Playclose Playgroup	Dawn Phillips	778141 or 07759 583566
Purton Under 5's Community Playgroup	Fionna Griffiths	771723
St Mary's Primary	Secretary	770239

### **CHURCH OF ENGLAND – PARISH CHURCH OF ST MARY**

<i>Vicar:</i>	<i>Revd Ian Tweedie-Smith,</i> <i>tel 770077 (for emergencies only, 773031)</i> <i>email: vicarage@stmaryspurton.org.uk</i>	
<i>Curate:</i>	<i>Revd Judith Wells, tel 770627, email curate@stmaryspurton.org.uk</i>	
<i>Wardens:</i>	<i>David Nettleton, tel 772298    Sandra Horsnall, tel 770157</i>	
<i>Administrator:</i>	<i>Rosie Harris, tel 773035, email administrator@stmaryspurton.org.uk</i>	
<i>Web site:</i>	<i>www.stmaryspurton.org.uk    Services: See Diary Page in this magazine</i>	

### **METHODIST CHURCHES**

<i>Minister</i>	<i>Rev David Perkins    tel 853197</i> <i>1 Garraways, Woodshaw, Royal Wootton Bassett SN4 8LT</i>	
<i>Services:</i>	<i>PURTON    See Diary Page in this magazine</i> <i>BRAYDON    Sundays 6.00 pm Evening Worship</i>	

### **CATHOLIC CHURCH**

#### **CHURCH OF THE SACRED HEART, ROYAL WOOTTON BASSETT**

<i>Parish Deacon</i>	<i>Reverend Terry Aspell    tel 325681</i> <i>Church of the Sacred Heart, High Street, Royal Wootton Bassett</i>	
<i>Services:</i>	<i>Holy Days    7.30 pm</i> <i>Sundays    11.00 am Mass</i> <i>For times of weekday services please see Church notice board</i>	

#### **ST MARY'S CHURCH, CRICKLADE**

<i>Priest</i>	<i>Father Philip Beisly    tel 01285 712586</i> <i>St Mary's Church, High Street, Cricklade</i>	
<i>Holy Days</i>	<i>7.00 pm Mass</i>	<i>Sundays 9.30 am Mass</i>

## From The Editors

An American Cardinal, now aged 80, once said “any society, any nation, is judged on the basis of how it treats its weakest members - the last, the least, the littlest.” Yet again, Purton has stepped up to the plate and although many of its residents cannot be so classified, Ashgrove House has received Wiltshire’s first Outstanding rating following the latest inspection report from the Care Quality Commission (CQC).

On page 9 we learn that of the approximately 70,000 care homes in the UK, only 0.5% - only around 350 - currently have the top rating of Outstanding. There’s no higher accolade for the owners, staff and residents of Ashgrove House and this is yet another indication of the many qualities within our community.

Once or twice, the description of a box of frogs has been used for all the very best reasons in relation to the very occasional activities of one or two in our community. Somehow said box of frogs is to make an appearance in this year’s Christian Aid Week activities and not in relation to any of the organisers. We are assured that no animals will be harmed but perhaps we ought to turn up, just to make sure. Details of all the Christian Aid Week activities in Purton are on page 42.

After many years of correspondence and petitions culminating in the Public Inquiry held in the Village Hall on 9 March this year, the Inspector has confirmed the Modification Order under Section 53 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. With effect from 4 April 2016 the definitive map is modified by adding a footpath from the top of Hogs Lane in a north-westerly direction to its junction with existing footpaths 110 and 112. It is understood that an appropriate stile or gate has already been sponsored and the final physical changes are eagerly awaited by many villagers.

Rather than have their copies delivered, some Purton Magazine readers have found it easier to buy their copies when out shopping. While Best One has already closed temporarily, we learn also on page 39 that In Touch Services will be relocating at the end of May. Instead we are really delighted to announce that One Stop in the Top Square and Shear Success on the corner of Witts Lane have kindly agreed to sell copies of your magazine – the committee is extremely grateful for this development in our community.

**161**

Purton's new footpath has been confirmed following the recent public inquiry - see page 5

**£1,536**

raised from this year's Lent Lunches for the Tear Fund and Water Aid - see page 42

**1909**

first opening of a Co-operative shop in Purton on 24 April 1909 - see page 21

## CONTENTS

10 Years Ago	Knit-A-Square
After 8	Len Simpkins
Age Concern	Lent Lunches
Alan Webb	Library Hours
Ashgrove House Award	Margaret Gunasekera
Bowls Club	Marjory Backhouse
Bradon Forest School news	Methodist Church
Carnival News	Museum News and the Co-op
Christian Aid Week	Obituary Contacts
Church Floodlighting	Open Gardens
Cricket Club	Our Family's War
Cricklade Country Market	Parish Council News
Diary Pages	Prayer for Purton
Duke of Edinburgh's Award	Probus Club
Freemasonry	Purton Placard
Gardeners' Guild	Purton Postbag (letters)
Great War Project	Purton Profferings
Group for Patients	Rainbows, Brownies & Guides
Guide Dogs	Running the Bath ...
Guild of Wiltshire Artists	Tennis Club
GWR Hooter	Victory Dance
Hazel Woodbridge BEM	We Record
Historical Society	Wiltshire Good Neighbours
Historical Society Outings	Women's Institute (Purton Evening WI)
In Touch Services	Your Magazine delivered free!

## Purton Magazine

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### Magazine Committee

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**Also on line at [www.purtonmagazine.co.uk](http://www.purtonmagazine.co.uk)**

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## Parish Council News



### **Village Centre Open Day - Saturday 7 May 2016, 11 am to 4 pm**

Don't forget to pencil this date in your diary. Come long and meet your Local Clubs/businesses/organisations. Meet the crafters, enjoy the fun-fair, food stalls, have a refreshing homemade ice-cream and much, much more. Come along and support them all. Still spaces available (outside only) for local businesses/groups and crafters.

### **Hall Bookings - Important Notice**

As from 18 April 2016 all hire bookings for the Village Hall, Millennium Hall and Bowls Pavilion will be managed via the Council Offices. For all enquires please call 01793 772646 between 9 am - 5 pm (Monday to Thursday) and 9 am - 4 pm Friday. Full details of relevant changes will be relayed to you on confirmation of booking.

I would like to take this opportunity on behalf of Purton Parish Council to thank Lesley Miles for her 25 years' service as Bookings Clerk. Lesley will continue to take booking enquires during her office hours, when available, along with all other members of staff within the Council Office.

### **Councillor Vacancy**

The Parish Council has the option to co-opt a Councillor to fill the current vacancy. If you are interested in your community and in how the Parish Council forms its decisions and provides the services, please contact the Clerk on 01793 771066 or email for more information [clerk@purtonpc.eclipse.co.uk](mailto:clerk@purtonpc.eclipse.co.uk).

### **Volunteers Required**

Purton Parish Council is in the process of creating an Emergency Plan for Purton. At this stage we are seeking like-minded people who would wish to help in an emergency by either being a "first point" contact, (Cascade contact list) or could advise and help the vulnerable in Purton, or provide a valuable resource such as a 4x4 driver, tractor driver, nurse, doctor, chain saw owner etc. Please contact our offices with offers of help. More information on this plan will follow.

### **May meeting dates - All are Mondays**

9<sup>th</sup> Council meeting    16<sup>th</sup> Planning meeting    23<sup>rd</sup> Village Hall Charity meeting

### **Footpath walks in Purton**

With the help of the Volunteer Footpath Team' the Council will be working on a project to produce a revised and updated Walks of Purton booklet.

### **Cemetery**

During 2016 we will be undertaking a project to enhance the area to the far end of the Cemetery where the first cremated remains were placed. This area is in need of light, renewed edging and also the relaying of weed suppressant and stones.

We are anticipating this work will be completed during 2016 taking into consideration weather conditions and current work schedules. Notices will be placed to advise when works will commence. Please bear with us during this period of works. If you have any questions or queries, please do not hesitate to contact the Clerk.

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## How to contact the Parish Council:

Telephone number 01793 771066, email address: [clerk@purtonpc.eclipse.co.uk](mailto:clerk@purtonpc.eclipse.co.uk)

Website [www.purtonparishcouncil.gov.uk](http://www.purtonparishcouncil.gov.uk)

The Parish Council's letter box is 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 away will see you interact with the Parish Council. Events, road closures, meet the staff, "did you knows", photographs and much more. If you have an event in the Parish that you would like us to promote on any of the above media sites please contact the Clerk on [clerk@purtonpc.eclipse.co.uk](mailto:clerk@purtonpc.eclipse.co.uk) or call 771066.

Find us at :- Facebook – Purton Parish Council, Twitter - @PurtonPC

On our website you can join up to receive regular updates which will keep you informed of matters 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](http://www.purtonparishcouncil.gov.uk) and sign up today.-

## Purton & District Age Concern

The boat trip on "The Rose of Hungerford" along the Kennet & Avon canal takes place on Friday 3 June. This year, the boat will be setting off in the opposite direction to last time, making the trip about 1½ hours longer than last time. Due to the size of the boat we are limited to taking just 50 people. Last year the trip sold out very quickly and I know it is proving to be popular again this year. If you haven't already booked your place, please speak to your street warden as soon as possible to avoid disappointment. The cost is £20 and includes the coach fare to Hungerford and a fish and chip lunch. The coach will leave the village at 9 am.

Khalique, Wendy Johnson and all at the Maharajah Restaurant have announced they will be holding another afternoon tea event on Bank Holiday Monday 2 May from 12 to 4 pm. Proceeds from the afternoon will be divided between Purton Age Concern and a children's charity in India. Please come along and enjoy all the homemade cakes with endless cups of tea or coffee. It's a lovely social way to spend a Bank Holiday afternoon. If you need transport, please contact Hazel Woodbridge on 770862.

The committee is in the process of organising an Afternoon Tea Party to celebrate the Queens 90<sup>th</sup> Birthday. The tea party will be held on Sunday 12 June from 2 pm to 6 pm on the green outside the Red House. Our gazebos will be up in case of inclement weather but I'm sure the sun will be out all day! We will provide some chairs and tables, but please bring your own fold-up chairs, rugs and picnics. There will be a BBQ and cream teas on sale, also a cake stall. Music and side stall games will also be provided and the Red House bar will be open all day serving drinks. Admission is free and open to all ages, and families are welcome. So come along and join in the birthday celebrations wearing your most patriotic red, white and blue outfit! If you need transport please contact Hazel Woodbridge on 770862.

Sadly, we have recently lost two people who, over the years, have been a great

The logo for AGE Concern, with 'AGE' in a bold, sans-serif font above 'Concern' in a cursive script.

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help to Purton Age Concern – Alan Webb and Jean Miles. Tony has written a piece about Alan and has told me about the help Jean has given to Age Concern. Jean was one of our first street wardens for the top part of Pavenhill. She also helped Tony when we were working without a secretary, and was ably assisted by her daughter Teresa. Tony says he has no doubt that without their help Purton Age Concern would have folded. So, Jean and Teresa, we are very grateful to you both, we have so much to thank you for. We are also very thankful for money in lieu of flowers at Jean's funeral being shared between the Alzheimer's Society and Purton Age Concern.

At our recent minibus meeting Richard Woodbridge stepped down as co-ordinator after 25 years with the minibus service but fortunately for us his wife Hazel has kindly agreed to take over the role. We knew Richard was only going to be a temporary co-ordinator when he took on the job but we are very grateful to him for helping us out for the past few months – thank you Richard. We are also extremely grateful to Hazel for taking over where Richard has left off. The telephone number to book the minibus remains the same – 770862.

We will be joining other clubs and societies at the Village Open Day on Saturday 7 May at the Millennium Hall from 11 am to 4 pm. Several of our committee members will be there during the day manning our stall; so pop along and say hello!

#### FUTURE EVENTS

**Mystery Tour** – Wednesday 4 May with a 2 pm start and tea included. The cost is £13.50 for pensioners and £15.00 for non-pensioners and those from outside our area. If you would like to go, please book your place with your street warden before Friday 25 April.

**Golf Day** – Do you play golf on a regular basis? Have you never played golf but would like to give it a go? If the answer is yes to either of these questions, why don't you book a place on our golf day which is taking place on Wednesday 18 May at 10 am at The Cricklade Country Club; the cost is £10. It's a 9-hole course but there is no extra charge for going round twice. Golf clubs and trolleys can be hired for an extra charge. For further information please contact Charlotte Griffin on 770665 or email her at [charlotte.griffin1@btinternet.com](mailto:charlotte.griffin1@btinternet.com) or book your place with your street warden before Monday 9 May

**Gloucester Docks** – Wednesday 6 July with a 10 am start. Food is not included in this trip. The cost is £10 for pensioners but £11.50 for non-pensioners and others from outside our area. We will leave the docks at 4 pm. Please book your place with your street warden before Monday 27 June.

**Annual Coffee Morning** – This will be on Saturday 9 July from 10 am to 12 noon at the home of Dick & Jackie Scott, Bentham House Farm, Bentham Lane. Admission will be £1 and includes tea/coffee/biscuit. There will be plants for sale, bric-a-brac, tombola, cake stall and a raffle. To book the minibus please contact Hazel Woodbridge on 770862.

#### PAST EVENTS

**Annual auction** – Just a quick update from last month. Our net sales profit was £319.00, refreshments made £56.48 and we were given donations totalling £115.00.

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**Our Easter Market** was held on Saturday 26 March. The helpers managed to get the gazebos up before the rain started! Our thanks go to Andrew Hiscock and Robert Collis for supplying the sausages and cooking equipment and to Richard and Kevin for providing delicious cooked sausages and to everyone who donated raffle prizes, cakes, bric-a-brac and books and helped out on the day. We couldn't manage without all the support we get. We made a profit of £254.66

**The 3 B's Evening** was held on Friday 8 April and was completely sold out again! As always it was a fun-filled evening. Our grateful thanks go to John and Brenda Lilley for calling the bingo; we really do appreciate their support with this event. Grateful thanks also to Maria and all the helpers in the kitchen for the delicious food. The next 3B's evening will be on Friday 7 October, so put the date in your diary; some people have booked their tickets already!

#### INFORMATION

**Fire Service & Bobby Van** – If you need a smoke alarm fitting or checking please contact the Fire Service on 01225 756514 between 9.30 am and 4.30 pm, Monday to Friday. If you need the Bobby Van, please call them on 01225 794652.

**T'ai Chi** – We hold sessions for pensioners each Thursday at 2 pm in the Millennium Hall. There are places available so if you would like to give it a go please contact Mick Hull on 772453.

**Minibuses** – Please contact Hazel Woodbridge our minibus co-ordinator 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](mailto:andywhitepacmb@gmail.com) New volunteers are always welcome.

LOUISE TIDMAN

## Purton Methodist Church

Thank you to everyone who supported our Coffee Morning on Saturday 9 April for the Radiotherapy Unit at the GWH. The amount raised was £1,000.55. Who knows when one of us will need this treatment.

An advance notice for our church: On 16 and 17 July, we will be holding our Gift Day Appeal to help with the upkeep of the church. There is so much going on at the church: from Pram Service, Rock Solid, Fellowship Meetings along with our Sunday Worship and Lent Lunches.

So on 16 July at 7 pm we are holding a concert with the Thamesdown Ladies Choir providing the entertainment. They are such a good choir and we are so pleased that they can come to Purton. Tickets will be on sale at £5, including refreshments – not just tea and biscuits but proper Methodist Welcome Refreshments.

Admission will be by ticket only, so get yours quickly before they sell out: ring Rose on 770564 to be sure of a good evening out.

Sunday 17 July will have a special service led by Rev. David Perkins. Anyone who would like to give just a small gift can do so at any of the above functions. Thank you. More about this in the June issue of the Magazine. Looking forward to seeing you there.

ROSE STUMP



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## Ashgrove House awarded Wiltshire's first Outstanding rating by CQC

Purton nursing home, Ashgrove House, has received an Outstanding rating in its latest inspection report from the Care Quality Commission (CQC). This makes it the first and only nursing home in Wiltshire and the surrounding area to score so highly.

It is estimated that of the approximately 70,000 care homes in the UK, only 0.5% currently have the top rating of Outstanding. An inspector from the CQC, the independent regulator of health and adult social care in England, visited Ashgrove House unannounced in January, and found the service provided by the home to be outstanding in terms of being caring, responsive and well-led.

The report produced following the visit highlighted the positive effect that the home's ethos of 'treat people how you would like to be treated', combined with excellent, caring staff, has on residents. Their focus is on making people feel valued, supported and included, with an aim to enhance overall wellbeing. It recognised that Ashgrove House supports people to achieve their aspirations, such as increased independence, using an example of how the care has helped a previously bed-bound resident get up and become more mobile.

The inspector spoke to a number of staff, residents and family members, about the service provided, and received a resounding response that people felt safe, staff were well-trained and well-supported, and family members knew that their loved one was being looked after in a manner they would expect.

Residents and their families were quoted as telling the inspector that 'it's a lovely place, I'm very happy here', 'this is my home' and 'we couldn't do better if [family member] was at home. The care is exemplary.' One staff member also said, 'if my mum needed care, I'd be happy for her to come here.'

Food was also praised in the report, with meals described as 'appetising and well presented' and that 'people were supported to maintain good health and had access to appropriate healthcare services'.

Keith Trowbridge, co-owner of Ashgrove House with his wife Mary, said: "We were thrilled to find Ashgrove House had received such a high rating and was awarded Outstanding for providing a caring, responsive and well-led service. When we opened the home just over 30 years ago we set out to achieve something better than anything else that was available and now we've got official recognition of this. We're proud that we've got it right and that the staff share the same values and vision as us. Ashgrove wouldn't be what it is without the support of the whole team. We select all our staff carefully to ensure that they're passionate about care and helping people live according to their wishes as this is our residents' homes, not a place of work.

"We're regularly looking at how we can add extras to enhance our residents' time with us, such as regular massages which can help alleviate aches and pains, as well as Snoezelen therapy, a multisensory therapy which has been shown to help people with dementia."

Ashgrove House specialises in care for the elderly and people with dementia, as well as those with physical disabilities and terminal illnesses aged 30 and above. For more information about Ashgrove House, visit [www.ashgrovehouse.net](http://www.ashgrovehouse.net) or call 01793 771449.

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## Len Simpkins 1922-2016

Older Parishioners of Purton may well remember Len Simpkins who passed away in hospital in Cornwall on 21 March. Len and Olive moved from their home in Cricklade Road to Cornwall some 13 years ago in order to spend their last years closer to their son, Keith, who was already living there.

I first got to know Len when he and others worked hard to re-form Purton Football Club after it was disbanded in the 1960s. At the same time, he was also a committee member of the Red House Social Club and worked tirelessly at The Village Centre for little financial reward in the days before the Parish Council took on the role of Trustees.

Those who knew Len remember him as a fitness enthusiast who exercised every morning and swam at least twice a week and for many years, on Sunday mornings, he would take youngsters to the swimming pool at Wootton Bassett and teach them to swim. As one of the people Len had taught said to me when he heard of his passing, "The world would be a much better place if there were more like Len about".

A friend of mine told me that when he was young and struggling to play darts at The Red House, Len would encourage him and spend time showing him the best way to do it, much as he did with me when, at the age of 26 and afraid of water, he taught me to swim.

Len was a kind and gentle man who would try to help people in need. He was always good company to be out with and in the days of the pub sing song, he performed with gusto songs like 'The Laughing Policeman', 'The Music Man' and 'Sons of the Sea' (woe betide any singer Len spotted who was not bobbing up and down!)

Len retained his fitness until the last few years when he became full time carer for his wife, Olive. As Olive's frailty worsened and despite being in his 90s, Len continued to care for his wife 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, a labour of love and an example for many others of younger age who would struggle to cope with such a crisis.

Well "Singalong Simmo", you have been a "good Un", thanks for your friendship.

*RICHARD PRICE (Dick)*

## Marjory Backhouse

It is with great sadness that I record the death of Marjory Backhouse, an enthusiastic supporter of Luncheon Club for 13 years. Born in York in 1930, she married Jack, a middle-school headmaster. They had 2 children, Russel, who lives in the USA, and Lindsay. Jack died in 2000 and shortly after that Marjory developed the rheumatoid arthritis that was to affect her life so severely. She came to Purton in 2002, having chosen it because of its distance from Hilmarton, where Lindsay lived with her children, Glen and Hazel. Marjory needed to be close enough to Lindsay for easy contact ... but yet far enough away to enjoy her fiercely guarded independence.

I first knew Marjory through taking her to Luncheon Club in my car and quickly learnt to admire her amazingly positive attitude to life and the dauntless courage

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with which she faced all the attacks that arthritis made on her body, necessitating several replacements of joints. But there was nothing of the suffering martyr about her, in spite of the fact that she was often, perhaps always, in pain. Her wide smile and the warmth of her responsiveness and her strong sense of humour made her a very welcome companion. She made her mark at Luncheon Club very quickly, with Elizabeth Ward soon putting her in charge of collecting the money. She speedily knew everyone's names, interests and problems, engaging with all the members with genuine consideration and friendliness. She will be much missed in the village, and not just by club members.

*DIANA THOMBS, Chairman, Purton Luncheon Club*

Lindsay, Russel, Glen and Hazel would like to thank all the people of Purton for their unflinching love, help and support of Marjory. You all enabled her to enjoy 13 years living in a lovely, friendly community and to remain independent to the end of her life, which was her very strong desire. We would like to celebrate her life with drinks and food in the Silver Threads Hall, at 3 pm on 30 April. You will all be most welcome to join us. Sandwiches, cakes and tea/coffee will be served by the Silver Threads committee.

*LINDSAY ALABASTER*

## Margaret Gunasekera

Margaret died earlier this year at her home in Matlock on 8 February, aged 76.

Margaret and Brian Gunasekera lived for a number of years at 29 Ringsbury Close and many will remember Margaret as the outwardly quiet English lady with a ready smile. While children Anna and David were popular pupils at St Mary's School, husband Brian was a prominent player and member of the Cricket Club.

*DAVID BISSET*

## Alan Webb

What an honour and privilege it is to share a little bit of Alan's life with you. He always greeted you with a smile and a friendly word. He was loyal and sincere, a man of many lovely qualities, a man you could not hurry and everything had to be right. He would tap his nose and say 'think about it'. So many people have told me of funny and touching snippets about Alan - it is almost impossible to do him justice so please forgive me - I will do my best.

Alan was the second son of Mr and Mrs J.J. Webb of Bagbury Lane Farm. He had an elder brother Stuart - sadly deceased - and a younger brother Hedley who still runs the farm today. Alan was brought up in a strong Methodist family - grandfather, father and uncle were all local Methodist preachers. When going to Lydiard Green Methodist Church the boys were always nicely turned out in suits.

Alan attended St Mary's School and was able to walk across four fields, including the one where Bradon Forest School is now, to get there instead of walking one and a half to two miles around the road. I wonder if Billy Osbourne inspired Alan into gardening - he was the gardening teacher. He became organist at Lydiard Methodist Chapel - Alan had a great love of music, especially classical music and his favourite composer was Elgar. It was very fitting and thoughtful that, at Alan's funeral service, Alan was carried in by his family and a special friend to

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the strains of Nimrod. In those days, the local Methodist youth groups from Wootton Bassett, Purton, Lydiard and Braydon used to meet up at Brinkworth Manse, riding their bikes there after the evening service – they were known as the Manse Gang – and lots of relationships were made and resulted in marriage. In 1949, at one of those meetings, Alan met Rita the Chapel organist at Callow Hill. She also worked as Sunday School teacher, treasurer and assistant leader and secretary of the Youth Fellowship and still attended school.

Alan helped his father on the farm and his favourite occupation was driving the tractor. In August 1952 he was called up for National Service but signed on for three years because he was able to do what he wanted to do, which was driving lorries. He joined the Royal Army Service Corps at Aldershot, then onto Blandford and Bulford. He was posted to Austria for two years and enjoyed his time there, learning to ski. Alan and Rita went back to Austria along with Maureen and Arthur Griffin on holiday. I know they had a lovely time and, with Alan spending two years out there, he could certainly show them places of interest.

He was demobbed in May 1955 and Rita and Alan married in November of that year and lived in Restrop Road behind Thompson's Garage – or was it called Wootton Bassett Road in those days. It was like a smallholding where Alan had plenty of garden and they also kept chickens, ducks etc. Alan continued to help his father on the farm but, after the birth of their three sons, Stephen, Gregory and Nicholas, he decided to go for a better paid job. In 1962 he went to work as an ambulance driver at Burderop United States Air Force Hospital – what an asset and comfort he would have been to his passengers -- and the family moved to Reid's Piece. The hospital closed in 1964 and Alan then chose to be an MOD fireman at Lyneham RAF station, staying there until his retirement, a total of twenty-six years.

In 1970 Rita and Alan moved to newly built sheltered accommodation at Hooks Hill. Rita held the position of Warden, looking after the elderly residents with Alan's help. You must give the Council credit – they certainly knew how to pick their people! Age Concern used to meet in one of the classrooms at Bradon Forest School, which was not very comfortable – not the place to encourage new members – then, at one such meeting, Rita invited us to meet at Hooks Hill. From this time, they both became involved with Purton Age Concern. I have said it before and I will say it again, Age Concern certainly took on a new dimension when Alan and Rita joined us. Alan was so knowledgeable about things like putting in seats that we had been given in memory of someone. What about the hedge at the Red House, planted in memory of Eric Webber, a past President of ours? Then there was the Horse Show and Gymkhana, the auction, antiques and collectable, arts and crafts, stalls, the Christmas tree and the parties – all these Alan was involved with and it was through him we began entering carnivals when he made Thomas the Tank Engine for us. This was twofold as Rita was very artistic with her sewing needles. What about when Alan and Arthur Griffin had made a big shoe for us and we all dressed up as the characters from the old woman who lived in a shoe? We entered Malmesbury Carnival and called in at the White Hart still dressed up. Alan and Arthur went into the gents on the way out dressed as little girls – two chaps were just going in and one nearly fainted and said to the other 'B----- me, they must have moved the gents!'

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We took this float to Pewsey illuminated carnival and the children watching the procession loved it when it was all lit up inside.

Alan was also a Parish Councillor and served on the Purton Recreation Committee. It was when on this committee that he planted trees and daffodils around the village. After retiring from the Fire Service he loved working on his allotments. We all know what an excellent gardener he was; in fact, what Alan didn't know about gardening wasn't worth knowing. I know at Gardeners' Guild one month the speaker couldn't make it and we had a 'gardener's question time'. The first one on the panel was Alan and he never failed. Could I just mention here what a lovely suitable poem Amie chose for Alan's cremation entitled Grampy's Garden? What about his allotment? It was like Fort Knox with all he had put round to stop the badgers and deer from getting in and eating things! Alan also helped out at Midge Hall nurseries at Hook, delivering plants far and wide.

Alan was a real countryman – he loved the countryside, wildlife and country pursuits. He knew the birds by their song and the names of all the trees and the hedgerows and he knew how to treat them. What about the hedge he laid at the Cenotaph and look at it now? He grew me two walnut trees from seed and they are now in the quarry twenty feet tall. Alan and Rita both loved walking. They spent all their holidays going away in their caravan – they were members of the Caravan Club for forty years – walking every day in every part of the UK. Favourite walks included the South West Coastal Path, starting at Minehead and finishing at Poole, then mid Wales and also walking the Malverns often. It was only in October last year that it became more difficult for him to enjoy his walks because of a knee injury.

What about Exmoor? Was there any part of it he didn't know? He knew where to go to show you what you wanted to see. I know we spent a few days with Rita and Alan on Exmoor and it was so interesting. Alan knew where the deer would be and I will never forget a stag with full antlers walking along the skyline. Talk about going on safari with Johnny Kingdom – it was much better with Alan and we have done both.

Alan always reminded me of a country gentleman the way he dressed for every occasion. Whether wet or fine, he wore those lovely wide braces, Harris tweed jackets –and what about those beautiful waistcoats? I have tried to match him but it is like trying to keep up with the Joneses with Alan's the best Harris tweed and mine ordinary twill material. Then the hats! I am told he had twenty-six of them. I often wonder whether he was mistaken for the governor when he went beating. What about the big Kelsoe onions he always took for his lunch? – and he would eat them like an apple! Alan was no mean shot himself. I am sure the squirrels are rejoicing if nobody else is. With Alan, I always felt how that saying goes 'a friend in need is a friend indeed'. I always felt like the one in need with what he did for me. Thank you Alan.

He was a man who would give you confidence, like the time in Age Concern when we decided to buy a minibus. It was just after the Church had collected for a toilet to be installed and Canon Roy Blake sat out in the lay-by on a toilet and collected money. Alan said 'Why don't we borrow a minibus from Melksham Age Concern, park it in the lay-by and Tony can sit in there and collect donations'. I said 'I don't know about that'. Alan said 'Come on mate, if the vicar can do it so can you'. As usual he was right – our street wardens distributed envelopes round the village

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and we had an exciting evening opening them, especially when we found we had collected well over a thousand pounds. On about confidence, what about the string of lights we put across outside the Institute at Christmas? Some bulbs had gone and Alan went and got his ladders, Arthur and myself held them upright and Alan went to the top and changed the bulbs. Talk about health and safety! I think Arthur and me were more nervous than Alan. I wonder if Alan knew what would happen when he asked son Nick if he could get a crew together to put the Christmas Tree up for us a few years ago. Nick came along with his two brothers-in-law, Adam and Ian, and Mick Looker. I can see Alan tapping his nose and saying 'think about it'. Apart from Nick and wife Sarah helping at a lot of our events, we know that Adam and Ian along with their family have helped us along the way and, of course, Mick Looker is our Chairman now and, with his wife Maria, is very much involved. With the other friends they have brought in I can see Age Concern Purton going on for another fifty years and this was all started by Alan.

Alan was a true family man and he was proud of them all and what they had achieved. He loved his three sons and their wives, Sarah, Nicky and Kay (who sadly passed away in 2014). He was never happier than spending time with the grandchildren, watching young Alan play football and cricket. Amie, Nicola and Jodie would cut his hair and he was so proud of the two dancing girls Imogen and Isobel, who danced in the England team for the Dance World Cup. He also has two great grandchildren, Mia and Harry.

Could I say to the family we all know how much you loved Alan by the way you cared for him and supported Rita, especially during this last year? Nobody could have done more and I sincerely hope you will draw some comfort from this. We all know the world has been a much better place for having Alan in it. We shall all miss Alan, but I am sure when we look on our memories of him they will all be happy ones and bring a smile to our faces.

TONY PRICE

### **Purton Profferings - *Recycle your unwanted items to a new owner here***

OFFERED: OFFERED: Free to a good garden – blue kettle BBQ. Tel 771632.

WANTED: Vintage Rolex Explorer or Submariner wanted by collector. Steven 07921 254768

*To advertise in this section please contact Purton Magazine (address on page 4). Free advertisements for Free goods. 2 lines maximum.*

## Purton Victory Dance

Well, what a fantastic night, even if I do say so myself! The U3A dance orchestra and Breeze Saxophone were excellent, my wife and her team successfully cooked up a fab vegetable stew for all attending and the atmosphere was fantastic. It was excellent to see so many people dressed up in period clothes and enjoying the evening. The night was a sell-out, we sold out about two weeks before the event and the total raised for Jubilee Gardens was £1143.33.

We look forward to seeing you at our next one in September!

RICHARD & MEL GOSDEN.

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## Purton Rainbows, Brownies & Guides



Are you going to the Village Centre Open Day on Saturday 7 May? Do say hello! We'd love to talk to you about all the brilliant opportunities open to our members - both adult and young members.

As well as a range of activities in weekly meetings the Guides were spoilt for choice of weekend activities last month: TV show 'The Cube' was the inspiration for a Division Guide challenge where Purton Guides competed against Guides from Lyneham and Royal Wootton Bassett. And they won! Well done Katy, Libby and Maria. Another weekend Purton Guides and more than 30 other Guide units spent the day in Bath at a 'Be Prepared' event. The scenario the Guides faced was an earthquake and each family (Guide patrol) had to work together to complete a series of challenges including rescuing casualties on a stretcher, putting out a house fire and making shelters.

2<sup>nd</sup> Purton Brownies are working on a 'Rustle, Bustle & Squeak' challenge which is all about celebrating the outdoors and nature. As part of this they made otter or bat pencil pots. Another week the Brownie meeting was organised by some of the Rangers: Kirstie, Alice and Sarah (ably assisted by Guide helper Janie) made the Brownie Leaders redundant and the Rangers have been tipped as Leaders of the future! The Brownies were treated to making Easter cards, a rabbit from a flannel and plenty of games including dominoes.

1<sup>st</sup> Purton Brownies completed the Number Fun badge with activities on the 24-hour clock and number codes. The fun took a different form another week as they spent the evening doing some extreme bouncing at the Link Centre trampoline park. Flushed faces, laughter and requests to go again marked it out as a successful trip.

Rainbows are looking forward to a range of activities based on the colours of the rainbow during the summer term and they're starting with red. If we give you a clue that it's something to do with St George's Day, can you guess what they might be doing? More next month of their colourful exploits.

If you'd like to find out more about volunteering, particularly with the Rainbow unit, please contact Rachel Mead by phone on 07729 462054 or by email at [braydondc@wncounty.org.uk](mailto:braydondc@wncounty.org.uk). You can also register interest at [www.girlguiding.org.uk/interested](http://www.girlguiding.org.uk/interested)

[www.facebook.com/GirlguidingNorthWiltsDivision](http://www.facebook.com/GirlguidingNorthWiltsDivision)



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# PURTON POSTBAG

*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 those details may be withheld from being published if so requested.*



## ■ ALAN WEBB

Rita and family wish to say a huge thank-you for the many cards, kind messages of condolence and to those who attended the service at Kingsdown Crematorium and also for the donations received in memory of Alan.

We would like to thank Revd Judith Wells for her help, support and for conducting a beautiful service.

A special thank-you to Tony Price a friend of many years for putting together and delivering Alan's life story.

To Doctors and Staff at Purton Surgery and Great Western Hospital for their care and kindness never to be forgotten.

Those who knew Alan will know what a huge gap it will leave not only to our lives but to the whole village.

*Rita and Family*

## ■ THANK YOU

I would like to say a huge thank-you to all my family, neighbours and friends who have helped and supported me over the past 6 months, particularly when I was in hospital for 4 weeks. Thank you for your cards, gifts and good wishes.

It is good to know that our community in the village is so caring.

*Caroline Young*

## After 8

Our March meeting found us delving into Gwyneth's amazing collection of 'coffee table' nature books. Many Pictures brought back memories of places we had visited, such as Turner's painting of the spectacular High Force waterfalls located at Forest-in-Teesdale in the heart of the Durham dales.

Photographs of places closer to home such as the Ridgway and various White Horses taken at different times and seasons will prompt some of us to don our walking boots (or get in the car!) and revisit some of those familiar places.

There was laughter when one of ours found a rather endearing picture of copulating snails (we thought that hermaphrodites didn't go in for that sort of thing!). Botanical paintings of birds, animals (some now extinct), beautiful plants and flowers made us think of artists that used to accompany explorers and the military on their travels – no cameras and 'selfies' in those days!

Last but not least we have to thank Sir Hans Sloane who was personal physician to George I. Whilst travelling in the Caribbean searching for Spanish gold he eventually settled in Jamaica. He travelled the island collecting flora and fauna and during one of these trips he tried the local cocoa and water drink which he found quite nauseating. He set about trying to find a recipe that would make this drink more palatable – eventually he came up with the idea of mixing it with milk and sugar and that saw the start of the British love affair with milk chocolate and, as they say, the rest is history.



*HELEN DIXON*



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## Purton Carnival

Thank you to all who came to the Children's Easter Egg Hunt; the weather was against us but we still had about 30 children take part and a good time was had by all. Our new Easter bunny made an appearance and entertained the children. If you were driving through the village he might have even given you a cheeky wave!

The bingo was a success as normal with over £200 paid out in cash prizes on the night. Our next bingo is in Carnival Week (Wednesday 29 June) - 7.30pm at the Silver Threads Hall. Why not come and have a go?

We have no events in May, but we will be at the Parish Council's "Get to know your Community" day at the Village Centre on 7 May.

So if you would like to know more about joining the carnival committee, the events or have suggestions please come and see us

### Coming Events:

Pig Roast & BBQ with Live music

New Date : Saturday 4 June from 4 pm

New Location: Play Close play park - next to the Methodist church.

Poker Night at the Royal George

Tuesday 7 June, from 7.30 pm. Turn up and play.

Don't forget, this year's theme is "Superheroes". Why not get your friends together and put in a float or walking group?

If you need help with it, please contact a member of the committee

*KEVIN LAW, Purton Carnival Chairman*

## Purton's Special Lady!

Hazel Woodbridge, who lives in Hoggs Lane, was awarded the BEM in the New Year's Honours list, for services to carriage driving. Hazel is Area Commissioner for the British Driving Society in Gloucestershire and North Wiltshire

Many Purtonians will have seen Hazel as she has travelled around the lanes with her ponies and carriages. She has organised many events in the area, often two or three a month throughout the



summer, which raise interest in the skills of

carriage driving, for example at Barbury Castle and Badminton.

Congratulations, Hazel, from supportive Purtonians, who are very impressed by your achievement.



*LIBBIE SHEPPARD*

# PURTON PLACARD

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



Tandoori & Balti  
Restaurant

6 High Street  
Purton, Swindon  
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01793 770253

Come and join us for good company  
and good food at the Maharajah's  
Curry night!



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Book to avoid disappointment

Contact Wendy on 01793 771749  
or Kate on 01793 772930 if you would  
like to reserve a place!!

Tickets £15  
per head, two  
sittings 6:30pm  
and 8:00pm

## PURTON AGE CONCERN **Golf day**

Wednesday 18 May at 10 am  
at Cricklade Country Club  
Cost £10. Golf clubs and trolleys  
can be hired for an extra charge.  
Book your place with your street  
warden before  
Monday 9 May

## Chedworth Silver Band with Purton Peartree Pealers **Concert**

on 7 May, 7.30 pm  
at Purton Village Hall  
proceeds to Prospect Hospice  
& Purton Age Concern  
For more information contact  
Brian Broad 771667 or  
Alan Woodward 771572

## Prospect Hospice Support Group **June Fair**

Saturday 4 June, 10am  
At Silver Threads Hall  
Tombola, nearly new, bric-a-  
brac, books, raffle, plants,  
cakes & refreshments

## **Coffee Morning**

Saturday 28 May  
At Silver Threads Hall  
10-12pm

## Sing 4/4 Community Choir with Voices in Harmony **Concert**

Saturday 14 May 7pm  
St Sampson's Church, Cricklade  
tickets £8 (including refreshments) from  
Mary New (770630), Sing 4/4 members  
or The Barista, 49b Cricklade High St

## PURTON AGE CONCERN **Mystery Tour**

Wednesday 4 May  
Coach leaves at 2 pm  
Cost: £13.50 (tea included)  
Book your place with your  
street warden  
Before Friday 25 April

Group for Patients - Purton and  
Green Gable Surgery G4P

### **Coffee Morning**

Tuesday 7 June  
10 am to 12noon  
Cricklade United Church Hall  
All patients are welcome.

### **The Ridgeway Breast Care Support**

24 May : 7.30 pm,  
Ellendune Community Centre,  
Barrett Way, Wroughton, SN4 9LW  
The Penny Brohn Cancer Care  
Centre will be coming along to give  
advice and help for cancer sufferers.

### **Fashions for the Mature Woman**

Tuesday 24 May, 2 pm  
Clothes available to buy  
at Silver Threads Hall

### **Bank Holiday Tea Party Charity Event**

*Let's do it again!*  
Monday 2 May : 12 noon to 4 pm  
at The Maharajah  
Free tea, coffee, homemade scones and  
cake  
Freshly made to order Indian sweets  
and savouries  
All donations to both Charities:  
*Special Needs Hostel, Udaipur, India  
& Purton Age Concern*  
**Phone Khalique Ali 01793 770998  
or Wendy Johnson 01793 771749**

### **PURTON AGE CONCERN**

#### **Boat Trip**

Friday 3 June  
Limited to 50 places!  
Coach leaves at 9 am  
Cost £20 - (includes coach  
fare and fish & chip lunch)  
Book your place with your  
street warden  
Before Friday 20 April

## **Wiltshire Good Neighbours**

Just a reminder that I am here to help with information to  
(hopefully) solve problems and make your life a little easier.  
Please call me, Ellen Blacker 07557 110414 or email me:  
[rwbrickladedgnc@communityfirst.org.uk](mailto:rwbrickladedgnc@communityfirst.org.uk)



## **Purton Open Gardens 2016**

You will recall that in our article last month we indicated that we were struggling to find enough participating gardens to make this event viable. We are most grateful to those gardeners who responded to our call but regrettably we still have insufficient numbers. We have decided to cancel the event this year but hope to have a bigger and better Open Gardens Weekend in 2017.

**NICK YERBURY**

To advertise in Purton Magazine telephone 01793 770648

or email [mail@purtonmagazine.co.uk](mailto:mail@purtonmagazine.co.uk)

**2016 Annual rates - 12 issues:** 1/8 page £90 1/4 page £180 1/2 page £360

other rates available on application

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## GWR Hooter

Being close to Swindon we have heard a lot about the GWR celebrating 175 years on 22 March 2016 although the Swindon Works wasn't in action for another two years. At the Steam Museum we heard the hooter again - it was thirty years since it was last blown and the last gentleman to blow it was given the honour to blow it again at precisely 1.45 pm on that day. This was all made possible by an engineer with steam interest who made two hooters from the original plans. They were put on the roof of the museum and a steam pipe was run down the outside of the wall to a valve which was connected to the engineer's traction engine and sure enough we had the hooter again. The old hooters still exist in the Outlet Village.

Derek Giles, my cousin, visited the Railway Museum some time ago and in the photo gallery saw a picture of a man in the hooter house in 1936 with 'name unknown' by the side of it. Derek knew who it was - Mr E. Giles, our grandfather known as Teddy - and told reception that the photo was of Mr Giles ready to blow the hooter at 12.30 pm.

Teddy was a local man who lived at 34 Pavenhill behind the Royal George and still has many family connections in Purton. His cottage is still there, perhaps a little larger than it was. His large garden would be where Dogridge is today with the Blacksmith's hedge running down the west side of his property. Teddy was a very good gardener and won lots of prizes at local flower shows. In fact, in the local Royal British Legion flower show, there is a cup in his memory.

*DAVE MILLER, Faringdon*

## Knit-A-Square

Our Coffee Morning held on Saturday 12 March at the Silver Threads Hall was a huge success again this year. At the end of the coffee morning over 60 people enjoyed a delicious two-course lunch. I would like to thank all the ladies who worked so hard in the kitchen making the drinks and preparing, cooking and serving the lunch. Thanks also go to the waitresses and everyone who helped on the stalls and a big thank-you to Moira White who made the apple sponge dessert and to Sylvia Freemantle who made the fruit salad and finally thank you to everyone who came along on the day to support us; it's much appreciated. We raised £1079.59, which is amazing!

I will be sending the next shipment of items to South Africa very soon, more details about that next month.

*LOUISE TIDMAN, tel 772558*

## Obituaries

*Purton Magazine* is always happy to include obituaries. If you wish to have us publish an obituary of a loved one, please send it, perhaps with a recent photo, via the contacts on page 4 of the Magazine. We can crop or resize photos supplied.

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## Vastern Lodge of Freemasons

Did you know that the Vastern Lodge of Freemasons have been holding their regular meetings in Lydiard Millicent Parish Hall for over 25 years?

If you are interested in finding out more about Freemasonry, the Lodge is holding an 'Open Day' on Saturday 4 June, from 10 am to 4 pm in Lydiard Millicent Parish Hall.



The hall will be set up for a typical Masonic Lodge meeting and members of the Lodge will be on hand to answer any questions you may have about who we are and what we do – particularly in support of local charities and organisations.

Freemasonry is one of the world's oldest and largest non-religious, non-political and charitable organisations. Organised Freemasonry, as we understand it today, began with the formation of the Grand Lodge of England in 1717 - it will be celebrating its Tercentenary in 2017 and has some 270,000 members grouped in approximately 8,000 lodges.

Vastern Lodge is one of 44 Masonic Lodges in Wiltshire and holds seven meetings over the course of the Masonic Year, which runs from September to April. The Lodge was founded in 1981 in Royal Wootton Bassett and held the first meetings at The Angel in the High Street and over the next six years at The Civic Centre, St Bartholomew's School and Hook Village Hall. Since September 1987 meetings have been held on a Thursday evening in Lydiard Millicent Parish Hall.

Why not come along and find out more? Tea, coffee and biscuits will be available.

Further information about Freemasonry is also available on the Wiltshire Provincial website – [www.pglwilts.org.uk](http://www.pglwilts.org.uk)

*BRIAN COWLEY, Lodge Secretary*

## The Co-op in Purton

Rumour has it that a Co-operative store is to be opened in Purton. This news coincides with the setting up of our 'Then and Now' exhibition in the museum. We have two very interesting photographs on display of the first Co-op stores in the village High Street.

The first opened on 24 April 1909 (despite some political resistance from leading residents), in the premises once occupied by the Maltsters Restaurant, now a private house. The opening was a grand affair with two village bands playing in the street for nearly two hours. The premises comprised good-sized shop, bakehouse, stable and garden, which were sub-let.

The business moved to a newly erected building almost opposite and was opened on 1 April 1922, despite nine inches of snow falling on that day! There were two main shops, one devoted to groceries, provisions and confectionery, and the other to drapery, boots and outfitting. The business continued until spring 1993, when it changed hands and a pair of semi-detached houses now stand on the site.

The museum has many vintage photographs on display of Purton and a very interesting postcard collection. Opening hours are Wednesday 2 - 5pm and Saturday 10 am - 12.30 pm.

*JAN WALKER, Museum Assistant*

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## Purton Diary - May 2016

1	Su	8.00am	Communion at St Mary's Church
		10.30am	Morning Worship at the Methodist Church
		10.30am	Family Service at St Mary's Church
		6.00pm	Evensong at St Mary's Church
2	M		<b>Spring Bank Holiday</b>
		12noon	<i>to 4pm:</i> Age Concern Afternoon tea at The Maharajah
4	W	2.00pm	Age Concern mystery tour
5	Th	10.30am	Communion at St Mary's Church
6	F	12.55pm	<i>to 4pm and 4.50 to 7.15pm:</i> Blood Donor sessions at Village Hall - <a href="http://www.blood.co.uk">www.blood.co.uk</a>
7	Sa	11.00am	<i>to 4pm:</i> <b>Village Centre Open Day, Millennium Hall</b>
		7.30pm	Chedwoth Band and Pear Tree Pealers concert, Village Hall
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8	Su	8.00am	Communion at St Mary's Church
		10.30am	Morning Worship at the Methodist Church
		10.30am	Communion at St Mary's Church
10	Tu	10.00am	Probus Club at Red House: <i>Golden Age of Mountaineering</i>
		11.00am	Songs of Praise, Ashgrove House
		2.00pm	Silver Threads Club: <i>Co-op Choir</i>
12	Th	10.30am	Songs of Praise at The Cedars
13	F	9.30am	Age Concern Minibus to Swindon
14	Sa	7.00pm	Sing 4/4 Community Choir with Voices in Harmony perform at St Sampson's Church, Cricklade
		8.30pm	Purton Cricket Club Race Night at Red House Club
<hr/>			
15	Su	8.00am	Communion at St Mary's Church
		9.00am	Christian Aid Breakfast at St Mary's Church
		10.30am	Morning Worship at the Methodist Church
		10.30am	Family Communion at St Mary's Church
		6.00pm	Pentecost Praise at Braydon Chapel
16	M	7.30pm	St Mary's Fellowship of Women: Fundraising meal for Jubilee Gardens, at Methodist Church
17	Tu	6.30pm	<i>and 8pm - 2 sittings:</i> Christian Aid Curry Night at Maharajah
18	W	10.00am	Age Concern Golf day at Cricklade Country Club
		2.00pm	Communion at Ashgrove House
		7.30pm	Purton Evening W.I, Village Hall: <i>Keeping hens in your garden</i>
		10.00pm	Deadline for Christian Aid Quiz entries to 20 Hoggs Lane
20	F	2.00pm	Friendship Club, Silver Threads Hall
21	Sa	8.30pm	Christian Aid Plants & Cakes sales outside Pavenhill shops
<hr/>			
22	Su	8.00am	Communion at St Mary's Church
		10.30am	Morning Worship at the Methodist Church
		10.30am	Christian Aid Service at the Methodist Church
		4.00pm	Messy Church at St Mary's School
24	Tu	10.00a,	Probus Club at Red House
		2.00pm	Fashions for the Mature Woman at Silver Threads Hall

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		2.30pm	Communion at White Lodge
		7.30pm	Gardeners' Guild, Silver Threads Hall: <i>Focal points in the garden</i>
26	Th	7.30pm	Historical Society, Village Hall: John Farrow - <i>Ashdown House</i>
28	Sa	10.00am	Coffee morning, Silver Threads Hall
29	Su	8.00am	Communion at St Mary's Church
		10.30am	Morning Worship at the Methodist Church
		10.30am	Communion at St Mary's Church
30	M		<b>Late May Bank Holiday</b>

### Every week

Tu	9.00am	to 11am:	Purton Toddler Group at Village Hall
	12 noon		Luncheon Club at Silver Threads for over 60s
	7.30pm		Bridge Club at the Red House
W	10.00am	to 12 noon:	Coffee and Chat at Silver Threads Hall
	6.30pm		Rock Solid at the Methodist Church
Th	9.00am	to 11am:	Purton Toddler Group at Village Hall
	11.15am	to 1pm:	New Beginnings at Purton Youth Centre
	12 noon		Luncheon Club at Silver Threads for over 60s
	2.00pm	to 3pm:	Age Concern T'ai Chi at Millennium Hall
	2.20pm		Pram Service for pre-school children at Methodist Church
F	10.00am	to 11.30am:	Tea, Coffee & Cake at The Cedars

### Moon Phases

● 5 May

◐ 12 May

○ 20 May

◑ 27 May

### Church Floodlighting

13 April St Mary's was floodlit in loving memory of Mum **Emily**, brother **Dave** and brother-in-law **Paddy**. Always in our hearts and thoughts. Dorothy, Eric and family

4 May St Mary's will be floodlit in memory of my darling husband **Ron Harris**, on our wedding anniversary. Forever in my heart. Love always. Heather

18 May St Mary's will be floodlit in memory of **Dave Binstead**. Always in our thoughts: forever in our hearts. Greatly missed by Dorn and family

22 May St Mary's will be floodlit in memory of **Bruce D'Arcy-Masters** on the 1<sup>st</sup> anniversary of his passing. Forever in our hearts. Val, Carole, Anthony, Sue, Scott, Katy and Laura.

If you would like the church floodlit, for a special date, occasion, memorial, please contact Libbie: 771018. The cost is £17 for one evening and it would be helpful if the date is booked at least a couple of weeks before the chosen night.

An announcement can also be put in this magazine for no extra charge.



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# Bradon Forest School News

## National Science Week 2016

British Science Week is a ten-day programme of science, technology, engineering and maths events and activities across the UK for people of all ages.

The Science Department celebrated British Science Week, commencing 11 March 2016, with a series of fun activities for students to get involved with. Mrs Hall organised talks from three local professionals who work locally in jobs that require a science background.



Firstly, midwife Sam Field talked about her role and answered questions, Emma in Year 9 commented: "I found this very interesting because it told me how to get there, how to become a midwife."

Thursday lunchtime saw a visit from Mr Alan Frost, owner of Agralan, a local company specialising in organic methods of pest control. He brought with him the star attraction: a colony of bees especially from Belgium for the occasion.

Students commented, "The bee talk was very interesting. We learned a lot about worker bees. The queen bee only produces sterile workers until she is about to die, then she creates full males and females who leave to create a new colony!"

Finally, on Friday 18 March 2016, Mr Ben Husband, an experienced nurse working at the Bristol Royal Hospital for Children came to talk about his job. "The talk about the children's hospital was funny and educational. We learned about what nurses do and some of the reasons children come in."

Mrs Hall also organised the Great Big Science Hunt, a competition to collect 75 famous scientists' names hidden around the school and a Just a Minute science talk competition for the students.

## A Calculated Step to further Maths

Students in Year 10 and 11 were encouraged to take Maths further recently as a result of a variety of engaging activities within the Maths Department.



Monday 7 March 2016 started with a visit from Patrick Cobb and Ben Sparks, from The Further Maths Support Programme (FMSP), who were invited to run interactive workshops with Year 10 and 11 students to demonstrate what Maths would be like if they opted to take it further.

Our budding Mathematicians had to make some quick calculations as they competed to answer questions to win points for their team.

The FMSP work with schools and colleges to support and promote the study of AS/A level Mathematics and Further Mathematics. It is supported by the Department for Education and managed by Mathematics in Education and Industry (MEI), an independent educational charity.



Later the same week, four Year 10 students went to The Commonweal School to take part in the Year 10 Maths Fest. The competition provided an enriching and enjoyable activity for students to work together to solve challenging and interesting mathematical problems. The rounds are all designed to test a wide range of mathematical and communication skills.

### **Gonzo Moose presents Great Scott:**

... They bring their latest show to The Bradon Forest Theatre on Friday 20 May 2016 at 7.30pm. Call 01793 773981 to book your ticket.

Mark Dawson, co-writer and performer in Gonzo Moose's Great Scott says, "The best way to explain our shows is as knock about comedies. If you have ever seen a Morecambe and Wise show, they are reminiscent of the swashbuckling often historically based Roman epic or French Revolution sketches they used to do at the end with their special guest. Like those Morecambe and Wise pastiches, our shows are often swashbuckling adventures but with the added element of crossing them with movie genres. So with Great Scott! We present a sci-fi spoof set in the world of Captain Scott expeditions."



### **Students raise money for Sports Relief**

We are pleased to announce over £1000 was raised for Sports Relief on Friday 18 March 2016. Students were encouraged to participate in a variety of activities throughout the day to raise money for the charity. As well as the traditional 'non-uniform day', there were Zumba sessions at lunchtime and a basketball competition. The highlight of the day however must have been the 'Mud Run' that took place in the rural grounds of the school. Students and staff were barely recognisable after sliding to the finish line! Dr Morrison joined a number of brave staff members to run alongside almost 150 students. Head Boy, Ben Etheridge, ran the course four times, setting a great example for his fellow students.

Runner and Assistant Headteacher, Mrs Catherine Chappell, said: "*Kudos to everyone who took part, especially as it was freezing on Friday! Thanks to the PE Team for hosting a great event and I'll definitely run it again next year!*"

### **Purton Baby & Toddler Group**



Every Tuesday and Thursday  
at Purton Village Hall

9am - 11am (term-time only)

Many toys for all ages from babies and toddlers to pre-school children, with snack and drinks for children and adults

Only £2 per adult per session

Contact: 07813 352299



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# Great War Project

## Part 34: May 1916

### Ireland

On 1 May, the leaders of the Dublin rising in Ireland surrendered to the British forces. The British army was cheered by the majority of the population of Dublin for the success in putting down the Rising. However, the actions by the British in the weeks following completely turned public opinion.

Courts martial were held from 2 May, and 90 people were sentenced to death. Fifteen were executed at Kilmainham Gaol by firing squad over the next 2 weeks. Not all of those executed were leaders. The most prominent leader to escape execution was Eamon de Valera, later to become President of the Irish Republic. 1,480 were interned in England.

Those executed became martyrs, and hatred of Britain grew. Sir Roger Casement was tried in London for high treason and hanged at Pentonville Prison on 3 August.

### The Battle of Jutland

Germany's High Seas Fleet under the command of Vice-Admiral Scheer had been contained in Wilhelmshaven by a British blockade for most of the war to date. The German navy wasn't strong enough to engage the entire Royal Navy's Grand Fleet in open water. So, Germany devised a plan to lure out and destroy a part of the Grand Fleet. Success might break the British blockade of Germany's ports and allow their merchant ships to operate.

On 30 May, Scheer ordered a fast scouting group of five battlecruisers under Vice-Admiral Franz Hipper to lure Vice-Admiral Sir David Beatty's battlecruiser squadrons into the path of the main German fleet. Hipper stationed submarines beforehand on the likely routes of the British ships. However, the British learned from signal intercepts that a major fleet operation was likely so, on 30 May, Admiral Sir John Jellicoe sailed his Grand Fleet to rendezvous with Beatty, passing over the locations of the German submarine lines before they were prepared.

Beatty met the German force off the north coast of Denmark (Jutland) much earlier than Hipper had expected but, in a running battle, Hipper drew Beatty's force towards Scheer's main German Fleet. Although Beatty turned back towards Jellicoe's Grand Fleet, he lost 2 battlecruisers from a force of 6 battlecruisers and 4 battleships, against the 5 ships of Hipper's group. The Germans gave chase but were in turn drawn towards Jellicoe's Grand Fleet.

By 6.30 pm, the setting sun back-lit the German forces. Between then and about 8.30 pm, the two fleets fired at each other twice. There were a total of 250 ships between them. 14 British and 11 German ships were sunk, with great loss of



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life. The British had hoped to keep the Germans at sea and continue the battle the next day, but overnight the Germans broke through the rearguard of the Grand Fleet and returned to port on 1 June.

Both sides claimed victory. The Royal Navy lost more ships and twice as many sailors as the German fleet, but Scheer's plan of destroying a substantial portion of the British fleet also failed. Germany's ships, though in port, continued to cause the British to concentrate their battleships in the North Sea to contain them. By the end of 1916, Germany turned to unrestricted submarine warfare and the destruction of Allied and neutral shipping, further alarming the United States of America who believed they had negotiated an end to submarine warfare on 4 May.

The Battle of Jutland, known in Germany as the Battle of Skagerrak (Skagerrakschlacht) was the largest naval battle of the war and the only full-scale clash of battleships. The combined death toll of both sides was around 6,600 men.

### **Purton men mobilised in May 1916**

*To France:*

Francis John Burgess, 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, Wiltshire Regiment.

Robert Stanley Grimes, 29<sup>th</sup> Battalion Canadian Infantry (British Columbia Regiment).

Stanley Frederick Haines, Machine Gun Corps.

Albert James Parsons Salter, Royal Marine Light Infantry.

*to India:*

Reginald Edward Bye, 3<sup>rd</sup> Wessex Brigade, Royal Field Artillery.

### **France**

Vimy Ridge, 8km northeast of Arras and about 7km in length, provides an unobstructed view for tens of kilometres in all directions and was therefore strategically important. The British operating in that sector discovered that German sappers had dug a tunnel network under the ridge to attack French positions by setting off underground explosives (mines) beneath the French trenches. German artillery and trench mortar fire intensified in early May 1916 to deter British counter-tunnelling. On 21 May, German infantry attacked British lines to force them from the ridge. The Germans halted their advance and entrenched their positions. The Canadian Corps relieved the British forces stationed along the western slopes of Vimy Ridge in October 1916. Of this, more in a later issue.

### **Other News**

On 21 May, Daylight Saving Time was introduced in Britain. And on the 25<sup>th</sup>, Universal Conscription was started.

*RICK DIXON*

**OUR FAMILY'S WAR:** We have already received a number of contributions for this feature, for which we are most grateful. If you want to share a memory of your family's life in the Great War, in the forces or the home front, please send it to us at one of the addresses on page 4. The memory doesn't need to be Purton related.

If your Club or Organization's Events are not included in the Diary Pages, contact: Purton Magazine c/o In Touch Services, 115 Pavenhill [mail@purtonmagazine.co.uk](mailto:mail@purtonmagazine.co.uk)

# Purton Magazine 10 Years Ago ...

The May 2006 issue was the first time that your magazine had ventured into a colour cover. Over the last dozen and more years, the

magazine has been blessed with numerous attractive illustrations kindly donated for our front covers and, with the printing skills of In Touch Services, we are usually able to produce an acceptable greyscale reproduction from the artwork supplied.

However, 10 years ago, we were given a very gentle and subtle watercolour by Catherine Pier. Reproducing the light blues and soft yellows – to say nothing of the almost translucent shadows – in greyscale on any coloured thickish paper that we use for front covers simply rendered most of the image indistinguishable. To see the image again in colour, do have a look in our on-line archive, the details of which are in the box below. So, at no extra cost to our loyal readers, we took the plunge and because the idea seemed to have been well received, we continued the practice from time to time when the combination of healthy finances and delicate artworks so allowed.

Inside the magazine 10 years ago, there was a very interesting initiative from the then Chairman of Purton Parish Council for us all to increase our “Pride in Purton.” The basis was the introduction in April 2006 of the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act which allows Councils to issue fixed penalty notices for litter, graffiti, flyposting and dog offences – even to the point of issuing dog control notices. The proposal was that, before adopting such a formal approach, all of us should be encouraged to do our bit by cleaning up our lovely village ourselves in the first instance.

In several – if not all – areas, the idea seems to have had an effect. Quite a few villagers are to be seen on their walks with a plastic bag to collect other, discarded plastic bags and lots of other litter. It really doesn't take much effort, especially if we all were to spend as little as 10 minutes a month and the results could be enjoyed by all of us. After all, we are well known for being a friendly community and keeping the place just a little more tidy helps everyone.

*All past issues from January 2004 (but without advertisements) can be accessed through our on-line archive. Please visit [www.purtonmagazine.co.uk](http://www.purtonmagazine.co.uk).*

## We Record ...

**Memorial Service at St Mary's Church:**

29 March

Hilda Smith (Wheeler)

**Cremations at Kingsdown Crematorium:**

7 April

Alan Webb

*To add your family announcements to this section contact Purton Magazine. Addresses on page 4. We are happy to include births, marriages, deaths, special birthdays and anniversaries, exam successes ...*



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# Purton Historical Society



**The 55<sup>th</sup> AGM - 31 March 2016** was followed by talk by Jacky Parker (Committee member) on "The Flawed Genius of Jan Christian Smuts".

**Finances:** The Society remains financially healthy with a regular membership of around 53.

However, this does not represent the many who prefer not to pay an annual membership fee (now £15 p.a.) but just to attend our lively programme of talks (entry £3.00) and outings.

**The Committee:** After 3 years the following are happy to continue to serve; Tony Neate, Janet Neate (secretary) and Jill Watts. The existing Committee will continue; Marion Hobbs (Chair), John Belt (President), Jim Mosley (Treasurer), Jackie Parker (Programme Secretary), Heather Brimacombe (Minutes Secretary), with Doreen Freegard and Paul Booy. Sadly, we have to record the death of Brian Freegard, but the audio-visual screen of some of the displays in the museum has been set up in the library in his memory. We hope you will view this with pleasure.

**Museum:** Jan Walker has retired as curator of the museum after her Herculean efforts to validate it and get the whole project off the ground. It was officially reopened on 7 March and is well worth a visit. Bethaney Farnham has volunteered to be your new Museum Curator.

**Website:** Our Website is presently being refurbished and will be available soon.

**Graveyard Project:** The Graveyard project is going ahead this year, recording all the graves in the old cemetery. The Maskelyne Tomb will be refurbished this year.

**The Golden Chapter** ... recording the fallen of Purton in last two wars, has been renewed after our efforts, paid for by St Mary's Church and will be on display again in all its glory.

**Some Future Events** - all are welcome

- Thursday 28 April - Village Hall - 7.30 pm: John Samways - *History of Cricklade*.
  - Saturday 7 May - Open Day for all Purton Clubs
  - Thursday 26 May - "Ashdown House" - Speaker John Farrow
- Any suggestions for new subjects or speakers are welcome

**Outings:** Helen Dixon has arranged-trips to Waddesdon Manor (NT) Saturday 18 June (coach from village, book soon). See page 44.

Also Royal Chelsea Hospital 27 September - see page 47.

For further information, please contact Helen on 01793 770648.

Jackie Parker then gave an informative and illustrated talk on Jan Christian Smuts (1870-1950). The eminent but controversial South African politician, soldier, scholar, and imperialist. A man of his time and friend to Gandhi and Churchill alike and a founder of the United Nations. The talk was followed by a lively discussion and a vote of thanks by David Sweet

Watch for more events in future magazines, new members and visitors always welcome.

JILL WATTS, [teddington1940@gmail.com](mailto:teddington1940@gmail.com)

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A commemoration ceremony took place at St Mary's Church on 19 March to remember Captain Mervyn Richardson on the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of his death and 15 other soldiers who also died in the year of 1916, all of whom were either Purton residents or had strong connections with the village.

Captain Mervyn Stronge Richardson was the youngest son of Captain Arthur Percy Richardson and Mrs Ethel Mary Richardson of Purton House. Mervyn aged just 21 years was killed in action when a howitzer shell burst on the line. He is buried in Point 110 New Military Cemetery, Fricourt, France.

His parents donated a bell to the Church in Mervyn's memory. While this bell tolled all 16 soldiers names were solemnly recited by Bob Lloyd in the presence of the Richardson family descendants and residents of Purton Parish.

*MARION HOBBS*

### **Future Dates**

#### **Thursday 26 May, 7.30 pm in Purton Village Hall**

Due to unforeseen circumstances the subject of the May meeting has been changed and we apologise for any inconvenience caused. The subject is now - Ashdown House, Near Lambourn. We welcome back John Farrow who has recently visited us and gave an illustrated presentation on The Canal at Swindon.

John Farrow has just entered his tenth year as a National Trust guide at Ashdown House; a hunting lodge between Ashbury and Lambourn. William Craven, Senior was born in Yorkshire and when a teenager was sent to London to earn his fortune. He became so wealthy that he lent money to the Treasury and after he died in 1618 his family bought lots of land particularly from London westwards, including the Ashdown Estate. It was his son, also called William, who had the House built in the 1660s reputedly to enable his friend Elizabeth Queen of Bohemia, sister of Charles I and known as the Winter Queen, to get away from the plague in London. John will give an illustrated talk about the pair who became very close after Elizabeth's husband Frederick, Elector Palatine, died and Charles lost his head. John will give a brief history of the House and describe what can be seen today. There will also be a light-hearted quiz about places where you may find the Winter Queen today.

#### **Saturday 16 July 2016**

Walking Tour of Cricklade - Further details to follow in June magazine

*TONY & JAN NEATE, tjneate57@gmail.com*

*Telephone 01793 770117*

### **PHS Outing to Waddesdon Manor**

Our Summer outing is on Saturday 18 June, when we shall be visiting Waddesdon Manor, near Aylesbury. You do not have to be a member of the Historical Society to join us on this outing. The cost, for those with National Trust membership will be £12 (please remember to bring your membership card with you on the day). Those without NT membership will cost £26.

For further information or any questions, please contact Helen on 01793 770648. Booking forms will be available at society meetings, from In Touch Services or can be emailed to you if you contact Helen. They can also be found on the Purton Magazine website; [purtonmagazine.co.uk/phs-form](http://purtonmagazine.co.uk/phs-form).

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## PHS Outing to Royal Hospital Chelsea

We shall be visiting the Royal Hospital Chelsea on Tuesday 27 September.

The Royal Hospital is Grade I and II listed and a beautiful legacy left to us by Charles II who had the vision of providing a home for veteran soldiers in the centre of London and which was brought to life by architect Sir Christopher Wren.


The Hospital has been providing a home to the Chelsea Pensioners for over 300 years; anyone who has served as a soldier in the British Army aged over 65 who is on their own is eligible and in more recent times that has included women.

We shall have a 2-hour tour led by a Chelsea Pensioner and some free time.

You do **not** have to be a member of the Historical Society to join us on this outing. The cost is £25.

For more information or any questions please contact Helen on 01793 770648. Booking forms will be available at Society meetings, the information stand at the Library or can be downloaded from the Purton Magazine website [www.purtonmagazine.co.uk/phs-chelsea](http://www.purtonmagazine.co.uk/phs-chelsea)

## Group for Patients - Purton and Green Gable Surgery - G4P

... will be holding a Coffee Morning on Tuesday 7 June from 10 am to 12 noon at Cricklade United Church Hall. All patients are welcome. 

We are inviting a number of health professionals such as Community Nurses, along with volunteer groups like Age Concern, dementia and health promoters, to join us at this event so do drop in for a coffee and have an informal chat with them. There will be a small charge for coffee, biscuits and cake. We also plan to have a Tombola.

This event is to raise money to help support the funding of three new large high-backed chairs with arms for the waiting rooms – one for Cricklade and two for Purton – which will greatly improve the comfort for many patients.

As a result of holding two Vintage Tea Parties in 2015 and 2016 to raise money to help fund a patient check-in system for the surgery, G4P has been able to donate £2000 to the surgery towards this. In the photo presenting the cheque to Kai Howard, the Practice Manager are Gloria Haynes, Treasurer G4P and Sheila Fowler, Secretary G4P.



For those who aren't aware, G4P (Group for Patients) is the patient participation Group for Purton and Green Gable GP Surgery. It was formed several years ago and as well as the recent fundraising runs information evenings for patients on medical matters and serves as a link between patients and the Practice.

G4P will be at Purton Village Centre Open Day – Saturday 7 May from 11 am to 4 pm. G4P plans to have an information table at this event which is being held in the Millennium Hall and promises to be an interesting, informative day. Do come and have a chat and find out more about who we are and what we do.

*SHEILA FOWLER, Secretary*

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## Purton Evening WI [purtonevewi.wordpress.com](http://purtonevewi.wordpress.com)



Our March meeting found us gathering at our usual venue of Purton Village Hall. We all take it for granted that the key has been collected, tables and chairs will be in place, the speaker will arrive and there will be ample supplies of tea, coffee and biscuits and all we have to do is turn up! None of this would happen without the hard work of our officers, committee and members.

This meeting was our AGM when the finances are explained, the president's address is given including word of thanks to those who have fulfilled various roles throughout the past year and a few words from our secretary. Reports from our various groups are given, including the Scrabble team, our skittle players and entertainers. We learn about those who have done a diverse range of courses at Denman WI College and those who have been to National and Federation events.

2015 was a busy year as it was 100 years since the first WI was formed in the UK at Llanfair PG, Anglesey, North Wales on 16 September 1915 and the first one on English soil was at Singleton near Chichester, Sussex. The late 19<sup>th</sup> century had seen the first WI in Stoney Creek, Ontario, Canada starting as a branch of the Farmer's Institute. Our centenary year saw the WI celebrate in style as we welcomed HM The Queen, HRH The Princess Royal and HRH The Countess of Wessex to our Centenary Annual Meeting at The Royal Albert Hall; we were graced with a Royal Garden Party, baton relays, loads of tea parties, champagne celebrations, thanksgiving services, flower festivals, fashion shows etc. At our December meeting Purton Evening WI marked its half century with a party.

The main part of the AGM was to elect our committee and it was quite refreshing to welcome some new blood to the team and say thank you and goodbye to those who had decided to stand down. Barbara Compton was elected as our President and Jane Smith continues as our Secretary.

It is always difficult to predict the length of this meeting so we didn't have a speaker but everyone had been invited to bring their favourite board game. There was much hilarity and laughter and maybe a bit of cheating (certainly not from WI ladies?). A good evening was had by all.

Our next meeting is on 18 May at Purton Village Hall starting at 7.30 pm when Charlotte Popesue will talk to us about 'Keeping Hens in the Garden' and we will have a chance to decorate an egg.

*HELEN DIXON, tel 770648*

## Cricklade Country Market



We produce: pickles and preserves, pies, cookies and cakes, original presents and cards, seasonal plants, fruit and vegetables ... and everything is handmade, home cooked or home grown by us just for you.

Find us at "The Club at Cricklade" On Friday 27 May, 9 am to 11 am. Coffee, tea and cakes available too.

Please call Nikki on 01793 751845 to place an order or for further information about the market. We look forward to meeting you.

Market dates for your diary: 27 May and 24 June.

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## Purton & District Probus Club



**On 8 March**, Bjorn Watson presented a talk on the Second Boer War which was fought from 11 October 1899 until 31 May 1902 between the United Kingdom and the South African (Transvaal/Boer) Republic allied with Boers of the Orange Free State. The British were supported by troops from several areas of the Empire – South Africa, Canada, Australia, New Zealand and India. The war ended with capitulation of the Boers and annexation of the two republics, leading to the Union of South Africa in 1910.

In the 1880s Bechuanaland, modern Botswana, was disputed between the German Colony of Southwest Africa (now Namibia), the Boers of the Transvaal and the British of the Cape Colony. The Berlin Conference, 1884/5, failed to settle the claims. The first attempt by the British to annex the Transvaal (1<sup>st</sup> Boer War 1880-81) failed and tension continued to escalate. Cecil John Rhodes, the major partner in De Beers Consolidated Mines (Kimberley diamonds and gold), who entered politics in 1880, by 1890 became Premier of the Cape. He won the support of the Afrikaaners by distributing “bonds” in the British (chartered) South Africa Company. The discovery of gold near Johannesburg in 1872, had prompted the influx of “Uitlanders”, British and foreign fortune hunters, into the Transvaal in vast numbers. In 1895, with the connivance of Rhodes and gold magnate Alfred Beit, a plan was hatched to take Johannesburg, ending control of the Transvaal Government.

On 29 December 1895, Leander Staar Jameson, the Chief Administrator of the B.S.A. “Chartered Company”, led an army of 600 armed police from Bechuanaland towards Johannesburg, believing that the Uitlanders would rise in support. President Kruger’s army surrounded and captured Jameson’s men before they reached Johannesburg. Rhodes was discredited and was obliged to resign as Premier. Continuing oppression of the Uitlanders by Kruger in the Transvaal and the threat to create an another port to avoid Cape Town, saw the British build-up of its forces along the borders.

In 1898, Orange Free State President, Martinus Steyn called for a peace conference at Bloemfontein. Jan C Smuts, Afrikaaner lawyer and politician, faced Sir Alfred Milner acting for the British. The conference collapsed without agreement consigning South Africa to war. On 9 October 1899 Paul Kruger gave the British Government 48 hours to withdraw its troops from the borders of the Transvaal and the Orange Free State. With no reply forthcoming, the Boers mounted pre-emptive strikes to besiege the British Garrisons of Ladysmith, Mafeking and Kimberley. Lord Roberts brought in more colonial troops and successfully relieved the sieges.

With Natal and the Orange Free State secured, the British invaded the Transvaal and ultimately took Pretoria in June 1900. Now the conflict bogged down for two more years. The Afrikaaners adopted guerrilla tactics and the British, under Kitchener, countered with a burnt earth policy while enclosing the Boer families in concentration camps. It was estimated that 2600 Afrikaaner women and children died of disease and malnutrition. It was the longest and bloodiest conflict since the past 100 years. In May 1902, Jan C Smuts, now a guerrilla leader but also a

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political negotiator, met Lord Kitchener to thrash out terms, and the Boers finally surrendered on 31 May.

Under the treaty of Vereeniging the two States were absorbed into the British Empire with the promise of future self-government. Through 1906 Smuts worked at the new constitution of the Transvaal and later that year elections for the Transvaal Parliament were held. The Afrikaaner "Het Volk" party (*The People*) won with a landslide. Botha became President and Smuts Colonial and Education Secretary. The Union of South Africa came into being in 1910 with an Afrikaaner majority. Our Speaker presented a controversial period of the Empire, a political and pioneering struggle, with heroes and villains in both camps.

**On 2 March**, Gerry Churchard recounted the story of the Battle of Rorke's Drift. In 1874 Sir Henry Bartle-Frere was sent to the Cape Colony as High Commissioner. It was hoped to create a Federation of South African states. The main obstacles were the South African (Boer) Republic and the Kingdom of Zululand with its army. Frere, in October 1878, without Government approval, issued the Zulu King a 13-point ultimatum which included the disbanding of his army, the handing over of minor Zulu leaders who had opposed the British and the readmission of missionaries who had been evicted.

With no reply from King Chetshwayo, Frere sent in Lord Chelmsford to invade and suppress the Zulus. Early on 22 January 1879, half of Chelmsford 3<sup>rd</sup> column was wiped out at Islandlwana, losing 1300 men, 1000 rifles and much ammunition. (This battle was the subject of Gerry's previous talk.)

Rorke's Drift, at the boundary of Natal and Zululand on the Buffalo River, was built as a Missionary Station, used as a Trading Post and now adopted as a Hospital and Supply Depot. When the garrison, (24<sup>th</sup> Regiment of Foot), observed the survivors and the Native Natal Contingent streaming back from the debacle of Islandlwana with the Zulus hard on their heels, they decided to make a stand.

Lt Gonville Bromhead I/C of the Battalion, Lt John Chard, RE's – Maintaining the ferry at the river crossing – and James Dalton of the Commissariat and Transport Department together ordered the creation of a surrounding stockade of wagons and mealie bags to enclose the storehouse, the hospital and a stone kraal. Chard suggested an inner wall of biscuit boxes to give a final redoubt. The battle commenced at about 4.30 pm, 154 British against 3/4000 Zulus. The film "Zulu" tells the story, and Gerry used a short video clip to demonstrate the devastating effect of 3 ranks organised in volley firing. After 11 hours of fighting the enemy withdrew, only to return at 7 am on the 23<sup>rd</sup>, but when the remnants of Chelmsford's column reappeared they faded away.

British casualties were 17 killed and 13 wounded while 351 Zulu bodies were buried, but the total Zulu dead was estimated at more like 600. Eleven VCs were awarded including to the 3 officers mentioned. There has been much debate in the media about those who missed out, but today it's all history. Zulu resistance was not finally overcome until 4 July after three more battles: - Khambula led by Colonel Evelyn Wood, Ginginlovu, 4 April, and finally by Chelmsford at Ulundi. Though honoured by the Queen, Chelmsford was widely criticized for his heavy-handedness. King Chetshwayo was banished to London for three years and Field

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Marshal Lord Wolseley took over in South Africa with a more understanding attitude. Next meeting, 10 May: 10 am in the Red House lounge - Golden Age of Mountaineering.

BOB STEVENS

## Purton & District Gardeners' Guild

After welcoming three new members to our midst, we settled down to enjoy a talk given by Sue Burns on the subject of Batsford Arboretum.



Beginning with a brief history, we learned that the arboretum covers an area of 55 acres of woodland sitting on the edge of the Cotswold hills, close to the market town of Moreton-in-Marsh. It was created in the 1880s by Algernon Mitford, Lord Redesdale, grandfather of the infamous Mitford sisters, after he inherited the Georgian mansion and its 3000-acre estate. He built an artificial water course and stream to the lake, and began the formation of the oriental-themed garden, inspired by his extensive travels to the Far East.

His passion was shared by the 2<sup>nd</sup> Lord Dulverton, an enthusiastic plantsman, who inherited the estate in 1956 and continued the restoration.

He was responsible for setting up the Batsford charitable trust, to ensure that, after his death, the arboretum would continue to be enjoyed as a resource to promote research and education into conservation, gardens and architecture.

Sue explained that as only three full-time gardeners manage the grounds many areas are left to grow wild which only lends to preserve the natural aspect.

Having provided a brief history, her talk continued with the accompaniment of a stunning slide show, providing a tantalising picture of Batsford Arboretum through the year.

In early spring, the magnificent silver birch trees stand amongst drifts of snowdrops, cyclamen, aconites, hellebores and daffodils, whilst the Tibetan cherry tree, just one of the National Collections held at Batsford, dazzles with its amazing mahogany bark and white blossom.

From April to May, over 100 magnolias display their glorious flowers whilst snakeshead fritillaries, alliums and Welsh poppies arrive to replace the early flowering spring bulbs.

In late May, *Davidia*, the beautiful 'Pocket Handkerchief Tree', takes centre stage. Discovered by Father David, one of the first missionaries it's also less commonly known as the Ghost or Dove tree and was planted in 1920. Whilst its flowers are fairly insignificant, they are framed by a pair of white to cream coloured bracts which can be 8-9" long. These give it its common names.

A number of Orient inspired statues adorn the grounds, including the Japanese Rest House, complete with a roof top dragon, reputedly to ward off evil spirits. It bears references and Chinese proverbs to the beauty of bamboo, held in high esteem in the Far East, one proverb translating as 'You can live without meat but you can't live without bamboo'!

As summer arrives, the pure white marble statue representing 'Daphne', who in

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Greek mythology was turned into a laurel tree, is surrounded by wild flowers enticing bees and butterflies to its hidden glade.

In the summer months of July and August the hanging flowers of *styrax japonicum*, and the lime-green leaves of catalpa, the Indian bean tree, provide a welcome sight to visitors amongst drifts of wild flowers.

September heralds the start of the magnificent autumn colour provided by Japanese maples whilst the pink, white and red fruits of the sorbus and the fruits of magnolias add their own blend of colours to the mix.

In October, species crocus and fungi clothe the ground beneath the trees, whilst the Japanese flowering cherries so magnificent in the spring look equally as colourful in the autumn.

And so to winter, when as snow and ice prevail, the arboretum resembles a winter wonderland.

Having whet our appetites, Sue informed us that the arboretum is open every day of the year with the exception of Christmas Day or when wind speeds are in excess of 35 mph.

Leon Slee proposed a vote of thanks to Sue for her splendid talk highlighting her obvious enthusiasm and passion for the subject and judging by the response from members this was a view heartily agreed.

Congratulations to the winners of the competition '5 Daffodils': 1<sup>st</sup> Mary Read, 2<sup>nd</sup> Maureen Griffin, 3<sup>rd</sup> Jill Herbert.

If you would like to join us, we welcome new members and visitors. Our next meeting will be at 7.30 pm on Tuesday, 24 May when our speaker will be Frank Hardy with a talk entitled 'Creating focal points in the garden'. The competition will be 'Photo of a focal point'.

*MARGARET GOODALL, Secretary, tel: 770906*

## Purton & District Guide Dogs

I have made contact with the person in charge of Trade Stand bookings for Cricklade Show, and I was advised that it is going to be primarily a Horse Show now, so we might not have as many people coming by. I have however asked if we can have a stall there to promote Guide Dogs, and was told the request would be made at the next meeting.



Many thanks for your continued support.

*BRIAN DAVIES, for the Purton Support Group*

### DISCLAIMER

Contributions to Purton Magazine are always welcome for consideration on the understanding that the contributor's name and address are known or supplied (but may be withheld from publication on request) and that all related copyright issues have been cleared for publication in this Magazine - especially with those recognisable in any photographs. It follows that opinions expressed in the Magazine are solely those of the respective contributors.

To make the best use of available space, we ask that contributions are written concisely and reserve the right to edit contributions and advertisements.

Advertisements are accepted in good faith and their inclusion does not imply the Magazine's endorsement of the product or service.

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## Running the Bath ...

Back in September 2014, aged 35, I felt I needed to get fit so, as I had enjoyed athletics and cross country running at school, I decided to join a beginners running group in Cricklade. Under the guidance of our brilliant group leader, Sara Cocks-McCracken and, within a couple of months, I had entered my first charity 5k race. I was really starting to enjoy this running malarkey and it had made me realise why so many people do it; the fresh air, the time to think, a chance to enjoy our local countryside, getting fit, meeting people – all without the expensive gym membership.

In March last year I ran my first 10k race, The Mad March Hare, and this was followed by Dauntsey 10k in May and Lethbridge 10k in June. At the end of the summer Sara called me to ask if I would like to lead the beginners group, as she felt she could no longer commit to our weekly runs. Flattered though I was, I had to decline as I had made the decision to take my running to the next level and join a local running club, the Royal Wootton Bassett Hounds. I made some enquiries and found I already knew a couple of the members.

This was the best decision I made; I feel like I now 'belong' to a group of like-minded men and women of all ages and abilities, who enjoy running and all the social gatherings we have too. I've met lots of people who run for all kinds of different reasons, and I've found a great running buddy in the shape of Phil (who also happens to live in Purton!).

When I was running with Sara and the beginners group I started thinking about the childhood dream I'd had of running a marathon in 2018, the year I turn 40. I used to love watching the London marathon on TV and felt so inspired that maybe one day that could be me. So on Christmas day I decided to *carpe diem*, take the plunge and entered the Bath Half Marathon, just to test the water. I was running it for Oxfam, a charity I'd worked for at their Oxford HQ before having my children. At that point I hadn't run further than 7 miles so lots of training was in order, starting with a new year's resolution of ten miles by the end of January. Such was my excitement about running the Bath Half, I did ten miles on my first run of the new year.

Gradually I built the miles up, with regular progress reports on a Wednesday night whilst running with the Bassett Hounds. This was getting serious, I had sought advice from experienced halfers and from Liam at Run Swindon, about everything from training, to what to wear and what to eat.

I had ironed the letters of my name on my Oxfam running shirt, my timing chip was fixed to the laces of my shoes, my number was emblazoned across my front. I was ready ...

Sunday 13 March was a beautiful sunny day and I, with the other 14,999 runners and probably the same number of spectators, descended on the historic city of Bath. At 10 am we walked from the runners' village to our start area. The elite runners were right on the line for the 11 am start but me and the rest of the 'fun' runners were way down Pulteney Bridge. As 11 am approached I discarded my old hoodie (to be collected by volunteers and donated to charity) and with both excitement and apprehension waited for the start gun. It took ten minutes to reach the start line and as I crossed I started my watch and I was off, this was it.

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As I began, gradually getting into a rhythm I tried to relax, focussing on my breathing (and remembering to do it!) and my posture. It was an overwhelming and awe-inspiring sight as I went around the first bend; thousands of people, for as far as the eye could see, doing exactly the same as me, and raising millions of pounds for worthy causes.

The support along the route was fantastic, a real carnival atmosphere. There were children sitting outside the front of their houses banging pots and pans with wooden spoons, live music of all descriptions and complete strangers shouting your name and cheering you on.

I wasn't too bothered about my finish time, I just wanted to get around the course in one piece and find a comfortable pace that I could maintain. I had to put a predicted finish time on my entry form, but having never run that distance before (my longest training run had been 11.6 miles) I just guessed two and a half hours.

I checked my watch at 10k (6.2 miles) and it said 64 minutes which seemed ok to me, so I kept going, knowing I would probably slow a bit on my second lap of the course. So in the spring sunshine I got to the final 5k of the race and dug deep to reach the finish. Despite the spectators shouting 'keep going it's just around the next bend!', that final 5k seemed to go on forever! as I neared the finish I thought back to my first race fifteen months earlier, when 5k was as far as I could run! I spotted a few other Bassett Hounds in the home straight and crossed the line in 2 hours 21 minutes.

I felt a mixture of elation and exhaustion as I queued with the other runners to get our medals and goody bags; my legs felt like lead but I was really happy to have finished my first half marathon.

I'd like to thank all the friends, family and strangers who supported and sponsored me, some of whom donated via my Just Giving page advertised on a poster in Rick's window at In Touch Services. I probably won't get the opportunity to thank you all in person so I just wanted to say how much I appreciated your sponsorship (and let you know how I got on!). My Oxfam fundraising target was £200 and I managed to raise £278, so that's even more clean drinking water, school books, health workers and all the other great things Oxfam do, that I have been able to help with.

And the moral of this story of course is that, if I can do this, anyone can! I'm just a busy mum with a slightly unrealistic goal of running a marathon. Just put your trainers on, open your front door and go, it's as simple as that. And it's even more enjoyable if you can find someone else to go with.

Since running the Bath I've done Devizes 10k, and coming up I have Corsham 10k, the Race for Life, Lethbridge 10k, Broad Town 5 mile, Up Tow Down Flow half marathon (Windsor to Marlow along the River Thames) and The Great South Run, which I'm doing with Purton Brownie leader, Jo Sully. I think it's fair to say that I've caught the bug.

Running isn't for everyone but if you'd like to give it a go, there are lots of local groups that have beginners sessions (often known as 'Couch to 5k'), including the RWB Hounds. Many are free to join and you have a coach or mentor that can help motivate you and give you tips on your technique. Just ask Libbie Sheppard!

*HEATHER PONTING-BATHER*

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## In Touch Services & Magazine Outlets

From 27 May, In Touch Services will be moving from the shop at Pavenhill to our home address. We shall be continuing the printing business with a reduced amount of equipment and will still be able to print, finish and project manage most documents as before. However, we will not be able to offer a walk-in service, nor will we be selling Purton Magazines. The phone number remains 01793 772954 and the email address is [mail@intouchpurton.co.uk](mailto:mail@intouchpurton.co.uk).

Together with Purton Magazine committee, we have arranged that One Stop Shop at 113 Pavenhill will hold a supply of magazines for sale. Since Best One at Lower Square has now closed, Shear Success hairdressers, on the corner of Witts Lane with Station Road, has kindly offered to hold a stock for sale too. We hope to arrange with the Co-op a new sales point there but that is some months off.

## Prayer for Purton

This month the churches in Purton are praying for everyone who lives or works in *Kibblewhite Close, Proud Close, Reids Piece, The Peak, Willis Way, Long Acre, High Street, College Road and Hooks Hill*.

If there is anyone or anything that you would like us to pray for during our Sunday worship, please contact Revd Ian Tweedie-Smith, Revd Judith Wells or Rev. David Perkins. Their contact details can be found on the inside cover of this magazine. You can give as much or little information as you wish. We don't even have to know a name.

### THE FLOODS | *edgeland*s

**Joseph Wright**; a photographer and author of books, has republished his photo book featuring areas of the wooded countryside around his **home village of Purton**.



The book was chosen as an international '**best photobook of 2015**' by photo-eye, as well as featuring images commended in both national and international competitions.

It also includes an extract from '*Common Ground*' by Robbie Cowen, the award-winning nature writer who writes for the Independent and Telegraph.

The 1<sup>st</sup> edition book sold out within 2 weeks of first release but is now released as a 2<sup>nd</sup> edition with all original content, as well as still being hand bound by Joseph himself.

For more details, see Joseph's website: [www.josephwright.co.uk](http://www.josephwright.co.uk)

A **15% discount** is available for readers during May using the code: **floodsmay15**

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## Purton Cricket Club [purton.play-cricket.com](http://purton.play-cricket.com)



Given some drier, warmer weather the club fixtures start on 1 May when the U13's play Steeple Langford at home. A full season of 80 matches will follow and the members hope to see villagers at the ground encouraging the players, especially the youngsters.

We would welcome support at our early fund raising activity, a Race Night, at the Red House on Saturday 14 May starting at 8.30 pm. Anyone wishing to buy a horse in a race please contact me.

The Easter Camp was very successful with 21 players taking part including 3 girls. The enjoyment and enthusiasm was evident and all players improved their skills.

### Fixtures

May 7	2 <sup>nd</sup> XI v Winsley 2	1.00pm
May 14	1 <sup>st</sup> XI v Westbury	1.00pm
May 21	2 <sup>nd</sup> XI v Calne 2	1.00pm
May 28	1 <sup>st</sup> XI v Malmesbury	1.00pm

Junior fixtures not available at time of going to press.

### From the archives

Frederick Lillywhite published 10 volumes entitled "Scores and Biographies" and he listed the following dates of the formation of some of the most famous clubs.

1750 Hambledon Club	1816 Manchester
1760 Sevenoaks Club	1817 Doncaster
1800 Hatfield St Ives	1820 Purton
1804 West Grinstead	1825 Lansdown
1810 Bramshill	1827 Norfolk

*JOE GARDNER*

## Purton Bowls Club

By the time you read this the Bowls Green will be open for another season. As usual we have a very busy schedule, lots of games to fit in and organise. Team selection is hampered by the lack of members again this year, we are down again on last year.

But there is light on the horizon! Come along to the Village Open Day where we will have coaching staff on the green to give you an insight on the game itself, with plenty of members to give advice and talk about how the club operates.

There will be a roadshow supplied by the Bowls Development Alliance which will demonstrate short mat (indoor) bowls, which will actually be outside, a bit confusing that! Never mind the weather is going to be great and we will all have a good time. Clubs Together in Purton offers all the clubs the chance to boost their membership and we are keeping our fingers crossed that you will all turn up.

Bring the family along and see what we have on offer, there will be stalls and sideshows and things to buy, and eat.

*PETER BERRY*





The Bingo night which took place on 2 April was a very enjoyable evening, although not very well attended. Thanks to the Red House for hosting this annual event which saw some much needed funds added to the club coffers.

The Easter Camp was well attended and the children enjoyed improving their skills.

The club members have had their annual spring clean and the courts and pavilion are looking better for it. By the time you read this the Summer League will have started (Monday 25 April) and the courts will be extremely busy with both adults and juniors enjoying their match tennis.

It is never too late to join the tennis club. Tennis is for all ages and abilities. We offer both junior and adult coaching (in groups or individual), cardio tennis, social tennis and league tennis. If you are interested in joining please come along on a Friday Social evening, 6.30 onwards, and give it a go.

NICOLA GARDNER

## New Duke of Edinburgh's Award Centre

A new Duke of Edinburgh's Award Centre is opening shortly in **Royal Wootton Bassett**. This will provide young people in North Wiltshire and Swindon with the opportunity to undertake their own DofE Award. The group will meet on a Tuesday evening and is open to all young people, enrolling Bronze Silver and Gold levels.

This new centre is at **Manor House Enterprise Centre, High Street, Royal Wootton Bassett, SN4 7HH**. It is an addition to the Wiltshire Council DofE service and its start-up has been supported financially by a donation from the Nationwide Building Society.

If you are not familiar with the scheme, the Duke of Edinburgh's Award (DofE), which celebrates its 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2016, is all about the things that young people do in their spare time, and is designed around the interests and non-academic strengths of the individual. You'll gather friendships, experiences and memories that will last a lifetime. It doesn't matter who you are or where you're from, as long as you're aged between 13 and 25. You can choose the activities that motivate you and go on your own personal journey.

Millions of young people in the UK have already taken part in the world's leading youth achievement award – pushing personal boundaries, gaining new skills and enhancing their CVs and college/university applications. If you would like more information about the new Open Award Centre, please email your contact details to [royalwoottonbassett.OAC@gmail.com](mailto:royalwoottonbassett.OAC@gmail.com) and we will reply to your query and give details about our launch evening. Alternatively call 07548 100252 to speak to a leader.

## The Guild of Wiltshire Artists - [www.guildofwiltshireartists.com](http://www.guildofwiltshireartists.com)

... are holding their Summer Exhibition at St Peter's Church, High Street, Marlborough SN8 1HQ from 1 pm on Sunday, 10 July, to 12 noon on Sunday, 17 July 2016. Opening times Monday to Saturday: 10 am - 4.30 pm.

Entry is free.

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## Christian Aid Week

Have you ever wanted to participate in Christian Aid Week but never quite known what to do? Why not come along to our Big Breakfast, In St Mary's Church, at about 9am on Sunday 15 May? You would be SO welcome ... the more the merrier.



All the funds raised will go towards helping our neighbours in Bangladesh who have been flooded out of their homes. Come and help us to help them rebuild their homes on raised platforms of earth to protect them from the rising waters.

### **A box of frogs at the Cakes and Plants Sale on 21 May**

On 21 May, up at the Top Shops, from 8.30 onwards, there will be a sale for Christian Aid. Please come and investigate!

There will be delicious home-cakes and specially prepared plants and seedlings for sale. And, just to add an extra dimension this year, there will be a 'Box of Frogs' Don't worry: no animals will be harmed during this sale!

We have been given a collection of frogs to sell ... some are made of wood, of glass, of brass, of pottery. All need to go to new homes where they will be loved.

All items will be sold to raise money for Christian Aid.

Please come and see us ... and buy your plants and cakes as well as checking out the box of frogs!

### **Christian Aid week in Purton has many familiar activities planned**

Please do come and support us. Throughout the week the little red envelopes will be delivered and then collected up by dozens of volunteers. We are so grateful to them all, especially the Guides who are so enthusiastic ... even when it rains as well!

- Sunday 15      There will be BREAKFAST available for all in St Mary's Church from 9 am - 10 am. Please do come and join us. It is always fun. Stay for Church too - you are ALL welcome!
- Tuesday 17    Curry Evening at Maharajah. Please see Purton Placard and posters for more details. Two sittings. Always a wow!
- Friday 18      Christian Aid Quiz must be in by 10 pm. Phone 771018 for more details of the Quiz.
- Saturday 21    Plants and Cakes stall at Top Shops from 8.30 plus a Box of frogs. Come and find out more
- Sunday 22      Christian Aid Service at the Methodist Church, 10.30. Come and find out more. All are welcome

*More details, contact: LIBBIE: 771018*

## Lent Lunches 2016

Each year we think we can't possibly do better than the last – but with approx 350 lunches served and several kind donations, we have! £1,536 was raised to be divided between Tear Fund and Water Aid.

The organising team would like to say a big thank-you – to our willing band of helpers, to the cake makers for another superb selection of cakes, and to all the friends who came and supported the lunches – another success. Thank you all.

*LINDA, SHEILA, SYLVIA and VAL*

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