

Purton *Magazine*



Shoeboxes ready for despatch - see [page 10](#)
photo by Sylvia Freemantle

December 2016 50p

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
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
Health and Wellbeing Champion	Ellen Blacker	07557 922020
Schools and Play Groups:		
Bradon Forest School	Secretary	770570
Playclose Playgroup	Sarah Grigg	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, tel 770077 (for emergencies only, 773031) email: vicarage@stmaryspurton.org.uk</i>	
<i>Curate:</i>	<i>Revd Judith Wells, tel 770627, email judith@judithwells.wanadoo.co.uk</i>	
<i>Wardens:</i>	<i>Sandra Horsnall, tel 770157 Jane Smith, tel 772422</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 1 Garraways, Woodshaw, Royal Wootton Bassett SN4 8LT</i>	
<i>Services:</i>	<i>PURTON See Diary Page in this magazine 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 Church of the Sacred Heart, High Street, Royal Wootton Bassett</i>	
<i>Services:</i>	<i>Holy Days 7.30 pm Sundays 11.00 am Mass 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 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

Back in the August issue we were reflecting on the inescapable fact that democracy had given us what we now know as Brexit, even if the outcome was not what we might have chosen as individuals. In some small way, many Americans could now be having similar feelings. 2016 certainly has been a year of unpredicted outcomes and, although Andy Murray's world No.1 ranking might not have been such a surprise, he certainly has given us something to cheer about.

As expected, this month's magazine is full of cheer for Christmas with information about numerous church events, concerts, parties, quizzes, bazaars and markets in and around the village. It seems that there is enough going on locally that readers who want to use the annual Scouts Post may need to be reminded that the last posting is at 4 pm on Tuesday 13 December. More details of the outlets where Scout stamps can be bought are on [page 29](#) as is the list of towns and villages in the wide delivery area.

Our community's contribution to Operation Christmas Child continues to grow and this year already 421 filled shoeboxes have been collected from Purton. The photograph on the front cover shows 100 of the filled "Go-Boxes" which are being increasingly used as shoes are sold in actual boxes less and less these days. As the article on [page 10](#) reminds us, we should each take a moment over Christmas to think about the children receiving these boxes. We understand that, since 1990, more than 124 million boys and girls in over 150 countries have received a shoebox – such a simple idea but just imagine the impact on each of those youngsters.

Before you get too involved with your own Christmas preparations, please can we remind you that all contributions for the January magazine are required by 10 December so that our magazine distributors can circulate the next issue over the Christmas period.

Thinking of the festive period, there are people who become uncomfortable at the commercialisation of Christmas. On [page 27](#) there is an appeal to avoid the word "Xmas" as that can be read as Christmas without Christ, overlooking what is at the very heart of our celebrations.

In closing, we wish all readers and advertisers the happiest of Christmases and thank everyone - especially all our valiant and vital volunteers - for helping to keep this magazine vibrant and viable.

17

engagements for the
Cricklade Band in the
month before Christmas
- see [page 37](#)

70

attended a Grandparents'
coffee morning at Bradon
Forest school
- see [page 14](#)

>421

filled shoeboxes were
collected from Purton for
Operation Christmas Child
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Magazine Committee

Avril Ainscough, Barbara Compton, John Creasey, Helen Dixon,
Rick Dixon, Sheila Fowler, Sandra Horsnall, Francis Sheppard

Typeset by: **In Touch Services**

Advertising enquiries and copy for contributions

by 10th of each month, please to: Purton Magazine,
c/o In Touch Services, Quarry House, 51 The Hyde, Purton SN5 4EA
tel 01793 772954 email: mail@purtonmagazine.co.uk
(Copy can also be left at 20 Hoggs Lane)

Distribution & Delivery enquiries only:

Sandra Horsnall 01793 770157, or sandra_horsnall@yahoo.co.uk

Other enquiries and comments for the committee to:
The Secretary, 45 Ringsbury Close, Purton SN5 4DF

Also on line at www.purtonmagazine.co.uk

Purton Parish Council News



Office closures for Christmas and New Year

On behalf of Purton Parish Council and staff I would like to take this opportunity to wish you all a very merry Christmas and a healthy happy New Year. Please take time to consider your neighbours or those less fortunate at this time of year and spread the festive cheer. The Office will close on Friday 23 December at noon and re-open on Tuesday 3 January 2017 at 9 am.

Ditch clearance

It is coming up to that time of year where heavy rainfall and leaf and tree debris can cause instant damage to properties and have a major effect on families through flooding. If you have a hedge to the boundary of your property and a ditch after, the rule of thumb is that it is your responsibility to keep it clear unless your title deeds specify otherwise.

Clear ditches allow water to flow and move to the appropriate drainage points. Please consider not only your property but that of your neighbours when carrying out these works.

Neighbourhood plan

For more information on our emerging Neighbourhood Plan check out our website: www.purtonparishcouncil.gov.uk/Neighbourhood-Plan.aspx

Councillor vacancy

The Parish Council has the option to co-opt a Councillor to fill one current vacancy. If you are interested in your community and 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.

December meeting dates

Monday 5 December Planning and Highways

Monday 12 December Full Council meeting

Community speed watch

We are looking for enthusiastic volunteers to undertake training to start the Speed Watch Scheme at Restrop Road. If you are interested, please contact the offices for more information. Training dates are coming up for next year so please, if you think you can support this scheme, get in touch.

Wiltshire Council APPMobile reporting - download our My Wiltshire app

To make life even easier, Wiltshire Council have an app so you can report things like potholes, dog mess, graffiti, litter and street lighting on the go using your smartphone. The MyWiltshire app is available to download at both the App Store (for iPhones and iPads) and from Google Play™ (for Android phones) or from Windows store (for windows phones). You can attach information such as photos or videos and pinpoint the location of your report using the mapping software on your phone.

How to Contact the Parish Council:

Telephone number 01793 771066, email address: clerk@purtonpc.eclipse.co.uk

Website 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 know's", 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 or call 771066.

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

On our web site 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 and sign up today.

Sheila Phillips

Sadly our mum (Sheila May Phillips) passed away quietly on the 20 October after a short illness. To most people she was just a normal housewife, but to anyone who got to know her it soon became apparent that inside was a person who was very driven and extremely practical.

Her father died when she was quite young and she had to shoulder a lot of responsibility. Our grandmother was not only mother to mum but also had twins, one who died shortly after birth, the other, Stafford, a few years later.

Before our dad came along, she lived in Blacklands with her mum (Elsie Selwood) and uncle Harry (Henry Bowden, Gran's brother who worked for Mr Wells at Pavenhill Farm).

After school she worked at the lingerie counter of Anstey's Department Store. She was shrewd and conscientious, so much so that they offered her the chance to become a Buyer. That job would have meant spending a lot of time away from home and so she refused. It was just after this that she met Dad (John). He worked for Tydemans and was sent there to paint the place. Needless to say, romance blossomed over the stockings counter.

Mum was a natural born manager, if a job needed doing then she would do it. Although not particularly sentimental, she was kind and caring. She gave money to a multitude of charities, everything from the Donkey Sanctuary to Prospect Hospice.

She was well known for helping out her elderly relatives and neighbours, and was well-liked by all those around her. She did a superb job of looking after our Dad right up until he passed away, and no doubt this contributed to her poor health.

She had a phenomenal memory and an encyclopedic knowledge of the village and the people who lived in it. She will be sorely missed by all of us.

We would like to thank everyone for their kind words and sympathy cards. Mum's wish was for the funeral to be kept very small with only immediate family present.

We hope that no one is offended, we simply feel that it is right to honour Mum's wishes.

STEVE, MAXINE and our families

Mrs Inez Gale

I first met Inez when David and I moved to Purton together with our two young boys, in 1969. Inez and Mike with their two daughters Amanda and Cate lived around the corner from us in Vastern Close and Inez and I became firm friends, helping each other with baby sitting and joining various clubs and societies, also helping at the luncheon club.

As the years went by we became Founder Members of PADS, having great fun with the various roles in plays and pantos as well as helping with back stage duties.

I have such fond memories of my friendship with Inez that included in our working life becoming entwined, with myself at Purton Library and Inez following the service at Wootton Bassett and Cricklade.

Inez was always ready to help people and, after Mike died, Inez moved to Norbury Court, where she would always help her neighbours and friends.

There are so many occasions that I recall where Inez featured strongly in my life especially enjoying social occasions getting together with our friends Pam and Theo to play Rummycub.

At her funeral, there were so many people who had known her, and Judith gave a lovely service recalling fond memories of her life. I feel blessed to have been Inez's friend and my thoughts go out to Amanda, Cate all the family.

ANNE SWEET

Obituaries

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

Coffee and Cake for your hospice's sake

Amy Francombe, Community Fundraiser at Prospect Hospice, would like to thank everyone who attended the Information Evening which took place on 2 November in the Village Hall; one of the aims of which was to discuss setting up a fundraising support group in the local area.

Some great feedback and suggestions were given leading to the idea of a monthly coffee and cake afternoon in aid of the local hospice, with the possibility of a one-off larger scale event in the area. Amy is therefore appealing to local residents who would be happy to give a few hours a month to help organise and host these events to please get in touch for a chat on 01793 815142, alternatively you can email amyfrancombe@prospect-hospice.net.

Amy very much looks forward to hearing from you.

The Way of the World

I stopped believing in Santa Claus when my mother took me to see him in a department store, and he asked for my autograph.

Shirley Temple (1928 - 2014)

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.



■ **THANK YOU CARNIVAL COMMITTEE!**
Purton Under Fives Playgroup would like to extend its thanks to the Purton Carnival Committee. After the Carnival this year, we applied for a charitable grant from the Carnival Committee so that we would be able to buy some new books for the children. As a charity, we rely on fundraising/donations and grants so that we can maintain our high

standard of play equipment. Purton Carnival approved our request and have given us £500 to spend on books. This will go a very long way to replacing some much-loved classics, and to getting the latest releases.

Abby Beattie, Administrator

Red House History Response

Having read with great interest the article published in "Reflections" by John Scott I feel I would like to respond to the fine efforts made by John to secure the purchase and the kind consideration given by Miss Russell for Purtonians.

Although I am Chairman of the Red House at present, I write this response as a long-time member and with personal concern over the Red House club's future and without knowledge of my committee members whose first view of this will be the same as everybody else.

In my time as a member (37 years) and Chairman (26 years) I have seen many changes and of course struggles but then again what licensed premises have not had struggles over the last few years?

We have strived for many years to keep the club afloat financially with members now asking how long things can last at its present position with increased bar costs and membership fees on the rise. These members' concerns were echoed when we had 60+ attend our last AGM which looking back was a record attendance by a long way!

The Problem

We have continually tried to convince our Trustees/Parish Council that the problem lies in our premises rent which at the present time is unsustainable and if only John Scott and Miss Russell knew that we now pay £20,000+ per annum rent which is 4 times the total purchase price.

In John's article (Part 4) he says that and I quote "When we were trying to buy the Red House and set up the Centre as a War Memorial the Parish Council of the day did not wish to co-operate". So, I leave you with this thought ... What's new!

Let's hope John's and the villagers' efforts were not in vain all those years ago but sadly as I can say from a place of authority in the Red House that unfortunately we are far from thriving as John concluded in his article.

TERRY CRUMBIE

Anticipation builds for opening of Purton's community café!

Pips – Purton's community café project has been making lots of positive steps forward over recent months. It was fantastic to talk to some of our many supporters at Purton Food Festival at the beginning of November, and we were delighted to be able to introduce the project to enthusiastic new village residents, who missed the initial launch.



A phenomenal fundraising effort, much of which has been organised by Dave and Mary Nettleton, who've successfully pitched our project to all sorts of local grant-giving organisations, but also by generous local individuals who are determined the project should succeed. Our initial fundraising target of £47,000 is now well within our grasp, with over £30,000 raised to date.

Building work at the Purton Club, where the café will be situated, has begun and all being well, the roof will be on our new kitchen by Christmas. This opens up more funding avenues from organisations who give to projects that have already started building work.

As we start planning the opening of this much-anticipated village amenity, we are recruiting volunteers to help with the day-to-day running of the café – from serving food to bookkeeping. Local community involvement will be the key to getting the project off the ground and securing its long-term viability.

We are currently seeking local people who can give whatever time they have available; either weekly, monthly, occasionally or ad hoc, to fulfil the following roles: Café manager, catering manager, finance, DIY, hygiene adviser, kitchen fitting, other skilled trades, administrative work, communications/publicity, laundering kitchen/tableware, cleaning, recruitment of volunteers, and staff training.

This doesn't need to be a huge commitment, just whatever time you feel you can give. This could also include cooking or baking for the café or donating homegrown fruit and veg or eggs, and preserves and conserves for our team of cooks to use. All cooks will need a hygiene inspection certificate, (arranged by the café management) and will be reimbursed for their ingredients.

Not only will the café be a fantastic venue to meet friends or work colleagues, there will also be the opportunity for local artists and crafts people to exhibit and sell their work, or run arts and crafts workshops. How about a Knitter natter group? These are all possibilities and would be a huge benefit to our local community.

If you're a local crafter and would like to get involved please speak to Marie Dempsey email: marie.dempsey@live.co.uk

For any other enquiries about the project and how you can get involved, please contact Dave and Mary Nettleton email: marynettleton@hotmail.co.uk or david.nettleton@hotmail.co.uk or phone 772298.

You can also contact us through our Facebook page: facebook.com/purtoncommunitycafe

If your Club or Organization's Events are not included in the Diary Pages, contact: Purton Magazine c/o In Touch Services, tel: 772954 or mail@purtonmagazine.co.uk

Shoebox News

Operation Christmas Child



At the time of sending this article for print, 421 filled shoeboxes have been collected. There may still be more. At the moment, I do not know where our boxes are going, but will put it in next month's issue. The picture on the front cover of this issue is of 100 filled 'Go-Boxes'. These are available from OCC. They arrive flat packed and are easy to assemble. This year, we had experienced difficulty in obtaining enough 'normal' size boxes and many hours had been spent cutting larger ones to size.

For next year it was decided to buy all 400 boxes. It will also eliminate the cost of paper, glue, tape and many hours of covering. The cost to buy the boxes is £40 per hundred. I mentioned this to several people, and before I knew it, the money had been given to me by one organisation and five individuals, with more offered. One donation was from friends of friends who live in Swindon. I have never met them! So they were ordered and have arrived ready for next year.

Over the years we have been given hundreds of boxes, but I am sure you will agree, they are getting bigger and sometimes now, shoes are purchased without boxes.

Sometime over Christmas, please take a few moments to think about how you helped to provide all those filled boxes we sent, and picture a child opening one. A child who may be living in poverty, homeless, ill, orphaned or lonely. The list goes on. It seems unbelievable that a child can have a box of items, including a packet of sweets and not know what they are for. Never had a toothbrush, tennis ball, toy car, doll, jewellery, pens, pencils, etc.

As a village, let's be proud of what we have achieved for Operation Christmas Child.

SYLVIA FREEMANTLE, Co-ordinator

Runvember

You may have noticed a few people running/jogging around the village each day throughout November, with Runvember labels on their tops. They have accepted a challenge set up to help support rough sleepers in Swindon this winter.

About 270 enthusiastic runners in Swindon and surrounding areas have pledged to run a distance (of their choice) each day throughout the month, and to fill a box with essential items that may be useful to homeless people, sleeping out during this bitter wintry weather. Items for the box include; sleeping bags, coats, shoes, a torch, food, socks, underwear, hats, soap, chocolate, washing kits etc. This event has been set up by Threshold in Swindon. They are grateful for all and every contribution.

So ... 30 days ... 30 runs. Please do check out www.runvember.co.uk if you want to know more. Or Threshold charity www.thl.org.uk

And please remember that over 2,300 homeless people will sleep rough on the streets in the UK tonight.

LIBBIE SHEPPARD

Purton & District Age Concern



By the beginning of December all pensioners in our area should receive an Age Concern £10 Christmas voucher. This year we have produced a list of the local shops and businesses who have agreed to accept our vouchers. Vouchers must be spent between 1 and 31 December 2016. Vouchers will not be accepted by shops and businesses after 31 December 2016. Please treat yourself to a little something extra for Christmas courtesy of Purton Age Concern.

Thank you to all street wardens for delivering the Christmas vouchers and newsletters on our behalf, your help is much appreciated.

Shops willing to accept are vouchers are:

Andrew Hiscock Butcher	New Road Garage	Greatfield Nurseries &
The Angel	The Pear Tree	Garden Centre
The Royal George	Shear Success	Toomers Garden Centre
The Bell Inn, Purton	hairdressers	Lloyds Pharmacy
Stoke	Cyclecare	Maharajah Restaurant
Purton Farm Shop	Four Seasons (chip shop	One Stop Shop
Hair by Val	& Chinese	
Flowers by Sue	takeaway)	

If there are any other local businesses who would like to be added to this list next year, please contact Louise on 772558.

The Christmas tree and lights are up on the Institute Building. Thanks go to Mick Looker and his group of friends for organising this. The Christmas decorations will be up in the Village Hall in time for the main Christmas party. We decorated the Silver Threads Hall at the end of November in time for the less able party.

Our Christmas raffle tickets are now on sale; please contact your street warden or Tony on 770696 if you would like to buy raffle tickets. Remember the final chance to buy our Christmas raffle tickets will be at our Christmas market on Saturday 10 December. The prize draw takes place on Tuesday 13 December at 7.30 pm at the Silver Threads Hall at the start of our committee meeting. Donations of raffle prizes will be much appreciated. Thank you in advance for your support.

We have been offered a second hand stair lift for a straight flight of stairs and also a folding mobility scooter. If you are interested in either of these, please contact your street warden.

FUTURE EVENTS

Christmas Party – Our main Christmas party this year is on Saturday 3 December from 5 pm to 8.30 pm at the Village Hall. The cost is £5.00. Tony M will be providing the entertainment, after the interval the Age Concern ‘choir’ will lead the carol singing. Please contact your street warden to see if any places are still available. To book the minibus please contact Hazel Woodbridge on 770862.

Our Christmas Market will be held on Saturday 10 December from 9 am to 12 noon outside the Pavenhill shops. There will be sausage tasting, cakes,

bric-a-brac, books, mistletoe and other festive items; also it's your last chance to buy our Christmas raffle tickets. *Donations of cakes, bric-a-brac, books & festive items will be much appreciated. Thank you.*

Carols under the tree – This takes place at 7 pm on Christmas Eve under the Christmas tree outside the Institute Building (where the library is). Mark Blackwell and his musicians will provide the music, so come along and join in the carol singing. Mince pies and punch will be served during the interval.

Burns Night Celebration – This will take place on Saturday 21 January 2017 at the Village Hall, the doors open at 6.30 pm. The evening includes a three-course meal, with the haggis being piped in, dancing with a live band and caller and drinks available at the bar. This is always a very popular evening. Tickets cost £20 and are already selling fast. Please contact Jenny Barnes on 770339 to buy a ticket, don't leave it too late or you may be disappointed.

PAST EVENTS

Antiques & Collectables Fayre – This was held on Sunday 16 October. It was a lovely social occasion and well attended, although sadly three stall holders were unable to come on the day due to ill health. Thanks go to all who helped out on the day and to those who made cakes for us to sell; your support is always much appreciated.

INFORMATION

Fire Service & Bobby Van – If you need a smoke alarm fitting or checking please contact the Fire Service on 0800 038 2323. If you need the Bobby Van please call them on 01225 794652.

Luncheon Club – There are still places at the Luncheon Club every Tuesday and Thursday. This is held at the Silver Threads Hall. You get a good hot two-course meal with tea or coffee to follow. Please give Pat Suddaby a call on 771331 if you would like to give it a try. I'm sure you won't regret it. Transport is available if required.

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

T'ai Chi – We hold gentle T'ai Chi exercise classes at 2 pm on Thursdays at the Millennium Hall. The final class of 2016 will be on Thursday 15 December, where mince pies/teas/coffees will be served. The classes will resume on Thursday 5 January 2017. The New Year is a great time to start exercising so if you would like more information about the T'ai Chi classes please contact Louise Tidman on 772558.

The Friendship Club is run by the Silver Threads committee and meets monthly in the Silver Threads Hall. Please contact Jenny Barnes on 770339 for more information. The next meeting will be on Friday 9 December when the group will be having their Christmas lunch at The Bell Inn at Purton Stoke.

Finally, I would like to wish everyone a very Merry Christmas.

LOUISE TIDMAN

Purton & Green Gable Surgery - Group for Patients - G4P

Patient Information Evening – Dealing with our Stressful Lives – Tuesday 11 October. This was a highly informative evening and our speakers, Lauren Goodhead and Fran Griffin, talked those present through the various factors leading to stress and ways of coping with it.



Our Coffee Morning on 17 October was an enjoyable occasion and many of those attending had useful discussions with the health professionals present. We are grateful to Purton Age Concern for supplying two further high-backed chairs for Purton Surgery which are already in use.

We will be holding our third Vintage Tea Party on Saturday 28 January 2017, 3 to 5 pm at Purton Village Hall. These have proved to be popular events so do reserve the date.

Repeat prescriptions

Please remember to allow three working days after ordering a repeat prescription before collecting from the pharmacy. In addition, it is important that you remember to check your stocks of repeat medication well in time to order before going on holiday.

SHEILA FOWLER, Secretary, G4P

Health & Wellbeing Champion HELP!

Hello! This month I am appealing for help. One of my tasks as Health and Wellbeing Champion is to report anything which is just not working quite right or anything which could be improved within our community. Now, I am not a miracle worker and I am not guaranteeing that I can get things changed, but if I know about problems, I can try. My problem is that I can't be everywhere - I do so miss visiting the coffee mornings and lunch clubs! What I need is some eyes and ears in your area who can let me know if there are issues and problems which affect your, or your friends' and families' lives. For example, are there enough carers to visit the more remote villages (trick question, I know there aren't!)? Is the bus service available when you need it? Is there enough going on in your village? Would a new social group make your life better? This is the sort of stuff you will know but may not know where to report it. SO... Could you be the person to help me? I won't be looking for you to attend lots of formal meetings, but rather to expand my current network of lovely people who can be my "eyes and ears" out there and contact me with what's good and what's not. Give me a call for a chat about it – I promise that you won't be press-ganged into more than you want to do!

Meanwhile, as ever, I am around for general help and support on a wide variety of issues including transport, mobility and safety around the home and reducing the feeling of loneliness. Give me a call on 07557 922020 and leave a message. I will get back to you as soon as possible.

As we fast approach the festive season, I would like to take this chance to wish you all a very happy and peaceful Christmas and every good wish for the new year – 2017 already!

ELLEN BLACKER, Health & Wellbeing Champion



Serious Business for Year 11 Students

On Friday 21 October 2016 over 150 Year 11 students prepared their CVs and donned smart clothing ready for the last day before half term. A non-uniform day for the rest of the school, Year 11 students remained focused ready for their mock interviews.

They were interviewed by various business representatives to gain vital experience for life after Secondary School. Students faced interviewers from New College, Swindon College and Wiltshire College, plus companies such as Basepoint, Historic England, Imagine Cruising and Protocal Education as well as ex-Bradon Forest Student, Alix Young, Manager from the local Pear Tree Hotel. It was also warming to see Phil Scott, an ex-Deputy Head come back to the school to take part in the career progression process.



Thank you to the individuals, colleges and businesses for giving up their time in order to make this important careers progression event happen.

The Big Sing

Over 60 new Year 7 students took part in their first Music Concert at Bradon Forest.



Each tutor group chose a song and then used it as the basis for last terms Music lessons. They were then offered the opportunity to perform in their tutor groups as part of The Big Sing, two concerts in one night!

7R1 chose to enhance their performance of Justin Timberlake's, *Can't Stop the Feeling*, by signing the lyrics as well as singing!

7P2 had four students for the first performance and only two for the second. Mia Robinson and Lille Le Page sang *Count on Me*, by Bruno Mars, beautifully. Mr Hutchings, their Tutor, commented: "I was incredibly proud of Mi and Lille. To perform in front of 140+ audience members, in such a small group in their first term is admirable."

All participants earned a certificate, House Point and also got to check off a 'Take Every Opportunity' in their planners.

Head of Music, Mrs Hutchings, said: "The enthusiasm was notable from all the participants. We'd love to have them join the choir! I'm continually impressed with how the standard improves year on year. Well done everyone!"

Thanks to Tom Keen and Emily Musty, Year 10, who compered the evening. Mr Martch-Harry, Head of Creative and Performing Arts, said: "It was really lovely to hear such positive feedback from the audience. We are grateful to have such supportive parents and are looking forward to developing this for next year!"

Students explore world of politics at Houses of Parliament

Thirty-six students from Bradon Forest School took a trip to the Houses of Parliament on Tuesday 1 November 2016. They were eager to explore the world of politics and democracy in more detail after Mr James Gray, Conservative MP for North Wiltshire, had visited Bradon Forest School earlier in the year to meet students to discuss the life of an MP.

Student Robin Wilson said, "We were lucky enough to see some preparations going on for the visit of the President of the Republic of Colombia! There was a real buzz and excitement around the place as they put down the walkway and prepared the Queen's room."

Aspiring engineer, Lisa Hall, Year 9, said, "The tour guide was terrific and I now have more knowledge of the history of politics in Britain."

Robin added: "Yes, it was really interesting to see how the country is run. I definitely think it will help me make an educated decision when I'm allowed to vote in the future."

Assistant Headteacher, Ms Hunter commented, "The school visit was an invaluable experience for some of our more able students. It also got many interested in taking a look inside the Houses of Parliament to see what really happens during a debate."

Law Lecturer returns to Old School

Dan Nield, a lecturer from Cirencester College returned to his old school, Bradon Forest, on Thursday 13 October 2016, to talk to students about studying Law at 'A' Level and beyond. Dan was a student at Bradon Forest School before attending Cirencester College to study Law. He then went on to university and returned to Cirencester College to teach.

Dan had a wealth of information to share and encouraged students to look at Law from a different perspective.

Grandparents' Coffee Morning

Thank you to the grandparents who joined us for our special Coffee morning today. Over 70 guests were welcomed to watch our Year 7 assembly, followed by a tour of the school from their grandchildren. Everyone then re-grouped on the gallery for coffee and biscuits. It was lovely to see so many of our students sharing their new school with family members. It was a great opportunity for some special bonding time, and also a chance for grandparents to share career advice!



A very Happy Christmas to everyone from Purton Churches

I write this with eight weeks to go before Christmas Day. By then I will have eaten too many mince pies and I will have sung nearly every carol in the hymn book. I am anticipating countless school productions, not to mention all the Christmas fairs, Church nativities, coffee mornings and lessons and carols.

Am I dreading it? Not on your nelly. I will love every minute, every song and every child's reluctant bit of acting. And the reason? It will be in all the above and a lot more besides, that the "wondrous story" will be told in song and with joy and imagination. From the lips of children, we will be privileged to hear the 'Good News' that God is with us.

It will be the opportunity that repeats itself every 12 months to get the really important issues and the really important people into clear focus so that at Christmas our relationships with each other and with God may be different, may be better, for His Glory and our Blessing. So, we would like to welcome you to join with us at our Christmas Services

Merry Christmas.

Rev DAVID Methodist Church Minister

If you or any of your family or friends need our prayers please contact:

Revd Ian Tweedie-Smith 01793 770077, email: vicarage@stmaryspurton.org.uk
or Revd Judith Wells 01793 770627 for St Mary's Church.

Or Revd David Perkins 01793 853197 for Purton Methodist Church.

Purton Churches Christmas Services 2016

Sunday 11 December 2016

6.00pm Classic Christmas Carols with Bradon Forest Musicians, and St Mary's School Choir followed by Pies & Punch at St Mary's Church

Saturday 17 December

4.00pm Messy Church Christingle Service for children of all ages at St Mary's Church (Children please bring an adult and an orange!)

Sunday 18 December

10.30am Carol Service at the Methodist Church

6.00pm Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols at St Mary's Church, Candelight Service with St Mary's Church Choir and a Brass Ensemble followed by Mulled Wine and Mince Pies.

Wednesday 21 December

10.00am Christmas Carols at "Coffee and Chat" at the Silver Threads Hall.

Christmas Eve, Saturday 24 December

4.00pm United Village Carol and Nativity Service with the Cricklade Band at St Mary's Church.

11.30pm Traditional Choral 'Midnight' Communion at St Mary's Church

Christmas Day, Sunday 25 December

8.00am Traditional Holy Communion at St Mary's Church

10.30am Family Holy Communion at St Mary's Church

Church Floodlighting

- 15 November St Mary's was floodlit in memory of **Stan Williams** on what would have been his 90th birthday.
Lots of love from all the girls and boy.
- 19 November St Mary's was floodlit in memory of **Duncan Bamford's** birthday.
Always loved and sadly missed by Jean, Gary, Tracey and Howard and family
- 11 December The church will be floodlit in memory of **Laura Mumford** who sadly passed away a year ago.
Always in our hearts.
Sadly missed and loved by all the family.
- 19 December The church will be floodlit for **Elsie Goodings** on what would have been her birthday.
Pete Goodings
- Christmas Eve and Christmas Day St Mary's will be floodlit on 24 and 25 December to wish all Purtonians, their families and their friends, a Very Happy Christmas
- New Year's Eve St Mary's Church will be floodlit on 31 December to welcome in the New Year. A Very Happy New Year to you all.



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.

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

Holy Communion

Those who like a small Holy Communion service on the First Thursday at 10.30 am will find us together with Ian at the Vicarage in December and alternately the next month at 'The Live and Let Live' at Upper Pavenhill with Judith.

This pattern will carry on until May when we will return to worship in the Lady Chapel at St Mary's Church.

Rev. JUDITH WELLS

Prayer for Purton

This month the churches in Purton are praying for everyone who lives or works in *The Fox, The Pry and Collins Lane*.

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.

Purton Diary - December 2016

1	Th	10.30am	Communion at The Vicarage, Hyde Lane
2	F	7.30pm	Purton Historical Society Christmas Social, Silver Threads Hall
3	Sa	11.00am	Purton Peartree Pealers playing at John Lewis
		5.00pm	<i>to 8.30pm</i> : Age Concern Christmas Party at the Village Hall
<hr/>			
4	Su	8.00am	Communion at St Mary's Church
		10.30am	Morning Worship at the Methodist Church
		2.00pm	<i>to 4pm</i> : Purton Under Fives Playgroup Christmas Bazaar, Village Hall
		6.00pm	Evensong at St Mary's Church
6	Tu	2.00pm	Silver Threads Club Carol service led by Rev David Perkins at Silver Threads Hall, all welcome.
7	W	10.00am	"Storytime" at library for pre-school children
		7.30pm	Carnival Christmas Bingo at Silver Threads Hall
8	Th	10.30am	Songs of Praise at The Cedars
		8.00pm	<i>Doors open 7.30pm</i> : Sing 4/4 Community Choir Christmas Concert at Purton Village Hall
		8.00pm	After 8: Christmas Sing along at Cathy's
9	F	9.30am	Age Concern Minibus to Cirencester
		2.00pm	<i>to 4pm</i> : Silver Threads Club Friendship afternoon at The Bell, Purton Stoke
		7.30pm	Wessex Male Choir concert, Holy Rood Church, Groundwell Road
10	Sa	9.00am	<i>to 12 noon</i> : Age Concern Christmas Market at Pavenhill shops
		11.00am	Purton Peartree Pealers playing at John Lewis
<hr/>			
11	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
		6.00pm	Classic Christmas carols at St Mary's Church
12	M	7.00pm	Purton Parish Council meeting at Village Hall - press and public welcome - for other committee dates see page 5
		7.30pm	Royal Wootton Bassett Choral Society Christmas concert at RWB Methodist Church
		7.30pm	St Mary's Fellowship of Women at Methodist Church: Devotional Evening
13	Tu	10.00am	Purton and District Probus at The Red House Club
		11.00am	Songs of Praise at Ashgrove House
		4.00pm	Last date for posting Christmas cards through Scout Post
		8.00pm	After 8 Christmas Sing-along at Cathy's
14	W	2.30pm	Purton Methodist Women's Fellowship at Methodist Church: Christmas poems and monologues
15	Th	eve	Santa comes to Purton - top of village
16	F	9.00am	<i>to 11am</i> : Cricklade Country Market at The Club at Cricklade
		11.00am	Purton Peartree Pealers playing at John Lewis

		2.00pm	Silver Threads Club Christmas Party
		eve	Santa comes to Purton - bottom of village
		7.30pm	Purton Twinning Assoc Christmas quiz, Silver Threads Hall
17	Sa	9.00am	<i>to 11am:</i> Carnival Breakfast with Santa at Purton Club
		4.00pm	Messy Church Christingle at St Mary's Church
		7.30pm	Swindon Choral Society concert, St Mark's Church, Swindon
<hr/>			
18	Su	8.00am	Communion at St Mary's Church
		10.30am	Morning Worship at the Methodist Church
		6.00pm	Festival of Nine Lessons and carols at St Mary's Church
		7.30pm	Cricklade Band Christmas Concert at the Cricklade Club
20	Tu	7.45pm	Royal British Legion at The Red House
21	W		Winter Solstice
		10.00am	Christmas carols at Coffee and Chat at Silver Threads Hall
		2.00pm	Communion at Ashgrove House
		7.30pm	Purton Evening WI at Village Hall
24	Sa	4.00pm	Village carol and nativity service at St Mary's Church
24	W	7.00pm	Age Concern Carols under the tree outside Institute/Library
		11.30pm	Traditional midnight communion at St Mary's Church
<hr/>			
25	Su		Christmas Day
		8.00am	Traditional Holy communion at St Mary's Church
		10.30am	Morning Worship at the Methodist Church
		10.30am	Family Holy communion at St Mary's Church
26	M		Boxing Day
27	Tu		Bank Holiday
		2.30pm	Communion at White Lodge
30	F	12.55pm	<i>to 4pm and 4.50 to 7.15pm:</i> Blood Donor sessions at Village Hall www.blood.co.uk
31	Sa		New Year's Eve
			Final day for using 2016 Age Concern Christmas vouchers


January

3	Tu	2.00pm	New season for Silver Threads Club starts
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Every week

Tu	9.00am	<i>to 11am:</i> Purton Toddler Group at Village Hall (term time)
	12 noon	Luncheon Club at Silver Threads for over 60s
	7.30pm	Bridge Club at the Red House
W	10.00am	<i>to 12 noon:</i> Coffee and Chat at Silver Threads Hall
	6.30pm	Rock Solid at the Methodist Church
Th	9.00am	<i>to 11am:</i> Purton Toddler Group at Village Hall (term time)
	12 noon	Luncheon Club at Silver Threads for over 60s
	2.00pm	<i>to 3pm:</i> Age Concern T'ai Chi at Millennium Hall
	2.20pm	Pram Service for pre-school children at Methodist Church

Moon Phases

 7 December
  14 December
  21 December
  29 December

Great War Project

Part 41: December 1916

The following men with Purton connections were mobilised in December 1916:

To France:

George Durnford, 11th Battalion Australian Infantry Force
Ernest Hesketh Harrison, 8th Battalion East Surrey Regiment

To Salonika:

George Hicks, Royal Garrison Artillery
William Slade, Royal Engineers

Lt. Leonard Dunsford, was born in Purton on 1 April 1889, the eldest son of Arthur and Blanche Maud Mary Dunsford, of Holly Lodge, Purton. He had emigrated to Canada where he enlisted. He was wounded in the thigh at Ypres Salient in April 1916 when he was a Sergeant with the 2nd Canadian Pioneer Battalion. He was fit for service again by November 1916 and transferred to the 4th Canadian Mounted Rifles, with a temporary commission as lieutenant. On 17 December 1916, aged 27, Leonard was inspecting sentry posts of his battalion near Écurie, north of Arras, with another officer. He was struck by an enemy trench mortar bomb and instantly killed. Leonard is buried in Louez Military Cemetery, Duisans.

The Battle of Verdun (the longest single battle of the war) ended on 18 December after 11 months, with the German troops defeated. No one really knows the overall cost in lives and suffering, but estimates vary from French deaths between 156,000 and 162,000, with around 143,000 Germans killed. Those wounded were about 3 times as many. Over a million men were fighting on each side during the conflict. No records seem to be available of the effects on the civilian population of the city, but at least they had some respite until the 2nd battle of Verdun in August 1917, when France made a further push to regain its lost territory.

Politics

On 4 December Herbert Asquith resigned as British Prime Minister to be replaced by David Lloyd George on the 7th. Lloyd George held his first meeting of the new War Cabinet on the 9th and on 11 December, in a coalition government, the full cabinet met for the first time. Lord Derby became Minister for War in place of Lloyd George and Balfour became Foreign Secretary succeeding Lord Grey. The Ministry of Labour was established the same day.

Then on 19 December, the new government instituted National Service, followed quickly by the establishment of new ministries of Food, Pensions and Shipping (22nd) with Lord Davenport being appointed as Food Controller on the 26th.

Changes were made in France too. On 12 December, General Joffre was replaced as Commander-in-Chief (Western Front) by General Nivells. Joffre became a technical military adviser to the government. Then on the 26th, Joffre was appointed as a Marshal of France.

Surrender?

On 12 December, the German, Austro-Hungarian, Bulgarian and Turkish governments all simultaneously handed notes to the United States embassies in their countries. They stated they were ready to negotiate a peace. In response, US President Wilson sent out a note to the allied governments, on 18 December, suggesting talks and asking what their war objectives were. The Central Powers agreed to Wilson's suggestion of negotiations on 26 December while an Anglo-French conference was discussing it in London. The Allied governments rejected the peace proposal on 30 December.

War in the Air: on 22 December, the Sopwith Camel air fighter made its maiden flight, having been designed to counter the German Fokker aircraft.

War at Sea: on 4 December, Admiral Sir John Jellicoe was appointed First Sea Lord, replacing Admiral Sir Henry Jackson.

Greece

While the Allies were trying to pull the official Greek government into the war, there was a Greek attack (1 December) on allied forces that had occupied Piraeus and parts of Athens. The Allied forces withdrew. On 6 December, there was a massacre in Athens of supporters of the Venizelos provisional government by troops of the official government. By the 8th, the Allies were in a position to enforce a naval blockade of Greece and on 11 December they sent a note to the Athens government demanding a complete Greek demobilisation. This was followed up by a demand that Greece remove all its forces from Thessaly, in eastern Greece (14th) which the official government accepted. But on 17 December, the official government issued a warrant for the arrest of Venizelos on charges of high treason. Britain countered by formally recognising Venizelos's provisional government in Salonika the next day.

Mesopotamia

British forces in Mesopotamia commenced operations to recapture Kut-al-Amara on 13 December. On the Ottoman-Egypt border, the British Empire Desert Column occupied El Arish on 21 December during their advance across the Sinai Peninsula. 2 days later, the Desert Column captured the Ottoman garrison at Magdhaba.

Rumania

Rumania's foray into the war continued to do badly with the capture of their capital, Bucharest, on 6 December.

Russia:

In one of the oddest incidents of the war, a pro-monarchist conspiracy was hatched to kill the mystic monk Grigori Rasputin who had been seen as a malign influence on the Russian Imperial Court since he had been allowed to treat the young Tsarevich (crown prince) for haemophilia. Rasputin was believed to have urged the Tsar, via the Tsarina, to make misguided orders for war plans.

On 30 December, one of the conspirators, Prince Felix Yusupov, nephew of Tsar Nicholas, invited Rasputin to the Moika Palace in Saint Petersburg where, supposedly, he would meet Yusupov's wife, Princess Irina Aleksandrovna

Romanova. While there, Rasputin apparently survived being poisoned with cyanide-laced sweets, four bottles of poisoned wine, and a revolver wound through the chest, stomach and liver. Rasputin lurched from the palace and was then shot at again four times by another conspirator, Vladimir Purishkevich, though only one bullet hit. Rasputin never reached the gate. The body made a sudden movement, and a guard placed his revolver on Rasputin's forehead and pulled the trigger. The body was carried back inside, where Yusupov is said to have hit Rasputin in the right eye with his shoe ... just in case.

The body was thrown through a hole in the ice of the Malaya Nevka river but the conspirators didn't weight the body to make it sink and the corpse drifted into an ice mass. No one was ever charged with the murder. Of course, the two 1917 Russian revolutions in January and October probably added fancy to the story!

Other effects of war

Casualties in war are usually attributed to battles and sieges, but on 12 December in the Dolomites of southern Austria, now part of Italy, 100 avalanches in the Isonzo war zone buried 18,000 Austrian and Italian soldiers.

On the western front, manpower was in short supply with every able man used on the front line. On 30 December, the British and Chinese governments agreed a plan to allow employment of Chinese labour in the war areas of France.

A CATCH-UP

While concentrating on Purton's involvement in the Great War, to date, I've not had much chance to write about the bigger picture of what was going on. We've looked at the War in Mesopotamia, Egypt and Africa. Also developments in the Balkans, Russia and the United States, which will become such key elements in the coming year, 1917.

But how did the War on the Western Front get to the situation that we would have found in December 1916 after 2 years and 5 months of conflict? I rather glossed over much of that because there was a lot of Purton and Wiltshire Regiment history to cover. Now, just over half way through the Great War, it is about time to give a bit of a summary.

During August 1914, the German forces advanced quickly through Belgium, capturing Brussels fairly early on. The Belgian army, despite its small size, managed to hold the massive German attack long enough to give France time to mobilise its forces and move them into place.

The British Expeditionary Force was very small – after all we were a naval power not keeping huge standing armies like the continental nations were used to. However, our input was very little, very late and served only to plug a few gaps in the French line. The British Commander-in-Chief, ironically General French, didn't seem to like the French ... nor command. The British defences at Mons were half-hearted at best and II Division on the BEF left flank was all but wiped out when I Division to their right were pulled back instead of supporting them. A few months later, the 2nd Battalion Wiltshire Regiment joined II Division. Had it been earlier, there would have been a lot more Purton deaths to report in August 1914.

In the face of German advances, the French retreated but couldn't keep up with the British retreating even faster. General French wanted to get west of Paris, away from the fighting, and even back to the Channel ports and England. The phase of the War called the Battle of the Frontiers was starting (i.e, the border between Belgium and France). Kitchener, on a visit to the front, laid down the law and General French eventually began to advance again with the subsequent French push ... but painfully slowly.

The Germans continued to push forward towards Paris, Nancy and the heavily fortified city of Verdun. The Germans made what is seen as a terrible blunder by one of their armies, facing Paris, suddenly veering off to the east and leaving their right flank exposed. French forces took the opportunity to attack on 2 fronts splitting the German armies in two, and the BEF slowly wandered into the gap in the middle. The resulting Battle of the Marne saw a full retreat of German forces with massive loss of life. The new German line was formed at the River Aisne where another costly battle ensued.

Since the German forces couldn't now advance straight on to Paris, they fought their way west in what became known as the *Race to the Sea*, in order to secure North Sea and English Channel ports. The result of this was the stalemate that resulted in the trench war including the 1st battle of Ypres. No significant amount of territory was won or lost during the ensuing trench war. By late 1914, both sides had learnt that it was safer to defend that to attack.

Much reinforced and reorganised, the BEF became a more meaningful and respected fighting force during 1915 and 1916.

German forces continued to try to break through at Verdun but were eventually repulsed by French defending forces who eventually took the battle on to an offensive phase.

The Battle of the Somme, in 1916, was planned as a way of easing pressure on Verdun by diverting German forces away from the city, and of recovering lost French territory north of Verdun and east of Paris. This was successful ... but with terrible loss of life and maimed bodies.

As we see in the main article above, the Central Powers were looking for a way out of the War. The Allies had achieved a strategic push-back and didn't want a ceasefire that would consolidate German territorial gains as of December 1916.

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.

Purton Guide Dogs

We have our *January Jumble* booked for Saturday 7 January, 2 pm at Silver Threads Hall. Hope to see you there. Many thanks for your continued support.



BRIAN DAVIES, for the Purton Support Group

Purton Historical Society



On Thursday evening 27 October, more than 50 people met in our village hall to see a video presentation given by Paul Williams (Swindon History Society) entitled "Seen Yesterday - Gone Today" - well-known buildings in Swindon, sadly now gone, for example, The Baptist Tabernacle, James Walker's Jewellers, Montague Burton ("The Tailor of Taste"), and the old Fire Station were just some of the Swindon scene, but were keenly enjoyed by the audience who guessed where they had been and when.

After a break for refreshments we eagerly came back for more. A very enjoyable evening.

Come along to our meetings in the new year - you don't have to be a member (just £3.00) advertised everywhere. Happy Christmas!

JILL WATTS, teddington1940@gmail.com

Future Events Annual Christmas Social, Friday 2 December 2016 at 7.30 pm. Silver Threads Hall, Purton. Musical Entertainment and Carols by 'Bakers' Dozen' Lucky Ticket Draw, Buffet supper – special diets catered for upon request

Bring your own drinks – glasses provided. Tickets for the Social will cost £12 each and are available from:

- PHS monthly meetings
- Jim Mosley, Purton Telephone: 01793 778395
- Purton Museum (open Wednesdays 2 to 5 pm and Saturdays 10 am to 12.30 pm)
- DG'z Creative Hair Design, The Parade Purton Telephone: 01793 770340

Guests are warmly welcomed to join us on this festive occasion.

Purton Museum

The Museum will be closed in December until the spring. Dates will be notified in future magazines.

Thursday 26 January 2017, 7.30 pm at Purton Village Hall, 'The River at War' – Bill King. Further details tba.

Thursday 23 February 2017, 7.30 pm at Purton Village Hall, 'Wreckers' Tales – Ship Breakers of the Severn'.

New Members and visitors always welcome

TONY & JANET NEATE, tjneate57@gmail.com

Tel: 01793 770117

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For further information contact Sandra Horsnall on 01793 770157.

Purton Magazine 10 Years Ago ...

Is it really 10 years ago that Farepak collapsed? We know that it is a fact that companies can go bust from time to time but

Farepak's closure, especially in the run up to Christmas seemed additionally vicious. For those readers for whom Farepak is a new name, it should be mentioned that it was a Christmas savings club. Customers chose Christmas hampers and vouchers many months in advance and then made regular payments usually between January and October in preparation for goods to be delivered in time for Christmas.

It seemed a doubly cruel blow for customers who had literally been banking on some special seasonal treats, then found that not only were those treats not going to arrive but also that all their savings towards them were lost as well. In hindsight it seems that Farepak operated on goodwill, trust and credit. As another Christmas savings club went bust in February 2006, several retailers found themselves out of pocket and asked Farepak for cash up front instead of their usual credit.

At the time of the collapse, Farepak had 120,000 customers who lost a combined total of £40 million and many customers were pensioners and others on low incomes who must have been in complete state of shock. Even two years ago, in October 2014, it was announced that more than 11,000 former Farepak customers had still not collected their share of the £1 million victims' fund.

Then, in the December 2006 magazine there was also an article from Ps and Qs with some seasonal Green Tips about buying Christmas cards, presents and decorations as well as suggestions for food and drink. Rather than repeating all the ideas here, the list can easily be found on page 16 of the magazine web site -- www.purtonmagazine.co.uk/2006-12_dec.pdf.

Finally, on page 7 of the same magazine web site, our then vicar Jane Haslam, sent in an article about the miracle that is Christmas, reminding us all what is at the very heart of Christmas. Each section begins with the same haunting phrase "I am the Mary of your Christmas Cards" and it is a timely reminder of the origins of Christmas as many celebrations become ever more commercialised.

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

Cricklade Country Market

Locally made and grown: Pickles and preserves, pies, cookies and cakes and scones. Original Christmas gifts and cards, seasonal plants, fruit and vegetables. Everything is handmade, home cooked or home grown by us just for you.

Find us at "The Club at Cricklade" on Friday 16 December (please note that this is not the final Friday!) 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.



St Mary's CE Primary School

As we return in Term 2 we look forward to another exciting few weeks, as we head towards Christmas.

This term our Collective Worship value is Forgiveness. We will be looking at how forgiveness is the means by which damaged relationships are restored. As a whole school community we will be looking at how adults and children are helped to acknowledge that we all make mistakes and we all need forgiveness from God and each other.

Staff News

New Governors: We welcome Mrs Charlotte Hooper and Mrs Bonnie Van Zanten-Rice as Parent Governors.

Deputy Head Appointment: Mrs Oakes, our current Deputy Head, has gained a well-deserved promotion and will be leaving us in January to become Head Teacher at Longleaze School. We wish her every success in her new role. Congratulations to Mr Payne who has been appointed as her replacement.

Ms Veale has decided to leave St Mary's at the end of the Christmas term. We will miss her at St Mary's and we wish her well for the future.

Congratulations to Mrs Tew who gave birth to Alisdair Robert on 25 October weighing in at 8lb 6oz. We hope she and her family are enjoying their new arrival.

Year 3/4 Trip to Avebury

On Thursday 13 October, Years 3 and 4 visited Avebury to learn first-hand about the Stone Age. They had a wonderful autumn day to explore the stones and visit the "wishing tree". The staff of the museum provided an informative talk and were impressed with the thoughtful and enthusiastic questions from



the children. The children also explored the ancient burial mound, West Kennet Long Barrow. What an exciting end to their Stone Age topic!

Please note that the Primary School Admissions application process for Sept 2017 is now underway. Applications can be made on line via www.wiltshire.gov.uk or by obtaining a paper copy from the School Admissions Team in County Hall Trowbridge. Deadline for all applications is 15 January 2017.

Should anyone wish to visit the school prior to submitting their application, you are warmly welcome. Visits can be arranged through the school office by phoning us on (01793) 770239 or admin@st-marys-purton.wilts.sch.uk

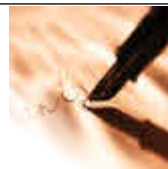
For more information about our wonderful school and all the exciting learning opportunities that take place, visit our school website www.st-marys-purton.wilts.sch.uk

Mrs NAOMI CLARKE, Head Teacher

We Record ...

Congratulations:

Mum and Dad - Dave and Geraldine Waldron, On your Golden Wedding Anniversary on 3 December 2016. With all our love, Therasa, Steve, Maddie and Alex, Mark, Wendie and Georgia.



Birth announcement:

Elena & Joey Alfreche (née Seviour) are pleased to announce the safe arrival of Myles David, born at 5.25 am on Sunday 30 October weighing 6lb 9oz.

Baptism at St Mary's Church:

16 October Archie Tasker

Funerals at St Mary's Church:

14 October Jean(ette) Hannah Kirtland (87)

8 November Inez Iona Gale (84)

Funerals at Kingsdown Crematorium:

4 November Elizabeth Muriel Bunce (86)

15 November Sheila May Phillips (87)

In Memoriam:

17 December 1916 Leonard Dunsford killed in action, aged 27, Écurie near Arras. Buried in Louez Military Cemetery, Duisans and remembered on Purton War Memorial.

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 ...

Purton Methodist Church

It is so nice that the shoeboxes are winging their way to children far away. Just a small box will make their Christmas. Our thanks to Sylvia and her many helpers, also to the kindness of Purton people. Purton are so caring and generous. Thank you to all of you.

We had a very good meeting at our Methodist Women's Fellowship in November led by Martin Pitman from the Leprosy Mission. We learnt such a lot, and then out came the cakes, buns, sandwiches, sausage rolls, to round off a very enjoyable afternoon. Our meeting on 14 December will be taken by Paul Evans with poems and monologues for Christmas. We can be sure of some very humorous poems. We look forward to this date. We start at 2.30 pm. All ladies are welcome.

Details of our Christmas services you will find in the Magazine Diary. Our Sunday services start at 10.30 am and finish when we have a cup of tea – who knows there might even be a mince pie!

We would like to wish you all a very happy Christmas with your family and friends. My personal tip for Christmas is: Don't use the word "Xmas", that means Christmas without Christ.

ROSE STUMP

Purton & District Probus Club



Our speaker on 11 October was **Robin Miller** from Shaftesbury, and the subject, Earth's Greatest Extinctions. It would be an archaeological or history lesson we thought, but no-one imagined that a similar catastrophic event might be threatening today and be already on our doorstep. There have been five great mass extinctions of life in the history of the world, and on each occasion the flora and fauna face three options, move, adapt or die. The causes of these extinctions have been various; the impact of large asteroids, as the one that struck the Yucatan peninsula, can disturb the tectonic plates and initiate volcanic activity. Eruptions of the magma can pollute the atmosphere with gases such as sulphur dioxide, blocking out the sun.

Meteor showers and comet tails can cool the atmosphere, gamma-ray bursts can thin the ozone layer, leading to excessive UV exposure. Evidence of these events are found in many parts: fossils and calderas in America and Africa, craters and lava fields in Russia and India. The Great Ice Ages are believed to have been caused by variations in the shape of our orbit around the sun. The earliest identified mass extinction occurred 444 million years ago when life existed mostly in the sea, the latest was 66 million years ago when the dinosaurs became extinct. It is estimated that 99.9% of all the species that have lived on earth are now extinct, which would indicate that present species have evolved from just 0.1% of the whole.

The 11 miles of the atmosphere in which we live would seem to be very fragile and the activities of man today threatens to destabilise the balance of its elements. Humans are overharvesting both the sea and the land, clearing tens of thousands of acres of forest, which will push up CO₂ and accelerate global warming.

The population of the world, in 2012, was 7.3 billion and rising rapidly. Only 12% of the world's surface is habitable and this is being diminished by rising sea-levels. Robin expressed the view that unless the governments of the world co-operate to reduce pollution, then we could be heading for another mass-extinction or perhaps a world pandemic. Stunned Probus members asked "Is there hope for our children and the future". Robin's reply was that maybe we are intelligent enough to evolve solutions which will control these trends? We can only hope.

Our meeting on the 24th was addressed by **Commodore Ian Gibb** - "From Cadet to Commodore". With experience of 43 years at sea and 20 years plus working with the Corporation of Trinity House of London. He gave a fascinating account of his career, beginning with his command of passenger liners; the Sea Princess, the Canberra and the Oriana, and now as an Elder of Trinity House.

The Commodore told of his varied, hugely responsible and sometimes hilarious experiences at sea. He explained the logistics required when disembarking up to 1900 passengers for an 8-hour stopover at port and the problems of getting the same number back on board for dinner. He also reflected on the impact of these visitors on small communities, e.g. at Skagway, Alaska where the local population is a mere 500. What benefits can cruise liners and passengers bring to such communities? And are there any negative effects? He covered how deaths at seawere dealt with and how to ward off the advances of very determined, rich

American widows! The Commodore gave us a very real insight into a varied and eventful life at sea, an easy delivery incorporating interest and humour.

Purton Probus Club meets on every 2nd and 4th Tuesday of each month in the Red House lounge. Visitors and prospective members welcome. Programme: - 6 December - Presidents lunch, to be held at the Wiltshire Golf and Leisure Hotel, Royal Wootton Bassett. 13 December at 10 am in the Red House lounge, "Members Contributions".

BOB STEVENS

Scouts Christmas Post

As usual, 1st Purton and Lydiard Scout Group and 2nd Cricklade Scout Group will be participating in the Scout Christmas Post. We are selling stamps at Cyclecare, Flawless Floors and Shear Success in Purton and at Toomers Garden Centre, in Lydiard Millicent.



All profits go to run Scouting in the Swindon, Purton, Highworth, Cricklade and Wootton Bassett areas.

Christmas cards must be properly addressed including postcode and only posted in the Special Scout Post Boxes. Stamps are 30p each, a real saving!

Please **DO NOT USE** Scout post stamps on cards posted through Royal Mail post boxes. They are not valid and the receiver of the card will have to pay at least a £1 surcharge!

We can only deliver Christmas Cards. We cannot deliver letters, bills, diaries or calendars. No money or cheques should be sent through this service.

Last Posting is 4 pm on Tuesday 13 December 2016

The cards will be delivered between 18 and 23 December 2016

The delivery area for the Swindon Scout Christmas Post is Swindon Borough and some of the surrounding towns and villages as follows:

Swindon Borough: This includes all areas of Swindon, Badbury, Bishopstone, Blunsdon, Burderop, Chiseldon, Draycott Foliat, Elcombe, Hannington, Highworth, Hinton Parva, Hodson, Inglesham, Langton Park, Liddington, Overtown, Red Barn, South Leaze, South Marston, Stanton Fitzwarren, Stratton St Margaret, Thorney Park, Wanborough, West Leaze, Wroughton.

Other Towns and Villages: We deliver to Royal Wootton Bassett, Purton, Lydiard Millicent, Bushton, Clyffe Pypard, Tockenham, Broad Town, Cricklade, Latton, Ashton Keynes, Shrivenham, Watchfield, Bourton, Idstone, Ashbury and Kingston Winslow.

We DO NOT deliver to any other location.

Thank you everyone for supporting us; especially the local businesses for housing our boxes and selling stamps! A wonderful contribution.

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

OFFERED: Plate glass shelf 56" x 15.5". Tel: 771210

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

PURTON PLACARD

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

Silver Threads Group

at Silver Threads Hall 2 pm
New programme starts
on Tuesday 3 January
Come and join us for entertainment,
a cup of tea and a slice of cake.
For more details
call Jenny Barnes 770339

Purton Under 5s' Community
Playgroup

Christmas Bazaar

Purton Village Hall
Sunday 4 December
2 - 4 pm
Stalls, games, crafts
and meet Father Christmas.

Cricklade Band

"Christmas Present"

with carols and Christmas music
at The Club at Cricklade
Sunday 18 December at 7.30 pm.
Seasonal refreshments Raffle Bar
Tickets £6 from Cricklade Council Office
or from the band rehearsal
(Monday and Thursday at the Club)

PURTON AGE CONCERN

Carols under the tree

Wednesday 24 December at 7 pm
Outside Institute/Library
All your favourite carols with
Mince pies and punch!

PURTON AGE CONCERN **Burns Night Celebration**

Saturday 21 January 2017
At the Village Hall
Doors open at 6.30 pm
Tickets cost £20 and include a
3-course meal
Tickets available from
Jenny Barnes on 770339

Purton Twinning Association

Christmas Time Quiz

Friday 16 December at 7.30
The Silver Threads Hall
£6 per person
to include Ploughman's Supper.
Maximum of 6 per team
Licenced Bar

Purton Twinning Association

Christmas Time Quiz

Friday 16 December at 7.30
At The Silver Threads Hall
£6 per person to include
Ploughman's Supper
Maximum of six persons
per team
Licensed Bar

Royal Wootton Bassett Choral Society

Christmas concert

Monday 12 December
At the Methodist Church, Royal
Wootton Bassett
Music by Vaughan Williams, Bach,
John Rutter, John Tavener,
and traditional carols.
Starts 7.30pm retiring collection
Refreshments

Sing 4/4 Community Choir
present their popular annual

Christmas Concert

at 8 pm on Thursday 8 December
at Purton Village Hall.

Tickets at £8.50 [including light refreshments]
are on sale from Choir members,
or from Pat Hughes on 01793 772382.
Further details: Mary New - 01793 770630.

Concert proceeds will be
donated to local charities.

PURTON AGE CONCERN

Christmas Party

Saturday 3 December

5 pm - 8.30 pm

at the Village Hall

Cost £5.00

Join us for festive fun!

PURTON AGE CONCERN

Christmas Market

Saturday 10 December

9 am - 12 noon

Outside Pavenhill Shops

Lots of Christmas bargains!

2nd Cricklade Scout Troop
are holding their very popular

Christmas Bingo

on Tuesday 13 December
at the Cricklade Town Hall.

Doors open at 6.30 pm

Eyes down at 8.00 pm

Great prizes including lots of
Christmas goodies and
an LCD TV/DVD Combo!
Always a great night out!

Purton Guide Dogs

January Jumble

Silver Threads Hall

Saturday 7 January : 2pm

Wessex Male Choir

Christmas Concert

Holy Rood Church, Groundwell
Road, Swindon SN1 2LU

Friday 9 December

7.30pm

Tickets £15 from 01285 869955

Swindon Choral Society
Christmas Concert

St Mark's Church,
Church Place, Swindon SN1 5EH

7.30pm

Tickets £15 from 01285 869955

PURTON CARNIVAL

Saturday 17th December 2016

Purton Club.



09:00 to 11:00 hrs.

Ticket only event: £2.50 per child.

Includes breakfast & presents.

Tickets will be available from mid-November, a
further announcement on where you can buy
tickets will follow.

Purton Rainbows, Brownies, Guides & Rangers



Rainbows have been feeling autumnal with fireworks crafts and a leaf hedgehog. Their two new adult helpers Wren (Amanda) and Raven (Rebecca) are settling in well and the unit had cakes to celebrate their Young Leader Owl's 18th birthday.

A total of 15 Brownie Promises have been made: Evie, Sophie, Jess, Sicelly, Lucy and Kanna at 2nd Purton Brownies and Heidi, Imogen, Matilda, Daisy (1), Daisy (2), Caitlin, Aoife, Ella and Frankie at 1st Purton – that's a lot of new Brownies! The 2nd Purton Promise celebration included some older Brownies completing their Hostess Badge, with the entertainment including a film quiz, music quiz and a short play.

1st Purton Brownies are working on the Seasons badge and also the Agility badge. They've made reflective strips for their coats, celebrated Diwali, skipped, bounced balls, hula hooped, done sit ups, hopping and balancing.

2nd Purton Brownies have been outside in the dark to collect leaves for collages – the results were a fox, owls, hedgehogs, and a cat.

During October, the Guides finished the Five Senses Go For It challenge. For hearing, they played Chinese Whispers, as well as trying to identify everyday noises (harder than they had imagined!) and became foley artists to create a talking book. For smell, they made air fresheners, had to identify smells (only nice ones!) and created a calendar of smells, as the inhabitants of the Andaman Islands do.

As the nights draw in that doesn't mean the Guides are confined to the hall. They enjoyed a night hike around Purton on a cold, crisp evening. They were then rewarded with hot chocolate and sparklers.

For Armistice Day, the Guides learned about how Guides supported the war effort and made poppy bookmarks.

Rangers have also been out and about, enjoying a treasure hunt around Purton, a trip to Kaspas as well as Incarcerated with Rangers from Melksham. Two teams had to solve logic puzzles in order to 'escape' from the room. The Rangers had a great time and one team even managed to escape!

To recover from the excitement and as part of the Mission Spectacular badge, the Rangers took part in 'The Great Ranger Cake Off' and decorated cakes.

For more information about the units in Purton, either for girls joining or for volunteering, please contact District Commissioner Rachel Mead by phone on 07729 462054 or by email at braydondc@wncounty.org.uk. You can also register interest at www.girlguiding.org.uk/interested.

Find us on Facebook too:

www.facebook.com/GirlguidingNorthWiltsDivision



Rianna Wardle of Purton Guides attended a South West Region event: ICE (International Community Experience), a weekend providing a mixture of community action and an understanding of international guiding. Here's her report from the weekend:

My International Community Experience [ICE] Weekend 28 to 30 October 2016

I went to Deer Park, Cowley, Gloucestershire with 19 other Guides. The other Guides were from Cheltenham, Gloucester, and Berkshire.

We were asked to take “all about me” bags to share with all the group. The house had 3 floors and 2 dormitories. On Saturday morning we took down tents, and in the afternoon we walked to the village church and polished all the wood and the brasses, this gave us our Community ICE badge. When we were walking back we met 3 llamas and I stroked one of them, it was very soft! One of them was called Poppet. Over the weekend we did lots of craft activities to do with world issues. They gave us a badge for this. One of the girls celebrated her birthday on Sunday so we had chocolate cake for breakfast and sang to her. THE FOOD WAS AMAZING!

In February, there will be another weekend in Hampshire for other Guides. Then the ICE leaders will choose 12 girls from each group to go to Ireland in October 2017 where we can get the other half of the ICE badge.

By *RIANNA WARDLE*

Purton Evening WI purtonevewi.wordpress.com

The theme for our October meeting was motor cars, and I think it would be fair to say that many ladies do not always display a great deal of expertise in this area. However we all had a stab at identifying the car badges during our social time. I think the enthusiasm had been inspired by our speaker Alan Nix who told us the story of his family garage business in Swindon, from the initial struggle in the 1950s to relative prosperity in the 1980s. He told us about the many shortcomings of cars in the 50s, the rapid increase in car ownership in the Sixties and on selling a variety of new cars in the Seventies and Eighties.

There were some interesting photographs of cars (mostly black!) from the early days and through to the late 20th century interspersed with wonderful photographs of Swindon triggering that conversation that starts ‘Oh I remember I bought my first car there’ or ‘What happened to the main Post Office that was in Regent Circus?’ Alan very definitely took us on a trip down Memory Lane.

Our December meeting is for members and invited guests but we look forward to seeing you in 2017. Our first meeting of the new year is 18 January - more details next month.

Purton Food Festival

The Food Festival was a great success. A big thank-you to those of you supported us by coming to shop and eat, those who showcased their lovely food (with samples!) and wonderful crafts, the Pips team who helped set up the hall, the puppeteers who entertained the children and the grown ups, and last but not least the WI ladies who



sold cakes and crafts as well as doing sterling work in the kitchen serving copious quantities of tasty homemade soup and more cake! Your support made the event very enjoyable and several people have commented on the buzz and friendly atmosphere in the hall.

HELEN DIXON, 01793 770648

Purton & District Gardeners' Guild

Having negotiated a two-hour journey from Leicester we were delighted to welcome Linda Smith of Waterside Nursery to our October meeting to present her talk on the subject of 'Water for small garden spaces'.



Linda explained that the purpose of the talk was to illustrate how water can be introduced into even the smallest of garden spaces and this she did with the accompaniment of her brilliant photos.

So why should we have water in the garden?

Firstly, for the sound and movement. Linda explained how still water, beside a garden seat, can have a calming effect on your mood allowing for reflection and contemplation, whilst the sound from a waterfall style of feature can be invigorating. Similarly, the sound of water is a real pull, drawing people in to find the source.

It has the added benefit of acting as a magnet for wildlife, providing an environment for birds to drink, frogs and toads to mate and dragonflies to skim.

Water filled containers also allow for the introduction of other plant species into the garden space. The tiniest water lily, *Nymphaea* 'Helvola', just 1" in diameter, will flower freely in a container of still water, provided it has a sheltered, sunny site. Other recommended species for water planting include Iris *Laevigata variegata* and the dwarf bulrush, *Typha minima*.

To ensure that the water is kept fresh Linda emphasised the need for an oxygenating plant to be included in the arrangement.

In a small garden area, Linda advised a simple water feature to avoid a fussy look. Photos of a gravity-fed rill with water falling off the end into a reservoir, an arrangement of ridge tiles set at different angles on a wall, allowing water to spill from one to the other, and a barely discernible water feature set either side of a set of steps, emphasised this point to good effect.

There is no end to the possibilities for producing a simple water feature including timber barrels and galvanised sinks.

Linda then went on to describe how, ten years ago, their nursery had been invited to plant up some containers for a magazine feature. This had proved to be a frustrating exercise when terracotta pots complete with drainage holes arrived on the scene. Before planting could begin it was necessary to patch the holes with butyl liner and adhesive and to seal the porous terracotta pots. This persuaded Linda and her husband to consider designing pots suitable for supporting aquatic plants. From experience, they knew that a simple shape with a wide rim, constructed in fibreglass, both strong and lightweight, would fit the bill.

The problem of working out how to keep plants in position within the sloping sides of the bowl was achieved with the addition of a grid style support, holding the aquatic plants at the correct depth in the water for successful growth.

'And the rest is history' as they say. These containers, along with the aquatic plants from their nursery, now form the basis of their thriving online business, much of its success generated from their appearances at Chelsea flower show where their displays have won them 6 gold medals to date.

Linda's display of three of her containers, one in a red marble effect finish, another with a granite look and the smallest with a blue textured finish, caused a flurry of interest from members as the talk ended.

Congratulations to the winners of the October competition - 1st Janice Simpkins, 2nd Chris Jefferies and 3rd Doreen Freegard with their beautiful displays of 'Leaves and Berries'

As there is no meeting in December our first meeting of 2017 will be on 24 January at 7.30 pm in Silver Threads Hall when we will be holding a brief AGM followed by a talk from Alan Holland on the subject of 'TWIGS' Community Gardens based in Swindon.

Our program of talks for 2017 will feature a variety of subjects including 'Stumperies, ferns and shady friends', 'Keeping hens in the garden' and 'Flowers flamboyant to demure'. With a competition and a raffle this is an enjoyable social evening.

If you would like to join us we meet on the fourth Tuesday of each month at 7.30 pm in Silver Threads Hall. Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

MARGARET GOODALL, Secretary, 770906

Christmas and New Year waste and recycling collection changes

There will be no waste or recycling collections on **Monday 26 December 2016.**



All collections during this week will be one day later than normal, with a collection on Saturday 31 December.

Collection days will return to normal from Monday 2 January 2017.

Garden waste collections will be suspended from Monday 26 December and restart on Monday 9 January.

If you have paid for a garden waste collection you can leave your real Christmas tree alongside your garden waste bin on your first garden waste collection day in January and we will ensure it is composted.



To check your collection days at anytime visit: www.wiltshire.gov.uk/rubbish-collection-days

Normal collection day	Revised household waste, black box, plastic bottles and cardboard collection day	Revised garden waste collection day
Mon 26 December	Tues 27 December	No collections
Tues 27 December	Wed 28 December	No collections
Wed 28 December	Thurs 29 December	No collections
Thurs 29 December	Fri 30 December	No collections
Fri 30 December	Sat 31 December	No collections
Mon 2 January	Collections as normal	No collections
Tues 3 January	Collections as normal	No collections
Wed 4 January	Collections as normal	No collections
Thurs 5 January	Collections as normal	No collections
Fri 6 January	Collections as normal	No collections
Mon 9 January	Collections as normal	Collections as normal

Household recycling centre opening hours

All household recycling centres will be closed from 1pm on 24 December and all day on 25 December, 26 December and 1 January. At all other times normal opening hours will apply, 10am - 4pm, five days per week. Visit www.wiltshire.gov.uk/household-recycling-centres to check which days your local centre is open.

WHAT'S ON?

Swindon Choral Society

... present their Christmas concert at 7.30 pm on 17 December 2016 in St Mark's Church, Church Place, Swindon SN1 5EH.



Musical director Robin Nelson.

Harpist Laurette Pope. Organist Simon Dinsdale.

Music includes Britten's "A Ceremony of Carols", Nelson's "Star" cantata and traditional carols for audience participation.

Tickets £10. Accompanied children under 18 free. Tickets available from www.swindonchoral.org.uk, Swindon Information Centre in the Central Library or from members of the choir.

There will be a retiring collection in aid of 'Dressability'.

Sing 4/4 Community Choir Annual Christmas Concert

is on Thursday 8 December at Purton Village Hall. Tickets at costing £8.50 will include light refreshments and are on sale from Choir members, or from Pat Hughes on 01793 772382. Further information from Mary New on 01793 770630.

Concert proceeds will be donated to local charities.

Wessex Male Choir Annual Christmas Concert 2016

The Choir's annual Christmas Concert will take place at Holy Rood Church, Groundwell Road, Swindon SN1 2LU on Friday 9 December.

The choir will be accompanied by guest artists the Aldbourne Brass Band.



The choristers look forward to welcoming you to a musical evening to start the celebration of Christmas.

The concert starts at 7.30 pm, with doors open at 7 pm.

Tickets are £15 per adult (free for under 16-years, free though a ticket is still required to ensure a seat). Tickets are available from 01285 869955,

tickets@wessexmalechoir.co.uk

or, in Purton, from Rick on 01793 772954.

Please bring a cushion with you for comfort.

For further information visit www.wessexmalechoir.co.uk which has further information on the choir.

New members are always welcome at our rehearsals at Abbey Mead on Tuesday evenings from 7.30 to 9.30 pm.



A festive 'what's on' from the Cricklade Band

We have our Christmas Present at The Club at Cricklade on Sunday 18 December at 7.30 pm.

Everyone seems to like the Christmas party atmosphere! There will of course be all the carols and Christmas music you'd expect to do your part in, and again our BandAcademy will also be taking an important part.

We'll have seasonal refreshments, and a raffle kindly supported by Cricklade traders and businesses. You'll also have the bar available throughout the show.

Entry is by ticket (although you might be able to get in on the night) at the gift of a price of £6 – tickets will be available at the Council Office in Cricklade High Street or from the band at Monday and Thursday rehearsals at the Club, just call in!

In its 129th year the band is ready as usual for a busy festive season. Our diary has details of about 17 occasions between 25 November and Christmas morning when we'll be out and about playing all the familiar Christmas music. We'll be touring the streets of Cricklade, Purton, Ashton Keynes and Latton. Your kind donations during our traditional door-to-door collections will, in addition to the band itself, benefit Brighter Futures which is well-advanced in bringing radiotherapy much closer to home.

As ever, we do it in music but, from everyone in The Cricklade Band – 'We wish you a merry Christmas'.

PAUL HEWER

Carnival News: Still to come in 2016:

December Bingo at the Silver Threads Hall on Wednesday 7 at 7.30 pm. £10.00 for bingo including Flyer Tea, Coffee and Mince Pies.



Santa comes to Purton (FREE Event) from 6pm on Thursday 14 December (Top end of the village) and Friday 15 December (Bottom end of the village). Please see posters, Facebook and Website for more info ... Also pick up your FREE 2017 Purton Planner.

KEVIN LAW, *Carnival Chairman*

Purton Peartree Pealers

The Purton Peartree Pealers will be very busy throughout December, ringing the handbells and raising money for the Prospect Hospice as well as other charities.

The handbell team is practising ready for the Christmas build up. We have been invited to play at John Lewis several times this winter so do come and hear us on 3, 10 and 16 December.

We shall also be playing at various residential care homes; at Royal Wootton Bassett Late Night shopping; and at concerts in Purton and Cricklade.

If you would like to know more about the Purton handbell team please do contact Libbie: 771018. Maybe, if you are interested in having a go yourself, you could think about joining us in the new year?

LIBBIE SHEPPARD

Gaffer's Tales

Do not swat bees! They have a hot spot on their backsides; a sting! If a bee feels threatened, it will sting and if it does, it dies. A wasp can keep stinging, but a bee leaves its sting behind, and tears itself to bits.

I kept bees for about ten years and it was a very interesting time. An uncle of mine had a lot of old bee hives, and offered them to me. I had no knowledge at all about bee keeping, but decided to give it a go!

The hives were a mixture of the old recognisable WBC hives, and the modern National type. The former consisted of an outer layer of wooden sections, and the brood chamber and supers were inside. The National hives were made up of just the brood section and the super. The brood section is a box with frames spaced close together. The frames are made up with a flat piece of wax-like foundation. The bees build up a comb on the foundation, and the Queen Bee lays eggs in all the little cells, and that leads to many more working bees emerging.

The supers mentioned earlier, is the part of the hive where the honey is stored. There is a grid called a Queen excluder fitted between the top of the brood box and the super. This is to prevent the Queen laying eggs in the honey.

So, I was ready to have a go, sent off for a nucleus of bees, and got them into the hive. That's when the fun starts!

Every week I had to inspect the brood chamber for Queen cells. They are made large enough for a Queen to grow and when she is ready, to leave the hive, taking most of the bees with her; a swarm.

All Queen cells should be removed to stop this occurring. When they do swarm, the bees are actually at their most benign state, as they are full of honey for their journey.

To capture a swarm is a bit daunting for a beginner. Firstly, put a sheet on the ground beneath the swarm if possible. Then put a cardboard box or a skep, which is a basket-shaped item, on the sheet. Raise one side of the box a little. Then if the swarm is on a bush or tree, shake the branch so the swarm falls on to the sheet. After a bit of flying around, the bees settle, and make their way into the box or skep. When they are all in, wrap the box up in the sheet, and take them home.

The next step is interesting. The bees need to go into their new home. The best time to do this is in the evening. The best way to do it, is to put a board about 2ft square sloping up from the ground up to the hive entrance. Then with great care, unwrap the box with the bees, and sharply throw the bees out of the box and on to the board. There is a mass of seething bees making their way upwards as is their natural reaction. As long as the Queen goes in, all is well.

Beekeeping is very interesting, but as in everything else, the more you know, the more there is to learn! I enjoyed my experience, until several bees got in through my veil, and stung me quite a lot. Then a cow sat on the honey extractor. Oh well, that's life! Ta ta for now.

GAFFER

