Buckland Parish Magazine
December 2026



Merry Christmas from Buckland

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***** Rev. Pru Dulley is on long-term sick leave.
Please contact a Churchwarden in her absence.

COVER PICTURE

The cover shows the 'old' Buckland church from the 1700's in deep snow, by our very own Everett Leeds. His inspiration is from a sketch of the old church by the artist W. Scott. Thank you Everett!

Parish Letter – December 2026

For the next few months, our Churchwardens and Supporting Priests will, in turn, contribute the Parish Letter for the Buckland & Betchworth magazines.
Thanks to Revd. David Eaton, for contributing this month's letter.

Christmas Carol

We have been fortunate this Christmas to have the Betchworth Operatic and Dramatic Society landmark production of "A Christmas Carol" by Charles Dickens performed in St Michael's at the beginning of December. As I write tickets are selling well (see p.13). It is, of course, the story of Ebenezer Scrooge and his change of heart after he is visited by the ghosts of Jacob Marley, Scrooge's business partner, the ghost of Christmas present and the ghost of Christmas yet to come. When we first meet him, Scrooge is a hard hearted and cynical man but he changes to become a kinder more gentle soul.

It was a cause close to Dicken's own heart because not only was he a prolific author, including the "A Christmas Carol" novella, but also a social reformer. It is in this role he may have come to Brockham and Betchworth. It is speculation but Dickens published a weekly literary magazine called "All the Year Round". He didn't always write the articles himself. However, from his writing it is clear he joined common cause with others who were trying to introduce a new tier in the safety net which helped those who were on hard times. This meant keeping, especially young girls, out of the Workhouse. The Workhouse was the last resort of social care and not the place to go unless you could possibly help it.

In "All the Year Round" for 18 October 1862 we read *"In the hamlet of Brockham, not very far from Dorking, where a pretty rivulet flows into the Mole, and a bridge crosses the smooth river that reflects the old oaks and tall beeches on its bank, there has been established for the aid of Workhouse girls about fourteen years old, another sort of Home. The founder and chief support of it is The Honourable Mrs Albert Way (who lived in Wonham Manor Betchworth). This lady has for the last fourteen years paid active attention to the subject of the education of pauper girls. Bred in the Workhouse, eight out of ten remain essentially paupers, many return again and again,"*

Mrs Way gave evidence to a House of Commons Select Committee and in doing so she joined with others like Dickens who were trying to establish an alternative to the Workhouse. With Ginny I live in part of what was Way House in Brockham which

was known at the time as an Industrial Training School. The School trained orphan girls to go into service and so to find employment and avoid the Workhouse.

Dickens used his fictional writing to promote his social reform agenda. In "Pickwick Papers" the noble and honourable Mr Pickwick is sentenced to a Debtors Prison because of a spurious accusation. Dickens own father had been in a Debtors Prison too. Charles Dickens knew firsthand what this meant and wanted to expose it. He uses the story of Mr Pickwick to do so.

What we see in Ebenezer Scrooge and in Way House and in other of Dickens's novels is a belief in change for the better in people and institutions; change which isn't magic. It isn't a case of waving a magic wand and all will be well. But when inspired belief is combined with practical hands-on action the two often work together for good.

At Christmas we celebrate the birth of Jesus 'in a manger long ago'. This isn't magic either; it was a real birth and a real baby. Jesus came to bring hope to the world; hope that the world could be a better place. That hope has inspired women, men and children down the centuries since then. It inspired Charles Dickens. Other faiths have similar stories to tell.



We know only too well that darkness crowds around us in our world today. The loss of religious faith and practise leaves us without a narrative to interpret that darkness and our lives as a whole. Is Christmas a time to recover a faith that will inspire us and enable us to marry belief and practical action to make the world a better place to be?

David Eaton

A Carol for Christmas

Thoe who wast rich beyond all splendour,
all for love's sake becamest poor;
thrones for a manger didst surrender,
sapphire-paved courts for stable floor.
Thou who wast rich beyond all splendour,
All for love's sake becamest poor

Thou who art God beyond all praising,
stooping so low, but sinners raising
heavenwards by thine eternal plan.
Thou who art God beyond all praising,
All for love's sake becamest man

Thou who art love beyond all telling,
Saviour and King, we worship thee.
Emmanuel within us dwelling,
make us what thou wouldst have us be.
Thou who art love, beyond all telling Saviour
and King, we worship thee

Frank Houghton 1894 - 1972

Church Services - December

Date	St Mary's Buckland	St Michael's Betchworth
6th December Advent 2		10am Morning Prayer *(lay-led)*
13th December Advent 3	10am Iona Tradition Communion *Revd. David Eaton*	[No Choral Evensong in December]
16th December (Wednesday)	7pm Service of Nine Lessons and Carols *Revd. Neil Vigers*	
20th December Advent 4	10am Parish Communion (said) *Revd. Neil Vigers*	5pm Service of Nine Lessons and Carols *Revd. Neil Vigers*
24th December (Thursday) Christmas Eve	4pm Children's Carols by Candlelight *Revd. David Eaton*	5pm Crib Service (the Barn in Church Street) *Fr. Doug Ross*
25th December (Friday) Christmas Day		10am Parish Communion *Revd. Sue Weakley*
27th December Christmas 1	10am Holy Communion (BCP) (said) *Revd. David Eaton*	
3rd January 2027 Christmas 2		10am Parish Communion *Revd. Kate Capper*

Due to the current circumstances of our Rector, the Revd. Pru Dulley, being on long-term sick leave, there could be changes to church services. Please check on our websites and in the Parish Magazines to see if there have been any changes.



CHRISTMAS LUNCH 2026
11 December, 12 noon – Buckland Reading Room

The Buckland Christmas Lunch will be held on Friday the 11th December. Doors open at 12 noon and lunch will be served at 12.30. pm. Lunch will be a traditional Christmas affair with a vegetarian option. If you would prefer vegetarian, please let us know. For catering purposes could you please phone or speak to Liz Vahey on 07710 277413 or Carol Leeds on 01737 247399 **no later than THURSDAY 3rd DECEMBER.**

I am not sure how many years we have been having a Christmas get-together, but it is always great fun and so lovely to be able to meet up with friends to celebrate this happy occasion. Look forward to seeing you on the 11th December.

Carol Leeds

ST MICHAEL'S PILLARS –DESIGNER CLOTHING EVENT
Donations Required

Early in the new year, St Michael's Betchworth will be holding a sale of pre-loved, branded lady's clothes and accessories (handbags, hats, etc). If you are having a clear-out of your wardrobes, please consider keeping these items to donate to the sale in the New Year. Details to follow, enquiries to:

Pam Armitage, armitagepam@hotmail.com

Village Events

DECEMBER

2 to 5 Dec, 7.30pm each night. Play: A Christmas Carol. BODS, p.13
3 Dec, 7pm. Christmas Dinner, Hartsfield Manner, B&B Soc, p.32
5 Dec, 3pm. Christmas Concert. Ladybirds Choir, Dorking, p.31
7 Dec, 7.30pm. Talk: Christmas Feasts across the ages. DLHG, p.31
8 Dec, 6.45pm. Christmas Talk: Bertie Pearce, Arts Society, p33
9 Dec, 7.30pm. Carol Concert, St Michael's Betchworth, B&BCS, p.8
11 Dec, 12 noon. Christmas Lunch (Winter lunches), Reading Room, p.6
11 Dec, 6.30pm. Carols on Buckland Green, Open to all, p.7
20 Dec, 12 noon-2pm. Christmas Drinks, Reading Room, p.32

CAROLS ON THE GREEN
Friday 11 December, 6pm



Carols on Buckland Green

Friday 11 December 2026
Meet at 6pm – Carols from 6.30

Refreshments provided, including mulled wine
Please bring a torch and a seat if needed, along with your Yuletide Spirit
Collection in aid of St Mary's Buckland Churchyard Trust

ALL ARE WELCOME

With Christmas fast approaching, our annual 'Carols on the Green' will take place on Friday 11th December at 6.30pm, in aid of the St Mary's Churchyard and Church Fabric Fund. Once again, festive refreshments, including mulled wine, hot apple juice and seasonal nibbles, will be available. As last year, there will also be an opportunity to 'Make a Wish on an Angel', with personalised angel ornaments hung on the Christmas tree.

The St Mary's Churchyard and Church Fabric Fund was established in 1983 by the late Terence Sanders. The Fund, a registered charity, is dedicated primarily to maintaining our beautiful village churchyard, whilst also contributing to the upkeep of St Mary's Church itself.

This year, we are raising funds for urgent repairs to the churchyard's perimeter wall and fencing, so please give as generously as you can to help preserve this important part of our village heritage.

Please join us on the Green for an evening of festive carols, seasonal refreshments and good company, whilst supporting this very worthwhile village cause. We will gather from 6.00pm, with carol singing beginning at 6.30pm, weather permitting. Please bring a torch, wrap up warmly and bring a chair if you would like to sit.

Everyone is welcome! *Nigel Husband*


BUCKLAND BETCHWORTH
CHORAL SOCIETY
Carols for Christmas
St Michael's Church, Betchworth RH3 7DN
Wednesday 9th December at 7:30
Tickets: £15.00* ...including a mince pie and a glass of wine !
*under 16's are free
Buy tickets from members, on the door
or at www.ticketsource.com
BBCSINFO.ORG

A big thank you and a sad 'good-bye' to JEAN & TREVOR COOKE

Jean & Trevor Cooke came to live in Cliftons Lane, Reigate around 30 years ago. They quickly settled on St Mary's Buckland as their 'go-to' church. They have both taken on several voluntary roles in the church and in the village community, firmly establishing themselves as 'Honorary Bucklanders'.

Trevor has been a sidesman at St Mary's Buckland for several years, welcoming people into our services. He has also been a regular reader of our intercessional prayers. Trevor also served as Treasurer of St Mary's Buckland from 2010 to 2016. In 2020, when St Mary's Church organ required much needed and costly renovation, Trevor stepped in to lead the fund-raising effort and then to manage the contractor. Over £35,000 was collected to fund the organ renovation, which was completed in 2023.

Trevor also joined the Committee of the Betchworth & Buckland Society, spending 5 years as Chairman of the Society. He also liked to play golf and was a regular member at Reigate Heath Golf Club. We will miss Trevor's calm, gentlemanly friendship, good sense of humour and excellent organisational skills.

Jean has spent many years on the flower arranging team and organised several 'Flower Festivals' which were once held biannually and involved a large team effort. She has sung Soprano in our church choir for many years, also helping with organising our choir behind the scenes. When St Mary's choir joined with St Michael's Betchworth, Jean also supported us singing at both churches practically every week that they were 'home' (rather than away on exotic holidays!). She has even found time to be a distributor of Buckland Parish Magazine on Cliftons Lane, a role which we are grateful to Francoise Biles for taking on. Jean has been a member and organiser of the Buckland & Betchworth Choral Society, taking part in many concerts and prize-winning performances at the Leith Hill Music Festival. Jean will be missed particularly for her well-organised leadership, her many genuine friendships and excellent singing.

With their family now focussed in the south-west, they have moved to a new property in Bath. After a prolonged period of matching the sale of their home with the purchase of a new home, this was realised in early-November, albeit a little more rushed than they were anticipating! We will miss them both, in our church and our village community. We wish them well in their new home in Bath, close to Jean's daughter's Rachel and Charlotte, and to their grandchildren. *Ed.*

Trevor's 'Goodbye' … Jean and I have been overwhelmed by the many good wishes we have received on our relocation to Bath. We have been involved in the life of Buckland, Betchworth and Reigate for thirty years and take this opportunity to thank the many people at St. Mary's, St. Michael's, Buckland, Betchworth, The Betchworth & Buckland Society and the Buckland and Betchworth Choral Society, whom we have been pleased and privileged to call friends.

It has been a joy to have been part of a community that welcomed us so warmly in 1996. While we have moved to Somerset to be closer to the larger part of our immediate family, leaving so many connections that are very important to us has been a considerable emotional wrench. However, we take wonderful memories of our time living in the orbit of Buckland, including the marriage of our daughter Rachel at St. Mary's in 2007. Also, the friendships we have been lucky enough to enjoy cannot be eviscerated by geography. We will maintain contact with as many old friends as we can. Our email addresses and mobile phone numbers remain the same.

Again, thank you for all your kind messages and for your friendship.

Trevor and Jean Cooke

The Turkey Shot Out Of The Oven



The turkey shot out of the oven
and rocketed into the air,
it knocked every plate off the table
and partly demolished a chair.

It ricocheted into a corner
and burst with a deafening boom,
then splattered all over the kitchen,
completely obscuring the room.

It stuck to the walls and the windows,
it totally coated the floor,
there was turkey attached to the
ceiling, where there'd never been
turkey before.

It blanketed every appliance,
it smeared every saucer and bowl,
there wasn't a way I could stop it,
that turkey was out of control.

I scraped and I scrubbed with
displeasure,
and thought with chagrin as I mopped,
that I'd never again stuff a turkey
with popcorn that hadn't been popped.

Jack Prelutsky

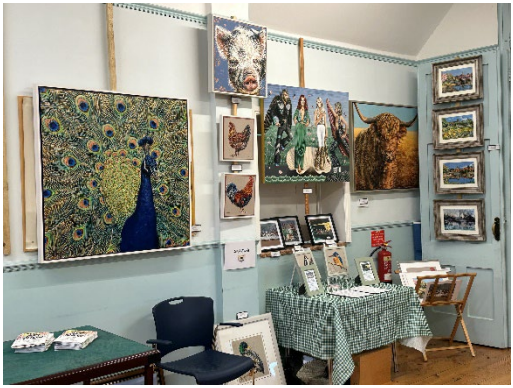
FRIENDS OF ST MARY's BUCKLAND (FOSM)

Review of Buckland ART SHOW on 24-25 October 2026





Nine local artists exhibited their artworks, all completed to a very high standard. Over £2,000 of art sales took place over the two days. Thank you also to many contributors who donated homemade cakes for the enjoyment of visitors.



The net contribution to Friends of St Mary's was £1,002, of which £540 was a contribution from the artists, and £462 contribution from refreshments.

This was a great fund-raising event, and many visitors used the occasion to meet up with friends and neighbours.



A very big thank you to co-organisers, Leigh Banks and Everett Leeds, and to Miranda who organised the contributions of cakes and the rota for the refreshment team.

FOSM Committee

BUCKLAND BELLRINGERS – Bells & Christmas Carols



During the Christmas season many carols are sung and played. How many different carols will you hear or sing this Christmas, with words relating to the sound of bells ringing? Adults may immediately think of 'Ding dong! merrily on high, the bells in heaven are ringing' (G.Woodward, 1924), with the lines 'E'en so here below, below let steeple bells be swungen'. Children may think of 'Jingle bells, jingle bells' (J.Pierpoint, 1857).

Choirs may sing 'Carol of the bells' (music by M.Leontovych early 1900s and words by P.Wilhousky 1936). This carol includes the lines

"Hark! how the bells, sweet silver bells, all seem to say, throw cares away"
'Ding-dong, ding-dong, that is their song, With joyful ring, all carolling'
'Oh, How they pound, raising the sound, O'er hill and dale, telling their tale,
Gaily they ring while people sing.....'

Longfellow's 'I Heard the Bells on Christmas Day' (1863) opens with
"I heard the bells on Christmas Day, their old familiar carols play".

W.Sandys' I saw Three Ships' (1833) includes the lines '
'And all the bells on earth shall ring, On Christmas day, on Christmas day;'

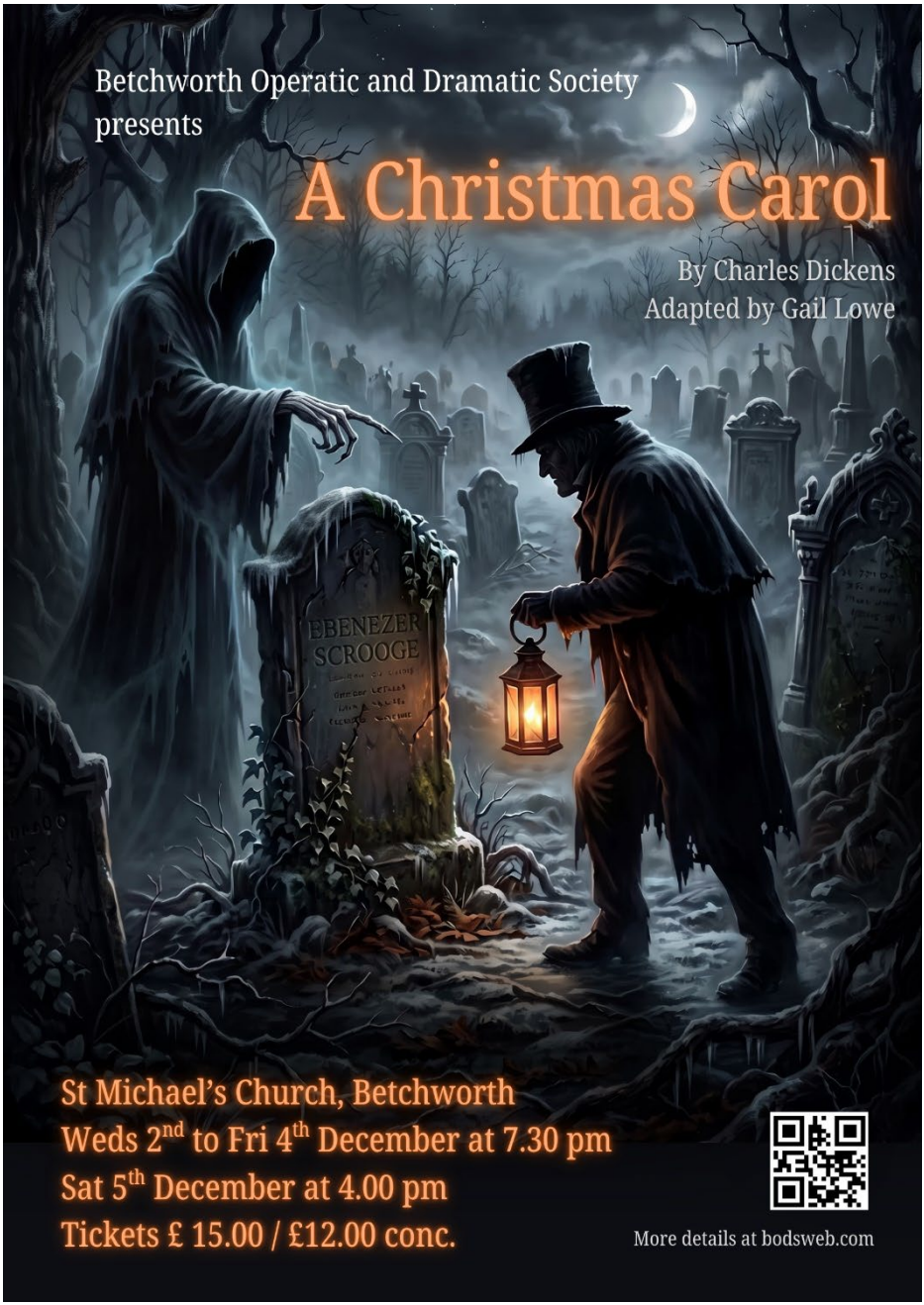
G.R.Woodward's 'Up! good Christian folk, and listen how the merry church bells ring.' (1901) This carol starts and ends simply with the words
'Ding dong ding, ding a dong a ding'.

A more recent work by Rutter 'Christmas Child' (2025) includes the words
'..hear the bells ringing out their message..'
referring to church bells ringing on Christmas morning.

The Buckland bellringers are arranging bands to ring for all the Christmas services. Favourite services are the candlelit carol services at Buckland and Betchworth, as well as ringing on Christmas morning itself at Betchworth, as ringers have done for years past, and will continue to do so for years to come.

Happy Christmas to everyone, from the Buckland bellringers.

Julie Beale


Betchworth Operatic and Dramatic Society
presents
A Christmas Carol
By Charles Dickens
Adapted by Gail Lowe
EBENEZER
SCROOGE
St Michael's Church, Betchworth
Weds 2nd to Fri 4th December at 7.30 pm
Sat 5th December at 4.00 pm
Tickets £ 15.00 / £12.00 conc.
More details at bodsweb.com

Buckland Matters

BUCKLAND PARISH COUNCIL UPDATE



East Surrey Council By-election – Thursday 10th December 2026

On Thursday 10th December a by-election is being held in the Dorking Rural ward of East Surrey Council (ESC) to fill a vacancy that has arisen following the resignation of one of the two ESC Councillors elected on 7th May 2026.

Dorking Rural will comprise the existing parished communities of Buckland, Betchworth, Brockham, Charlwood, Headley, Leigh, Mickleham and Newdigate, a newly parished Boxhill, the non-parished community of Westhumble, and some areas of Tyrells Wood and Givons Grove (south of Leatherhead).

The newly elected ESC Councillor will work alongside ESC Councillor Dineke van den Bogerd, initially serving on the ESC shadow authority until they take office on 1st April 2027 afterwhich they are scheduled to remain in office until May 2031. Surrey County Council (SCC) and Mole Valley District Council (MVDC) will continue to operate as separate entities and our MVDC and SCC Councillors will continue as our Councillors until the 31st March 2027.

If you will not be available to vote in person, between 7am and 10pm, at the Reading Room you have until 5pm on Tuesday 2nd December to elect a proxy to vote on your behalf. It is too late now to apply for a postal vote.

If you intend to vote in person please take a few moments to check you have an appropriate form of photographic identification and remember to take it with you to the polling station. If you need to apply for a Voter Authority certificate the deadline is 5pm on Tuesday 2nd December.

Further information, that includes links to apply for a proxy vote and/or a Voter Authority certificate and a list of candidates is published on both the village website and on the MVDC website.

2027 Annual Parish Meeting

Please keep the evening of Monday 1st March 2027 free to attend the 2027 Annual Parish Meeting. The meeting provides an opportunity for you to hear topical updates… more details to follow in next month's magazine.

Buckland Parish Council owned grit bins

Council currently maintains three grit bins and allocates funds to allow for one replenishment of grit each year. The grit is made available for use on public rights of way and in public spaces close to the location of each grit bin - please do not use the content of these grit bins on private paths or drives or transport it elsewhere in the village.

If you do decide to spread grit, please use it sparingly – SCC Highways advises a small amount will be effective, suggests you use a spade or shovel to spread the grit thinly and evenly across the pavement and a shovel full of grit will be sufficient to treat 20-30 square metres.

Sheena Boyce, Clerk *parishcouncil@bucklandsurrey.org.uk* *01737 448023*

Buckland Village Charity

Concerned about increasing Cost of Living?
Worried how you're going to pay your Gas and Electricity bills?

We can help!!

The Buckland Village Charity can help quickly and easily
(and our gifts won't affect any benefits you may be getting)
All contacts and queries are dealt with in complete confidence

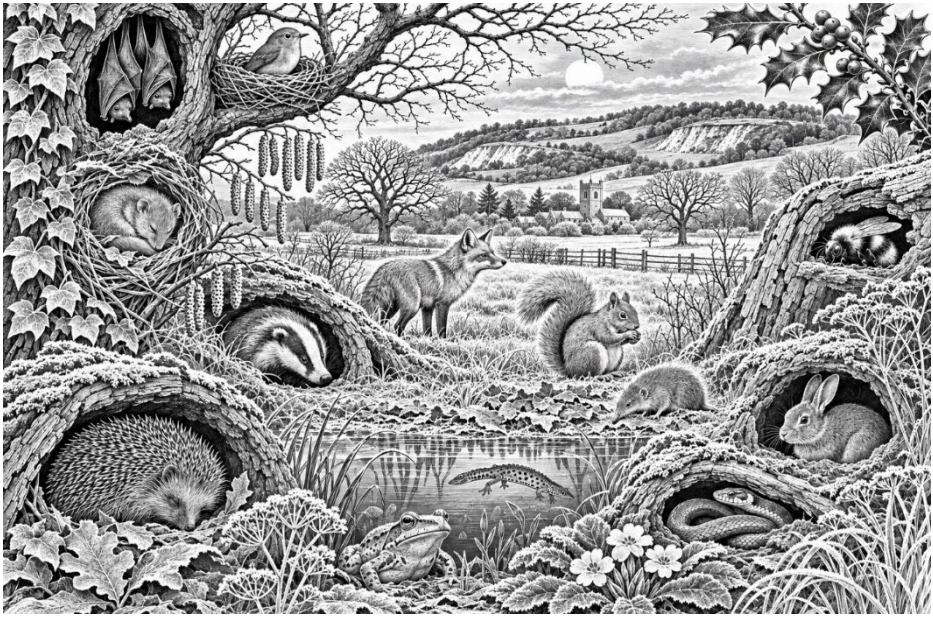
Queries?
Contact Debbie Jones (The Clerk of the Charity)
07701 347351
jones13aldersroad@yahoo.com

NATURE NOTES
December Slumber

On a still December afternoon, with the light failing by four, the parish can seem empty of wildlife. The hedges are bare, the fields quiet, the woods hushed. But much of our wildlife hasn't gone anywhere. It is resting, in more ways than we might imagine – some deeply asleep, some merely dozing, some just lying low to conserve their energy.

It might surprise you, but only three groups of British mammals truly hibernate, and all three can be found in our corner of Surrey. Hedgehogs bed down around November, each in a nest of leaves beneath a bramble, in a log pile or a quiet corner of a compost heap. In deep hibernation a hedgehog's body temperature falls from about 35°C to just a few degrees, and its heart, which normally races at around 190 beats a minute, slows to about twenty.

In older woods that have been coppiced for hazel, the hazel dormouse, golden and huge-eyed, lies curled in a tight ball in a woven nest in a tight ball of leaves and grasses tucked into leaf litter, among roots or at the base of a coppice stool. It will sleep until spring unless the weather is particularly mild.



The many species of bats that roam the 4Bs have tucked themselves into tree holes, church roofs, lofts and the old underground lime kilns and workings of the North Downs. A hibernating bat wakes only now and then, and every waking burns precious fat, which is why it matters so much that they are left in peace.

Many animals we imagine to be sleeping, are not. Badgers spend more time underground in cold snaps, living off their autumn fat, but come out to forage on milder nights. Grey squirrels are busy digging up the nuts they buried in October. Foxes are noisier than ever: those unearthly screams on a winter night are courtship, not murder. And the common shrew has a stranger answer to winter. Unable to store enough fat to sleep, it shrinks. Its body, and even its skull and brain, become smaller to save energy, and grow back again in spring.

Frogs, toads and newts have gone to ground under logs, stones and garden sheds; some male frogs spend the winter at the bottom of ponds, breathing through their skin. Slow-worms and grass snakes are often found together in the warm depths of compost heaps.

Then there are the insects, tucked into the very fabric of our gardens and homes. Each queen wasp and bumblebee is the sole survivor of last summer's colony, waiting in the soil or a log pile. Ladybirds huddle in hollow stems. Peacock and small tortoiseshell butterflies sleep in sheds and lofts, wings closed, like scraps of dark paper. The brimstone – often the first butterfly we see in spring – hangs in the open among ivy and holly, disguised as a leaf.

And what of the plants? They too are sleeping, and the frost helps them do it. Through autumn, trees and wildflowers prepare for the cold by drawing water out of their cells and filling them with sugars, a natural antifreeze, so that a hard frost does them no harm. More than that, many of them need it. The buds of oak, hazel and many fruit trees will not open in spring until they have counted enough cold days through the winter, a safeguard against waking too early in a mild spell. The seeds of primroses, cowslips and yellow rattle lying in the soil will not germinate until the cold has worked on them too.

The parish is not empty in December. It is resting. And as the days lengthen, it will begin to wake.

4Bs Biodiversity Initiative, coordinator - Norman Jackson

ST. JAMES THE LEAST OF ALL
On the sort of dog that a clergyman should own

The Rectory, St James the Least of All



My dear Nephew Darren… *cc. Revd Neil Vigers* 😂

I am absolutely delighted to hear that you are getting a dog. But be careful which variety you choose. First, your dog must be something substantial, but not prone to fighting or making amorous advances towards parishioners' dogs. A mongrel may be all very well for you as a curate, but just think to the future when you are an incumbent. Get a pedigree. It sets a better tone at the Rectory.

It should also be a breed that sheds fur copiously. That will deter your more fastidious parishioners from bothering you at home. If it also drools, that is a bonus. I would recommend you do not get a sheepdog. They become very stressed while rounding everyone up as they roam round your lawn at the annual Summer Fete.

It can be quite useful giving your dog a name that - naturally, by coincidence - is remarkably similar to that of an awkward parishioner. Being able to bawl out commands to 'come', 'sit', and 'stop that', along with the pet's name, can be cathartic to you, salutary to the parishioner concerned and instructive to the rest of your congregation.

Dogs keep every confidence you tell them, are infinitely sympathetic when you moan about the flower arrangers, and they also make an excellent audience when you rehearse your Sunday sermon on them. Just like my parishioners, my Labrador gives me a look of well-meaning incomprehension as I get underway, and within minutes slips into a peaceful doze, which continues until my sermon concludes.

Dogs also provide an excellent excuse for terminating endless meetings, overlong phone calls, parish socials and even visits to the bishop. Even the hardest of hearts cannot stop you from dashing home to give your pet a much needed walkies, even though you would love to continue enjoying yourself with whoever it is you are obliged to flee from. But do not take them to your church council meetings. When difficult decisions have to be made, you can never rely on them voting the way you want. My Labrador will wag her tail and agree with anyone.

Your loving uncle, Eustace

CHRISTMAS DAY
An opinion piece by Father Richard Rohr, Franciscan & Author

In the first 1200 years of Christianity, the central feast or celebration was Easter, with the high holy days of Holy Week leading up to the celebration of the resurrection of Christ.
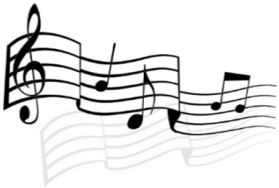


But in the thirteenth century, Francis of Assisi entered the scene. He intuited that we didn't need to wait for God to love us through the cross and resurrection. Francis believed the whole thing started with incarnate love. He popularized what we now take for granted as Christmas, which for many became the major Christian feast. Christmas is the Feast of the Incarnation when we celebrate God taking human form in the birth of Jesus. Francis realized that since God had become flesh—having taken on materiality, physicality, humanity—then we didn't have to wait for Good Friday and Easter to "solve the problem" of human sin: the problem was solved from the beginning. It makes sense that Christmas became the great celebratory feast of Christians because it basically says that it's good to be human, it's good to be on this Earth, it's good to have a body, it's good to have emotions. We don't need to be ashamed of any of it!

With that insight, it's no wonder Francis went wild over Christmas). Francis believed that trees should be decorated with lights to show their true status as God's creations, and that's exactly what we still do eight hundred years later. And there's more: when we speak of Advent or preparing for Christmas, we're not just talking about waiting for the little baby Jesus to be born. That already happened two thousand years ago. In fact, we're welcoming the Universal Christ, the Cosmic Christ, the Christ that is forever being born (incarnating) in the human soul and into history. We have to make room for such a mystery, because right now there is "no room in the inn." We see things pretty much in their materiality, but we don't see the light shining through. We don't see the incarnate spirit that is hidden inside of everything material.

The early Eastern Church made it very clear that the Incarnation of Christ meant not just that God became Jesus, but we had an example of the mystery of incarnation. We're always waiting to see Spirit revealed in a new way, and whenever that happens, we're celebrating Christmas. The gifts of incarnation just keep coming! Perhaps this is enlightenment.

MUSIC IN DORKING



5th at 3.00, Ladybirds choir at United Reformed Church Hall
5th at 6.30, Brockham Choral Society at St Martin's church
16th at 7.00, Dorking Choral Society at St Joseph's church
20th at 1.30, ballet screening at Dorking Halls

December brings a wealth of Christmas music. The Ladybirds choir, conducted by Helena Twentyman, begins with a programme of festive music including many traditional Christmas carols, plus White Christmas, Merry Christmas Everybody by Slade, and A Holly Jolly Christmas to remember Dolly Parton. There will also be the Wassail Song from Yorkshire and the lovely Welsh lullaby All Through the Night. The concert is supporting the work of SERV Surrey and London, also known as Blood Bikes, a charity that helps the NHS by transporting urgent medical supplies to hospitals. There will be tea and mince pies after the concert!

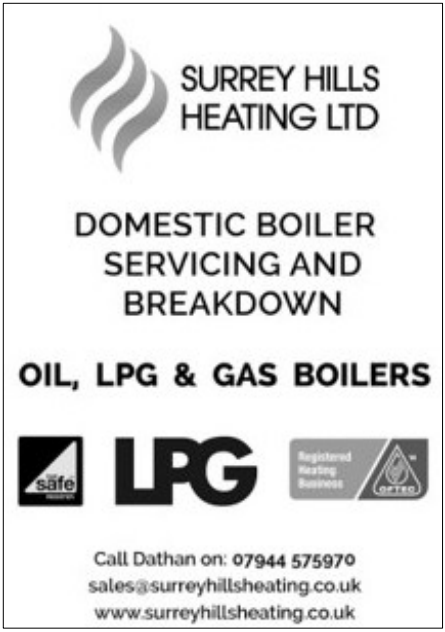
Brockham Choral Society's concert includes James Whitbourn's Missa Carolae and music from Bach's Christmas Oratorio, together with a selection of Christmas carols. They will be joined by children from St Martin's primary school and the Martineau Brass Ensemble. There will be wine and mince pies!

Dorking Choral Society, conducted by Daniel Mahoney, presents its Christmas concert, featuring a mix of carols both familiar and less well-known. The choir will also be singing carols around Dorking during December, including some evenings at The White Horse.

The Dorking Halls reopens in December after major refurbishment work, so we can look forward to the return of concerts at the Halls, beginning in January with the Orchestra of the Swan, followed by three concerts from the Sacconi String Quartet, and of course the Leith Hill Music Festival. Meanwhile, there is an encore screening of Tchaikovsky's Christmas ballet The Nutcracker from the Royal Opera House. Happy Christmas!

Ian Codd


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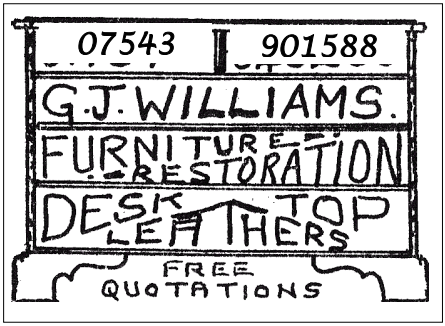
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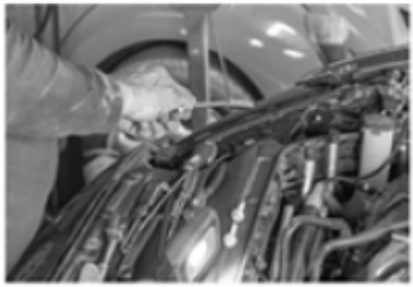
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GARDENING NOTES
Christmas Season

It's already Christmas tree season again! Buy early for the best choice and keep outside in all weathers until you are ready to bring in your prized fresh tree. Keep away from direct heat such as radiators and use a stand which you can top up with water. Enjoy!

If you don't have a good display of bulbs for the spring in your garden, it's not too late to plant them out, or use potted bulbs to create a more instant display. Cram them into window boxes or add to existing flowerbeds or containers for early colour. Smaller types look great when planted beneath a tree or shrub. Add them to new flowerbeds that are still a bit sparse. Many of these gorgeous flowers are also perfumed, making them perfect for planting near doors and windows. For indoors, Amaryllis are tall and imposing - a perfect living gift if you are stuck for ideas.

With their delicate white bell-like pendant flowers, snowdrops are so resilient they will even pop up through snow. Gorgeous when planted in drifts under shrubs or trees, in clumps in flower beds, or even to add the earliest of interest to long-term patio containers. Plant them somewhere that you'll see them every day, and they're guaranteed to cheer up even the gloomiest day.



Elsewhere in the garden, hellebores are winter classics known as the Christmas rose. They have stunning white, pink, burgundy, darkest purple or even green, slightly nodding flowers, often beautifully patterned with numerous tiny spots. They provide an important early nectar source for early bumble bees, too. Most do best in a partly shaded spot in moist, fertile soil. Flowering through until spring, their evergreen, often toothed, leathery leaves add interest throughout the year. Top up the soil with mulch to help retain moisture to give you their best performance.
Happy Christmas!

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Small Surrey Churches - Part Twenty-two

St. Mary's, Pixham, Dorking



St. Mary the Virgin in Pixham, Dorking, is a unique Church of England building designed by the famous architect Sir Edwin Lutyens in 1903. Lutyens (1869-1944) was one of Britain's best-loved architects, known for combining country styles with grand classical elements. He was commissioned to design many large Surrey houses working with the great Victorian gardener, Gertrude Jekyll. These include including Loseley Park, Standen House, Great Dixter, Goddards, & Munstead Wood. From 1910-1920, the British government hired Lutyens to design the new Imperial capital of India, New Delhi, after which he gained international fame.[1]

St Mary's Pixham church was funded by a local benefactor named Miss Mary Mayo. She paid for the building to serve the small hamlet of Pixham in Dorking.

Miss Mayo's mother, Mrs. Mary Mayo (wife of the Reverend Charles Mayo), also had a local infant school built in her memory in 1880, which is now the 'Old Pixham School' community center.[2]

The church was built as a 'Chapel of Ease' for St Martin's Church in town, the building was designed to serve as both a church and a village hall. Because St. Mary's was meant to act as a village meeting space, Lutyens created a clever design.[2]

To architectural historians, the semi-circular design over the doorway is a 'tympanum' - a feature often found in Romanesque churches (and in Norman churches in England). Here at Pixham, Lutyens seems to have adapted the tympanum motif to represent a rising sun.[3]



The adjacent doorways suggest an entrance and an exit door, as featured in many cathedrals[3]

Externally, the building has tiled, pitched rooves with long external slopes. Internally, the observant will notice a surprise, namely that the ceilings are suspended and bear no relation to the external shape of the building! The main nave of the church has a curved, false ceiling, described as 'barrel-vaulted' or tunnel-like, with deep recesses for the side windows. The Rector explained that the ceiling design resulted in excellent acoustics throughout the hall.





Top: Barrel-vaulted interior of the hall ceiling
Below: Conical, tiles ceiling above the Sanctuary and altar



The altar below the conical ceiling

At the end of village hall room, separated by a large curtain, there are steps up to the sanctuary and altar, with another surprise. This allowed the holy area to be hidden away when the community gathered for meetings or plays. Above the sanctuary and alter, which has a square footprint on the floor, is a suspended, circular ceiling in a 'conical' shape (not a curved dome), constructed in terracotta tiles. A candelabra-style light is suspended from the centre of the ceiling. The overall effect is that the design of the interior totally defies the conventional exterior appearance. The design mixes early-church (Byzantine) styles with Art Nouveau designs of the early 1900's.[3]

The church is ranked as a Grade II* listed building by Historic England, meaning it is a structure of special architectural and historic interest.[4]

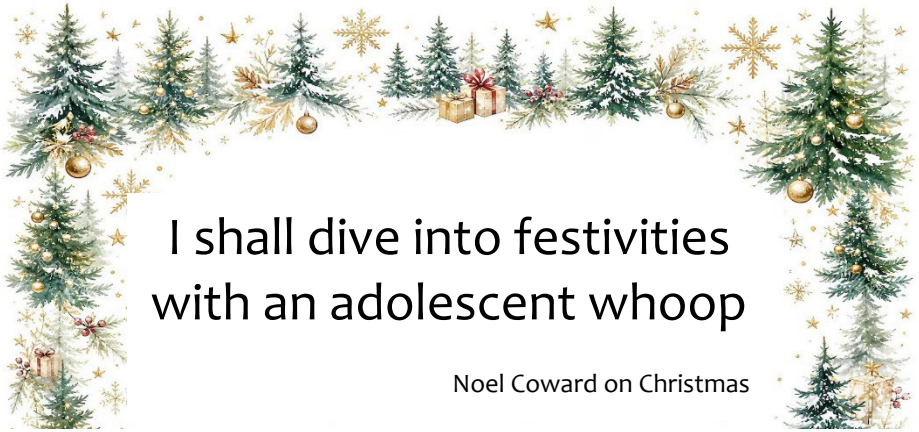
Access

St Mary's Pixham remains a fully functioning church, sharing a Rector in the joint benefice of St Martin's Dorking, St Mary's Pixham and St Nicholas's Ranmore. Services are held weekly at 9.30 am each Sunday.[2]

However, the church is normally locked, unless there is a service or function, so please see the church website (ref.4 below).

References

1. *Sir Edwin Lutyens, Wikipedia page*
2. *Church Website, www.pixhamresidents.org/st-mary-s-church*
3. *www.geograph.org.uk/photo/2987932: front entrance*
4. *www.pixhamresidents.org/st-mary-s-church*



A POLITICALLY-CORRECT CHRISTMAS

Twas the night before Christmas and Santa's a wreck...
How to live in a world that's politically correct?
His workers no longer would answer to "Elves".
"Vertically Challenged" they were calling themselves.
And labour conditions at the North Pole
were alleged by the union to stifle the soul.

Four reindeer had vanished, without much propriety,
Released to the wilds by the Humane Society.
And equal employment had made it quite clear
That Santa had better not use just reindeer.
So Dancer and Donner, Comet and Cupid
Were replaced with 4 pigs, and you know that looked stupid!

The runners had been removed from his sleigh;
The ruts were termed dangerous by the E.P.A.
And people had started to call for the cops
When they heard sled noises on their rooftops.
Second-hand smoke from his pipe had his workers quite frightened.
His fur trimmed red suit was called 'Unenlightened'.

And to show you the strangeness of life's ebbs and flows,
Rudolf was suing over unauthorised use of his nose
And had gone on Jeremy Kyle, in front of the nation,
Demanding millions in over-due compensation.
So, half of the reindeer were gone; and his wife,
Who suddenly said she'd enough of this life,

Joined a self-help group, packed, and left in a whiz,
Which meant nothing for him. And nothing for her.
Demanding from now on her title was Ms.

And as for the gifts, why, he'd never had a notion
Nothing of leather, nothing of fur,
Nothing that might be construed to pollute.
Nothing to aim, Nothing to shoot.
Nothing that clamoured or made lots of noise.
Nothing for just girls, or just for the boys.
Nothing that claimed to be gender specific.
Nothing that's warlike or non-pacifistic.

No candy or sweets...they were bad for the tooth.
Nothing that seemed to embellish a truth.
And fairy tales, while not yet forbidden,
Were like Ken and Barbie, better off hidden.
For they raised the hackles of those psychological
Who claimed the only good gift was one ecological.

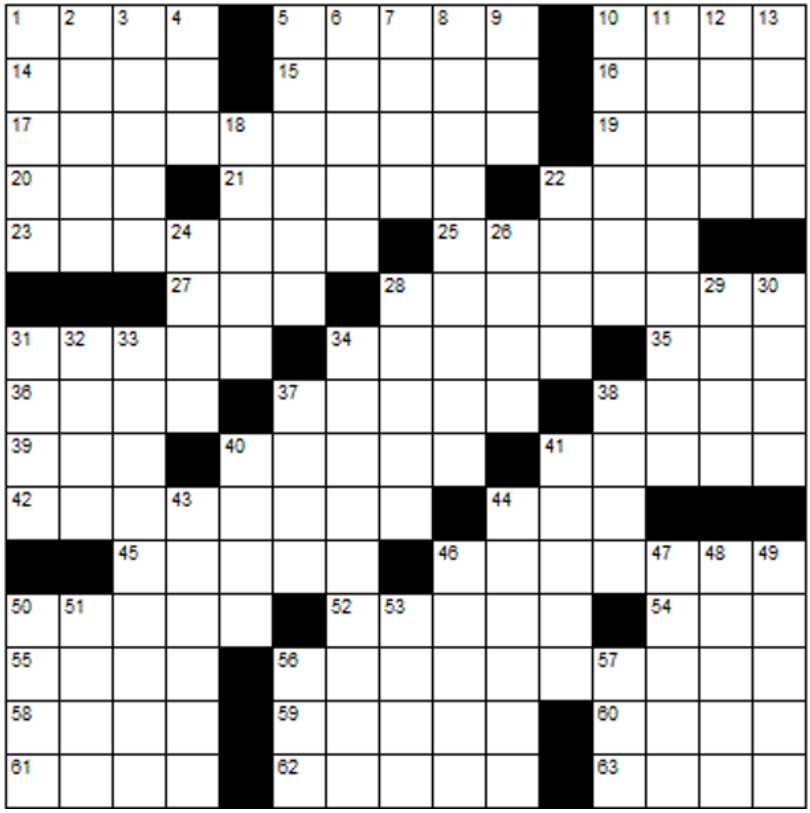
No baseball, no football...someone could get hurt;
Besides, playing sports exposed kids to dirt.
Dolls were said to be sexist, and should be passe;
And Nintendo would rot your entire brain away.
So Santa just stood there, dishevelled, perplexed;
He just could not figure out what to do next.

He tried to be merry, tried to be gay,
But you've got to be careful with that word today.
His sack was quite empty, limp to the ground;
Nothing fully acceptable was to be found.
Something special was needed, a gift that he might
Give to all without angering the left or the right.

A gift that would satisfy, with no indecision,
Each group of people, every religion;
Every ethnicity, every hue,
Everyone, everywhere...even you.
So here is that gift, it's price beyond worth...
May you and your loved ones, enjoy peace on Earth.



GENERAL KNOWLEDGE CROSSWORD (answers p.35)



ACROSS		
1. Mother	27. Hearing organ	45. Suffuse
5. Confined	28. Neatness	46. Neck artery
10. Contributes	31. Crinkly	50. Donkeys
14. Cain's brother	34. Shrunken	52. Jaunty rhythms
15. Mistake	35. Bite	54. Ribonucleic acid
16. Used to be	36. Absorb written material	55. Laugh
17. Unity	37. Dishes out	56. Drunkenness
19. Largest continent	38. Beige	58. Always
20. Lyric poem	39. Mistake	59. Late actor Christopher
21. Genus of heath	40. Rural area (British)	60. Not closed
22. Hops	41. Cornered	61. Untidyness
23. Sewing tools	42. Having no intelligible meaning	62. Venomous snake
25. Mature	44. Mist	63. Dampens

DOWN		
1. A worker of stone	18. Wait	40. Nets
2. Residence	22. Whirl	41. Body
3. Donnybrook	24. Accomplishment	43. Besmirches
4. Anagram of "Ail"	26. Midmonth date	44. Male parent
5. Holder	28. Name of a book	46. Split
6. German iris	29. "Your majesty"	47. Balderdash
7. Relating to urine	30. Potato	48. Map within a map
8. Certified	31. Small songbird	49. Curses
9. Not wet	32. Relating to aircraft	50. Throat-clearing sound
10. Rouse	33. Shellacs	51. Rescue
11. A grammatical ending	34. Prevaricated	53. Anagram of "Dice"
12. Trickle	37. List of options	56. Genus of macaws
13. Oceans	38. Therefore	57. Not high

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How was your interview?

Interviewer:	**Applicant:**
What do you know about our company?	Errr… just the address
Why did you leave your last job?	They relocated the business and didn't tell me where it was
Why did you apply here? Can you be more specific?	Oh, I applied to dozens of places 4.5 dozen
Name one of your strengths… Isn't that conflict avoidance?	I prevent conflicts before they start It is, you're right. Now let's move on
Can you perform under pressure?	I'm better at Bohemian Rhapsody
Can you explain the gaps in your CV?	I used the space bar, and some paragraphs. If you like, I can show you how to do it?
Why are you asking for such a high salary when you have no experience in this field?	Well, the job is so much harder when you don't know what you're doing
Where do you see yourself in 10 years?	My biggest weakness is not listening
I see by your responses that I should have looked at your CV before inviting you for interview	Actually, I hacked your IT system and sent myself the invitation for interview. Surely that demonstrates my initiative?

SUDOKU

Answers p.35

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WORDSEARCH – Silent Night

Silent	Young
Night	Priest
Loved	Organist
Carol	Midnight
Austria	Mass
First	Melody
Sung	Single
Stille	Bing
Nacht	Version
Heilige	Third
Christmas	
Eve	
Father	
Joseph	
Mohr	

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Laura Swinson, https://dlhg.org.uk

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The Betchworth & Buckland Society



Annual Festive Dinner

Following new ownership, Hartsfield Manor are pleased to welcome us again with a new menu

Thursday 3rd December 7.00pm

Hartsfield Manor, Betchworth

7pm welcome drinks followed by a new seasonal menu. £45pp



Christmas Drinks & Nibbles

Sunday 20th December 12-2pm

The Reading Room, Buckland

Members £10 & Non-Members £12





New Year Quiz – 29th Jan

Winetasting – March 19th



Numbers are limited so please register your interest as soon as possible. Ticket enquiries & further details please contact betchworthandbucklandsociety@gmail.com www.betchworthandbucklandsociety.org.uk



ARTS SOCIETY BETCHWORTH
Christmas Charity talk – Bertie Pearce
Tuesday 8 December 7.30 pm (doors open 6.45pm)
Betchworth Memorial Hall, Station Road

Have you ever heard Bertie Pearce speak? If not- you' re in for a treat. If Yes- you know what to expect. Huge fun! Come to hear Bertie recount the extraordinary tale of how a small bronze statue, which had sat in his Grandfather's garden for 40 years, was discovered as a masterpiece and ended up in the Getty Museum, California.

Festive refreshments will be served from 6.45, and the talk will begin at 7.30. This is a Charity evening, and the ticket price is £15. Just pay at the door. You will be very welcome.

Carole Evans, www.theartssocietybetchworth.org.uk

DORKING MUSEUM

'From Dorking to Ochos Rios': Strawberry Studios South: Dorking Museum's winter exhibition marks 50 years of Strawberry Studios South. This exhibition explores the story of the studios and the talented artists that recorded there, including 10cc, Paul McCartney, and Stevie Wonder.

Family Activities at Dorking Library: *Christmas Craft:* Make a Christmas decoration or a Christmas card. Saturday 12th December, 10am-12pm. Dorking Library, St. Martin's Walk. Free, materials provided and children must be accompanied.

Kids Christmas Bauble Trail: Our Kids Christmas Bauble Trail is the perfect free activity for the seasonal period! Come in and follow the clues - spot them all to win a prize. Launching on November 29th.

The team at Dorking Museum offers warmest seasonal greetings to all readers, supporters, and friends of the museum. (Note holiday closure from 20 Dec to 7 Jan).

Dorking Museum: Thursdays 1pm-4pm, Fridays and Saturdays 10am-4pm, free entry. www.dorkingmuseum.org.uk. Visit dorkingmuseum.org.uk/digital-guide/. 01306 876591

Laura Swinson

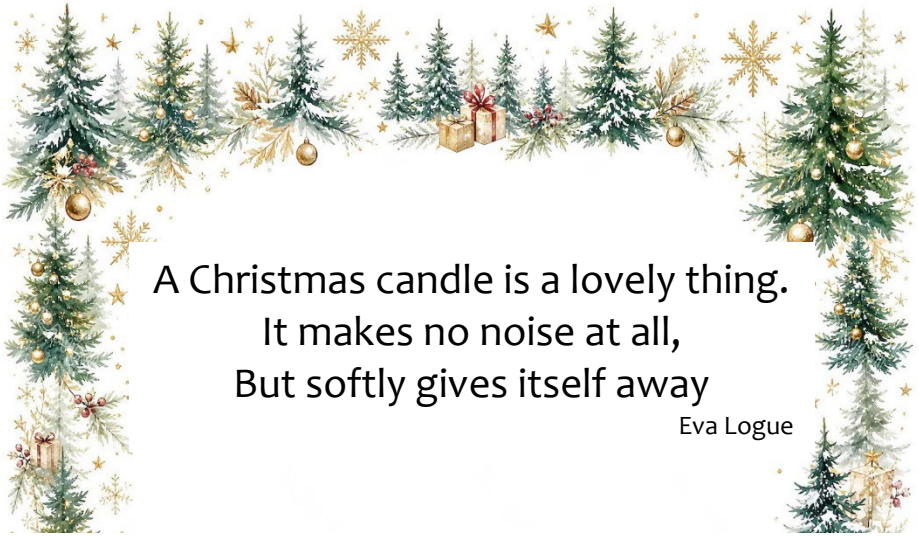
BROCKHAM BOWLS CLUB

As I write this in early November our thoughts are on the bonfire rather than outdoor bowls. The green has had its winter renovation and will be left to recover for the winter. We had our AGM at the end of October, where the Club Members can hear and ask about what goes on behind the scenes in running the Club. The Management Committee for the following year is also voted in by the members, and our Club Captain for next season will be Joan Darling. The annual subs for next season have been kept at the same competitive level as this year.

The day after we had a social evening loosely based on the old TV game show of Bullseye, an enjoyable evening run by two of our members Mark and Dana Yeo. It was well attended and there was a lot of laughter. It also had a Halloween theme, as it was the 31 October.

So, although we are not bowling, we are keeping busy. Several of our members are keeping their bowls skills going by playing indoors at either Donyngs in Redhill or Mole Valley at Leatherhead. I know this season has finished, but if you want more information about the Club, please contact Joan Darling, our Club Captain, on 07769566094, or visit our website at brockhambowlsclub.co.uk.

Trevor Anderson



PUZZLE SOLUTIONS (from p.28-30)

M	A	M	A	■	B	O	U	N	D	■	A	D	D	S
A	B	E	L	■	E	R	R	O	R	■	W	E	R	E
S	O	L	I	D	A	R	I	T	Y	■	A	S	I	A
O	D	E	■	E	R	I	C	A	■	S	K	I	P	S
N	E	E	D	L	E	S	■	R	I	P	E	N	■	■
■	■	■	E	A	R	■	T	I	D	I	N	E	S	S
W	A	V	E	Y	■	W	I	Z	E	N	■	N	I	P
R	E	A	D	■	M	E	T	E	S	■	E	C	R	U
E	R	R	■	W	E	A	L	D	■	T	R	E	E	D
N	O	N	S	E	N	S	E	■	F	O	G	■	■	■
■	■	I	M	B	U	E	■	C	A	R	O	T	I	D
A	S	S	E	S	■	L	I	L	T	S	■	R	N	A
H	A	H	A	■	A	L	C	O	H	O	L	I	S	M
E	V	E	R	■	R	E	E	V	E	■	O	P	E	N
M	E	S	S	■	A	D	D	E	R	■	W	E	T	S

6	1	5	2	7	3	8	4	9
3	8	9	1	6	4	5	7	2
7	2	4	5	8	9	1	6	3
5	7	1	8	3	6	9	2	4
8	4	2	7	9	5	6	3	1
9	6	3	4	1	2	7	8	5
4	3	7	9	5	8	2	1	6
1	9	6	3	2	7	4	5	8
2	5	8	6	4	1	3	9	7



Buckland Parish Magazine

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Articles Please submit articles for next month's edition by the above date, via email to **fernsdc@gmail.com.** If possible, please submit WORD format for text files, JPG for images and PDF for posters. New articles and contributors are welcomed.

Editorial Views expressed in this magazine are those of the contributors and are not necessarily shared by the editor or other church staff.

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Web Access The web version of the magazine, including trade adverts & colour photos, is available online at **stmarythevirginbuckland.org.uk/parish-magazine.** The online rolling-archive retains the most recent 2 years of magazines, readable as PDFs without charge.

BOOKS ON THE HISTORY OF BUCKLAND

1. Buckland's Past Lives (2025), 308pp - £17#
2. A Buckland Memorial (2025, War biographies), 600pp, full text online*
3. St Mary's Graveyard Survey (2020), 94pp –full text online**
4. Buckland 1000-2000 with 20-20 vision (2019), 294pp – now £15#
5. History of Buckland Villlage School (2006), 148 pp -full text online***

\# to purchase, email request to fernsdc@gmail.com

* www.bucklandsurrey.org.uk/local-amenities/war-memorial/

** www.stmarythevirginbuckland.org.uk/ Link on 'Resources' page

*** www.bucklandsurrey.org.uk/village-history/the-story-of-buckland-village-school

BUCKLAND READING ROOM ACTIVITIES

Monday am	Singing for Pleasure (1st & 3rd Mondays)
Tuesday am	Toddlers
Tuesday 2.15pm	Bridge Club
Tuesday 6.30pm	Yoga (Maria)
Tuesday 8.00pm	Yoga Beginners (Maria)
Thursday 2.15pm	Bridge Club
Thursday evening	Yoga (Judy)
Saturday 08.30am	Qi Gong (Judy)

For booking enquiries please contact Jane Stewart, preferably by email: Bookings4bucklandreadingroom@gmail.com or 07733 116992

Arts Society, Betchworth	Carole Evans	01372 452563
Bell Ringers (*practice Friday evenings*)	David Sayce	01737 242776
Betchworth & Buckland Children's Nursery	Laura Snelling	01737 843610
Betchworth & Buckland Toddler Group	Debbie Jones	07701 347351
Betchworth & Buckland Society *(Secretary)*	Nathalie Nichols	07801 967623
Betchworth Operatic & Dramatic Society	Diane Mayall	01737 842758
British Legion	Maurice Daley	01737 843058
Brockham Green Horticultural Society	Ruth & Paul Johnson	01737 842691
Brockham Surgery/*Chemist*	n/a	01737 843259
Buckland & Betchworth Choral Soc. (*Sec.*)	Caroline Bartlett	07967 969425
Buckland Parochial Charity (*Clerk*)	Debbie Jones	07701 347351
Buckland Parish Council *(Clerk)*	Sheena Boyce	01737 448023
Buckland Deli (Village Shop)	(see p.12, this issue)	
Children's Society	Margaret Miller	01737 842098
Family Activities Betchworth & Buckland	Katrina Rea	07803 163868
North Downs Primary School	Jane Douglass	01737 843211
Reading Room - Bookings	Jane Stewart	07733 116992
- Chairman	Tim Howe	07961 123126
- Treasurer	John Maud	01737 843530
- Secretary	Liz Vahey	01737 221444
Reigate Pilgrims Cricket Club	Julian Steed	01737 842220
St. Catherine's Hospice	Sheila Dyer	01737 842046
Women's Institute	Margaret Miller	01737 842098

Websites: Church: www.stmarythevirginbuckland.org.uk
Village: www.bucklandsurrey.org.uk
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