

The

Keston Magazine

News of your Parish and Village



Dec/Jan 2020

Keston Parish Church

Church Rd., Keston, BR2 6HT kestonparishchurch.org.uk



Rector

Rev'd Carol Morrison 01689 853186

email: rector@kestonparishchurch.org.uk

Days working for Keston Parish: Sunday to Wednesday

Licensed Lay Minister

Tricia Coward 01689 854373

& Parish Administrator

email: kestonconsult@btconnect.com

Churchwardens

Neil Morrison 07900 081696

John Molnar 07709 818073

Verger

Patricia Geiger 01959 574008

Parish Secretary &

Heather Molnar 07816 464880

Safeguarding Officer

email: hevamolnar@aol.com

Treasurer

Anna Bailey 01689 852583

Organist & Choirmaster

David Cook 020 8289 5768

Church Hall

Tricia Coward 01689 854373
hallbookings@kestonparishchurch.org.uk

Messy Church

Tricia Coward 01689 854373

Magazine Editor &

Sally Churchus 020 8462 8750

Book Reading Fellowship

email: editor@kestonparishchurch.org.uk

Keston Singers

Pam Robertson 01689 856318

Beavers/Cubs/Scouts

Samantha Strange 07507 519114

27th Bromley

strange_samantha@hotmail.com

Women's Institute

email: tonia.cc@blueyonder.co.uk

Residents' Association

www.kvra.org.uk

Village Hall

Tina Lupton 01689 859906

Bless the Children

John Goldby 01689 851000

Welcare in Bromley

Caroline Cook 020 8289 5768

Keston C.E. Primary School

Julia Evison 01689 858399

Friends of Keston Common

High Elms Country Park 01689 862815

website: www.friendsofkestoncommon.btck.co.uk

Keston Residents' Road Safety Group

email: krrsg@hotmail.com

Front cover: Nativity picture by Anna Bailey © Sally Churchus

But the angel reassured them. "Don't be afraid!" he said. "I bring you good news that will bring great joy to all people". *Luke 2:10*

Thought for the month

Joy to the World!



One of my favourite Christmas carols, by far, is 'Joy to the World' – for me it sums up what Christmas is all about. 'Joy!'. The word in itself is not used much in everyday language – it means a feeling of delight, great pleasure and jubilation. Although it is, of course, about being happy – it is beyond happy, joy goes deeper and isn't dependent on external factors.

It's such a shame that Christmas makes so many people stressed or anxious, whether they be unable to afford all the material things involved, or the season reminds them of a lost loved one, or the indulgence of the festivities puts a burden of temptation on recovery from an addiction.

Such a shame, because this season is all about joy. Something the disciple John wrote in the Bible sums up why Jesus came as that baby, which we celebrate at Christmas, he wrote: 'God loved the world so much that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes will not perish but have eternal life.' Knowing ourselves to be loved this much brings a sense of joy our circumstances can't take away.

There are certainly many circumstances in the world around us that are joy-less, but Christmas can serve to remind us that with an attitude of love for our fellow humans we could make the world a better place – a joy-full one.

The whole of creation sings out with joy at the coming of the one who will save souls and offer an eternal existence with the Creator who, above all else, loves us. The carol says: '(God) rules the world with truth and grace...and wonders of his love'. The message of Christmas truly is all about love, and if we could get to a place of love amongst peoples we would know a deeper joy.

Pastor and Author Rick Warren says: "Joy is the settled assurance that God is in control of all the details of my life, the quiet confidence that ultimately everything is going to be alright, and the determined choice to praise God in every situation".

In this carol we sing 'Let every heart prepare him room' – praising with a good Christmas carol opens our hearts to make room for God to bring in peace, comfort and joy.

I wish you all joy this Christmas, and if you want to join me and others from our community in singing 'Joy to the World' and other carols then do come to our Carol Service on Sunday 22nd December at 6.30pm.

Carol

Rev'd Carol Morrison



Cover Story



The cover on this issue is from part of a picture done by resident Anna Bailey – the Treasurer for Keston Parish Church. I visited her house in the summer and saw this wonderful picture, which is quite large, (about 100cm x 70cm), and admired it. It was only recently that I found out that she had done it herself! She did A level art and now enjoys art as a hobby; her favoured media is chalk pastel. She told me that the inspiration for this picture came from Christmas cards. Thank you, Anna, for letting us use it on the front cover of our Christmas issue. (Although it was a devil to photograph behind the glass!).

Sally Churchus

Windmill Opening

Open House London weekend at the end of September was very successful and three people from the village responded to the Keston Magazine article to come and help. We had 218 visitors to the windmill, 16 helpers and raised £750 which was divided between four charities: Demelza Hospice Care for Children, St. Christopher's Hospice, Muscular Dystrophy UK and the Cystic Fibrosis Trust.

Elizabeth Anker

Keston Village Christmas Lights

The Christmas lights will be put up on the first weekend of December and will be alight straight away.

Unfortunately, this year, we have not been able to

arrange an event for that weekend, but we are hoping to be able to run at least one community event during the spring or early summer as we do need to raise enough money to keep having the Christmas lights. If you have any ideas for events we might run please drop me an email at kestonvillagera@gmail.com. Also, if you would like to make a donation towards the upkeep of the lights you can do so by making a bank transfer to: KVRA sort code 09-01-29 and a/c 35321237 reference Xmas lights, or drop a cheque, with Christmas lights on the back, through my letterbox at 21 Heathfield Road.

Hilary Ryder



Ravensbourne Morris Men

As usual, (56 years now), we will be dancing outside The Greyhound at 12.30pm on Boxing Day.

60s Music Night

More details soon to come on our website kestonparishchurch.org.uk, and around the village, but put Saturday 25th January in your diary!

Blue Plaque Article and ChildAid

In our last edition, we wrote about the Keston College Blue Plaque unveiling and were delighted to hear from one of our readers that the legacy of Keston College continues today, in Bromley, through a small Christian charity called ChildAid to Eastern Europe.

In 1973, one of Canon Michael Bordeaux's key researchers, Jane Ellis, established Aid to Russian Christians, (ARC), as the first organisation with the aim of supplying material aid and



Providing life saving fuel

spiritual support to Orthodox Christians suffering for their faith in Russia.

Although its name has changed to ChildAid it has remained steadfastly committed to serving the weak, vulnerable and disadvantaged exclusively in countries which formed the Soviet Union. Canon Michael Bordeaux is still a Patron.

Things changed when the USSR collapsed in 1991, but not all for the better. ChildAid responded to increasing requests to help the churches

and Christians in the former Soviet Union who were reaching out to the poor and needy in their communities. The charity supplied orphanages and homes for the elderly and disabled with the clothing, medical supplies, bedding and food they so desperately needed. Economic crisis and instability in the region led to many vulnerable children due to extreme poverty, family breakdowns, unemployment and alcoholism. As a result, the charity began to focus on children's charitable initiatives and today they help families in crisis, orphans, children living with



Refugee children in Ukraine

disabilities, families affected by the war in Ukraine and refugees from that ongoing conflict.

The Soviet Union held that the people were there to serve the state, and that those who were not capable of service were of no account and should be accorded the minimum of resources and largely ignored – the “put away and forget” mentality. For ChildAid, the state is there to serve the people and everybody should have the opportunity to live in reasonably decent

circumstances and make the most of their potential within the main body of society – a “care for and integrate” mentality.

Sadly, the old Soviet mindset lingers on in many areas of the former Union, so ChildAid partner with local Christian projects aimed at helping disadvantaged children turn their lives around so that, as adults, they can lead normal and useful lives, or, where this is not possible because of inability, to live decent lives within and be accepted by society. Their work is focused in Moldova and Ukraine, with partners also in Belarus and Siberia, and offers

- Free to use rehabilitation therapy centres
- Children’s centres (play and health care)
- Respite and day care centres

- Prevention of abandonment services
- Practical family support services
- Health and education

With offices based at 5 Walters Yard, Bromley North, ChildAid have a delightful range of Christian Christmas cards and also welcome certain items, (jewellery, old bank notes/coins, home ink cartridges, mobile phones, electronic games), for recycling to help raise funds for their mission.

Visit their informative website at www.childaidee.org.uk or call them on 020 8460 6046 to drop in and meet the small team.

The reader who provided this information was Martin Wilcox, Director to ChildAid



Celebration 2000 Prayer

(Seen by Nicola Kingswood, a member of our congregation, on a visit to Old St. Boniface Church, Bonchurch, on the Isle of Wight, and still relevant today)

Dear Lord our Heavenly Father
At the dawn of a new millennium
In a world of darkness give us your light
In lands of war and prejudice grant us peace
In a world of despair give us hope
In a world of sadness and tears show us your joy
In a world of hatred show us your love
In a world of arrogance give us humility
In a world of disbelief give us faith.
Give us courage to face the challenges
of feeding the hungry, clothing the naked
housing the homeless and healing the sick.
Give us the power to make a difference in
your world, and to protect your creation.
Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Anna Crompton aged 13

My Faith Journey

When I was five years old my parents lived in Bridgemy, near Gosport, and I remember them taking my sister and I to a huge church on a Sunday afternoon and we went and sat on the floor in a large room with lots of other children. There was a stage at one end where a man stood and told us Bible stories. At this very young age I was always transfixed on what he was saying. Perhaps these stories were really the start of the faith which has been with me ever since.

When I was ten my family moved to a small village in Somerset and I began going to the local Congregational Church Sunday School each Sunday afternoon. My parents were strong Christians and my father became a Deacon and encouraged me to become a Sunday School teacher at 16.

At nearing 18 I moved to live in London and despite attending a couple of churches, no-one ever spoke to me so my attendance lapsed. I did, however, begin to visit patients in Dulwich Hospital on a Saturday, and soon came to realise that most were unlikely to go home due to their needs. I loved this time as I always got a smiley welcome. One lady was unable to speak and spent most of her time alone. This bothered me so I started talking to her in questions asking her to reply by

blinking once for a yes and twice for no. Soon she had a lot more interaction with people. It was during this time that I realised I had a deep compassion for the less fortunate, the lonely, the bereaved and I knew God was calling me to this avenue.

When I married in 1970 we moved to Keston. I attended St. Audrey's church and when they were old enough I encouraged my two boys to attend the Sunday School there under the leadership of Liz Harvey. When St. Audrey's was sold I continued

worshipping at the current parish church and in 2001 trained as an Authorised Pastoral Assistant. This role has enabled me to visit many people who are unwell, in hospital, have been bereaved, are lonely and other situations where someone needs a listening

ear and gentle support.

In my adult life I have had a number of personal tragedies and losses and it is my assurance that God walks with me at these times that has got me through. People sometimes ask how I can believe when such things happen and the only answer I can give is that God never promised a life without challenges but he did promise he would always be at hand. This has been true for me and at desperate times I have felt an awareness of his nearness and a gentle and calming influence around me.

Ren Harrold



Pet Service and Foal Farm



Alexis Robertson from Foal Farm Animal Rescue Centre in Biggin Hill was pleased to receive a cheque for £204 from the Rev'd Carol Morrison. The money had been collected during the Pet Service on 29th September, when Alexis gave us an interesting talk about the work of Foal Farm. They have horses, sheep, goats, a couple of cows, dogs, cats, rabbits, ducks, geese, hens etc. A large number of volunteers not only help daily with the care of the animals but also run a tea room and large jumble area. The cost of the food and medical bills is huge, but cat and dog food is generously donated.

As well as a three legged tortoise there were about 10 dogs plus owners present at the Pet Service, and they were all really well behaved except Bullet, my recently adopted dog from foal farm, and Barney, (owned by Tricia Coward), who wanted to sing a lot during the service! We all enjoyed tea and cake in the hall afterwards, and the dogs had some treats too!

Ren Harrold

Harvest Gifts



At our Harvest Festival service at the beginning of October food donations for Bromley Foodbank weighed in at a tremendous 68.5k, (10.8 stone!), and the money collected for Welcare in Bromley was £210, up on last year. Thank you everyone for your generosity!

O Little Town of Bethlehem

How silently, how silently,
The wondrous gift is given!
So God imparts to human hearts
The blessings of his heaven.
No ear may hear his coming,
But in this world of sin,
Where meek souls will receive him,
still
The dear Christ enters in.

Church Services

CW = Common Worship H & W = With prayer for Healing & Wholeness

1st December Christmas Gift Service (Advent 1)

10.00am First Sunday Communion (*Shorter all age service*)

Your donations of supermarket gift cards for Welcare in Bromley would be most welcome, instead of toys this year

8th December Advent 2

10.00am Holy Communion (CW)

Wednesday 11th December

10.30am Holy Communion (CW)

15th December Advent 3

10.00am Holy Communion (CW) H & W

22nd December Advent 4

10.00am Holy Communion (CW)

6.30pm Carol Service followed by mulled wine and mince pies

24th December Christmas Eve

4.00pm Christingle making followed by service at 4.30pm

11.30pm Midnight Communion

25th December Christmas Day

10.00am Holy Communion (CW)

29th December Christmas 1

10.00am Holy Communion (CW)

5th January Epiphany

10.00am First Sunday Communion (*Shorter all age service*)

Wednesday 8th January

10.30am Holy Communion (CW)

12th January Baptism of Christ

10.00am Holy Communion (CW)

19th January Epiphany 2

10.00am Holy Communion (CW) H & W

26th January Epiphany 3

10.00am Holy Communion (CW)

From the Registers

Baptism

6th October Olivia Deia Wallington (born 4/10/2018)

Funeral

25th September Doris Ella Davies (aged 98 years)

Interment of Ashes

15th September John Leonard (89 years) & Constance Elizabeth Filmer (94 years)

21st October John William (aged 92 years) & Doreen Allen (aged 89 years)

The Joy of a church Wedding!



“What a joyful occasion!” These are words often said to me of a wedding ceremony. There is joy in gathering to celebrate love. At a wedding it is the love of two people, who because of their love for one another, are making a lifelong commitment. This commitment is made in the presence of their loved ones, family and friends – made in community. The words of the marriage service reflect this community aspect of the vows two people make to one another when it says: ‘Marriage is a way of life made holy by God... a sign of unity and loyalty. It enriches society and strengthens community’.

With so much loneliness evident in our society, it’s good to be reminded that God joins people together with

love. Love is the glue that holds people and communities together. Joy is brought to the whole community as they share in the love of two special people at a wedding.

It’s such a privilege to conduct a marriage service, to share in the joy of the occasion. There’s always room to do more services at our beautiful church in Keston. Many people make the assumption that they wouldn’t ‘qualify’ to get married in church, or that because of previously being married and divorced they would be excluded. But things have changed in recent years and it’s more possible than you might think – it’s certainly always worth having a conversation with the Vicar or Rector of the church.

I have conducted weddings where less than 10 people were present and also where 100 people have gathered. Your wedding service can be, and should be, shaped for you. So, if you or someone you know is thinking of getting married and would like to consider getting married in church just call for a chat!



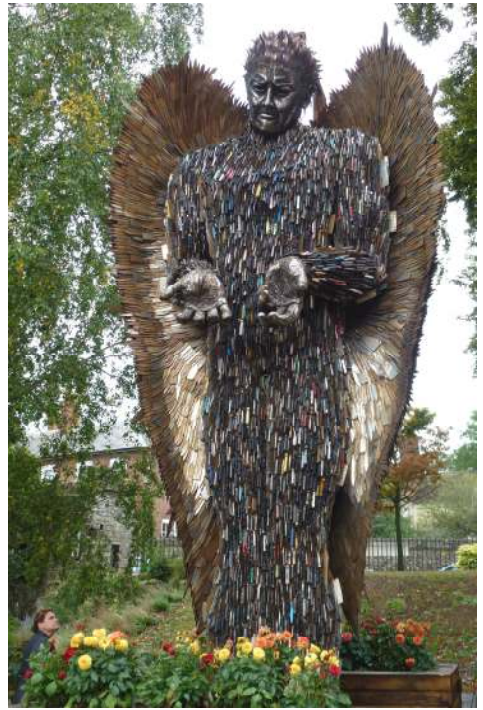
Rev’d Carol Morrison

Knife Angel Visit

Over 100,000 knives were used to make the Knife Angel, 30% were bloodied on arrival. These knives had been collected from 43 Police forces across the country in amnesties and knife banks provided by the National Ironworks Centre, (based in Shropshire), during the project “Save a Life, surrender your knife” in 2014. Alfie Bradley, an artist, disinfected and blunted the weapons before welding them on to the basic steel shape. The wings are just knives, some 80 of which have inscriptions on from families who have lost loved ones to knife crime and even a few from perpetrators with messages of regret and who now work to reduce knife crime.

Also called the National Monument Against Violence and Aggression, the sculpture has been on display in the grounds of Rochester cathedral during the month of September. A group of us from Keston church went to have a look at it – it is huge! Standing 27ft. tall, it has a sad face, (the artist wanted to portray the angel as if asking ‘Why?’), and is very thought provoking. Cathedrals that are hosting it have to agree to help their communities with initiatives to reduce knife crime and also host visiting school/youth groups. Over 5,000 people have been to see it in Rochester, it moved to Derby Cathedral in October and is due to go to Chester in November.

St. Margaret’s church, which like us is in Rochester Diocese, organised a conference in Chatham in September called The Point. A petition was started with the aim of bringing about a debate in parliament on the sale of pointed



kitchen knives. Research has shown that kitchen knives are used in a large percentage of homicides due to their availability and lethal nature.

At a special service in Rochester Cathedral in September, reflecting on knife crime, Bishop Simon Burton-Jones, the Bishop of Tonbridge, said there was never one victim of knife crime: “Knife crime rips up the lives of families and friends piercing the networks that give us life, meaning and support”. He went on: “Knife crime can be reduced if we follow the evidence trail, devote our resources to the right places, share knowledge smartly and value the organising power of local communities. The church has a role to play, for it is located in most, if not all, places”.

Sally Churchus

Butterflies this year in Keston

Butterflies are very quick to respond to changes in the weather and this year has given us a wonderful illustration of this characteristic. On mild days in January and February a few hardy fliers, the brimstones and peacocks were to be seen. In March they were joined by one or two orange tips but there were very few of them over the rest of the season.

During the cold wet weeks of April no butterflies were seen at all. The high point for Keston came in the third week of July, small and large skippers, small and large whites, common blue, painted lady, meadow browns (53), ringlets (51) and small heath (3) were all seen during a thirty minute walk on a glorious summer's afternoon.



Silver-washed fritillary butterflies were spotted in July too, at Padmall Wood and Ravensbourne Open Space.

These large butterflies with a wingspan of 72-76mm, are actually mainly orange in colour with dark markings and silver streaks on the undersides and have a swooping flight. Our Indian summer gave an extended season with large and small whites, green veined whites, meadow browns and red admirals still flying until late into September.

Each year the numbers of a specific species can vary dramatically; this year there were fewer comma butterflies just one or two small coppers and small

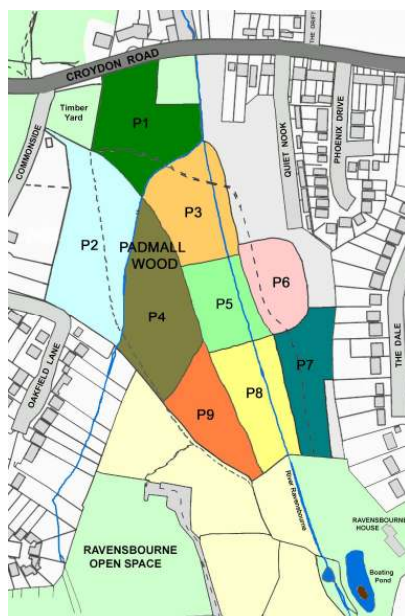
tortoises. Despite the usual fluctuations it seems the habitat on Keston Common continues to support the established populations and with careful management we might attract new species.

Tudor Davies

Common News

At the beginning of November some coppicing and felling operations started, undertaken by a company called Euroforest, to coppice Padmall Wood coups 3 and 7. Notices will go up explaining the work and warning that some paths may be closed or have restricted access. The work is likely to continue through to December. The operation will mostly be undertaken by hand using chainsaws with the use of a small forder to extract some of the timber into the wood yard where it will be stacked ready for transport off site by road.

Larry Herbert



The Brubach Mystery by Chalkpit

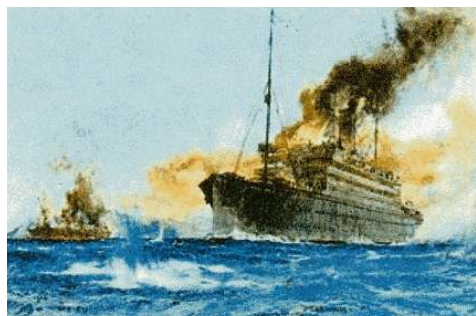
Part 2

To complete the Brubach family history a further three sons followed their brothers to war and saw action, fortunately surviving the experience. ALBERT BRUBACK was a Private in the 9th London Regiment, (Queen Victoria's Rifles), and spelt his surname with a "K" - perhaps he thought it looked less Germanic! Albert was transferred to the Army Pay Corps later in the War.

HANS BRUBACH was born on the 13th January 1898 but he changed his German names and became JACK BRUCE. He was 18 years old when he enlisted into the Royal Navy on the 13th January 1916. On the 6th May of that year he was serving aboard the H.M.S Arathusa as a Boy Class II and on the 24th August boarded H.M.S. Commendable as a Boy Class I later becoming an Able Seaman on the same ship.

**Received prize money
amounting to £3.16s.0d
for the destruction of
an enemy ship!**

The last of the seven brothers is VALENTINE AUGUST BRUBACH who also changed his name by Deed Poll to VICTOR AUGUST BRUCE. Born on the 12th August 1882 he went on to enlist into the Royal Marine Artillery obtaining the rank of Corporal. Victor was put on the Royal Fleet Reserve and returned to his former Corps on the 14th August 1914. Victor



Carmania sank Cap Trafalgar off Trindade

served aboard the Armed Merchant Cruiser H.M.S. Carmania which had been converted from a Passenger liner of the Cunard fleet. She was given the tasks of both a Convoy Escort and Raider designed to sink German Colliers and small Warships sailing in the vicinity of Trindade, a remote Brazilian island. It was at Trindade that a German Auxiliary Cruiser named S.M.S. "Cap Trafalgar" was discovered on the 14th September by the H.M.S. Carmania. In the course of the fighting both ships suffered serious damage but it was the German vessel – holed beneath the water line which heeled over and sank. The British losses were slight but among the injured was Victor although he recovered and received prize money amounting to £3.16s.0d. for the destruction of an enemy ship!

Still searching for that connection with Keston... Fast forward several decades from the Great War and on the 25th October 1945 Mathilde is registered in the Death Index for Bromley. Her address is given as "The Lodgers" Downe Road, Keston where she had recently moved to. Her son saw to the funeral arrangements and interred his mother in Keston Churchyard. Mystery solved!

St Nicholas and Santa Claus



One account of how Father Christmas began tells of a man named Nicholas who was born in the third century in the Greek village of Patara, on what is today the southern coast of Turkey. His family were both devout and wealthy, and when his parents died he used his inheritance to help the needy, sick and suffering. He dedicated his whole life to God's service and was made Bishop of Myra while still a young man. Together with other Bishops and priests, he was imprisoned under the Emperor Diocletian's fierce persecution of Christians across the Roman Empire. Believers were tortured and executed in terrible and public ways. Christians who survived were called 'saints' or 'confessors' because they kept on confessing that Jesus is Lord. Nicholas was one of these.

Finally he was released by a decree of the new Emperor Constantine. He returned to Myra and served as a Bishop for another 30 years. One story of his generosity tells of how there was a poor family with three daughters who needed dowries if they were to marry and not be sold into slavery. Nicholas heard of their plight, and on three occasions tossed a bag of gold into their home through an open window at night, which was said to have landed in stockings or shoes left by the fire to dry.

Saint Nicholas was a popular saint in Europe until the Reformation in the 1500s. However, he remained an important figure in Holland and the Dutch continued to celebrate his feast day on 6th December. Sinterklaas, 'St Nicholas', dressed in red Bishop's robes arrives on a boat from Spain to ride a white horse on his gift giving rounds. Children put out their shoes on the windowsill the night before and in the morning find the gifts that he has left for them. To this day, 6th December is still the main day for gift giving and merry making in much of Europe. Many feel that simple gift giving in early Advent helps preserve a Christmas Day focus on the Christ Child.

Sally Churchus, from various sources



Sinterklass

What I Do



I can't believe that I have been running The Keston Singers for 54 years now! My love of music began early, my mother was very musical and I started to have piano lessons. I enjoyed the music and singing when I went to church on a Sunday too and sang in the church choir. By the time I had reached the Sixth Form I was excused PE to attend piano lessons with a Professor in Hertfordshire, where I lived. I went on to train at the Royal Academy of Music for three years, and my course had a slant towards teaching, which I had always wanted to do.

My working life included teaching music and choirs at a Junior School in Kidbrooke and at Sydenham High School for Girls. When Sydenham High celebrated 100 years, I conducted the concert under the dome of St. Paul's, which was an amazing experience. When I had my daughter in 1964 I gave up full time work and taught piano and singing part time to fit in with family commitments. When Hilary was three months old and we had moved to Keston, it was suggested by the Rev'd John Starky that I join the Young Wives' Group, which I did. The pianist for the Christmas Concert was then taken ill and I offered to help out. There was no looking back after that, as they

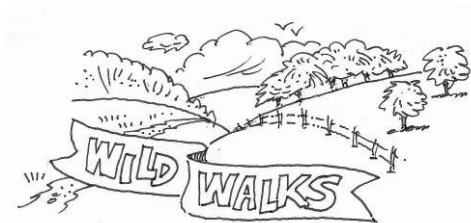
enjoyed having me and I enjoyed running the Choir section of the group. I remember that we used to do singing round the parish at Christmas time, singing at private parties, which was great fun. Eventually the Choir expanded to about three dozen singers, and we managed John Rutter's and Fauré's Requiems. Due to the ages of the members in the 1980s we changed the name to the Wives' Choir and then to The Keston Singers. We are now down to about two dozen in number and would welcome new members. Belonging to a choir has been shown to have both physical and mental benefits.

Running the Choir involves rehearsals each week, (on a Tuesday afternoon), in Keston Church Hall, preparing for our Summer and Christmas Concerts and also organising an accompanist. All monies raised at these over the years, bar expenses, have gone to charity. I have had tremendous enjoyment from running the Choir, and appreciate their loyalty and hard work.

I conducted the concert under the dome of St. Paul's

Our Christmas Concert this year will be on Saturday 14th December at 2.30pm in Keston Church Hall. Tickets are priced at £7.50 including refreshments and can be purchased from Maureen Marshall on 01689 857260, from Choir members or at the door. All proceeds will be shared between the Biggin Hill Community Care Association and our local charity, Magpie Dance. Do come and join us.

Pam Robertson/Sally Churchus



Whilst out walking in the last week of October I met a man with a Welsh Collie dog. “What’s the difference?” you ask. Well, while I’m not a dog expert, the obvious difference is the colouring. The Welsh Collie is brown and white while the English version is, as you probably know, black and white. Added to that it’s also smaller.

As a boy, I recall my mother bringing home a cute little brown pup which she’d seen in the window of the local pet shop – yes, the window – could you imagine that today! It didn’t grow too large and had wispy little ears which it would prick up and a classic Collie tail. It turned out to be... a Welsh Collie.

The dog on the walk was accompanied by a pleasant man who informed me, upon asking, that he was checking out the freshly sown winter corn. Within a week or so it had already germinated and covered the field with an even cloak of delicate green. “What’s to check?” I asked. Several things were mentioned but the most interesting was the fact that slugs could, at the early stage, almost ruin the growth. Hard to believe but I don’t doubt true. He’d come up from Faversham from an agricultural outfit that was into those sort of things. If I sound vague that’s because I am, but it all made sense at the time.



Fishponds Road

Now that autumn has truly arrived we’ve had strong winds which have stripped the leaves from some trees thereby exposing others which have hung on. What a truly magnificent scene with varying degrees of faded greens and vibrant golds.

Talking of gold * I must mention the trip in my little Austin car to the London to Brighton Veteran Car Run. It’s always the first Sunday in November and happily the weather was beautiful. The previous day was absolutely ghastly and doubtless a lot of participants were keeping everything crossed! I went with a couple of visitors from Germany who’d come specially for the occasion. They weren’t disappointed. Tragically there was a fatality as one of the ‘old crocks’ ended up on the M23 close to Gatwick airport. It’s easily done if you lose sight of a car in front that knows the route. We were located, as always, at Merstham and had seen the very car go clattering by. Oh dear.

* My little Austin’s colour is Harvest Gold.

Richard Geiger

If you love someone, tell them now, for hearts are often broken by words left unspoken

Christmas Trivia

1. In 1583 Scottish Presbyterians decided there was no Biblical reason for celebrating Christmas and declared it a normal working day, a practise which persisted until 1958!
2. The Old English custom of Wassailing was to toast someone's good health in exchange for gifts at Christmastide and was the forerunner for the tradition of Christmas carolling. It was in the 13th century that St. Francis of Assisi began the custom of singing carols in church.
3. Did you know that the first Christmas was celebrated on 25th December AD 336 in Rome?
4. The 'X' in Xmas, as we use today, comes from the Greek letter *chi*, which is the first letter of the Greek word *Christós*, which became Christ in English. There is well documented history of X (actually *chi*) as an abbreviation for 'Christ'. The suffix 'mas' is from the Latin derived Old English word for Mass.
5. Father Christmas's reindeer were actually the invention of an American, Clement Clarke Moore, who came up with the idea in his poem "The Night Before Christmas" in 1823. He names eight reindeer. Rudolph appeared in 1939 in a short story by Robert L. May.
6. We know the colour of Rudolph's nose, but what about his eyes? In December they are blue to capture more light; in summer they are gold. Reindeer are the only animals whose eye colour changes with the seasons.

Christmas Flower Arranging Workshop



We are having our (free) Flower Arranging Workshop on Thursday 19th December at 2.30pm in Keston Church Hall. Do come and join us and enjoy assembling your special arrangement for Christmas. You will need a container of your choice, secateurs, flowers and foliage. Also, baubles if wished. Oasis will be available for purchase. Help and advice will be at hand if needed and there will be the usual raffle. For further information please contact Maureen Marshall on 01689 857260.

WI News

We will be having a Christmassy meeting in December with entertainers, which is open to visitors. Everyone is also welcome to our Keston WI Festival of Carols at 2pm on Wednesday 18th December in Keston Parish Church. Tickets priced £3 are available from Tonia on tonia.cc@blueyonder.co.uk and include refreshments in the church hall afterwards. Our speaker in January will be Richard Griffin, a former Royal Protection Officer to the Queen and Prince Philip. Do come and join us at our meetings in Keston Village Hall, at 2pm on the second Wednesday in the month.

Shirley Newman

Magazine Deadline

Please send copy for the February/March issue of The Keston Magazine to The Editor, Sally Churchus, by Sunday 5th January at the very latest to editor@kestonparishchurch.org.uk or Tel: 020 8462 8750. Thank you.

Laughlines

☺ A young couple took their little daughter to a nativity service to hear the story of Mary, Joseph and the baby Jesus. Before the service they were enjoying refreshments in the church hall and their young daughter was scrutinising the table of food. "Mummy", she asked, "Where's the baby cheeses?"

☺ Sunday School Teacher: Class, what do you know about Adam's wife, Eve? Student: They named Christmas Eve after her.



☺ Carols that have been misheard and misquoted by children:

- * Get dressed you married gentleman,
Let nothing you dismay.
- * O Come All Ye Faithful...
O come let us ignore him,
O come let us ignore him,
O come let us ignore him,
Christ the Lord.
- * Hark, the hairy angels sing,
Glory to the newborn thing...
Peace on earth and mercy mild
God and sinners wreck a child...
With the jelly toast proclaim
'Christ is born in Bethlehem!'



Beat the Blues Coffee Morning



Saturday 18th January
10 am - 12 noon

The Rectory
40 The Dale BR2 6HW

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Entrance £4 includes coffee/tea & cake
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then finishing with High Tea

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