

The

Keston Magazine

News of your Parish and Village



June/July 2021

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Be careful how you think; your life is shaped by your thoughts.

Proverbs 4:23

Thought for the month



Our Greatest Treasure

What is of great worth to you? If this past year has taught us anything – it has to be what is of greatest worth in this life. Of course, as we are freed from restrictions, we want to get back to shopping, going to the cinema, singing in church and holidaying – but are they really the things that have emerged as the most important to us?

A quite well-known verse in the Bible is the one that shows just how far a person will go to obtain something they believe to be worth everything to them. A parable of Jesus in the Gospel of Matthew chapter 13 says: “Again, the Kingdom of Heaven is like a merchant on the lookout for choice pearls. When he discovered a pearl of great value, he sold everything he owned and bought it!”.

If we discover something that is really important to us, we will do all we need to do to secure it. Many of us have discovered that being with our friends and family is far more important to us than any amount of shopping, travelling or other forms of entertainment. Whilst all those things help us to relax and recharge after a hard week’s work – we enjoy them more when we do them in

the company of others. Some of us have realised just how important going to church is in sustaining us on our faith journey!

There are other things too that we have become all the more important to us, because they will actually help us to retain what is of greatest worth in the end. For instance, the health of our planet – if we don’t secure its health, it will stop us doing *any* of the things we enjoy. For some the welfare of animals has gone up in importance because they have derived so much pleasure and well-being from the company of their pets in recent months.

David Attenborough said of our recent history: “Our predators had been eliminated, most of our diseases were under control, we had worked out how to produce food – there was nothing left to restrict us, nothing to stop us unless we stopped ourselves”. The fact is that we can actually stop *ourselves* from gaining that ‘pearl of great price!’.

Our ‘pearl’ might be an affordable home, a purposeful job, our sobriety, our health and wellbeing, or maybe simple hope – notwithstanding circumstances outside our control, many of these are within our reach if we are willing to give all we have to obtain one of them. It might be all our money, time, effort or willpower – but, if we give it, we will be rewarded. On the way to attaining our ‘pearl’ we can pray the simplest of prayers – ‘Help me Lord!’.

Carol

Rev’d Carol Morrison

From the Editor

Welcome to this bumper edition of The Keston Magazine. Having been asked if it was possible to have ‘more’ and told by people how much they enjoy reading the magazine, we asked for a quote from the printers and found out that we would still just be in budget if we added an extra page of A4 paper. We are not sure at the moment if this will be a ‘one off’ or happen on a more regular basis.

We hope you enjoy all this issue has to offer, including our regular articles plus news about the new Book Exchange that has started in the village, the imminent re-opening of The Fox pub, and a bit about Greenacres riding school which will be celebrating it’s 60th year in Keston this year.

Our history articles are always very popular, and we are pleased to be able to offer two this time – unfortunately there wasn’t room for one in the last issue.

I would like to say thank you to all our contributors, especially those regular ones. If you know about anything interesting going on in Keston I would love to hear from you so that it can be included – in particular, stories about people. I also need photos.

Hopefully there will soon be some events to advertise, as there has obviously not really been anything for over a year now. How lucky we are and what a blessing it is to have had such an incredible vaccine roll out, enabling us to see the light at the end of the tunnel now.

Sally Churchus



Cover Story



The photo on the front cover by Bob Harrop is of *Angelica sylvestris*, (Wild Angelica), taken in the Ravensbourne meadows. The hoverfly, *Eristalis tenax*, the Common Drone fly can be seen on it. Angelica is a plant of wet woods and damp meadows throughout Britain, grows up to 200cm tall and has hollow stems. It is rather like Hogweed, but that is roughly hairy, while the Angelica is almost smooth.

The common and scientific name of the genus, (Latin *angelus* = angel), is derived from the legend that medicinal plants must have been shown to mankind by the angels. The seeds and root – said to be ‘long, thick... warm and aromatic to the taste’, and with ‘a very agreeable smell’ – were regarded as especially valuable. In early medical textbooks they were claimed to aid the digestion. The 17th century herbalist Nicholas Culpepper recommended Angelica against ‘all epidemical diseases’. Culpepper also mentioned that the plant could be eaten as candy, and it is in this form that it is best known today, crystallised as a traditional decoration on cakes and other sweet foods. The variety used is *Angelica archangelica*, (Garden Angelica).

A new venture opening September 2021 at Church Road, Keston BR2 6HT

Keston Forest Pre-school

*Where happy children play and learn by connecting and interacting with nature.
In our outdoor classroom, the sky is the limit.*



Imagine a place filled with awe and wonder. Where there is time to develop curiosity and discover the natural world. Opportunities to build confidence and resilience. Freedom to explore and create imaginative adventures with lots of friends. Space to run, swing, climb, build dens, make mud pies, grow plants, jump in puddles, go bug hunting and listen to the sounds of nature. Whilst children grow in our ever changing landscape as we travel through the seasons and our changeable weather, our priority is to keep them safe whilst offering risks and a secure environment from which they can develop.

Operating from 9.30am to 2.30pm Monday to Friday, term time for children over 2³/₄, you can enrol your children for any number of days a week. We are registered to receive the Free and Additional Early Entitlement, (FEE funding), and can accept

payments through a tax free gov.uk childcare account. We give daily feedback and termly progress reports online via Tapestry.

Keston is the first fully outdoor pre-school setting in the London Borough of Bromley. We have over 20 years experience delivering the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum in our day nurseries, but will now be delivering this fully outdoors through forest pre-school activities and with nature. Being outdoors is a fundamental part of the early years curriculum and has been proven to have a positive impact on children's health, wellbeing, happiness, concentration and decision making.

For more information on prices and availability please see:

Website: kestonforestpreschool.co.uk

Phone: 07862 020745 or email:

enquiries@kestonforestpreschool.co.uk

Key Quotes:

'Nature does not hurry, yet everything is accomplished' Lao Tzu

'There is no such thing as bad weather, only inappropriate clothing' Sir Ranulph Fiennes

The Fox

The Keston Magazine kindly approached myself and my husband to introduce ourselves regarding The Fox.

My name is Lisa and my husband's is Michael and we are locals to the village that have a vested interest in the community. We have lots of experience when it comes to the 'pub-game', running many successful pubs, including The Swan in West Wickham and The Lord Holmesdale in Bromley. Sadly, Michael had a health scare two years ago, which meant we had to take a break for a short while. Thankfully, he has overcome his health troubles and all is well. So when The Fox became available, we thought what a fantastic chance and challenge it would be!

We realise that there are lots of rumours regarding the recent building works going on at The Fox, so we thought it would be the perfect opportunity to set them straight by writing this article. It is not going to be flats, a Tesco Express or a nightclub, but a traditional, village pub. We have acquired the lease for The Fox and decided to do this because we think it is a fabulous pub and we couldn't bear to see such a lovely asset to our village boarded up any longer!

The Fox has been closed for about a year and its condition is not great. With a building that size that has been closed for a long time, it is obviously going to need some sort of care. With that said, we are hoping to open on 17th May, so please keep your fingers crossed for us, but it will all depend on how the renovations progress.

Michael, a true traditionalist, says we must earn it before we spend it! So,

whilst the exterior of the pub may look untouched, we can assure you that inside we have brand-new beer lines and equipment, new furniture and a huge emphasis has been made on the cleanliness of the pub.

Our main aim is to operate a good, family, community pub, where you can always get yourself a decent pint! Family means so much to us and that will be the core message that we want to put out there. The Fox will be a family-run pub; a place where you can relax and unwind; a place that is welcoming and feels like home!

We hope that you will come down and meet us, but for now you can find out all the latest updates on our social media pages. You can find us on Facebook: **@thefoxkestonofficial**
Instagram: **@thefoxkestonofficial**
Twitter: **@foxkeston**

Like, follow and share to help spread the word! Thanks in advance.

Lisa and Mike Powley



Mike and Lisa with Manager Lee Hancock

Prince Philip, Faithful Servant



His duty of service and “genuine and deep sense of humility” came from his personal and “sincere” Christian faith, Archbishop Justin Welby said, “absolutely untainted by false piety, formed and developed by wrestling with great issues. . . He knew who he was, and his faith was central to who he was and how he lived his life. He worked out his call to serve and follow Christ in the context of his own unique calling”.

Prince Philip began life being baptised into the Greek Orthodox Church in the Old Fortress in Corfu. Later, he attended Anglican services with his classmates and relations in England and throughout his Royal Navy days. Prior to his marriage to Princess Elizabeth he was officially received into the Church of England in October 1947 by the Archbishop of Canterbury, Geoffrey Fisher, at a private service in Lambeth Palace.

Of his faith, a United Reformed Church statement said, “Many who have known the Duke of Edinburgh bear witness to the depth of his faith

and his theological knowledge. A regular visitor to Mount Athos, and a keen questioner of preachers, his faith was much more than nominal”. (*Mount Athos is a mountain and peninsula in north eastern Greece and an important centre of Eastern Orthodox monasticism. It is home to 20 monasteries*).

He was known for his interfaith work, including the foundation of The Alliance of Religions and Conservation (ARC) in 1995 at Windsor Castle. This brokered links between the world’s major faiths and organisations working on environment programmes. His faith led to action, and he is quoted as saying “If God is in nature, nature itself becomes divine”. We therefore have “a responsibility not to harm it, not just for our own selfish interests, but as a duty to the Creator”. How apt at the present time while we are thinking more than ever what we must do about climate change, although climate change was something of which Prince Philip was ‘sceptical’.

A spokesperson for the Anglican Communion said “His example of duty and service and of care and concern for the environment and for young people will live on”.

His funeral on 17th April, at another St George’s, this time at Windsor Castle, featured some of his best loved words and music. These included the hymn *Eternal Father, Strong to Save*, the sailor’s hymn, and Psalm 104 which he had requested be set to music by William Lovelady. As the Bishop of Durham said, “May he rest in peace and rise in glory”.

Sally Churchus

Church Benchmark



While writing this article I have been asked ‘what is a benchmark? Is it a mark on a bench?’. Well, we do have quite a few benches in the churchyard, but no...

It all started a while back when I saw a map for the new enlarged car park at Keston Parish church and noticed on the north east corner of the church the words ‘bench mark’. This intrigued me, and I did have a good look at the outside of the church but I couldn’t find it – until last week (with some help!). I did wonder if it had eroded away or been re-pointed a couple of years ago when we had work done on the church to deal with the damp. However, it is actually carved into the stonework.

My online research informed me that a benchmark is a means of marking height above sea level. A benchmark, bench mark or survey benchmark is a chiselled horizontal mark made in stone structures that surveyors could use to secure a ‘bench’, (from 19th century surveying jargon, meaning a type of bracket), to mount measuring

equipment. It thus allowed the equipment to be accurately repositioned in the same place in the future. The marks were usually indicated with a chiselled arrow below the horizontal line. They can be cut into houses, churches, bridges and many other structures.

Benchmarks have been around for a long time, (some dating from 1831), and were used to calculate a height above the mean sea level. In Great Britain that is from ‘Ordnance Datum Newlyn’ – defined as the mean sea level at Newlyn in Cornwall.

In Great Britain there is a network of approx. 190 fundamental benchmarks from which about 500,000 lower-order benchmarks were established. The network of benchmarks has had little maintenance for 30 years and the number is reducing due to property development, road widening etc. However, the fundamental benchmarks are highly accurate and are still maintained and used by Ordnance Survey. Apparently the last traditionally cut benchmark was carved in 1993. OS records state the one on Keston parish church, (lower-order), which is 80cm off the ground, was cut in 1969 and is 450ft (137.3m) above sea level.

Other systems such as GPS, (Global Positioning System), are now the preferred method of heighting used by Ordnance Survey as it is more accurate.

Benchmarking has become a hobby for some as they seek to find benchmarks, and sometimes other reference marks too. Not sure that I’ll be going in for that, but I’m pleased I’ve found the one on our church.

Sally Churchus

Our Keston Calendar Walk

For Christmas our friend Angela Godfrey gave us The Keston Calendar. As we have lived in Hayes for many years most of the views were familiar to us, and I had the idea to plan a walk to each view and try to find the exact place the photo was taken. One or two I was unsure of but Angela helped me with that and a route was plotted on the map, starting at the Croydon Road end of Padmall Wood.

When we set off rain was threatening and we weren't able to match the sky colours, clouds or seasons in the photos but we did well, even discovering some paths we hadn't been on before. We were pleased to find that one mandarin duck, (November photo), was still sitting on the log – well we like to think it was the same one!



Gravestone in the foreground with ivy motif



Mary on the left and Pat, right

Strangely, the picture we spent most time on was the Keston Churchyard, (January photo), which should have been easy as there are lots of clues. I even managed to decipher the name, Henry T. Pat Fenden, but we didn't find it. Can anyone help? (I have taken a photo to put you out of your misery and help others! SC).

Just past the Wilberforce Oak we hoped to drop down the track to Westerham Road/Downe Road. There was no sign to tell us it was private but alas at the bottom were controlled gates and in spite of smiling at the security camera, no one let us out and we had to retrace our steps.

When we got back to Commonsides, (September photo), it started to rain very heavily so we didn't visit Fox Lane, (April photo). We had been out for nearly three hours but it was a lovely leisurely walk which we can recommend. We had expected to do it in parts so we felt really well exercised at the end.

Thank you to the photographers.

Mary Mills (and Pat Aste)

Why do we cross ourselves?

Do you ‘cross’ yourself? Do you literally make the sign of the cross over or upon your body? I can recall people doing it almost superstitiously in times of danger, seeing an ambulance rushing past or even as a sign of gratitude at good news.

People do this in different ways: some with certain fingers joined together, some touch their right shoulder before the left, some do small contained crosses on their head, lips and chest whilst others do an exaggerated sign extending as low as they can reach and almost wrapping their arms around themselves.

Keep your eyes open one time and look at your fellow congregation members as the priest extends his or her arm to bless them and you’ll see many different responses. From keeping their heads bowed, crossing themselves at the same time, to standing quite informally and just watching.

For me it’s not really ‘how’ you do it but rather ‘*What’s it all about?*’. If you ‘Google’ that question you’ll get lots of great theologically sound and sometimes deep suggestions.

Let me offer you my personal take on it that has grown to become daily the first thing, last thing and most important prayer of each of my days. It’s an acknowledgement of God’s love for me individually and us collectively and how through this we are forgiven and set free to live life to the full – with courage and strength.

As I start at the highest point and descend it reminds me that Jesus, God’s own Son came down to earth for love of me and all of us. As I cover the width of my body I feel His love wrapped around me, surrounding me, encouraging me, strengthening me, enveloping me and all that will take place in my life and the world today. Not a magic protection layer but a recognition of His presence wherever and whatever takes place.

May you be blessed – In the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Rev’d Dr Jo White for Parish Pump



Traditionally the thumb, index finger and middle finger of the right hand are used, symbolising the Holy Trinity.

From the Registers

Funerals

14th April

Marjorie ‘Beryl’ Bareham (aged 92yrs)

Funeral at Bluebell Cemetery, Halstead

28th April

Sheila Kathleen Barker (aged 85yrs)

Burial of Ashes

12th May

Gillian Faith Mobsby (aged 85yrs)



Singing the last hymn outdoors on Easter Sunday

Church Services

As of 6th June our Sunday services will be back to a **10am** start and although we are allowed to receive the bread, Communion wine is still not allowed. We continue to operate a strict booking system, therefore please book with Tricia Coward on 01689 854373 hallbookings@kestonparishchurch.org.uk or Rev'd Carol 01689 853186 rector@kestonparishchurch.org.uk if you wish to come. Masks need to be worn and hand sanitiser used on entry.

Prayer Walk

On the first Tuesday of each month we meet at 9.30am on the field opposite the Greyhound Pub for our prayer walk – we start with a simple prayer and then proceed to walk and chat as we make our way across Keston Common. We stop a couple of times for prayers that are creation themed, taking the time to appreciate the natural environment and water and wildlife around us. We usually finish back at about 10.45am. Newcomers are always welcome.



Prayer walkers ready to set off

Easter Competitions at K



Thank you to the school for these v
creations made by pupils. Years 3/
and years 5/6 had an 'egg



Keston CE Primary School



wonderful photos of the Easter
4 had a blown egg competition
'-mobile' competition.



Greenacres Riding School



Greenacres Riding School is celebrating its 60th Birthday this year. It was established in 1961 set in 50 acres at Leaves Green. The Indoor Riding School was one of the first in the country. The school began catering for pupils at a time when riding was becoming popular – prior to the 1960s the sport was mainly only available to people living further afield in the countryside.

During the 1970s the school provided riding for local people, it also catered for five schools travelling from inner London on a regular weekly basis. The children arrived on coaches provided by the London Councils which gave them the opportunity to experience a new outdoor sport.

Greenacres was also host to the Metropolitan Mounted Police who during that time were based at Coney Hall near West Wickham.

Throughout the years the school has taught hundreds of people to ride.

Prior to the introduction of Government Colleges, residential training courses were provided at Greenacres for those wishing to work in the horse industry. Many pupils passed their British Horse Society exams and went on to pursue successful careers.

Regular horse shows were also held which were extremely popular with up to 100 entries in the local jumping category!

Nowadays, especially after lockdown, riding is as popular as ever. We have young mums returning to riding and grandparents returning with their grandchildren after many years. We still offer lessons for different ages and standards and our holiday activities and birthday party groups are proving very popular.

In this age of technology it is important to retain a healthy enjoyable pastime which we hope will never go out of fashion.

Tel: 01959 572008

Book Exchange



During the lockdown earlier this year, I had an idea about a book exchange that was sparked by a conversation I had with a customer in the Village Stores one morning. Our customer liked to read but the libraries were closed and there was a lack of books for him to read. I spoke to one of our lovely customers and she had some books that she thought might fit the bill and she was right! The idea started to take shape.

I'm an avid reader and swap books with family and friends all the time and I've always got piles of books at home that have either been read or are on my 'to be read' list.

I read about other book exchanges in other parts of the country that seemed to be very popular with the local community so I searched the internet, found a design I liked and had one made.

It was full steam ahead until I read an article in the paper about a similar scheme that had received very bad press because people complained that the book exchange was spreading Covid! This was not what I wanted to read. I decided to wait until some of the lockdown restrictions had lifted and the book exchange finally went 'live' on Monday 12th April.

Although the general idea is for people to take a book and then replace it with one they've read, I've had a fantastic response and I have many books waiting to go in the box. If you like the look of two or three of the books, please take them – I have many more to replace them.

The book exchange is in Lakes Road and you are very welcome to come and have a browse at any time. I have a few children's books at the moment but would welcome more if you have any to spare.

Thank you to everyone who has supported the book exchange so far – happy reading!

Sue Sinton

Life is short,
And we do not have much time
To gladden the hearts of those who
Travel with us.
So... be swift to love,
And make haste to be kind.
And the blessing of God,
Who made us,
Who loves us,
And who travels with us
Be with you now and forever.
Amen
Henri Frederic Amiel

Bio-Optic Organised Knowledge

A device for the future?

Introducing the new Bio-Optic Organised Knowledge device, trade-named BOOK.

BOOK is a revolutionary breakthrough in technology: no wires, no electric circuits, no batteries, nothing to be connected or switched on. It's so easy to use, even an adult can operate it! Compact and portable, it can be used anywhere – even sitting in an armchair by the fire.

BOOK is constructed of sequentially numbered sheets of paper, (recyclable), each sheet capable of holding thousands of bits of information. The pages are locked together with a custom-fit device called a binder, which keeps the sheets in their correct sequence.

Opaque Paper Technology (OPT) allows manufacturers to use both sides of the sheet, doubling the information density and cutting costs and size. Experts are divided on the prospects for further increases in information density; for now, BOOKs with more information simply use more pages. Each sheet is scanned optically, registering the information directly into your brain. A flick of the finger takes you to the next sheet.

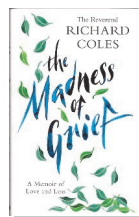
BOOK may be taken up at any time and used merely by opening it. The 'browse' feature allows you to move instantly to any sheet, and to move backwards and forwards as you wish. Many come with an 'index' feature, which pinpoints the exact location of any selected information for instant retrieval.

BOOK never crashes or needs rebooting or charging, though, like other devices, it can be damaged if coffee is spilled on it or if dropped too many times on a hard surface.

You can also make personal notes next to BOOK text entries using optional programming tools: Permanent Entry Nib (PEN) or Portable Erasable Nib Correctable Intercommunication Language Stylus (PENCILS).

Book Review

The Madness of Grief by Rev'd Richard Coles



Death is part of the Rev'd Richard Coles's life and work, but when his partner the Rev'd David Coles died, in 2019, much about death took Coles by surprise and he found himself in need of help. It is an honest and engaging book, written from the heart.

This *Sunday Times* bestseller has had many good reviews:

'Immensely moving and disarmingly witty' Nigella Lawson
'Captures brilliantly, beautifully, bravely the comedy as well as the tragedy of bereavement' *The Times*
'Will strike a chord with anyone who has grieved' *Independent*.

Rev'd Richard Coles features in several radio and TV programmes. He is the only Vicar in Britain to have had a No.1 hit single – 'Don't leave me This Way', with the Communards in 1986.

2nd Lte. Reginald William Wynne Mendel



Not all soldiers' deaths occurred during fighting on the battlefields of The Great War as the following article reveals.

Reginald was the son of William and Edith Mendel, his father was a Director of Harrods and their London home was at 31, Hans Mansion, Knightsbridge with a summer home at Oakwood, Leafy Grove, Keston. Reginald graduated from Sandhurst Military Academy and was commissioned as a 2nd Lieutenant in the Royal Field Artillery in August 1916. In November 1916 he embarked for active service on the Western Front, returning to England in July 1917 following an injury and illness. It appeared that, whilst in hospital in France, he had been told he had Tuberculosis of the blood, (according to the official reports at the time), and this preyed on his mind, fearing that he would not be able to return to the fighting.

On Reginald's return to England following his participation in the battle for Vimy Ridge he had, according to his mother, become very highly strung and did not respond to her attempts to calm her son down. The day before the tragedy he dined with his mother at their London residence before leaving for their country home in Keston. On arrival he seemed in good spirits and wrote several letters before retiring to bed, leaving instructions to be called at 7.30am to allow him time to catch the 9.22am train from Bromley to London where he was due to appear before a Medical Board to see if he could be recommended for foreign service. On his mind was the fear the doctors might find the TB which he thought he was suffering from and thus find him unfit to return to active service. This worried Reginald greatly as he obviously wished to return! The following morning James Smith, butler and valet, as instructed, went to wake him in time to dress and leave for Bromley. James knocked, and entered the room to find Reginald lying on the bed fully dressed in his uniform and he soon realized a serious incident had occurred. The Valet roused the maids and sent for both the doctor and the police.

Police Sergeant Page examined the body and found a bullet wound on the right side of the head and, in the deceased's hand, a magazine pistol. Dr Blake from Keston attributed death to shock and haemorrhage caused by a bullet and that death had been instantaneous and there was no doubt the means of death was self-inflicted.

The jury returned a verdict of death by suicide while suffering from temporary mental derangement.

The tragic end to a young life as Reginald was only 20 years of age. His body was taken back to London and buried at Kensal Green Cemetery near his family home at Kensington.

Chalkpit

The information for this article is taken from "King and Country" Keston Parish and the Great War.



Food for Thought

Browsing through archives written by the School Master of Keston National School at the turn of the 19th century will give the reader a stark reminder of hazards to health faced by everyone living at the time. I'm sure the selection below will encourage us all to examine our response to the wondrous gift we receive from modern antibiotics and vaccinations.

Sept 1890 *Bromley and District Times* reported the death of Keston School Master, Mr Eusabius Sears who had retired in the previous June from ill health, almost certainly tuberculosis.

Reasons for children's absences and occasions when the entire school was closed as recorded by the Master:

May 1896 Two week school closure for an epidemic of measles.

Oct 1896 62 pupils absent during an outbreak of mumps.

May 1900 Diphtheria in Fox Lane all children to remain at home by order of the medical officer.

Dec 1900 Diphtheria in Leaves Green all children confined to home by order of the medical officer.

Nov 1901 School closed for one week due to scarlet fever epidemic.

June 1903 School closed for three weeks and disinfected during a measles epidemic.

April 1903 All Apps (family) absent with chicken pox.

Feb 1905 Lily Allen pupil teacher for infant class was absent from school and had to postpone her evening studies at Bromley Pupil Teacher Centre because she had contracted ringworm. Her fellow pupil teacher Alice Purdy suffered the same illness a few months later.

May 1907 Edgar Cowland absent required to help nurse his family. A few months later he was again absent because his sister "was in the last stages of consumption" (dying of tuberculosis).

This story can be replicated in every parish in England.

Tudor Davies

What I Do

I have always done voluntary work in many different forms. I wrote some time ago for The Keston Magazine about my experience of volunteering in The Falkland Islands.

At the start of the pandemic back in March 2020 all my voluntary work ceased. I replied to a request from the London Borough of Bromley to volunteer for the borough but I didn't hear anything until December, when I was asked to marshall at one of the vaccination centres. The vaccination programme had just begun and I was excited to be part of such an important project.

The programme started slowly, and with small numbers of people, as it was a new initiative to vaccinate the whole of the adult population, but as the programme was perfected, larger numbers were invited and more centres opened. The

needs of the first groups invited to take up the vaccine were very different to the groups getting their vaccines now.

There was so little knowledge about the vaccines in the early days and Pfizer was the only one on offer. The organisers of the centres regularly update the procedures and I have to check how things are currently being done. Meetings have been set up online so we can understand any changes and current procedures. We have also been informed of work done locally to inform and encourage certain groups to take up the vaccine. It has been good to

hear about the resources produced by local surgeries to reach out to all members of society to encourage them to take the vaccine.

I have enjoyed meeting new people. They come from all walks of life and have so much to offer. Unfortunately, because of the masks, I probably wouldn't recognise any of my fellow volunteers in the street.

I have been mainly marshalling the queue before people go in for their vaccine and my official responsibility is to ensure people wear their masks

and socially distance, however I realise that for most people it is a very emotional time for various reasons. It could be that they are so relieved they are finally getting it but others might be concerned about the controversy surrounding every stage of its creation. I see my role as putting people at ease by trying to be sensitive to their needs.

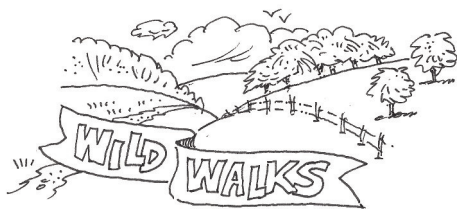


I currently work at six vaccination centres, including the Al-Emaan Mosque in Keston on the Croydon Road.

I enjoy challenges and adapting to new situations. I am proud to be part of something so crucial and to have helped the vaccinations to run as smoothly as possible. It is an honour to be part of such an important project.

Leela Florey

Thank you, Leela, we wouldn't have had such a brilliant roll out of the vaccine without volunteers like you! SC.



Whoopee, hooray! We're finally back to normal – everything's gonna be alright. Is it the end of lockdown? Is it goodbye to that awful north easterly wind that denied us the rainfall to get our lawns back into shape after what seemed like weeks of winter? No, it's none of these. The answer is simply that the bench has been put back at the West Kent golf course thus signifying all is well in the world. It was from this illustrious perch that I was inspired to embark on my literary career. With a little help from a feathered friend.

Over the recent months I've been having a peep at the patch upon which it used to stand. "Oh dear, it's still absent" and off I'd trudge to sit on a damp log and have my ciggie. But then a week ago there it was, albeit un-sittable-on as the bench had been watered along with the green! As the old song has it: happy days are here again...

With that in mind and the slow return of spring I've been struck by nature's offerings. In the back field the broad beans are at last starting to look like – well – broad beans and some are just presenting their sweet smelling flowers. However, amongst them I've noticed a huge amount of groundsel! Now this is an unwelcome guest and once in the garden it becomes a menace. Along with this I've been aware of the biggest clumps of dandelions this side of Mars!

They grow along the tractor tracks and I can only surmise that fertilizer has encouraged their prolific growth. One clump had up to fifty – yes **fifty**, flowers all looking forward to maturing and floating off to my garden, (and yours!).

On a completely different note but still relating to the subject I have to report that the bicycle I sometimes use to reach my walking spot, (and park in the woods), was stolen. Upon returning from my walk I was shocked by its absence. Did I leave it there or somewhere else? "Oh well, it's gone" I thought, "better walk home" – come on dog.

As I rounded the corner by the Gas Station there, walking across the field to Leaves Green was a recently made friend new to the area, "I've just had my bike stolen" I informed him. "Is it a black one, coz I've just seen one leaning against the fence at the entrance to the Gas Station?". Sure enough, there it was. Now what were the odds for that to happen? Being new to the area he'd gone to check the place out. Well, can you Adam and Eve it?

Richard Geiger



What Next?



Next Ahead hair design re-opened on 13th April and welcomed back customers old and new. The salon is owned by the energetic and enthusiastic Janet Bentley and has been open on the Heathfield Road for 27 years, supported by her professional team Lesley, Olivia and Pat. Janet is passionate about all things hair, horses and happy customers.

Like many small businesses, the salon relies on word of mouth recommendations and the support of loyal local clients. But realising that an online presence is almost essential to keep pace in the fast-changing world of technology, Next Ahead hair design now has a Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and Nextdoor page, all of which have full details of the business plus pictures of salon hair designs and the hair team. If Next Ahead is your salon of choice Janet would be thrilled if you could write a review, or 'like' or 'share' any of the posts on any of the platforms. Thank you.

Facebook: **@nextaheadhairdesign**

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Kate Hill Social Media

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Seasonal Recipe



Easy Strawberry ice cream

Ingredients

350g Strawberries (from 400g pack)

300ml whipping cream

397g tin of sweetened condensed milk

1 drop vanilla extract

- 1) Hull the strawberries.
- 2) Put into the food processor and process for about 45 seconds until pureed. If there are any white 'lumps' from the centre of the strawberries, remove them.
- 3) Whip the cream in a large bowl until it will stand in peaks.
- 4) Add the condensed milk, vanilla extract and pureed strawberries. Use a hand whisk to combine.
- 5) Pour into a dish or container and freeze overnight.
- 6) Remove from freezer 15-20 minutes before serving. Serve with the remaining strawberries.

Strawberries are packed with vitamins, fibre and have particularly high levels of antioxidants known as polyphenols and are also a good source of manganese and potassium.

Magazine Deadline

Please send copy for the August/September issue of The Keston Magazine to the Editor, Sally Churchus, by 11th July at the very latest. Email editor@kestonparishchurch.org.uk or Tel: 020 8462 8750. Thank you.

Laughlines

☺ How to stay safe

Avoid riding in cars. They are responsible for 20% of all fatal accidents.

Do not stay home. 17% of all accidents occur in the home.

Avoid walking on streets or pavements. 14% of all accidents happen to pedestrians.

Avoid traveling by air, rail, or water.

16% of all accidents involve these forms of transportation.

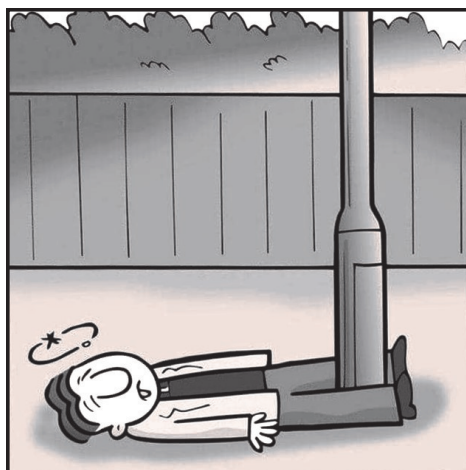
Of the remaining 33%, 32% of all

deaths occur in hospitals. So, above all else, *avoid hospitals*.

BUT: You will be pleased to learn that only 0.001% of all deaths occur in worship services in church, and these are usually related to previous physical disorders. Therefore, logic tells us that the safest place for you to be at any given point in time is at church!

☺ Coronavirus vaccine warning

This happened recently and is an important lesson for those in the older age group. A friend had his second dose of vaccine at the vaccination centre. Shortly afterwards he began to have blurred vision and struggled to get home. He rang the vaccination centre and asked if he should go straight to the hospital for help. He was told NOT to go to the hospital, but instead to return at once to the vaccination centre and pick up his glasses....



Derek had yet to learn that you don't need to close your eyes when you prayer walk!

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