



# The Keston Magazine

News of your Parish and Village

December/January 2023

# Keston Parish Church

Church Rd., Keston, BR2 6HT [kestonparishchurch.org.uk](http://kestonparishchurch.org.uk)



## Rector

There is currently a vacancy

## Licensed Lay Minister & Parish Administrator Churchwardens

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Residents' Association	<a href="http://www.kvra.org.uk">www.kvra.org.uk</a>	
Village Hall	Tina Lupton	01689 602993
Bless the Children	Jean 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
	<a href="http://www.friendsofkestoncommon.btck.co.uk">www.friendsofkestoncommon.btck.co.uk</a>	
Keston Residents' Road Safety Group	<a href="mailto:krrsg@hotmail.com">krrsg@hotmail.com</a>	

Thank God for his Son – his Gift too wonderful for words.

*2 Corinthians 9:15*

Front cover: Christmas wreath with nest by Sally Churchus ©



# Thought for the month



## Christmas presents

Those two words can cause so much anxiety at this time of the year. Sometimes thinking what to get and tracking it down can be time consuming and stressful and there is also often the financial strain too. With the rising cost of living, this year will be harder than ever for many.

So why do we do it? Let's take a look back to what really is 'the reason for the season'. The whole idea of giving presents is based on the presents the infant Jesus received from the wise men. On a side issue, the Bible never mentioned that there were three wise men (Magi) present, just that three presents were delivered. Also, it is likely that these men were astrologers from Persia, (present day Iran), and that Jesus was many months old at this time.

Having held my son shortly after his birth, I have some idea of what the word 'precious' really means. And yet, it doesn't even come close in terms of how precious the infant Jesus is to mankind. Look at John chapter 1 verse 14, *'And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory as of the Father's only Son, full of grace and truth'.*

We know from other scriptures that the 'Word' is the Lord Jesus Christ. I'm told that the Greek word used here for 'the Word' is logos, which can be translated as 'meaning, explanation, purpose' – now that is what we all need a good dose of! It is also a good description of what Jesus offered to a world ignorant of its Maker and desperately in need of His direction and love.

This must be one of the most precious verses in the whole Bible. I also think that many people miss the true significance of this statement of fact. The One through whom the world was created, the One who was 'with God' and 'is God', was present in a way he had never been on earth before. God the Son had 'put on human flesh' and entered this sinful world as a baby only to leave it later in agony on a cross. Foretold from the very start of the Bible, the final solution to sin was to demand the physical death of God's Son.

To come back to our topic of Christmas presents... We have to thank Jesus for the ultimate present – reconciliation to God! God's present to us was His Son. If we accept who Jesus is and what He did for us and then ask God to forgive us our sins, He will accept us through His own dear Son.

Forgiveness of sins, a home in heaven and a blissful eternity with Him who created us! Now *that's* a Christmas present.

Martin J Chalker, Churchwarden

Please see p11 for details of how to donate new toys to the Salvation Army.

## From the 'Editor'

Observant readers will have noticed the mistake in the last issue, so apologies for that! All the best publications include them. It's on p3 if you missed it. Just goes to show that proof readers are human.

Talking about magazine production, a member of our congregation told me recently that I am actually an Editrix. Or I could call myself an Editress – who would have known, what fun. According to my research the word Editress was first used in 1775, the definition being a woman who is an editor. The plural is Editrices. Editrix is down as a female editor, the plural of which is Editrixes. Well, there were plenty of Editrixes at the annual meeting of The Association for Church Editors that I went to in the middle of October. I am the Chair, which isn't nearly such a great term as Editrix. I could be a Chairlady but that sounds rather like charlady, so I think I'll give that one a miss.

Anyway, enough ramblings and on to this issue. Again we have a variety of articles from Christmas themed pieces to dogs, bees, heroes and cartoonists. Hopefully something of interest for parishioners to read whilst taking a break with a cup of tea or coffee from the hurly burly of preparations. I wish you all a meaningful and joy filled Christmas.

Sally Churchus



## Cover Story

In January, Mary P'Anson who lives on Heathfield Road kindly told me the tale about her home made Christmas wreath and let me photograph it. On 12th night when she came to take it down from her front door, she discovered, much to her surprise, a nest in the centre of it! There was just one egg in there, which looked like a Robin's egg. It hadn't hatched – presumably it was scared off at some point, which is hardly surprising.

Robins are renowned for nesting in weird and wonderful places and can start laying eggs as early as January if the weather is mild. This one had certainly chosen an unusual and beautiful place for their nest, but sadly not a particularly wise one!

## Joan retires



On Friday 28th October, Choir and church members said goodbye and thank you to Joan Taylor for over 40 years in Keston church choir. David Cook, our Organist and Choirmaster, presented her with an engraved Royal School of Church Music medal, hand made card, certificate and flowers.



# Defibrillator for church and hall

Thank you to everyone who has so generously given towards the cost of a fully automated external defibrillator, (AED), to be sited in Keston church foyer. In particular we would like to thank Pam Robertson for giving us the largest donation from the Keston Singers funds. Sadly, the group has now decided to fold after nearly 60 years.

A member of the congregation, Steff Nash, who is an A&E Consultant has kindly given us some Basic Life Support training so that we have the confidence to use the defibrillator if need be – although of course we are hoping we won't have to!

An AED is a medical device designed to analyse the heart rhythm and deliver an electric shock if needed to restore the heart rhythm to normal, ie. to revive someone from sudden cardiac arrest.



Dr Steff Nash with Pam Robertson and the new defibrillator

# Mourning Queen Elizabeth II's death



The week following the Queen's death Keston Parish church was open for people to sign the Book of Condolences, light a candle, say a prayer or just sit quietly. 85 people signed the book and several floral tributes were laid in the Garden of Remembrance.



## A good Harvest



Sally Churchus, (in red), at the Foodbank donation point in Downham, with volunteers. Although it looks like it, we didn't push the trolleys all the way from Keston!

Thank you to everyone who donated food at our Harvest Festival Service at the beginning of October for Keston Parish church to take to Bromley Foodbank. We took an amazing 69 kilos of non perishable food. In addition, we collected £245.30 plus Gift Aid for Welcare in Bromley to help local families in need.

## Christmas Sale in Aid of Demelza Children's Hospice

**Sunday 27th November  
Advent Sunday**

The Shirley Friends of Demelza will be selling the usual Christmas cards, decorations, gifts, toys etc. during coffee after the 10am service in the church hall ie. 11am-12 noon. Cash only please. Everyone welcome.

## Two New Benches



Bench in memory of 'ice cream' Shirley

At the end of September two new benches were installed at Keston Ponds. The first, (a picnic bench), was commissioned by the family and friends of Shirley, and replaces the rather burnt out tatty one close to the 'beach' area at Pond 2. The inscription reads 'For our beloved 'ice cream' Shirley because if we have ice cream we will always have you. Love from us all xxx'. It is the bench sited closest to the ice cream van.

The second bench is near Pond 3 and reads 'In loving memory of Michael Collins, a true and dedicated friend of Keston Common'. Michael was one of the founder members of the Friends of Keston Common.



Bench in memory of Michael Collins



# Tot's Play reaches award finals



I run 'Tots Play', baby and toddler multi sensory classes in Keston church hall, and was recently nominated for an award by some of my lovely customers for 'The Most Loved Children's Activity Leader in Bromley.' The awards are run by 'What's on 4 Kids' who are a platform that advertises local children's activities. They hold the awards every year, it's like the Oscars for the children's activity industry so I was chuffed to be nominated. I was even more thrilled to have then received enough votes to get through to the finals! I did not expect to make it to the finals but out of 12 nominees, I was one of six that made it that far. I attended the awards ceremony at the astonishing Mercedes' Benz world in October, I didn't win on the night but getting that far was a huge achievement of recognition for me. I am so grateful to have been nominated and to have received enough votes to reach the finals.

I love what I do, knowing that I am making a difference to the early years of a child's development and providing a safe place where parents can come and feel comfortable, make new friends and learn ways to boost their child's development. Everything we do has a purpose and focus on an area of development whether it be through massage in the baby classes, yoga, sensory play, instruments, bubbles or crawling through tunnels. It's all learning and it's all fun! Classes are suitable from newborn up to three years and need to be booked in advance. If you have a little one, do come along and give it a try. Schedule and booking can be done through the website [www.totsplay.co.uk/westwickham](http://www.totsplay.co.uk/westwickham) or email me on [ayten@totsplay.co.uk](mailto:ayten@totsplay.co.uk) for further details. I look forward to meeting you soon!

Ayten Ozgu

Keston C of E Primary School PTA

# CHRISTMAS FAIR

Saturday 26th November  
From 1PM to 5PM

Entry: £3 per adult, £1 per child or £5 per family (max 4)

Fantastic Christmas shopping stalls,  
delicious refreshments, fun activities,  
Santa's grotto, tombola, raffle,  
entertainment and lots, lots more....  
Don't miss out!



# Keston's Beautiful Front Gardens



Cannas at 27 Heathfield Road  
29th August 2022

Dahlias at 29 The Dale  
22nd October 2022



Acer at 7 Rolinsden Way  
23rd October 2022

Please send your front garden photos to [editor@kestonparishchurch.org.uk](mailto:editor@kestonparishchurch.org.uk)

# Eco Church tips for a greener Christmas

## Wrapping

Wrap presents with kindness for the environment. Shiny, foil wrapping ‘paper’ and ribbon can’t be recycled and will go to landfill. Try buying recycled wrapping paper or use brown paper and decorate with fir cones, wool or string. Maybe use zero plastic Sellotape, (plant based, fully compostable), or use bags and save them for another year.

## Christmas cards

Buy recycled Christmas cards, (eg. from [ecoliving.co.uk](http://ecoliving.co.uk) or [shopzero.co.uk](http://shopzero.co.uk)), or send an e-card. Make use of the large noticeboard in the church foyer for sending one card to everyone in the congregation – we are collecting money saved for Bromley Homeless charity. Keep cards after Christmas for making cards and tags for next year. Recycle those you can – but not glittery ones.

## Christmas Trees

Friends of the Earth recommend searching for locally grown trees, or at least from the UK and ideally with an FSC certification. After Christmas plant it, or take it to a local recycling centre. Don’t be tempted to throw away your plastic tree in order to ‘go green’ though.

## Christmas Lights

Turn lights off if you are not in, maybe put them on a timer so you don’t forget to switch off outside ones at night time. If you need some new Christmas lights or electrical goods don’t bin the old ones, donate them or take them to your local recycling centre.



Photo by Nathan Lemon on Unsplash

## Presents

It’s not uncommon to receive a present you don’t really want, so why not give consumable presents, (? home made), buy a membership/ experience day / luxury meal or theatre ticket. Are you buying presents that use batteries? If so, why not add recycled batteries and a charger? Take unwanted gifts to a charity shop or our Beat the Blues coffee morning. (See p16).

## Crackers

Buy eco-crackers or, in the best Blue Peter tradition, make your own and fill with some small gifts people might actually want.

## Food

Think about ways you can reduce your carbon footprint by being sensible with meat consumption and treating yourself to locally sourced products. Try and buy loose vegetables instead of packets. Don’t over buy. If you are having people over, bigger drinks bottles generate less waste than lots of small ones. Where possible freeze leftovers rather than binning them.

## Finally for New Year

Try and make your own eco-resolution.

Based on information from [ecochurch.arocha.org.uk](http://ecochurch.arocha.org.uk), which aims to help churches take practical action on caring for God’s earth.

# The X in Xmas

Surprisingly, the shortened version of ‘Christmas’, ie. the word ‘Xmas’ began as an abbreviation for church records and charts. X is the Greek symbol ‘chi’, which is the first letter of the word ‘Christ’. Therefore X stands for Christ. For the early Christians, most of whom spoke and wrote Greek, the word ‘Xmas’ signified ‘Christ’s Mass’. The shortening of ‘Christmas’ to ‘Xmas’ has been a common practice since at least the sixteenth century. The correct pronunciation for the word ‘Xmas’ is ‘Christmas’, the same as if the word was written out in full. Xmas is not ex-mas!

Some people are unhappy with the abbreviation, thinking that the letter X is a secular replacement and is crossing Christ out. However, this is not the case if it is used in the original context. Although there is increasing secularization of Christmas, knowing the above, the X in Xmas can still remind us of the real reason for celebrating Christmas.

Sally Churchus

# Scooped... by God!

As cub reporter – on a story,  
I’m looking for some by-line glory.

A city full of strangers milling,  
surely some have really thrilling  
tales of travel and adventure.  
Of highway theft or bandit capture?

But no one here too keen on talking  
after miles and miles of walking,  
and every inn and tavern full  
with hardly space to park a mule.

Of course the town is full of *rumour*  
with folk from far away as Sumer.  
Some say there’s been a funny light;  
they’ve seen it in the sky – at night.  
Others claim that sheep run free,  
ignored by shepherds on the spree!

As one of the more crackpot things  
I’m told to look for *foreign kings*,  
lurking near some local stables!  
My boss would think I’d lost my marbles.

That’s hardly going to make my name,  
or give dull old Bethlehem lasting fame.

Marjorie Goodridge, Keston resident



## From the Registers

### Funerals

19th October      Joan Ann Rice (aged 88 years)

### Burial of Ashes

1st October      Nellie May Robertson (aged 97 years)

2nd October      Margaret Valerie Nicholas (aged 82yrs)



# Church Services



## **1st Sunday of each month**

Informal Communion Service

## **All other Sundays**

10am Holy Communion

## **Toy Service**

**10am Sunday 4th December**

Please bring your gifts of new (unwrapped) toys to this service, which will be given to The Salvation Army, who supply around 800 locally referred children with a parcel to open on Christmas Day. Thank you for your generosity. (No vouchers please.)

## **Carol Service**

**6.30pm Sunday 18th December**

Finally we are back to normal! A large choir has been recruited, we can have the usual length service, we can process in and out, and hopefully we will have a full congregation. I am also happy to say that that there will be mulled wine and mince pies on offer after the service.

In October the musical world celebrated the 150th anniversary of the birth of one of England's greatest composers – Ralph Vaughan Williams. To mark this event we shall be performing three items by him. Two of his folk-song arrangements – O little Town of Bethlehem and Sussex Carol,

and his original Wither's Rocking Carol (not all 12 verses!). We shall also be performing carols by Bob Chilcott and the ever popular John Rutter.

There has been considerable concern among Choirmasters that the traditional Sunday for Carol services, the Sunday before Christmas, December 18th, clashes with the final of the football World Cup. What if England reach the final? (Really?). What if it goes into extra time? The match starts at 3pm our time, so hopefully it will be done and dusted by 6.30pm. So why not drown your sorrows/celebrate a remarkable victory by coming to sing some rousing carols and hear once again "The Christmas Story"?

## **Christingle Service**

**4pm Saturday 24th December**

Both children and adults are invited to this short service of readings, prayers and familiar carols. We will be told how to make a Christingle, (a symbolic orange decorated with a candle and sweets), and be given a bag of the items needed to make one at home. A collection will be taken for The Children's Society, who do such good work with children and young people nationally. Step aside from all the frantic preparations and join us for this magical service, capturing all the excitement of Christmas Eve.

## **Midnight Communion**

**11.30pm Saturday 24th December**

## **Christmas Morning Communion**

**10am Sunday 25th December**

We look forward to welcoming you to our lovely ancient parish church!

# The Hero in our Churchyard



It has come to light in an unexpected way that there is a man who was awarded the Military Cross buried in Keston churchyard. (The Military Cross being the third level military decoration awarded to Officers of the British Armed forces in the First and Second World Wars). The grave is on the far side of the church hall but sadly is in a bad state of repair, the cross on the top having fallen off, as so many in the churchyard have. The inscription reads: In honoured and loving memory of Lieutenant Robert Wylie MC RA Killed by enemy action April 1941 "None knew thee but to love thee, Nor named thee but to praise".

Robert was born in 1886 in Camberley, Surrey. His father was Robert James Wylie and his mother was Isabella. His father served as an Elder at Trinity Bromley United Reformed Church in Freeland Road, Bromley from 1916-1923. The entry in the 1939

England and Wales Register for Robert (junior) records that he lived at 43 Rodway Road, Bromley with his wife, Mary Emilie, and their daughter Kathleen Mary Wylie, (whose married name was to become Zeidler). Robert's occupation is listed as a Retired Bank Official and that he was an Air Raid Precaution (A.R.P.) Warden for the Inns of Court in London. Mary's is listed as "Domestic Duties", (a housewife), and Kathleen was a "Trained Beauty Culturalist" and a Volunteer Ambulance Driver.

Robert first served in the Army during the Great War, and according to the Supplement to *The London Gazette* dated 14th December 1915, he was Commissioned as a Second Lieutenant in the Inns of Court Officers Training Corps. Robert's entry in the 1914-1915 Star Medal Roll showed that he first served as a Second Lieutenant with the 6<sup>th</sup> (City of London) Battalion (Rifles) and that he embarked for France and Flanders on 1st June 1915. At some point he transferred to the Royal Field Artillery and was promoted to Captain. On 11th December 1917 he was promoted to Acting Major as well as being Mentioned in Despatches in *The London Gazette* of 14th December 1917.





The Supplement to *The London Gazette* dated 16th December 1918 states:  
Award of the Military Cross - Captain Robert Wylie, The London Regiment, *‘For conspicuous gallantry and devotion to duty when in temporary command of a Battalion. Then the situation suddenly became critical he altered his dispositions and organised the defence under heavy shell fire. His rapid decision and quick action added materially to the saving of the position, and made the subsequent successful counter attack possible.’*

Robert saw military service again during the Second World War. He was promoted from Second Lieutenant to Lieutenant in the 955 Independent Defence Battery (Searchlight Unit), 12<sup>th</sup> Defence Regiment, of the Royal Field Artillery on 18th September 1940. This regiment was based at Bridport and sadly Robert was killed during the bombing of Portland on the 15th April 1941, aged just 55. His death was reported in the Army Casualty List 491 on the 18th April 1941. He was awarded the 1939-45 Star and the 1939-45 War Medal. Records show that he left the sum of £34,115 6s 11d to his wife, which is the equivalent of £1,914,178.90 today!

It was through an embroidery that his wife did that this story has come to

light. In July 2022 the Rector at Keston was contacted by one of the Elders at Trinity Bromley United Reformed Church as they were closing the building. Whilst clearing 127 years of accumulated files and artefacts they discovered that a framed embroidery that had been hanging on the gallery had an inscription on the back, (see below), to say that it had been done in loving memory of Robert by his wife, Mary Emilie Wylie. They discovered that he was buried in Keston churchyard and wondered if we would like it. It is a framed embroidered pulpit fall, beautifully done, with a gold cross in the centre on a gold and white background. All round it are single flowers in pastel shades, linked by stems and leaves and there is a gold fringe at the bottom. We have gladly accepted and are currently deciding where to place it. It may not be possible for it to go in the church as we would require a faculty. Unfortunately as with many of these historical things, we do not know quite why Robert was buried at Keston, and may never know. What we do know is that we are honoured to have such a hero in our churchyard and are grateful to Hilary Creed, the Elder at the URC for taking the time and trouble to contact us and arrange the handover of the embroidery.

Sally Churchus with a great deal of help from Peter Ziemiński





# Obituary

Olive May Hayler

26/10/1930-24/8/2022



Olive was born in Middlesbrough and had an older sister, Kay. Although Olive spent most of her life in the south of England, she never lost her faint Yorkshire accent. Her grandmother tried to introduce her into the Baptist church, but when she attended a water-dunking Baptism for the first time she was so horrified at the total immersion that she refused to return, and joined the local Protestant church instead.

The family moved south to Caterham in Olive's early teens, and she trained as a nurse at Lewisham Hospital, did well and became a Matron. While there she nursed a young man named Eddie with a broken leg, received whilst playing in a football match. He fell in love with Olive, and on leaving hospital he pursued her with letters, until she asked advice from her friend, fellow student Irene, who persuaded Olive to agree to see him. They eventually married, living in Sanderstead, then Caterham, finally settling in Keston in 1970 with their young adopted children, Christopher and Claire.

Olive had a very strong Christian faith, and became a member of Keston parish church, joining the Young Wives Group, (after a while as Leader for a spell), the church choir, the Keston Singers and the WI. She also worked at the then Farnborough Hospital, (now the PRUH), part-time until retirement.

Olive was very fond of babies and young children, and was delighted when Claire married David and they had two sons, James and Luke. Olive was a very kind and generous person with many friends, whom she enjoyed conversing with, both face to face and by telephone. She and Eddie were very fond of going on cruises, which they did most years, seeing the world, and also having family holidays in Greece, (Eddie worked in Marine Insurance based in Greece). They usually took Irene or Olive's unmarried cousin Judy cruising with them.

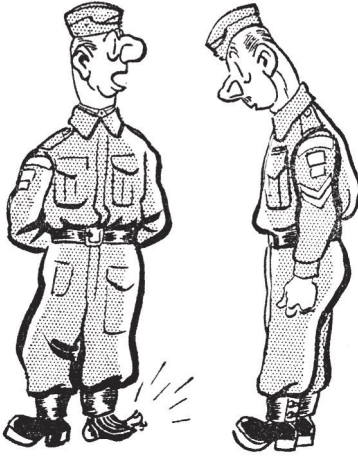
Apart from the church, Olive's interests were: helping Eddie's cricketing activities by scoring and making and serving teas, going to operas, the theatre, concerts, films, the ballet, knitting and embroidery, and visiting garden centres.

When Olive's mother died, her father came to live with them, and Olive cared for him at home when he was dying from cancer. She was very sad to lose Kay to cancer as well as Judy, and her lifelong friend Irene died only a few days before Olive. It was tragic indeed that she fell at home, broke her hip and had to go to hospital, where she caught an infection and was taken from us. She is very much missed.

Jean Goldby

Olive's neighbour for 50+ years

## **"Neb"** By Chalkpit



**"Improperly dressed or not—it's high time people realised that the Home Guard get no sock issue."**

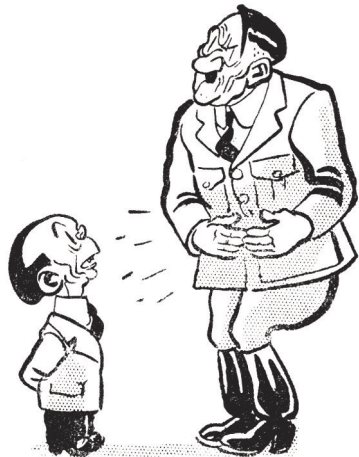
*By Neb*

I recently came into possession of a book, signed by Neb in 1944 to Gee Smith (Lte. G.W.Smith). Printed soon after the 2nd World War and containing 400 cartoons by five of the best known cartoonists of that period with top of the list "Neb".

I had come across the name "Neb" previously whilst researching the history of the Keston Home Guard and that body of volunteers deserves a separate article!

I managed to find out more information about Ronald Niebour, (Neb), as he was known throughout his extraordinary life. He was born in Streatham on the 4th April 1903 and later attended Barry County School. He could then have entered Cardiff Art School but instead chose to join the Merchant Navy and spent two years at sea. His family however persuaded Neb

to leave his life at sea and, with a little encouragement from his uncle, a Superintendent of Handicraft Teaching, he studied metalwork and woodwork. At the end of three years he qualified to teach Handicraft at schools in Birmingham, Weymouth and Kendall. Self-taught as an artist he then managed to obtain the position as a Cartoonist for two Welsh newspapers. Neb went on to be a "man of all work" for the Birmingham Gazette and Evening Dispatch. In 1938 Neb submitted sketches to the Daily Mail and joined the staff in September of that year being offered work illustrating the Women's Page and also Gardening Notes. At the outbreak of war Neb started drawing pocket cartoons which were a great success as he was able to get jokes across on a small amount of paper when this was in short supply, so was a man to gladden any Editor's heart! In 1942 the National Press named Niebour as



**"Internal trouble, eh ?—and the times I've told you to chew your carpet more thoroughly."**

*By Neb*



Caption reads: All H.G.s may now relax  
– Heaven be praised!

one of the most popular cartoonists of the war.

Neb continued working after his retirement in 1960 and was best remembered for his use of a brush with which he worked quickly, drawing his cartoons on paper just a foot square. He left England and made his home in Benajarafe, near Malaga in Spain. Neb passed away on the 19th July 1972 after living a full and interesting life.

To return to Neb's Keston connection, at the time of the War his home was at Forest Ridge, Keston Park. He joined "C" Company of Keston Home Guard under Lte. W.G. Smith, their task to guard part of the outer perimeter of Biggin Hill Airfield from enemy paratroopers. His time in the Home Guard gave him every opportunity for humour as can be seen in his cartoons of that period portraying his colleagues both on and off duty! He carried on throughout the war years reflecting events and bringing laughter into peoples lives. It was ironic that in the ruins of Hitler's Chancellery a cutting of one of his cartoons from the Daily Mail dated 15th January 1944 was found amongst the rubble! I wonder what his reaction to this find was!

## Goodbye and Thank You Chalkpit

I would like to say a big thank you to Chalkpit, for contributing an amazing 82 articles for The Keston Magazine, as well as a local quiz, tales of your collections and featuring on the Profile Page. Readers will be pleased to know that I still have a couple of articles 'in hand', but they will be finishing soon. I know how popular your articles have been, so thank you from all Keston parishioners, plus those readers wider afield. We have loved reading them and seeing the old photos. I am glad to hear that you are enjoying life in 'the country', apparently like Keston used to be 50 years ago!

Sally Churchus

## Beat the Blues Coffee Morning



Saturday 14th January  
10 am - 12 noon  
Keston Church Hall BR2 6HT  
\* Home made cakes

\* Raffle

\* Bring & Buy

Entrance £4 includes coffee/tea & cake  
Everyone welcome





# Au Revoir Chalkpit

Regular readers of The Keston Magazine since 2006 will have enjoyed informative and amusing articles penned by ‘Chalkpit’. Some of you, but I expect not all, will know that ‘Chalkpit’ is local historian and long-time resident of the parish, Edward (Ted) Williams. Why the nom-de-plume ‘Chalkpit’? Well, this refers to the now long since past chalk pit works that used to be close to where Ted lived in Leaves Green Road. Ted has lived in the parish since he was born, and he attended Keston school in Heathfield Road which is now private apartments. Together with his wife Maureen, Ted was a tireless supporter of the Primrose Centre Breast Cancer charity, and many will have enjoyed the annual fund raising cream teas and concerts held in their beautiful garden.

I first met Ted in 2014 following the publication of his book *Lest We Forget – Keston 1914-1918*, a history of the men named on the parish War Memorial. A shared interest between us for history



and the Great War led to our collaborating to produce *For King & Country – Keston Parish and the Great War*, which was published in 2017. Ted’s encyclopaedic knowledge of the history of Keston and Leaves Green has over the years resulted in many books and articles which have documented the lives and work of parishioners, illustrated by numerous period photographs from Ted’s collection. I am certain you will want to join me in wishing Ted and Maureen every happiness following their move to Devon to be closer to their family.

Peter Zieminski



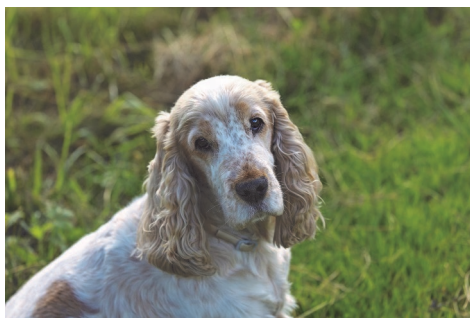
Photo circa 1905 of the chalkpit and lime kilns, entrance at the north end of Blackness Lane

# Your Dog nose best!

We dogs, so they say, have a sense of smell a million times greater than humans, (or was it a thousand?). Basically, all of us – large, small, hairy, smooth – are still wolves, needing to sense our surroundings to avoid danger and find pack pals or food. You thought that walkies were just to keep us fit, but they actually give an hour of nasal nourishment and sniffy surprises, every sniff tells a story! That's why I get so excited when my lead appears for my walk, be it Fishponds, Padmall Wood, the Common, or Farnborough Fields, with my mates Tilley, Alfie, Buddie, George and Pluto.

## they actually give an hour of nasal nourishment and sniffy surprises

Off we go checking all the lamp posts along the way! While my lead woman checks messages and chats on her phone, I nose the posts checking for wee-mails. Yes, Ruby and Reggie have left their mark so I'll do my bit. Wandering up the road, I know someone is enjoying a late lunch... is that hot bacon and strong coffee wafting past? At the next house I sense the walls are getting a lick of paint and elsewhere a dusty old garage is being swept. Nearer the local park some canine friends can be seen. I give a growl or bark, just to confirm who's



top dog, but then it's all wags and rear end nosing – that's our equivalent of 'How do you doo?'.

If I pull hard on the lead I can do a quick check along the hedgerow – is that a dead mouse, or bird I can smell? But I've had enough nose detecting and I'm keen to put my hooter into a rich plate of dog food, so head up and off we trot.

My favourite walks are the regular Tuesday or Wednesday Prayer Walk mornings our local Keston church organise. The very best bit is at the end when we return to Heathfields where I enjoy a deliciously tasty sausage! I've heard them discuss a possible Pet Service in the New Year where they'll probably talk about our local animal rehoming charity, Foal Farm, and I can bark along with those uplifting hymns!

Those Common walks have lots of fresh smells, mostly from all those two-legged creatures with their hints of musk, lavender, coffee and cake, together with my friends Tilly, Finzie and Max and I do still miss Rufus, Henry and Monty who have moved to Hastings.

Your canine pal, Barney

God is for life, not just for Christmas

# What I Do

I have always been both a wild and domestic animal lover and I had decided that when I retired I would seek to do some voluntary work in this field. About five years ago I met someone who worked at Foal Farm Animal Rescue Centre in Jail Lane, Biggin Hill, and after visiting it I applied to be a dog walker. I had a meeting with one of the staff and after a couple of visits I started to accompany one of the Dog Walker Team on dog walks and after a few weeks, they felt comfortable enough to let me walk some of the easier, smaller dogs myself. I currently go three mornings a week to walk the dogs and help where I can.

When I initially applied to Foal Farm to assist the Dog Team, they asked for two people who could complete a form giving their thoughts on my suitability for this role. There was no specific training, but I received a lot of guidance and advice about how to approach a dog, how to enter a kennel and not let the dog out! Also, how to lead walk effectively and how to distract a dog who has seen a squirrel, bird or even another dog in the distance.

For about a year now I have also carried out home visits. Prior to adopting a dog, the potential adopter will be visited and asked to complete a questionnaire. One important thing we ask them to confirm is what will be in place to stop a dog running out of the back or front door when opened. We also check that back gardens are totally secure so the dog can't get out. When a dog leaves to go to a forever home it makes me really happy. Often the adopter will put a photo of a happy dog

on Facebook which is great. Three months after a dog has been rehomed a Follow Up is done which is a visit to the adopter's home to see how settled the dog is. It is lovely when I go in and a dog recognizes me and I get a waggy tail!

There are a number of volunteers for each section: dogs, cats, birds, large animals, (horses, cows and sheep), as well as some gentlemen who come and do a lot of the maintenance work. Everyone seems happy and we all acknowledge each other. There are no set hours for volunteers.

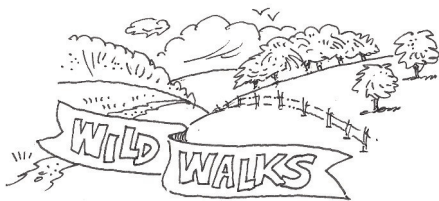
What I dislike most is when someone adopts a dog and brings it back after two or three weeks. Usually there is a good reason but it's sad for the dog. However, the dog team are fantastic and work tirelessly to enrich all the dogs' lives. Until a dog gets his/her forever home, Foal Farm is the next best thing.

Ren Blanchette



Ren with Kelsey, at her forever home





## The bumps and the bees

David Bellamy used to refer to things ‘down at tortoise level’. Well, he wasn’t wrong, this month I’m focussing on things at ground level and in particular within 100 yards, (metres for you youngsters), of my home.

After the corn was cut in the back field, in late summer, I became aware of a strange phenomenon at ground zero. An area of the field close to my back garden was pock-marked with hundreds of small volcanoes about an inch and a half across. Oh, all right – 4cm! I was intrigued and watched carefully to see any sign of activity. It wasn’t long before out of a hole emerged a bee of average bee size. How interesting, it was well camouflaged, (and wearing a tin hat), and on closer inspection I became aware of more and more – some leaving, others arriving.

Apparently there are similar bees on the grassy area opposite The Greyhound, just before the trees edging the car park on Commonside. I had to know more so... after a bit of research, here’s the info:

### The ivy bee

The ivy bee was first recorded in the UK in 2001, and has now been found in much of Southern England and Wales. As suggested by its common name, ivy is the main plant used by this bee for pollen. It is seen when ivy is in flower, from early September to early



November. Ivy bees nest in loose, light or sandy soil on southern facing banks and cliffs with ivy nearby for foraging. They are solitary bees, but when conditions are suitable, there may be thousands of nests in the same area.

The ivy bee looks similar to a honey bee; it has an orangey-brown, hairy thorax, and distinct black and yellow stripes on its abdomen.

Sad to say disaster struck a short while later when the sound of a tractor was heard pulling a harrow type thing that scraped the surface. After about a week the whole field had been prepared and planted with winter corn. Have they survived?

The other interesting item I wish to refer to within 100 yards of my home is in fact on the Common at Leaves Green. I’ve often passed it and not given it much thought but the bee subject aroused my curiosity. Ant hills: yes, ant hills, as we call them, are alive and well on the Green not more than a few yards from the main road. Four of them, in fact, about a foot and a half high. I’m prompted to give them a poke but feel disinclined to do so...ah! Nevertheless why are they there and not tucked away in some distant hidden bit of countryside? Answers on a post-card!

Richard Geiger

# Regular Events

## Prayer Walks

We meet on the Green opposite The Greyhound pub at 9.30am on the 1st Tuesday and 3rd Wednesday in the month. We usually return about 11am. Well behaved dogs welcome.

## Men's pub social

Do join us at 7pm at The Greyhound on the 3rd Wednesday of the month for social chat, a few drinks and a meal for those who want it.

## Book Reading Fellowship

Come and discuss books with some Christian content that you have read at 2pm on Monday 12th December. Please let Sally Churchus know if you would like to come. Tel: 020 8462 8750.

## Keston Book Club

Our meetings are on the first Wednesday of the month at 7pm in The Fox. More information from 07503 268001 or angelahollamby@gmail.com.

## New Keston WI

We meet from 1.30pm-3.30pm in Keston Village Hall on the 2nd Wednesday in the month.

# Flower Arranging Workshop

There will be a Christmas Flower Arranging Workshop on Monday 19th December held in Keston church hall at 1.30pm for a 2pm start.

Just choose what type of arrangement you would like to make and bring the appropriate container. To avoid using oasis we are now going to try chicken wire or a pin holder (if available). Help will be on hand to assist you with this.

You will need to bring: secateurs, flowers, foliage, a container, pin holder or chicken wire and maybe some baubles. There will be the usual raffle together with tea and biscuits. We do hope you can join us. For further information please contact Maureen Marshall Tel: 01689 857260. Thank you.



Last year's arrangements



Book Reading Fellowship

# Magazine Deadline

Please send photos and articles for the February/March 2023 issue of The Keston Magazine to the Editor, Sally Churchus, by 6th January at the very latest via email to [editor@kestonparishchurch.org.uk](mailto:editor@kestonparishchurch.org.uk) or contact her to discuss ideas on Tel: 020 8462 8750. Thank you.

## Laughlines

### ☺ Present

Question: How did one of the wise men feel when his gift was rejected?

Answer: Incensed.

### ☺ Christmas presents

Catching her in the act, I confronted our three-year-old granddaughter. 'Are you opening your little sister's presents?' I demanded. 'No,' she innocently replied, 'I'm just helping her learn to share.'

### ☺ Exchange

My friend reviewed her young son's fill-in-the-blank homework. One line was: "At Christmas, we exchange gifts with.....".

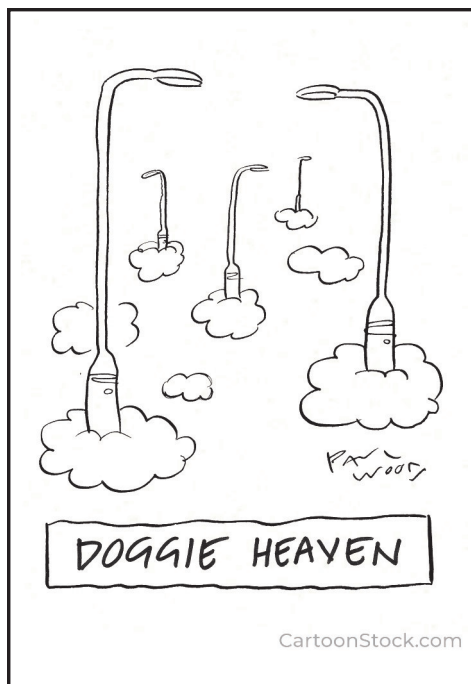
His quick response: "Receipts".

### ☺ New bank

Mother decided that ten year old Cathy should get something 'practical' for Christmas. "Suppose we open a savings account for you?" she suggested. Cathy was delighted. "It's your account, darling," mother said, "so you fill out the application". Cathy was doing fine until she came to the space for 'Name of your former bank'. After a slight hesitation, she put down 'Piggy'.

### ☺ Facebook

Thank the Lord for Facebook, otherwise I'd have to call 674 people today just to tell them I went Christmas shopping.



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