

The

Keston Magazine

News of your Parish and Village



April/May 2023

Keston Parish Church

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



Rector

There is currently a vacancy

Licensed Lay Minister & Parish Administrator Churchwardens

Tricia Coward	01689 854373
hallbookings@kestonparishchurch.org.uk	
Martin Chalker	07711 016891
warden@kestonparishchurch.org.uk	
Geoff Carr	07584 058872
warden@kestonparishchurch.org.uk	
Tonia Crouch	
verger@kestonparishchurch.org.uk	

Verger

Treasurer	Anna Bailey	01689 852583
Organist & Choirmaster	David Cook	020 8289 5768
Church Hall	Tricia Coward	01689 854373
	hallbookings@kestonparishchurch.org.uk	
Magazine Editor & Book Reading Fellowship	Sally Churchus	020 8462 8750
	editor@kestonparishchurch.org.uk	
Women's Institute	Helen Best	07715 880889
Beavers/Cubs/Scouts	gs127thbromley@gmail.com	
Residents' Association	kestonvillagera@gmail.com	
Village Hall	Tina Lupton	01689 602993
Coffee, Cake & Kids	Victoria Madden	07866 509696
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
	www.friendsofkestoncommon.btck.co.uk	
Keston Residents' Road Safety Group	krrsg@hotmail.com	

By his power God raised the Lord from the dead,
and he will raise us also.

1 Corinthians 6:14

Front cover: Mothering Sunday daffodils by Tonia Crouch LRP5 ©

Thought for the month



Stained glass window in Keston church

Easter and the death of Christ

This time last year along with a group of pilgrims, I found myself privileged, expectant and excited all at the same time, as we were all going on a 10-day pilgrimage to the Holy Land. One of the 'highlights' was the opportunity of 'Walking the Way of the Cross', (The Via Dolorosa), in Jerusalem. It had been something I had always wanted to do, but I was unprepared for the effect this would have on my thoughts and prayers even today.

For me, Station 5, the hand imprint in the wall had a big impact. The gospels do not specifically state that Jesus stumbled while carrying the cross, but it seems likely as *'they seized Simon from Cyrene ... and put the cross on him and made him carry it behind Jesus'*.

Medical experts have examined in detail the execution that Jesus Christ endured. All agree that he suffered one of the most gruelling and painful forms of capital punishment ever devised by man. These are some of the things we know from history, archaeology and medicine about his last hours...

The night before the execution, his disciples reported seeing Jesus in mental agony on the Mount of Olives. Not only

did he not sleep all night, but was sweating profusely. So great was the stress that tiny blood vessels were rupturing in his sweat glands and emitting as great red drops that fell to the ground. This symptom of severe stress is called hematohidrosis.

Jesus was physically exhausted and in danger of going into shock unless he received fluids, (which he apparently did not).

Having previously been beaten by the Jews, it was now the Romans' turn. The beatings administered by Roman soldiers are well known to have been very bloody, leaving deep lacerations.

Hung completely naked before the crowd, the pain and damage caused by crucifixion were designed to be so devilishly intense that one would continually long for death, but could linger for days with no relief.

Near the end, one of the criminals beside him said *'Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom'*. And Jesus replied *'Truly I tell you today you will be with me in paradise'*. How reassuring – that even at the end of our lives we can turn to Jesus, repent and be welcomed into heaven.

At the ninth hour, (the time at which a sacrificial lamb was killed every day in the Jewish temple), Jesus cried out *'It is finished'*, and gave up his life. Jesus remained in this agony and shame, not because he was powerless, but because of his incredible love for humanity.

'He opened his arms of love upon the cross, and made for all the perfect sacrifice for sin'.

Martin J Chalker, Churchwarden

From the Editor

It seems that daffodils are everywhere! In our homes for just £1 a bunch, in our gardens, parks and by the roadside. What a joy. Apparently early common names for the flower were Lent Lily or Easter Lily. Daffodils symbolise rebirth and new beginnings as they proclaim the start of spring and hopefully the end of cold, dark days. They are also the symbol of cancer charities in many countries, including Marie Curie Cancer Care here in the UK. Their Great Daffodil Appeal runs throughout the month of March, raising money for their much needed staff to support those at the end of their lives, and their families. I noticed even the politicians on the TV are wearing daffodil badges. The daffodil is also the national flower of Wales and as such features on the Coronation Emblem, which can be seen on p16.

We hope you will join us for our Coronation Cream Tea and also enjoy the other celebrations that will be happening. The Keston Village Residents' Association is not running anything specific to mark the Coronation, but has some other events in the pipeline to look forward to which you can read about on p14.

And last, but not least, you will be welcome to all of our Easter Services to remember the Easter story and on Easter Day to praise and thank God for the gift of his Son and the hope of a new and eternal life.

Sally Churchus



Cover Story



Tonia Crouch took this lovely photo of the posies of daffodils that we hand out during the service on Mothering Sunday for children to give to their mothers. It was cropped into a portrait photo for the front cover. Thank you, Tonia!

Keston Church Hall Manager Needed

We are seeking someone to take on the role of Hall Manager. This will include being the contact for bookings and payments, opening up the car park and hall and then returning to lock up afterwards; passing on details to the Administrator and invoicing regular users. The job is paid by the hour. Please contact Tricia Coward on hallbookings@kestonparishchurch.org.uk for more details.

Keston Church APCM

Everyone interested in the life of Keston Parish Church is welcome to come to our Annual Parochial Church Meeting on Sunday 23rd April after the 10am morning service, starting at about 11.30am.

Churchyard Status

This year, Keston Churchyard, together with the grassy triangle and verge next to Westerham Road, have been selected as a potential **Site of Importance for Nature Conservation** (SINC) because of the rare and interesting plants living there.

These include Meadow Saxifrage, Common and Pyramidal Orchids. Meadow Saxifrage grows in part of the Churchyard and is on the Kent Rare Plant Register because it is a nationally declining species of old, undisturbed grasslands, now a rare habitat.

Common and Pyramidal Orchids, whose beautiful spikes of pink flowers can be seen on the triangle and road verge in June and July, were studied by Charles Darwin locally. Like Meadow Saxifrage, orchids grow well in grassland that hasn't been ploughed or treated with pesticides. Under these conditions, soil develops a rich diversity of soil animals and fungi. The tiny, dust-like orchid seeds are so small that, unlike most seeds, they do not have a food store, so rely on mycorrhizal fungi to supply them with the nutrients and water they need to develop the roots and rosettes of leaves which some years later will also feed developing flower spikes. Where these beautiful plants live, there will be others which thrive in the same conditions and the biodiversity supports many different invertebrates including pollinators such as butterflies and moths.

By allowing the churchyard to grow wild in places, butterflies also benefit by finding their caterpillar foodplants. For example, Orange-tip butterflies can be seen in spring laying their eggs on

Garlic Mustard leaves in the hedgerow.

When a site is nominated to become a SINC, an experienced ecologist is employed by the Local Authority to survey the area and evaluate it against criteria set by the London Wildlife Sites Board. The criteria include habitat and species rarity, species richness, size, ancient/historic character and recreatability. Recommendations can then be taken to a local site selection panel. The borough then presents the proposed SINC (with others) to the London Wildlife Sites Board for consideration.

The granting of SINC status to Keston's beautiful Churchyard, triangle and the adjacent road verge would be an acknowledgement of the care given to the site by those who manage it and have managed it in the past. Bromley Biodiversity Partnership hope your lovely site gets the recognition it deserves as a place of peace for people and wildlife, where plants and animals which have co-existed for hundreds of years can continue to thrive in a world full of threats to their survival.

Judy John



Meadow Saxifrage
Photo by Bob Harrop

Holwood Flower Farm

Who would have known that we have a British flower supplier that uses organic practices right here on our doorstep? Holwood Flower farm is located off Shire Lane, and although the name may suggest it, it is not linked with Holwood Farm Shop. I went to meet the owner, Jayne Crear to find out more.

Jayne is a local, she was born in Harvest Bank Road and went to Hayes Secondary school. She has done a lot of studying since – on leaving school she first trained as a hairdresser and worked in Hayes, then did Floristry training at night school followed by Horticultural qualifications including garden design and then teaching. Incredibly she has managed to combine most of this studying with working and bringing up children at the same time. Currently she teaches Horticulture for Special Educational needs pupils at Bromley College and they also carry out their work experience at the farm, which she really enjoys. As well as this Jayne runs Holwood Flower Farm single handed.

Jayne and her husband bought the 12 acre plot on the Holwood estate four years ago. She grows a mixture of perennials and annuals as well as shrubs and roses throughout her growing season from April to November. She provides and arranges flowers for weddings and funerals and also wholesale to florists. Bouquets and bunches are also available as well as dried flowers – apparently they are back in fashion again!

The sustainability and environmental ethos of the business mean that the



Jayne gathering meadow flowers

flowers are natural like meadow flowers, sweet peas and dahlias with no chemicals used like imported flowers. The workshop is built from reclaimed wood, electricity is from solar panels and Jayne does not use Oasis although it is more time consuming using the chicken wire and moss. Delivery can be made within a five mile radius.

The main problem she has is the climate, particularly the extreme heat, but also the deer and mice. Although the business doesn't make much of a profit, Jayne loves the creativity, being outdoors in nature and tries to get a balance with her teaching commitments.

Holwood Flower farm can be contacted through the Cooperative for all British growers www.flowersfromthefarm.co.uk or Instagram @holwoodflowerfarm.

Your energy and enthusiasm for all you do is amazing and we wish you well, Jayne.

Sally Churchus

Please do not attempt to visit without contacting Jayne first, thank you.

Give a Bird a Home



Photo by Nik on Unsplash

Spring is definitely on its way. Days are getting longer and the weather is getting warmer. (Even though it might not feel like it!). So I have been thinking about the wildlife garden adjoining the car park and things we need to do this year.

The first thing I would like is to provide some nesting boxes for small birds. We have several trees these can be attached to. So if you feel you could do this, please donate a nest box to Give a Bird a Home.

Also, any perennial wild flowers are always gratefully received, especially primroses. (Not polyanthus please).

We will soon be organising a work party to finish up the tidying we started in the autumn so if you could help for an hour on a Saturday morning please get in touch and we'll let you know the dates. Thanks for your support.

Tonia C Crouch
verger@kestonparishchurch.org.uk

RSPB Walks

A warm sunny day in February brought out a record number of 30 people to join RSPB Bromley Local Group's walk on Keston Common. Members and non-members of the group followed the Walk Leader, Geoff Coad, from The Greyhound Pub to the Wilberforce Oak returning via Padmall Wood. Along the way the group saw 28 species with Goldcrests, Nuthatch and Redwings in the woodland, and Black-headed Gull, Little Grebe, Canadian, Egyptian and Greylag Geese at the Ponds with a Kestrel and a Buzzard in the sky above. An interesting walk had been enjoyed in different areas of Keston whilst being reminded of the local history and Geoff sharing his knowledge of the different bird species in friendly company.

Visit the website: group.rspb.org.uk/bromley/ or email bromleyrspb@gmail.com or phone 07392 790719 for more information.

Parish Walk



Sunday 14th May 2.15pm
Meet in Keston Church Car Park
Church Rd. Keston BR2 6HT
Takes about 2 hours finishing
back at Keston Church Hall
for a cup of tea and cakes

Well behaved dogs welcome



TWAM

Tools with a Mission



Frieda in Zambia 2022

Who are we? We are a Christian charity that collects unwanted usable tools, refurbishes them, sorts them into trade tool kits and sends them to countries in Africa. These tools give the recipients the means to generate their own income, create their own businesses and build a mindset of independence, not reliance.

What is our ethos? TWAM was established in 1984 by Jack Norwood, John Bennett, and the Baptist Men's Movement and is based on the belief "The Lord is close to those whose hearts have been broken. He saves those whose hearts have been crushed" Psalm 34:18. And "Love thy neighbour as yourself" Mark 12:31.

How do we work? 200 volunteers, based mainly in the south of England, collect unwanted tools which are refurbished by 120 volunteers at five locations, and eight support groups. These are sorted into trade kits and sent to DR Congo, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

What do we need?

- Sewing machines- all types
- Hand and power tools – required for Agricultural work, builders, masons/groundworkers, carpentry workshops, electricians, plumbers, motor mechanics and garage workshops
- Knitting machines – machine wool, needles and patterns
- Haberdashery – buttons, needles, cottons, large material pieces/rolls, zips, patterns
- Fully working IT equipment – desktop and laptop computers running a minimum of Windows 7, flat and widescreen monitors, tablets, network switches, routers, cables
- Ironmongery – nuts, bolts, screws, nails
- Bibles in modern English

Spread the news! Please tell your family and friends, neighbours, work colleagues and fellow church members.

Volunteers are also needed for this rewarding work.

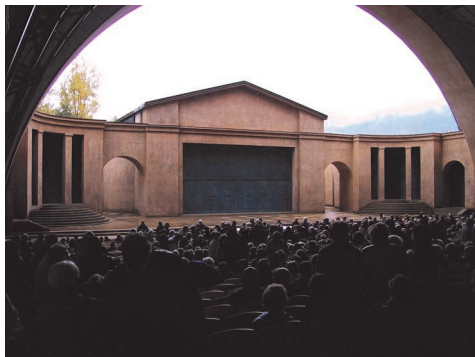
More information is available on www.twam.uk or www.facebook.com/toolswithamission or on 01473 210220.

Our local contact for advice or collection is Peter 020 8467 5120.



Chris in Zambia 2022

A visit to the Oberammergau Passion Play



View of the stage

Oberammergau is a small town in the Bavarian Alps, renowned for its beautiful location, its wood carving and its Passion Play which takes place every ten years.

Almost 400 years ago an outbreak of bubonic plague – the Black Death – was raging in Europe and killing thousands of people. The small village of Oberammergau had managed to stay free of the disease until 1633 when a villager, who had been living away, came back and unknowingly brought the plague with him. After many of the inhabitants died, the whole village met in the church and prayed for deliverance. At that time it was commonly believed that a disaster was sent as a punishment from God and they promised that, if they were spared, they would perform a play every ten years about the life and death of Jesus. From that day on, no one in the village died of the plague and the first performance of the Passion Play took place in 1634 in the cemetery near the

church. It was repeated every ten years until 1674 after which the villagers decided to perform it at the start of each decade and, with very few exceptions, it has continued to the present day.

Originally there was just one performance but by 1840 the play had become known internationally, the number of performances each decade had increased and the stage was relocated to the edge of the village in order to accommodate visitors from all over the world.

Fast forward to 2020 and I had booked a holiday in Austria which included a visit to Oberammergau and a ticket for the Passion Play on the return journey. However a different plague, Covid, began to sweep through Europe and indeed the whole world. Rehearsals for the 42nd production of the play had already begun but had to be postponed until 2022, as did my holiday!

Since 1840 there have been many changes and now the auditorium is covered and performances are held five days each week from May to October. The stage, while still open to the elements, is also covered and almost two thousand amateur actors and musicians, (plus animals), take part in each performance or are involved backstage. Only those who were born in the village or have lived there for twenty years are allowed to take the main parts and everyone involved in the production, including children, must be a citizen of Oberammergau. For each speaking part there are two actors and when rehearsals begin the men have to refrain from cutting their hair or trimming their beards!

In September 2022 our delayed holiday began with a flight to Munich and included visits to Innsbruck, Salzburg and an outdoor museum of old Tyrolean farms and buildings – all very interesting but the highlight was undoubtedly the Passion Play. After an early start we arrived in Oberammergau mid-morning and enjoyed several hours exploring the village and its attractive houses decorated with colourful frescoes. We then made our way to the Passion Play Theatre where we joined a long queue at 2pm. As we entered I was struck by the enormous size of the stage, (one of the largest open air stages in the world), and the huge auditorium seating 4,500 people. I had wondered how I would survive sitting on a hard seat for five hours but my worries were unfounded as there was a three hour interval during which we walked to a restaurant at the end of the village and enjoyed a delicious meal.

The play was performed entirely in German and interwoven with the Easter Story were tableaux from the Old Testament – The Golden Calf, The

Burning Bush, Moses crossing the Red Sea, Daniel in the Lion's Den At first I tried to follow the English text in the translation booklet provided, but that resulted in missing the action onstage and was not necessary as the acting and singing from start to finish was fantastic. The suffering and crucifixion scenes were incredibly powerful and moving and the whole audience was drawn into the performance, seeming to join the crowds gathered there all those years ago. It was an experience not to be missed and brought tears to my eyes. How proud the present-day villagers must feel knowing that they have continued to keep the promise their forebears made nearly 400 years ago.

Understandably, photography was not allowed but more information and photographs can be found on the website 2022-Oberammergau.com. The next Passion Play will take place in 2030 followed by special performances in 2034 to celebrate the 400th Anniversary.

Pam Thomas

Prayer of St Richard

Thanks be to thee,
 my Lord Jesus Christ,
 for all the benefits which
 thou hast given me,
 for all the pains and insults
 which thou hast borne for me.
 O most merciful Redeemer,
 Friend and Brother,
 may I know thee more clearly,
 love thee more dearly,
 and follow thee more nearly.
 Amen

Church Services

Do join us, we have a variety of ministers come to take our services:

1st Sunday of each month

10am Informal Communion Service

All other Sundays

10am Holy Communion

Third Sunday of the month

10am Communion service plus prayer for healing and wholeness if wanted

Special Service Sunday 7th May

10am Special Service to mark the Coronation, with Holy Communion

Easter Services

Sunday 2nd April

10.00am

Palm Sunday

Holy Communion with distribution of Palm Crosses

Thursday 6th April

10.00am

Maundy Thursday

Maundy Thursday Holy Communion

Friday 7th April

10.00am

Good Friday

Walk of Witness from Village Sign to church

All ages (and dogs) welcome!

10.40am

Short non-communion service

Followed by hot cross buns and tea/coffee

Sunday 9th April

10.00am

Easter Day

Easter Day Holy Communion

with lighting of new Paschal Candle and

Renewal of Baptism Vows

From the Registers

Baptism

15th January

Jack Denis Crow (born 16/11/2019)

Grace Eloise Joan Crow (born 22/5/2022)

22nd January

Harry George Fitzpatrick (born 9/9/2022)

5th February

Cassidy White (born 2/2/2022)

Funeral

13th January

Patricia Violet Rugg (aged 94 years)

Burial of Ashes

21st January

Patricia Violet Rugg (aged 94 years)



On Sunday 12th February we held a special Thanksgiving service and celebration afterwards to say thank you to Rev'd Eric Heselwood who has helped to cover services, (and baptisms, weddings, funerals, and other offices), for us at Keston Parish Church during five interregnums since the early 1980s. For many years Eric has also taken services at St George's RAF Chapel at Biggin Hill and more recently at Brasted. Thank you and may God Bless you, Eric.

Flights over Keston



Since 2016 there has been a massive increase in flights into and out of Biggin Hill Airport. Until then, as longer-term residents will know, most flights were small, private planes and not the large jets and helicopters that we have today.

What triggered this expansion and the consequent noise and pollution that now affects those living under the flight path? The answer is that 2016 was the year when Bromley Council, the Landlord of Biggin Hill Airport, granted an extension of operating hours to Biggin Hill Airport Ltd (BHAL), the Leaseholders and operators of the airport. This enabled BHAL to implement a programme of expansion and business development which is still in progress.

Flightpath Watch is a group of local volunteers who fought this decision at the time and provided expert evidence to demonstrate how detrimental it would be to residents. But Flightpath Watch was accused of scaremongering and Bromley Council let BHAL expand their business.

Residents were told that the number of flights each year would be capped at 50,000 and were assured by the Council that a Noise Action Plan (NAP), which

became part of the documentation supporting the change to the Lease, would ensure that they would not be disturbed by noise. We all now know that this is far from the truth.

Although the campaign was lost in 2016, Flightpath Watch has continued to fight on behalf of residents. We have examined every legal possibility of overturning the Council's decision; we have repeatedly drawn the Council's attention to circumstances where infringements of the Lease have occurred; we have resisted BHAL's attempts to modify the Lease still further to the detriment of residents; we have reminded the Council numerous times that their responsibility is to protect residents, as it was when the original Lease was agreed and signed.

Right now, in 2023, this is a critical time for residents. The NAP document, which so clearly has not worked in reducing noise, is due to be revised. Under pressure from residents and Flightpath Watch, the Council is considering how it can be improved. There has been talk in Council meetings that representatives of residents should be party to the discussions, but it is not yet certain that this will be followed through.

Also, one of the key conditions for the extended hours was the provision of a new route into Runway 03 which BHAL promised would be in place by the autumn of 2016, although BHAL's own advisers counselled that the proposed route was unlikely to be accepted by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA). BHAL stated that the new route would provide a 30% reduction in the number of flights over the most

affected residential areas. As predicted, the CAA rejected the proposal in December 2022, and published a timeline showing that the delay in progressing the application was not of their making. So now residents will not enjoy a 30% reduction in flights and will instead have to put up with the increasing numbers of flights as the airport expands its business. The failure to provide this route breaks a condition on which the Council granted the additional hours.

Flightpath Watch believes that there are grounds to suspend the additional hours until the deliberations have been completed and a new, workable, NAP is implemented. This would provide the incentive to conclude the discussions in a timely manner. The Council has fallen short of taking this decision and Flightpath Watch is now considering the legal ramifications of their action.

We have had amazing support from residents throughout our campaign, but the more support we have, the more we will be heard. You can find out more about Flightpath Watch on our website, www.flightpathwatch.co.uk, where you can also subscribe to join the mailing list and we would encourage you to do so.

Please email us at info@flightpathwatch.co.uk with your thoughts about the current situation and to let us know how you are personally affected by BHA flights. If you feel you can spare some time to help, so much the better!

Finally, Flightpath Watch is aware that many residents are concerned about our environment in Bromley and we are

encouraging Bromley Council to include controls within the revised NAP to reduce the environmental impact of BHA's activities on our borough. Please read the article on our website, written by one of our supporters, which, as well as giving some more detail about the background to Bromley's involvement with BHA, has some interesting information about the effects on air quality and the environment from aviation activity.

Arthur Portelli



KVRA Diary Dates

28th April The Keston Village Residents' Association AGM at 7pm in the Village Hall, Heathfield Road.

5th May Music Quiz Night at the Village Hall.

24th June Keston Village Festival (KESTFEST) 1-6pm on the Common opposite The Greyhound. Will be similar to the Jubilee Fair last year.

Look out for more information on the above events in due course.

KVRA are supporting the Friends of Keston Common to make a bid for the Platinum Jubilee Parks fund for the Children's Playground at the end of Lakes Road. It is still in the early stages but we will need 100 signatures of residents to support the bid. If you are willing to sign please ask in Heathfields where there is a copy of the form.

Experience is something you don't get until just after you need it

Keston Garden Birds in Spring

Churches have always been places of sanctuary for those suffering hardship in life. So too are our gardens becoming the last refuge of many wild animals, especially birds, who are finding it more difficult to survive nowadays. However, we **can** make a difference in our own patch of nature.

Our Keston back garden has seen up to 30 species of birds visiting each year, yet we have done nothing more than put out feeders and allow our shrubs and trees to grow tall around them. With a little planning, you too can create an oasis of colour and activity, and enjoy birdwatching in the comfort of your own home.

Watching the interaction of different species around the feeders is fascinating. Some birds learn new skills and others develop increasing confidence to hold their own in competition for the best seat at the table. Each species has their own personality and quirks:

- Blackcaps are usually solitary birds, maintaining a defined territory with their strident song. Yet this winter, in the coldest weeks, I have seen three males feeding together happily.
- Collared Doves, that look so mild mannered, have been learning to assert their position in the pecking order against the much larger Wood Pigeons, with flapping ritual dances on the lawn.

The real stars of the show must be the Goldfinches (pictured). This beautiful bird, looking like a clown in its red, white and black mask, comes in gangs of up to 12, squabbling and jostling



good naturedly with each other on the perches with cheery twittering songs. Fortunately, they are one species that have adapted well to a suburban lifestyle. They even nest in the front hedge and their young families quickly learn the art of using the feeders.

My advice would be:

- Keep food choices simple: sunflower hearts are the best all round fare for most species, along with fat balls.
- A small pond is a great asset for providing drinking and after-dinner bathing facilities.
- Buy feeders with protective cages to keep squirrels and larger birds from emptying them too quickly.
- Site them near to shrubs where they can perch in the queue, and feel safe from predators.
- Have them close enough to the house to be able to watch.
- Make sure they are easy to dismantle and clean – hygiene is vital to protect the health of the birds.

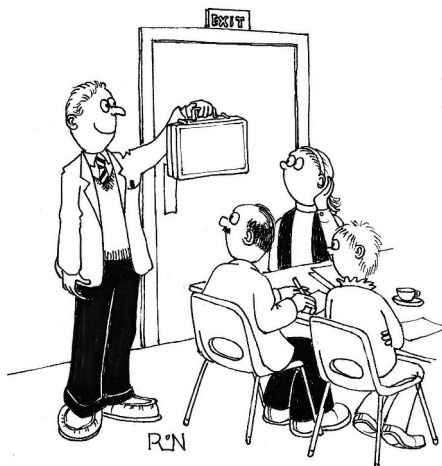
If you have binoculars, keep them handy. Sometimes what might seem to be a group of common Chaffinch may conceal a rare winter visitor, the Brambling, very similar in looks. Look out for a Greater Spotted Woodpecker or Nuthatch on a fleeting visit.

Bob Harrop

Charitable Giving by Keston Church

Every year Keston Parish Church raises awareness and funds to support local and national charities close to our hearts. During 2022 we have raised over £3,000 towards Ukraine Refugees, Christian Aid in Africa, Bromley foodbanks, Welcare in Bromley, St Christopher's and Demelza Children's Hospices, the Royal British Legion's support for our armed forces and veterans, the Salvation Army supporting gifts for children at Christmas, the Children's Society supporting young people threatened by abuse, and Bromley's Latch Project and Centrepont both supporting the homeless.

During 2023 we hope to continue supporting the above and more good causes.



*The Treasurer made the most of
his moment in the limelight*



CORONATION CREAM TEA

3-5PM MONDAY 8TH MAY

KESTON CHURCH HALL, CHURCH RD. BR2 6HT

TICKETS £15 IN ADVANCE FROM TRICIA COWARD 01689 854373
HALLBOOKINGS@KESTONPARISHCHURCH.ORG.UK

Keston when Richard II was King

Like many people especially English Kings of the past, Edward III was constantly in need of extra money. On this occasion he wished to wage another war in France. Already seriously ill in the spring of 1377 he died in June before his statute could be implemented to be succeeded by Richard II, a boy of ten. His uncle John of Gaunt was de facto ruler.

Both monarchs were searching for ways to refill a depleted treasury. Edward proposed a poll tax, described in the language of the day as 'a tallage of a groat per poll'. So it was a simple tax of 4d per head. A few older parishioners' might just remember using a groat which was a fourpence (1.5p) coin.

The tax was charged on adults of both sexes over 14 years of age. The only exemptions were people described as 'honest beggars'. Counties and boroughs were required to collect the tax from the people within their boundaries. In counties local collectors were appointed for each village. For Keston this task fell on the Constable Thomas atte Halle and the collectors appointed to assist him were Richard Miche and John Miche. They visited every household in the village and recorded the number and total money collected. Their account was then sent to the appointed Royal officials. Their report stated that Keston paid a total poll tax of 4 shillings (20p). By dividing 4d per head into the total of 4 shillings (48d) you arrive at a population of 12 taxpayers but what was the number of

juveniles not included in the figures?

Historians use figures for that time of 20% to 40% as the proportion of the population under 14 years. If we use the highest figure of 40% for the number of children in Keston then there are 19 people living in the entire parish. Even allowing for one 'honest beggar', (there could be no other sort in Keston), then we might arrive at 20 people.

It is interesting to compare the reports compiled for neighbouring parishes. Two parishes, Downe and Hayes, have acreages similar to that of Keston and can be used to provide a very rough comparison. Downe paid a poll tax of 37sh. (£1.85) which converts to 111 taxpayers. Hayes collected 19sh. 8d (98p) from 59 taxpayers.

By comparing the number of acres for each person the contrast between Keston and its neighbours is even more obvious. There were 24 acres per person living in Downe, 14 acres per head for Hayes and 91 acres for every one living in Keston. Keston was a lonely place when compared with any of its neighbours. This feature of Keston remained true for many centuries.

Tudor Davies



Portrait of Richard II at Westminster Abbey, mid 1390s

WI Update



This time last year I wrote an article about our plans for re-forming Keston WI. We hoped we would have at least 25 interested ladies but, to our delight 57 ladies turned up for the re-formation meeting. We now have 67 members and a waiting list.

Our first year has been very busy. We have had a variety of different speakers, including a demonstration on candle making, an interesting talk from a former policeman and a fascinating talk about Mrs Simpson's jewels. Some members also shared with us what life was like during the Second World War, including being evacuated to the countryside. We all participated in mince pie tasting and the members voted Tesco's as having the tastiest mince pies last Christmas. We also tested our member's general knowledge with a couple of quizzes.

This year brought celebrations and sadness. In June we celebrated The Queen's Platinum Jubilee with an afternoon tea and a quiz on the royal family, and then just three months later we were mourning the passing of Queen Elizabeth II.

We also had several trips, one to Eltham Palace, one to Rochester Christmas market and a theatre trip to see The Calendar Girls. We had a picnic at the Warren in Hayes, on one of the

hottest days in the year, but we found a shady space under the trees. To round off the year we had a Carol Concert at Keston Parish Church, which was attended by about 60 people.

In addition to our meetings and visits we have several clubs up and running. We have a monthly craft club, book club and lunch club and we have enjoyed several visits to the cinema.

For this forthcoming year we have got an interesting calendar of speakers including Hidden Corners of London, Make up for the More Mature Woman and the Gift of Dogs. In addition, we are looking forward to celebrating the Coronation of our new King, King Charles III.

In my last article I explained about the resolutions. This year's resolutions include:

- Save our water – every drop matters
- Women to women – turning over a new leaf in the lives of women tea workers
- Online gambling harm: time in action
- Clean rivers for people and wildlife

We will have to wait a few months to find out which one will go forward to the AGM in June.

Finally, we have moved our meetings and now meet at **Keston Parish Church Hall**. The day and time remain the same, the second Wednesday of the month from 1.30-3.30pm. Although we are full, ladies are welcome to visit up to three times a year. We look forward to seeing you.

Helen Best, President of Keston WI

What I Do



I'm sure you know of the Churchill Theatre, but have you been to Bromley Little Theatre? The BLT is a 113-seat theatre, established in 1938 on its present site which was converted from an old Victorian Bakery. It is situated opposite Bromley North Station. It is a thriving amateur theatre run on professional lines even though everyone involved is a volunteer. There is a play every month, (except August), and there is a huge variety of plays – some serious and thought-provoking, some thrillers or comedies or musicals. At any one time, there are at least three plays in rehearsal – one on stage, one in the bar and one in the rehearsal room.

I have been a BLT member for 10 years helping with various aspects of the theatre: Front of House, interval refreshments, costumes, assistant stage manager and props. I have been in eight plays so far, plus two which we put on the open air stage in August at The

Festival Theatre at Hever Castle.

The plays I have been in include: Blithe Spirit, Pygmalion, Comedy of Errors, Treasure Island, Far from the Madding Crowd and some modern less well known plays too. I am organising the costumes for the current play – A Bunch of Amateurs – and also helping with prompting at rehearsals for Educating Rita (only two persons), a Bar Show. Everyone needs to know their lines by the dress rehearsal stage, at the very latest, as prompts are not allowed beyond this time!

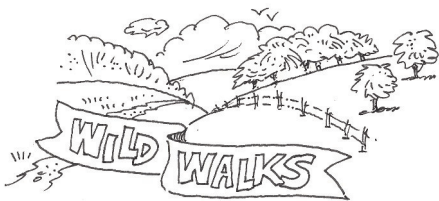
It's great to be involved and working as a team and I really enjoy it, although it does take a lot of time and commitment.

For anyone interested, they are always glad of new volunteers, especially Front of House duties, (meet and greet and ushering and health and safety), bar work or coffees/teas in the interval. Also, assistance backstage with lighting, sound, props, set building or stage management. Or costumes – not many people know this but our costume department is in the basement of The Glades! Fortunately it's lovely and warm down there!

At present there is a major refurbishment going on at the BLT. It is taking place in stages when funds permit. So far we have new dressing rooms, backstage toilet and new staircase. The bar lounge and auditorium will be rebuilt in due course. It is an exciting time for the theatre – do come and see a show (only £14!).

For more information, take a look at the BLT website:
www.bromleylittletheatre.org.

Ann Morgan



Lamberty's Dornier

Should you decide to walk to the village of Downe from Leaves Green Common, just as you enter the field which takes you toward the, now defunct, gas station you will be unaware of a one-time anti-aircraft gun emplacement close by. Yes! Leaves Green Common was worth defending! Actually, it was part of a defensive ring around the war time airfield and the earth bank surrounding it is still visible (in the bushes).

However, it made the papers back in 1940 on account of the fact that it brought down a 'Nazi bomber'. In fact it didn't but as they say, 'why spoil a good story with facts?'

The bomber – a Dornier 17 piloted by Oberleutnant Rudolf Lamberty – was already crippled while attacking the aerodrome at Kenley. I suspect he intended to put it down at Biggin Hill.

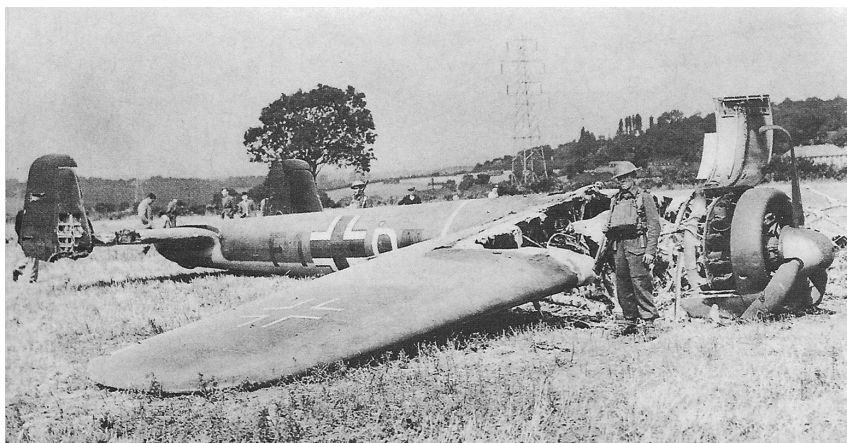
With one engine on fire it was not to be and he landed in the field between the gas station and the Downe Road, close to and parallel with the small copse in which the gas station was later to be built.

In the photograph below you see the wooded area of 'Keston woods' through which the main road winds towards Keston. The one time Council houses are just visible above the propeller and engine cowl. In Ted Williams' 1988 book *Keston Parish More pictures from the past* there is also a picture of it burning in the distance, photographed from an upper window of one of the houses.

When the field is ploughed in the autumn pending the winter sowing you can just make out where all this occurred by the change in colour of the earth. As a result of the fire, which would have been quite intense, the ground has a baked appearance. Come on you detectorists – get over there and see what's left!

Postscript: Rudolph Lamberty survived the war and visited Biggin Hill at one of the yearly airshows. Did he go to the site I wonder?

Richard Geiger



Morris Men welcome the May Day Sunrise



The Ravensbourne Morris at Caesar's Well
Photo by Rowan Hicks

Set your alarms early if you want to see the Ravensbourne Morris Men welcoming the May Day Sunrise at 5.32am on Monday 1st May at Caesar's Well, Keston Ponds this year. It is likely they will make their way down to the village after that.

The Ravensbourne Morris Men are currently recruiting – no previous dancing experience is required. Prospective members should contact the Squire or Bagman through the side's website: www.ravensbourne.org.

Historic Holwood Walk and Talk

There is another opportunity to hear about the history of Holwood house and estate during a guided walk on Sunday 21st May, meeting at 2.45pm to set off at 3pm. Please enter the estate from the public footpath that leads to the Wilberforce oak from close to the Westerham Road roundabout or via the main drive opposite Fishponds Road. Please book by phone on 07939 122174.

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.

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. More details from Martin Becker on 07484 609102.

Book Reading Fellowship

Come and discuss books with some Christian content that you have read at 2pm on Monday 3rd April. Please ring Sally on 020 8462 8750 if you would like to come.

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 Church Hall on the 2nd Wednesday in the month.

Friends of Keston Common

We meet in the Westerham Road car park at 10am on Friday mornings for tasks that need doing including litter picking. Please do join us.

Mental Wellbeing Coffee Morning

Join us for chat over tea/coffee and cake with a mental health professional at hand. We will hear tips about how we can keep ourselves well on Saturday 3rd June from 10am-12 noon in Keston Church Hall.

Magazine Deadline

Please send photos and articles for the June/July issue of The Keston Magazine to the Editor, Sally Churchus, by Friday 5th May at the very latest via email: editor@kestonparishchurch.org.uk or contact her to discuss ideas on Tel: 020 8462 8750. Thank you.

Laughlines

- ☺ Just heard that Sainsbury's are going to start rationing eggs...This is the absolute limit – un oeuf is un oeuf!
- ☺ I'm never again donating money to anyone collecting for a marathon...They just take the money and run!
- ☺ My gardener was leaning over his lawnmower sobbing. I think he was going through a rough patch!

☺ Did you really mean that?

These are two of my favourites out of dozens of malapropisms (*the mistaken use of a word in place of a similar-sounding one, often with an amusing effect*, eg. 'dance a flamingo' instead of flamenco) sent to *The Times*, in an article by Patrick Kidd.

His mother implied her eye problem was a gift from God since she always spoke of having 'immaculate degeneration'.

Dr Peter Moore was asked by relatives of an elderly patient to assess him for 'power of eternity'. Some things, Peter says, are beyond the NHS.



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