

The Keston Magazine

News of your Parish and Village



April/May 2024

Keston Parish Church

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



Rector

From 9th April onwards

Rev'd Belinda Beckhelling 01689 853186
rector@kestonparishchurch.org.uk

Licensed Lay Minister & Parish Administrator Churchwarden

Tricia Coward 01689 854373
hallbookings@kestonparishchurch.org.uk
Geoff Carr 07584 058872
warden@kestonparishchurch.org.uk

Verger

Tonia Crouch
verger@kestonparishchurch.org.uk

Safeguarding Officer

Steff Nash
steff@swissmail.org

Treasurer

Anna Bailey 01689 852583

Organist & Choirmaster

David Cook 020 8289 5768

Church Hall

Tricia Coward 01689 854373
hallbookings@kestonparishchurch.org.uk

Magazine Editor &

Sally Churchus 020 8462 8750

Book Reading Fellowship

editor@kestonparishchurch.org.uk

Women's Institute

Helen Best 07715 880889

Beavers/Cubs/Scouts

gsl27thbromley@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

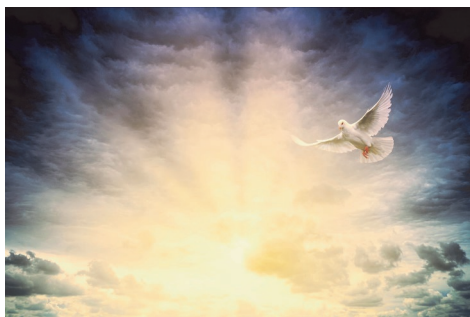
Keston Residents' Road Safety Group

krrsg@hotmail.com

Front cover: Hay bales and Holwood grounds from Shire Lane

"Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty,"
who was, and is, and is to come. *Revelation: 4:8*

Thought for the month



The Number Seven

Seven is the world's most popular lucky number, but the Bible reveals that it is one of God's numbers that are a feature of his creation – others include three, 12 and 40.

Seven is also held in high esteem in other cultures, for example, there are the seven heavens of Judaism and Islam, the seven elements in the Chinese world, and it's why the traditional Jewish menorah has seven candle sticks, and why Muslims walk seven times around the holy Kaaba in Mecca. Then we have the seven deadly sins. There are also many natural features of the world where seven plays a part – surfers will tell you they surf in sets of seven waves, there are seven colours in a rainbow, and seven continents of the world.

In the Bible, seven is mentioned over 700 times. God created the world in six days, and when his work was complete, he rested on the seventh day, thus seven is a symbol of completeness.

In the Gospel of John, we find the seven 'I am' sayings of Jesus and accounts of seven miracles performed by Jesus, while the book of Revelation is full of events and objects that appear seven times.

It is generally accepted that the ultimate completeness is seven times seven, that is, 49. Before his crucifixion Jesus told his disciples that God would send the Holy Spirit to guide and support them. Jesus was crucified just before the Jewish Passover when Jews from around the world were visiting Jerusalem. Most of them stayed there for the next seven weeks, after which, on the 50th day, there would be the feast day of Shavuot which was a thanksgiving for the first fruits of the wheat harvest. It came to be known as Pentecost, a name derived from the Greek 'Pentēkostē' which means 50th.

It was on this feast day that the Holy Spirit, promised by Jesus, arrived and filled the disciples with the wisdom, knowledge and courage to persuade others to join them in living in the way of Jesus. It was perfect timing. Tens of thousands of people in Jerusalem witnessed the event and large numbers became followers of the risen Christ before returning to their homelands with the good news. New churches sprang up throughout the world.

The work of Jesus on earth was fully completed 49 days after his crucifixion and resurrection at Easter. Surely this must be the ultimate example of why seven is much more than a lucky number. It was part of God's plan for the world. Seven is clearly His number that reveals His completeness in all things physical and spiritual.

Bob Peters

The Association for Church Editors

From the Editor

“Strength is the capacity to break a chocolate bar into four pieces with your bare hands – and then just eat one of the pieces” – quote by Judith Viorst. I don’t know who she is, but she must be a woman after my own heart. I am looking forward to the end of Lent and having chocolate again! By the time you read this Easter will be upon us and soon after will be the Service when Rev’d Belinda Beckhelling will become the 64th recorded Rector of Keston. We look forward to getting to know her and welcoming her into our community.

In this issue, as well as a list of future events to look out for, there are articles about what is currently happening on the Common and at Holwood as well as looking back at some of the history of the village and past events plus a 100th anniversary celebration.

I seem to recall that when I was a child, the late May Bank Holiday used to be called Whitsun. Within the Anglican and Methodist churches the word Whitsun is sometimes used instead of Pentecost. Apparently it was a tradition in some churches to baptise adults at Pentecost and the newly baptised people would wear white robes on that day, so Pentecost came to be called “Whitsunday” or “White Sunday” after these white baptismal garments.

Wishing you happy Bank holidays, whatever you prefer to call them.

Sally Churchus



Cover Story

The front cover shows some of the round bales of hay produced from the field right next to Jack Frost Pet & Country Store on the corner of Shire Lane, which they then subsequently sell.

The photo was taken in April, looking back towards Holwood. We will be walking along that footpath from the Holwood Estate driveway towards Shire Lane on Sunday 5th May this year when we do the parish walk. Let’s hope we see a beautiful blue sky!

Annual Parochial Church Meeting

Everyone interested in the work of Keston Parish Church is welcome to come to our APCM after the 10am service on Sunday 21st April, at 11.45am in the church hall. Tea, coffee and cakes will be available.



**Sunday
5th
May**

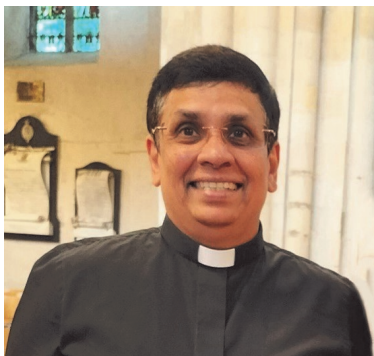
Parish Walk

- Meet 2.15 Keston Church Car Park BR2 6HT
- Takes about 2 hrs
- Finishing at Keston Church Hall for tea and cakes
- Well behaved dogs welcome



**Everyone
welcome!**

A bit about Belinda



Greetings people of Keston. What a wonderful village you have here and I say this as a visitor who has popped in *incognito* a few times and who has always been made to feel very welcome. I am the Rev'd Belinda Beckhelling, and I am to be your new Rector from early April and I look forward to living and working among you and to worshipping with and praying for the life of this place.

I was ordained deacon in 2020, having completed my theology training at St Augustine's College of Theology. I was priested in 2021 and served my Curacy at Rochester Cathedral. These being the Covid years, my experience has been 'different' but highly formational. It was very difficult to hide behind the busyness of parish ministry and I discovered the benefits of just 'being', of silence and of taking time and space to enjoy God's creation. I rediscovered my love for gardening and manage with my daughter to grow enough vegetables and fruit to last us many months. We both enjoy baking and making jams and crumbles.

As well as my grown-up daughter, Natasha, I have a son, Nathan who is

18 months older than his sister and who is settled in Vancouver, Canada with his wife, Chesca and my two grandchildren Caspian, five, and Chloe, three. We FaceTime most weeks and try to see each other every year. Visiting Vancouver is always such a pleasure – its weather being very similar to the UK – rain, rain and more rain. The seasonal changes are always very picturesque. I look forward to watching the seasonal changes in Keston and enjoying walks in the woods and round the fishponds.

Church has always been central to my life, having been brought up in a Roman Catholic family, as a young child in Goa, India, until the age of 15 when I moved with my parents to the UK. On marrying an Anglican, I began attending my local parish church, St Barnabas Church, Gillingham, where I worshipped and served on the PCC before finally responding to my calling to ordained ministry in 2015, when I was received into the Anglican Church.

Before becoming a priest, and since 1984 I was a teacher initially of Maths in a Secondary School. Subsequently, I ran a Pre-school, then became a teacher in an Infant School with a keen interest in Special Educational Needs, before becoming Deputy Headteacher in a Junior School and Headteacher in three Medway schools. I retired from teaching in 2013. I continue to enjoy working with children and young people and led sessions at the Sunday Club, and supported the education programme for visiting schools at the cathedral.

My current interests are working with homeless and vulnerably housed people, after having co-ordinated the Medway Night Shelter since 2015, when I

co-founded it with other similar-minded people in the Medway Towns.

God has blessed me with an awesome life! Every twist and turn instrumental to making me who I am today. For this I thank God every day. I look forward to the many blessings Keston will bring in the next stage of my journey with God.

The Rev'd Belinda Beckhelling,
Rector designate of Keston Parish Church

Psalm 23

The LORD is my shepherd;
I shall not want.
He makes me to lie down in green
pastures;
He leads me beside the still waters.
He restores my soul;
He leads me in the paths of
righteousness
For His name's sake.
Yea, though I walk through the
valley of the shadow of death,
I will fear no evil;
For You are with me;
Your rod and Your staff, they
comfort me.
You prepare a table before me in
the presence of my enemies;
You anoint my head with oil;
My cup runs over.
Surely goodness and mercy shall
follow me
All the days of my life;
And I will dwell in the house of
the LORD forever.

*The Stuart Townsend hymn based
on this Psalm will be sung at
Rev'd Belinda Beckhelling's Licensing
service on Monday 8th April.*

30 years since the Ordination of women in C of E



It was 30 years ago on 12th March 1994, that the first 32 women were ordained as priests in the Church of England. The service was officiated by Bishop Barry Rogerson at Bristol Cathedral. He ordained the women in alphabetical order, so Angela Berners-Wilson was the very first woman to be ordained. She was a university chaplain.

The youngest woman to be ordained that day was aged 30. The oldest was 69. By 2004, ten years on, one of the women priests had died, and 14 had retired.

Bishop Rogerson reckoned it would take 10 years before the first woman would be ordained as a bishop. In the end, it took 21 years and Libby Lane was ordained the first female bishop in the Church of England. She became Bishop of Stockport, a Suffragan bishop in the Diocese of Chester.

The first woman to be ordained a Diocesan bishop was the Rt Rev'd Rachel Treweek, Bishop of Gloucester, appointed on 26 March 2015.

There are currently 25 women bishops in the Church of England. In June 2023 men held over two thirds of the stipendiary posts.

Based on an article from Parish Pump

My Faith Journey



My faith journey begun when I was adopted at six weeks old. The only stipulation was that I was brought up within the Church of England. An accidental conception?

*For you created my inmost being;
you knit me together in my mother's womb.
I praise you because I am fearfully and
wonderfully made;
your works are wonderful,
I know that full well.*

*My frame was not hidden from you
when I was made in the secret place,
when I was woven together in the depths
of the earth.*

*Your eyes saw my unformed body;
all the days ordained for me were written in
your book before one of them came to be.*

Psalms 139:13-16 (NIV)

Aged 25 a friend and I went to the hen party of a Christian work colleague. We were dreading going; imagining it would be boring with all those Christians. We had such a good time; shocked that her Christian friends weren't boring, quiet

or pious but fun, well dressed **and** could afford a night out (I strongly believed you had to be poor to be a "proper" Christian).

The next day one of the "hens" drove all the way to Blackheath to take us back to Biggin Hill for a 10am church service. The singing sounded like angels. The worship moved us to tears. My friend accepted Jesus into her life immediately. I felt that God was trying to communicate with me but I was far too scared to listen. He might ask me to be a missionary in Africa!

After my marriage I felt compelled to attend church to thank God for my wonderful husband. He would meet me after church and although he had "lost his faith", we'd spend hours discussing the Bible.

We went to church together on Christmas day in 1996. I heard God speak through the Bible reading. I was hooked. I am still astounded by how Biblical passages hit you sometimes as if you've never heard them before. The living and active word of God.

I was baptised to acknowledge that I was on God's team. In the God squad, (as my husband used to tease), God still has plans for me and is bringing me through the deep sorrow of the last few years following my husband's untimely death.

This new future is not what we planned. I miss being a beloved wife but I try to remember this verse from Jeremiah 29:11.

*"For I know the plans I have for you"
declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you
and not to harm you, plans to give you hope
and a future".*

Melanie Moughan

Wilberforce Seat Restored



Wilberforce oak and seat circa 1900

On 12 May 1787 William Wilberforce and William Pitt the Younger discussed the abolition of slavery under a large, old oak tree in the grounds of Holwood House. After the Bill to Abolish the Slave Trade was granted Royal Assent, the tree, known then as the Emancipation Oak, became a place of pilgrimage.

In 1862 the seat was commissioned by Earl Stanhope, with the permission of Lord Cranworth the owner and occupier of Holwood House at that time. The bench is made of limestone from the Forest of Dean and was originally erected on the public footpath opposite the oak tree.

The original oak was brought down by a storm in 1952 and its replacement suffered the same fate in the October 1987 hurricane. A replacement was

planted soon afterwards by Seismograph, the owners of Holwood in 1987, in conjunction with LB Bromley. At the same time it was decided to move the seat within the boundary fence to protect it from vandalism. A composite bench now sits on the footpath where the stone bench originally stood.

Over the last few years the commemorative bench, widely known as the Wilberforce Seat, has been slowly sliding off its legs. During last year this became very noticeable, which proved a challenge for the Holwood Trust, which has responsibility for the seat. Finding a stone mason willing to take on the repair, and with estimated costs running very high indeed, was extremely difficult. Eventually the Trust contacted James South of Southern Stone who



Leg in need of repair

was able to do the job without using a crane, making the repair more affordable. The limestone has been stabilised, the legs repositioned and the seat secured, with the back of the bench being gently cleaned to reveal the inscription. It is hoped that the repair will ensure the seat remains in good stead for many more years to come.

Avril Glover



Restored bench

In April...

90 years ago, on 3rd April 1934 British inventor Percy Shaw patented the Cat's Eye reflective road stud. He set up a company to manufacture them in 1935 and in 1937 he was awarded a government contract to mass produce them for national use.

75 years ago, on 4th April 1949 the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) was founded.

Also 75 years ago, on 7th April 1949 the Rodgers and Hammerstein musical South Pacific was opened in Broadway.

70 years ago, on 26th April 1954 the Soviet Union transferred Crimea from Russia to Ukraine. In 2014 Russia annexed Crimea, but it is not recognised internationally and a number of sanctions were imposed on Russia as a result.

60 years ago, on 15th April 1964, 12 men convicted of carrying out the Great Train Robbery in England in August of 1963 were jailed for a total of 307 years. They were given some of the longest sentences in British criminal history.

50 years ago, on 6th April 1974 the Swedish pop group ABBA won the Eurovision Song Contest with their song Waterloo. It was the first time that Sweden had won the contest. ABBA went on to be one of the most successful groups in music history.

30 years ago, on 26th April 1994 the first post-apartheid multiracial elections were held in South Africa, with 18 million blacks eligible to vote for the first time. Nelson Mandela was elected president, and took office on 10th May.

Keston Church Charitable Giving

Every year we hope to give a value equivalent to 10% of our unrestricted net income, (tithing, as mentioned in the Bible), to charities chosen by the Parochial Church Council. We do this through specific appeals or events in church, through collections at dedicated church services, through appeals in the magazine and as gifts from our general funds. For 2023 the following charities were selected and payments made, including Gift Aid, where possible.

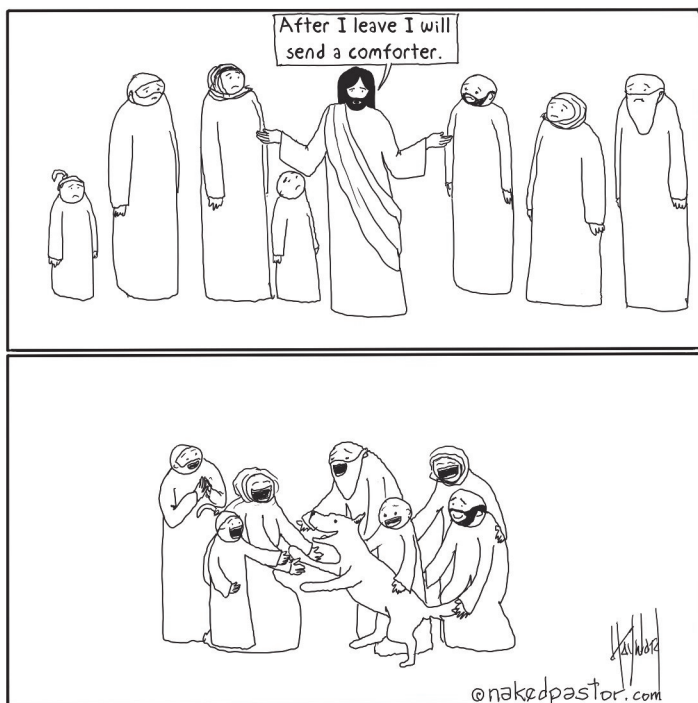
- Turkey Earthquake appeal
- Friends of Rochester Cathedral
- Christian Aid
- Spinnaker Trust (Christian schools work)
- St. Christopher's Hospice

- Bromley Borough Foodbank
- Welcare in Bromley
- The Royal British Legion
- Demelza (Children's Hospice)
- The Salvation Army
- Living Well Foodbank, Bromley
- Macmillan Cancer Support
- Bromley LATCH Homeless project
- The Children's Society
- Centrepont Homeless Charity
- The Grail Trust UK (supporting children in India)



Our total actually came to £4,781.41, equivalent to 7% of unrestricted income.

Anna Bailey, Treasurer



Church Services



1st Sunday of each month

10am Informal Non Communion Service (Shorter all age service)

All other Sundays

10am Holy Communion

Third Sunday of the month

10am Holy Communion service plus prayer for healing and wholeness

Monday 8th April Licensing Service for Rev'd Belinda Beckhelling

7.30pm Holy Communion with refreshments in the hall afterwards
Please notify us if you would like to come. Thank you.



Messy Church teatime on 5th March. Children enjoyed crafts with a Mothering Sunday theme, followed by a song and story in church before tucking into high tea.

The Founding of Keston Village



The Supply Stores, now Berry Cottage,
9, Commonside

The manor rolls for Keston South Court of 1850 describe two copyhold tenants as William Bowyer and John Rumsby, each of whom was paying 2sh.6d (12.5p) in quit rent for their quarter acre copyhold. The location of these properties is described as, *Bounded on the north and east side by Hayes Common, on the west by the Fox public house and on the south by land of John Best*

Fortunately a surveyors' map accompanying the record leaves the location of these properties in no doubt. The written entries and the map also record changes in use of the properties between 1822 and 1862.

In a letter to Sir John Lennard his lawyer, Mr. Holcroft, confirmed that prior to 1822 John Rumsby had been a servant to the Farnaby-Lennard family and in that year he had been given permission to enclose a quarter acre of Keston Common to be held by copyhold tenure. He went on to say that Rumsby, *took possession and built several small houses on the property.*

The lawyer noted that the whole property with cottages produced a rental income of £48 pounds per annum and that according to custom the lord was entitled to a fine on the admission of new tenants, *Not exceeding 2 years value, in this case £98 but this is the extreme amount the law admits.*

This land was not yet enfranchised which meant ancient manorial fines were still due to the lord of the manor.

On this site today you will see The Greyhound pub, Daisy Grey café and Stable Cottage. On his plot Mr Bowyer had built a cottage and opened a grocer's shop, *The Supply Stores* which also became the first village post office. The house is now separated from the others by Stour Close. On the west side of John Rumsby's copyhold William Purdy built a wheelwright's shop. In 1834 he was granted permission by lord of the manor to enclose a piece of 'waste' being the forecourt to his workshop where he dug a saw pit and where you will now find a fine display of Porche cars.



Olive's mill house circa 1905

It was sold along with the church in 1908 by Lord Sackville Cecil to the Rector and Churchwardens for £2,500.



Olive's mill and house 1841

He also rented a plot of land behind the Greyhound pub for storing timber. Access to this yard was by a footpath alongside the public house. Residents of Keston Gardens continue to use it.

Further down Commonsides, William Ashby built his windmill in 1824/5 and a mill house. The mill came into the possession of Luther Olive in 1863. Damaged in a violent storm in 1879, the mill was demolished and in 1888 St. Audrey's Church was built on the foundations. The Church was converted to a private home in the 1990's and the money used to help pay for the current church hall adjoining Keston church. The mill house remained in use as the parish rectory until it was sold in May 2017 and a new rectory was bought in The Dale.

To provide a constant source of power to his mill Luther invested in a

steam engine. The building for housing it can be seen to the left of St. Audrey's in the photo, and is now a house called Olive's Mill. For many years it was used as parish rooms by village residents.

Tudor Davies



St. Audrey's 1880s

Friend or Foe?

Conservation in action on Keston and Hayes Commons

As you walk the commons here, you may spot the Friends of Keston Common in hi-vis jackets busy pulling up the coconut scented gorse bushes or cutting back the tall bracken and holly trees. Aren't we supposed to be protecting our natural landscape?

Around here, the landscape has changed many times over the years, reflecting social and environmental factors, so what is "natural"?

Not so long ago, the area was largely open heathland, with shrubs and trees kept short by the grazing animals of commoners, and large numbers of

Broom...has similar yellow flowers, but no spines and smells of vanilla

rabbits, as the above painting by Sidney Johnson from around 1900 shows. As the farm animals slowly disappeared, and the rabbits suffered badly in the 1950's from myxomatosis, this left the door open for tougher plants such as gorse, bracken and holly to take over and spread widely. Invasive garden species such as bamboo and cherry laurel also multiplied quickly, and our precious areas of native pink flowering heathers and herb rich meadows soon began to vanish.

Bracken (*Pteridium aquilinum*) is a native fern species in the UK. However, it quickly becomes the dominant species in meadows and heathlands, at the expense of other plants and animals. It shades the ground during spring and



Hayes and Keston
Sidney Johnson circa 1900-1

summer with its broad leaves and when it dies back in autumn, it leaves a deep thatch that stops other plants germinating. It is also toxic to grazing animals and can harbour ticks. It is almost impossible to eradicate once established. It has no natural enemies so pulling or cutting are the only control methods available. These may weaken the plant to some extent but must be repeated frequently, to allow the orchids, purple knapweed, yellow rattle, eyebright, cuckoo flowers and daisies to flourish and provide nectar for pollinators.

Gorse (*Ulex europaeus*) is a tall prickly shrub that needs constant management. It can grow very quickly to over three metres and, given the chance, will



Common Eyebright



FoKC being awarded the Green Flag Award for the seventh year running

shade out the **Common Heather** (*Calluna vulgaris*) and **Bell Heather** (*Erica cinerea*). Gorse spreads by its explosive seed pods and will colonise bare heathland within a season. It leaves a dry carpet of needles that prevent other seeds from germinating and can also pose a fire risk in dry years. Like Bracken, control is no simple task and involves removing the roots and small seedlings when they resprout.

Holly (*Ilex aquifolium*) with its red berries is a traditional Christmas decoration, and food for some birds. However, when let loose on the sandy soil of the Common, it spreads rapidly through branches forming suckering roots as they touch the ground. With their tough evergreen prickly leaves, they can become large trees, forming a dark canopy which totally excludes other plants, cutting out the light and closing the paths to walkers. Once established, it takes constant cutting back to keep it in check.

We do however take great care to protect our **Broom** (*Cytisus scoparius*)

shrubs which resemble gorse at a quick glance. It has similar yellow flowers, but no spines and smells of vanilla. Now uncommon here, Bromley originally took its name from this shrub, and there have been heritage events to celebrate this in 1933 and 2019. See <https://www.bromleycivicsociety.org.uk/2019/04/broom-time/>

So our intrepid volunteers will continue to battle against the invaders, and keep your paths, heathlands and meadows open and flower rich for the enjoyment of all. Feel free to join us! friendsofkestoncommon.btck.co.uk

Bob Harrop



Broom



In Half Term

10am Tuesday 28th May

Keston Parish Church Hall
Church Road BR2 6HT

10am Welcome snacks. You may arrive
at any time throughout the session

10.15am Crafts and Activities for all
ages and interests

11.30am Celebration with music

11.45am Lunch (provided)

Everyone gets to enjoy doing crafts,
playing a game, learning about the God
who loves us, and sharing a meal together.

It's church, but not as you know it!

A well earned rest!



From left, Alan Dow, Harry Bowman and Diane Stalker Muir on the new Heathland bench

New equipment was installed between the 4th and 9th December in the Lakes Road playground under the Platinum Jubilee Parks Funding scheme. The missing spring-loaded piece of play equipment was finally replaced towards the end of February. We hope to plan an activity day in the spring, when some of the equipment will be repainted and the area given a good tidy up. No date has been set as yet.

We have installed another rustic bench on the Heathland, this time close to the large central tree. Two further rustic benches are planned for Padmall Wood. We are considering an additional standard bench to be placed in the playground.

In other news FoKC has purchased two new lectern style interpretation boards, one to be placed adjacent to Caesar's Well to describe its history and hydrology, and the other at pond 3 to describe the conservation nature of that area. Permission was granted from Natural England to install the board at Caesar's Well, which lies inside the SSSI. Delivery is expected in April and the team will endeavour to install these at the earliest opportunity.

We plan to attend KestFest on 1st June and will be selling plants and gifts to raise funds for our cause.

Larry Herbert
Chair of Friends of Keston Common

Keston Women's Institute 100th

2023 was a busy year for new and existing members of Keston WI. We celebrated the Coronation of King Charles III, had our annual picnic at The Warren as well as a coffee morning in one of our member's gardens.

Interesting visits during the year included a trip to Hampton Court to the Tulip festival and a trip to the Lavender fields at Banstead. In October we went to visit the Poppy Factory at Richmond, which was very interesting. Then our final visit was to a costume factory in Croydon that make Ballroom and Latin costumes. One of their clients is 'Strictly Come Dancing', so as you can imagine there were a lot of sequins and sparkles.

We also took part in the Remembrance Service at Keston and we had a stall at the Keston Christmas market.

Keston WI originally opened its doors to members in January 1924, a hundred years later it is still in operation and going from strength to strength. By 12 noon on 10th January 2024, Keston Parish Church hall was all set to host a lunch for 70 members of Keston WI and their visitors to celebrate this amazing achievement. This was made more special by the fact that Keston WI was suspended for a short period of time and then reopened again in 2022. Our visitors included Amanda Breach, the Chair of the West Kent Federation of WI's, of which Keston is a part, and Rita King, the treasurer of the West Kent Federation of WI's, Bev Wilde our WI advisor, and a couple of members from neighbouring WI's as well as

Tricia Coward, the Licensed Lay Minister of Keston Parish Church.

By 12.45 everyone had arrived and the hall was buzzing with conversation. The members were treated to some lovely food, which was provided by the Greyhound pub. After the meal our two longest standing members, Sheila Adcock and Shirley Newman, cut the cake for us. Both Sheila and Shirley have been members of Keston WI for 53 years, joining in 1971.

The members were treated to a very amusing entertainer, Dame Nitty Nora, a pantomime dame. The afternoon was full of laughter and lots of chatter. Our celebrations will continue throughout the year with visits and other activities.

Helen Best, President Keston WI



Shirley Newman (left) and Sheila Adcock cutting the 100th celebration cake

What I Do



Hello, I am a manager at Jack Frost Pet & Country Store. I run the business with my sister Katie – our dad Allan founded the company and was integral to its day to day running until around 2012 when he started to hand over some of his duties and allow us to take the reins. Allan is now fully retired but keeps an eye on us and I regularly let him know what's going on.

When I was 15 I struggled, (through lack of enthusiasm), to attain a C in maths GCSE which was required for sixth form, and can remember saying to a friend that it “didn’t matter anyway as I would probably end up making rabbit hutches with my dad”. I now mainly look after anything do with finance for the company and we don’t even make anything anymore, let alone rabbit hutches. I know how to work out VAT backwards, calculate a percentage difference or discount and had to learn about tax rates, pension contributions and NI just to be able to do the payroll. The irony.

The digital revolution hasn’t fully reached me yet, I have one foot in the past and one in the future, so we like email and we have modern tills and

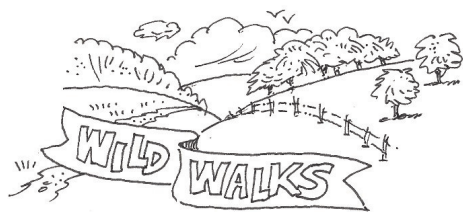
accounting software but a lot of our processes rely on real people to work and they might need a paper invoice instead of a pdf. We are slowly making changes and working towards things that will help with stock control and take some of the pressure off our team.

I do also look after HR and onboarding of new team members with the help of Katie and our Supervisors. This involves a bit more paperwork and most importantly getting out of the office for training in the big range of products we have available.

For a change of pace, a delivery of hay, bedding or feed for one of our many horsey customers can come as a welcome break from staring at a screen. I travel up to 30 minutes from the store often with hay or wood shavings which are our best bulk sellers. I get to meet lots of customers’ horses which I love although it isn’t without its challenges. Some of the “roads” I traverse would be more suitable for a rally stage and not everyone is pleased to see a big van coming the other way down a small lane! I always try to avoid really tricky spots if I can and I’m not bad at reversing – which is often required. So hopefully readers will not have had many occasions where they have been stuck because of me!

I couldn’t do my job without the training and experience I got from working with my dad or without the support from my sister Katie who as well as helping me also looks after purchasing and most of the day to day running of the store. So big thank yous all round, particularly to our lovely customers!

Sam Frost



Friday 8th March

Windy or wot! I've just returned from my morning 'walk' with the dog: in fact it was a bike ride across the fields into the bitter east wind, then to park the bike in a small copse close to the end of the runway. From there I pick up the trail I made back in the 70s when owning our first dog. Phew! Was it that long ago?! In reality the first time I explored the woods was with the children at Christmas time when we went in search of holly and yew to decorate the house for the festive season. In those far off days we used to walk straight across the airfield from the back field, there being just a simple wire fence which we could duck under. Try it now and you'll be shot!

Back to the present – what a joy to be entering the woods. The first signs of spring are already visible and on a fresh sunny day like today it's uplifting.

But wot's this?! As I proceed I'm greeted by a wide track 'scraped' through the undergrowth in a meandering fashion. It rises from the golf course and winds its way into the distance – pushing aside small shrubs and brambles. Sometimes even thrusting aside fallen dead trees, one of which I used to take a rest on and have a 'roll-up' whilst my then dog, Wally, would hop up and sit with me – aah! Oh well, life is full of changes, as Alan Price used to sing. I don't doubt the track will

be covered by hogging or similar and make an enjoyable walk toward the club-house. We wait to see!

Part 2. Originally I contemplated writing about a walk I made years ago, and which has stuck in my mind ever since. Back in the 60s when I "were't but a lad" a chum and I used to walk to various country pubs, (when they existed!). I'm talking deepest Kent in the Sittingbourne area. One such pub was near Bredgar and we'd walk from Stockbury. Our route took us across the Detling to Key Street road and I seem to recall the area having small holdings, orchards and such-like! On this particular Saturday night the missus – being young and 'up for adventure', came with us. As we got to about a mile away we began to hear 'snatches' of music... then silence, then minutes later, more music. The nearer we got, the louder it became and the realisation dawned on us it was a Jazz band at the pub and the intervals of sound were when people (males, I presume), opened the pub door to come out and perform a necessary function at the required (outdoor) 'place'. Even now when I hear 'Trad' Jazz I'm taken back to that dark and silent? night.

Richard Geiger



What's On

• Prayer Walks

1st Tues & 3rd Wed 9.30am

The Green opposite Greyhound pub

We usually return about 11am. Well behaved dogs welcome too!

• Men's pub social

3rd Wed 7pm The Greyhound

Join us for social chat, a few drinks and a meal for those who want it.

More details from Martin Becker on 07484 609102.

• Keston Book Club

1st Wed 7pm The Fox

More information from 07503 268001 or angelahollamby@gmail.com.

• New Keston WI

2nd Wed 1.30pm-3.30pm

Keston Church Hall

More details from Helen Best on 07715 880889.

• Keston Village Residents Assoc.

Sounds Familiar Music Quiz

Fri 12th April 7-11pm

Keston Village Hall

Teams of 8-10, tickets £20 per person including a fish & chip supper (veggie alternative available), bring your own drinks and nibbles. To book please email kestonvillagera@gmail.com.

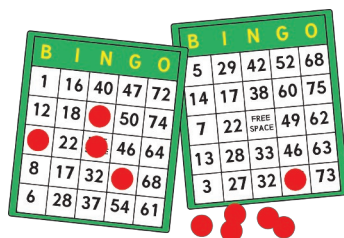
• Keston Village Residents Assoc.

AGM

Fri 26th April 7.30pm

Keston Village Hall

Guest Speaker David Winstanley, CEO of Biggin Hill Airport, will give a brief talk about the airport and answer questions.



• Bingo

Sun 28th April 11.45am

Keston Church Hall

Soup and a roll lunch included.

Tickets £10 from Chris 07988 712873.

• Ravensbourne Morris

Wed 1st May 5.32am

Join them to welcome the May Day sunrise at Caesar's Well, Keston Ponds.

• St Christopher's Fun Walk

Sun 12th May

See www.stchristophers.org.uk/funwalk

• Book Reading Fellowship

Mon 13th May 2pm Gravel Road

Come and discuss books with some Christian content that you have read over tea/coffee and cake. Please let Sally Churchus know on 020 8462 8750 or editor@kestonparishchurch.org.uk if you would like to come.

• Mental Wellbeing Coffee Morning

Sat 25th May 10am-12 noon

Keston Church Hall

Come 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.

• KestFest 2024

Sat 1st June 1-5pm

On Green opposite The Greyhound

Lots of stalls and entertainment for all the family.

I never think about the future; It comes soon enough. (*Albert Einstein*)

Magazine Deadline

Please send photos and articles for the June/July issue of The Keston Magazine to the Editor, Sally Churchus, before Friday 10th May by email: editor@kestonparishchurch.org.uk or contact her to discuss ideas on Tel: 020 8462 8750. Thank you.

Laughlines

☺ Noah had built the ark and had seen the animals on two by two. Time passed and the floods went away and the animals came off the ark two by two, and Noah said “Go forth and multiply”. Then Noah saw two snakes left on the ark, and said “Why are you still here?”. The snakes replied, you told us to go forth and multiply, but we are adders.

Part Time Job

ChildAid to Eastern Europe is a local Christian, Bromley based, charity supporting vulnerable children and families in Moldova, Ukraine and Belarus. They are currently looking for a dedicated Child Sponsorship Coordinator. This part-time role involves managing our sponsorship scheme, keeping databases updated, and creating engaging updates twice a year for sponsors. Work is not evenly spread but will be approx. 50-60 days per year. Remote-friendly; all you need is computer access and a strong grasp of English. If you're interested, or know someone who might be, please contact Martin Wilcox on 020 8460 6046 or charitymanager@childaidee.org.uk.

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