

A Saint for Cowley?

There is a new book out that contains great pictures and stories about the changing history of Cowley and other Oxford villages and suburbs. Cowley has changed dramatically over the past 50 years. People have come here from all over the world and changed the face of our schools and shops and homes. If it were possible I would nominate Nelson Mandela as patron saint Cowley. Of course he might object. He once said, "I am not a saint, unless you think of a saint as a sinner who keeps on trying." That's one of the reasons I like the idea so much. I think a lot of people from our churches see faith in much the same way.

Mandela was baptised in a small Methodist stone church in the Eastern Cape village of Qunu. He grew up in a Methodist home. As a young man he attended the University of Fort Hare, an elite black university in Alice, Eastern Cape. There Mandela became a member of the Students Christian Association and taught Bible classes on Sundays in nearby villages.

Nelson Mandela was a man of faith. He lived his life with the conviction that "faith" is a verb and that those with faith need to live it out not just speak piously. "What counts in life is not the mere fact that we have lived. It is what difference we have made to

the lives of others that will determine the significance of the life we lead."

Mandela's dream was to change South Africa from a nation enveloped in the darkness of apartheid and repression to a rainbow nation determined to foster respect between all people. When asked how do you change a nation Mandela replied, "One of the most difficult things is not to change society - but to change yourself." That need to be born again and become the person who embodies their belief was a central tenet of this man who won the Nobel Peace prize. He believed that "until I changed myself I could not change others."

Not so long ago, in a private conversation with Nicodemus, Jesus said, "Don't be surprised when I say, 'You must be born again.' " As people of faith we believe that we must be changed from the inside out if we are to be able to serve God, our world, our nation, or each other. As I have seen in our Alpha classes, people can see the need to change but they are not certain they can do it. Mandela found a way to do it through his faith.

HOWARD

Chronicle

February 2014

Editor's Letter

Dear Readers

I have to begin my New Year letter on a sad note as I mark the passing of a dear friend of Cowley Parish, Suzanne Withall. Like a stick of Blackpool rock Suzanne had the words Cowley Parish running right through her. I was lucky enough to interview her for The Chronicle some years ago. I went to her home in Rock Edge and remarked on the many fascinating house plants on her windowsill.

"Would you like a piece of this one"? She asked.

Of course I said "yes" (those of you who have been to 18 St Omer Road know how I love growing things!). Well that little plant is still in my porch. I call it Suzanne and now, more than ever, when I water it, it will remind me of a dear lady so much loved especially at St Francis.

I hope you took in the news in our last edition of Florence Park Community Centre's exciting programme of events they have planned for 2014. This is their eightieth anniversary and they are really "going to town". Many members in our parish will be taking part in their 'residents' only' events such as the big street party and the Best Front Garden Competition but we are all invited to a Party in the Park on Saturday, 21st June and to see their exhibition of 80 stories about their area later in the year. I am feeling very privileged to having been interviewed by Jill Ling, who is one of the story collectors. She wanted tales of Donnington School and as I taught there for 22 years I was certainly able to pass on a few (some not quite suitable for print!) I intend to pop in to one of their Saturday coffee mornings, held every week, to hear how their plans are coming along.

Talking of coffee mornings, everyone seems to be running them. St Francis has been doing so for some time now and the latest is being launched at the Church Centre as I write. It seems that there will be more than coffee on hand, though, so bring

your purses, snap up a bargain and help with parish funds. Who needs three coffee shops at the John Allen Retail Park!!

If you like a walk round our beautiful ancient churchyard along with a cuppa and some cake, don't forget our annual snowdrop weekends – Saturdays, 8th and 15th February and Sunday afternoons, 9th and 16th February are the dates. Everyone receives a warm reception and it is lovely to welcome spring in this way. The event this year will be the first I have missed since it began, as I will be on holiday. The idea sprang from a suggestion from our late, and much missed, church warden, Gwen Ranklin. I always feel that keeping the tradition going is a tribute to her.

You may have seen an article in The Oxford Mail about plans for the old church school next to St James Church. It is great to know that plans are afoot to rescue this lovely old building. If you know any former pupils (or are one yourself) who would like to get involved in the restoration project do get in touch with Howard. By the way, make sure he has your 'phone number or e-mail address firmly in hand as he's awfully good at mislaying things (sorry, Howard, only teasing).

Lastly, I would like to thank the friendly folk of St Francis for the great welcome they gave to Frank and me at their Epiphany Tea Party. It was a very nice occasion and the food was phenomenal, the delicious sandwiches and cakes made us wish we hadn't eaten lunch.

Spring is on its way, the daffodils are coming up in the churchyard already. Here's looking forward to a great year ahead in the parish.

God Bless

Rosanne

5th Cowley Guides

In September we had five new girls join us this term.

We have been taking part in a Duck Challenge Badge. This has involved fabric painting pillow cases with a duck theme. We played various duck games, made a duck collage and duck cupcakes. Everyone enjoyed the fun.

We celebrated Bonfire night with apple bobbing, eating doughnuts off a string, sweets in flour etc.

For the Christmas Tree Festival we made decorations from the four World Guiding Centres - Sangam-India, Our Cabana- Mexico, Our Chalet-Switzerland, Pax Lodge. Great Britain.

The girls also made gingerbread biscuits and mince pies. We finished the term with a Christmas Dinner which included Turkey and all the trimmings.

The Guide Promise changed in September and here is the new one:

I promise that I will do my best,
To be true to myself and develop my beliefs,
To serve the Queen and my community,
To help other people and To keep the Guide Law.

Cynthia Retter

3rd Cowley Brownies

We undertook the following:

We completed 'In Her Shoes' badge from the Girls In Action challenge.

Some of the Brownies went on a pack holiday to Stansfeld in Headington on the 6th December - I could not go this time because it was my sister Isobel's 2nd birthday.

We made Christmas decorations.

We started our season's badge - we made sticky toffee sauce in pots with chopped up apples.

We are celebrating 100 years of Brownies and we are hoping to camp at Cornbury Park with Brownies from all over Oxfordshire.

My sister Ashlea made her promise at Rainbows just before Christmas.

Janine Higham aged 8

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MOTHERS' UNION NEWS

The December branch meeting was, as ever, our pre-Christmas party. We were pleased to welcome Skye and Howard to join us for the party tea. The afternoon began with discussion about the Mothers' Union Christmas tree for the Tree Festival, also a report on the Christmas cards for prisoners to which several members contributed.

Our act of worship took the shape of Bible readings, carols and prayer for fellow members around the world and those members of our own branch who had been unable to join us.

John, our branch leader, read out an excellent letter from our Member of Parliament, Andrew Smith, in reply to the one we sent raising our concern about women throughout the world suffering from all types of abuse. A copy of the letter follows this report.

We have also received a letter of thanks for the £50 we raised for The Wheels Appeal, a project close to our hearts. This money was raised at our wine, cheese and poetry evening when members and friends enjoyed a very pleasant evening. Thanks to all who came to that.

Our January meeting is our Annual General Meeting and Bring and Buy. More news of that next month.

Letter from Andrew Smith: (5th December 2013)

"I very much share the Mothers' Union concern about the incidents and impact of violence on women. I intervened in a recent Westminster debate to point out the seriousness and scale of this. I think it is commendable that the Mothers' Union is campaigning on this important issue.

I have today written to the Home Secretary taking up these concerns and I will let you know as soon as I have received a reply."

RECIPE

We thought something chocolaty for Valentine's Day:

Chocolate Cream Pie

Crumb crust:

8 ozs crushed digestive biscuits

2 ozs sugar

4 ozs melted butter

Filling:

6 ozs dark cooking chocolate

4 ozs sugar

2 fl ozs water

3 ozs flour

16 fl ozs milk

1 egg

1 teaspoon vanilla essence or rum (go for it is Valentine's Day")

10 fl ozs double cream

Prepare crust by mixing together the biscuit crumbs, sugar and melted butter. Line a 9 inch pie dish with mixture pressing it in with back of a wooden spoon. Refrigerate till quite cold.

Prepare filling by melting together the water, chocolate and 2 ozs sugar over a low heat.

Remove from stove.

In a medium saucepan mix flour and rest of sugar over a low heat slowly add the milk beating all the time till the mixture is smooth and creamy. Stir in the chocolate mixture.

Heat and stir till the mixture thickens. Place the pan over another pan of hot water over low heat to continue the cooking process, stirring occasionally.

In a small bowl beat the egg till frothy. Add 4 tablespoons of chocolate mixture and stir briskly. Add the whole mixture to the saucepan, stir in the butter and vanilla essence or rum.

When all completely mixed, remove the pan from over the hot water and cool to lukewarm. Pour the mixture into the cold crust and chill for at least an hour (overnight is best). Just before serving whip the double cream till stiff and spread all over the pie. Sprinkle the top with a little grated chocolate.



BELLRINGING NEWS

The weeks leading up to Christmas were busy for us this year. We rang for both carol services, and were able to muster a team to ring for midnight mass on Christmas Eve. We now have nine members, one of whom is still in the early stages of learning, but who we hope is not too far away from being able to join us for service ringing. We continue to get a lot of support at our practice nights from experienced ringers from both Iffley and Marston, and this is enabling us to make good progress. Shortly before Christmas we combined our practice with a Christmas party, where we had over twenty ringers attend. Some had not rung at Cowley before and were very pleased to try our bells for the first time.

For 2014, there are already many events planned which will help us develop our ringing. In February we have been invited to ring in Garsington, where they have had their bells recently rehung, and, we have been told, are a real pleasure to ring. In March there is a day's outing to Wiltshire, to ring at four different churches, including Royal Wootton Bassett.

We continue to have our practice night on a Thursday at 7.30, and are very pleased to welcome visitors. If you would like to come and see what we do, whether or not you want to take up ringing, we would always be very glad to see you.

Lindsay Powell



HOW IS YOUR LOCAL KNOWLEDGE?

Each month we are going to challenge our readers to identify a Cowley landmark. Our roving photographer, Les Hemsworth, will choose a local view to get you thinking.

Answer next month.

Last month's answer:

The Nelson Public House, Between Town Road

CHRISTIAN AID OXFORD'S CHARITY AUCTION

Monday, 17th February 7 pm at the Malmison Hotel, Oxford Castle. Tickets £6/£5 students to include wine, food and live acappella music. Exciting lots for which to bid. See the poster on display.

Tickets from the Oxford Christian Aid office –
Tel: 01865 2246818 – email: alockwood@christian-aid.org.

COWLEY LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

Tuesday, 18 February 2014
commencing at 8.00 pm

TALK:
**The East Oxford
Archaeology Project**

An Illustrated talk by Jane Harrison

At United Reformed Church, Temple Road, Cowley
Annual Membership fee £18 (OAP £16)
Visitors welcome £3 per meeting

Cowley at the turn of the Twentieth Century

(from Nan Davies' memoirs)

Adjoining where the Willis' lived there were about six more tiny cottages, no back doors, where a Mrs Johnson and a Mrs Allison lived. I forget the other names. Then a pub called the Carpenters Arms. You turned down a sideway there to Mrs Steal's cottage and another one.

On the other side about two more tiny cottages where Jimmy the hunchback lived. He delivered the Oxford Times round every Friday using a low truck, walking it all down to New Inn-Hall Street and back again to deliver the papers all round the village. On Sundays in Cowley Church he pressed the bellows up and down to make wind for the old organ to work.

Another old man came round the streets calling 'any jam jars' and we would get a little windmill on a stick for one jar. Coming back to the top of the sideway, were four more cottages where a Mrs Taylor lived, also a Mr Garlick who was caretaker for the Steam Plough yard. They used to do the road making for miles around so they had a type of living van and a man would be taken to a site. Where there was a big job he would stay there for maybe a month to see everything was alright. He had his fire, food and often his dog too.

After the Steam Plough yard came a big spare piece of ground, then the Old Nelson pub, a lovely old place with a garden in front, one chestnut tree had a seat all the way round, where people could sit, drink and have their children with them; another lovely old big garden at the back with a huge walnut tree and we could go and buy a pennyworth, 10 for a penny.

Mr King was next, he was a Wheelwright, quite a clever man too, six more houses, then our coalman, Mr Morris. He had a bad leg and

always limped, a very nice man. A tiny empty shop next to him, then six more quite nice houses, all the people had lived there for years, then Gibbons' bakery, they made nice bread and delivered it in a pony trap to the houses.

The Co-op was opposite. Mr Edwin Willis was the manager, he was a nice man and I had many a ½ d. worth of broken biscuits from him as there used to be rows of tins then, much better than the tightly packed biscuits we now have which are so difficult to open.

Next another six houses; a piece of spare land, then Mr White a plumber, and more land nearly to the corner, then a big yard, a flight of iron steps that went to a big old fashioned place named 'The Village House', later the Cowley Workers' Club, which went round the corner to Mr Smith who had a tiny place for shoe repairing with a door leading through to his house and pub. Two cottages, another pub, the Coach and Horses, kept by Mr Belcher where you had to go up four steps for your beer and they had to go down to the cellar for all the pints and half pints. They sold little pies for 2d. each and we thought they were lovely.



After 39 ½ years of wandering in the desert, Mrs Moses secretly asks for directions

DIARY DATES TO REMEMBER

Mothers' Union

Monthly Meeting on 3rd Monday of month
from 2.30pm.

Cowley Parish Church Centre

Women's Group

1st and 3rd Monday of the Month
from 7.30 – 9 pm

Cowley Parish Church Centre

Women's Institute

Monthly Meeting on 3rd Wednesday of month
from 2 – 4.30 pm

Cowley Parish Church Centre

St James Café at Cowley Parish Church Centre
10am—1pm

The last Saturday of each month

Film Club

Friday, 14th February 2014, commencing at
6.30 pm with coffee and cake

"The Pink Panther"

Cowley Parish Church Centre

Snowdrop Weekends at St James

Saturday, 8th February 2014: 10.30 – 4 pm

Sunday, 9th February 2014: 2 – 4 pm

Saturday, 15th February 2014: 10.30 – 4 pm

Sunday, 16th February 2014: 2 – 4 pm

Cowley Local History Society

Tuesday, 18th February 2014 at 8 pm

Talk: The East Oxford Archaeology Project

An Illustrated talk by Jane Harrison

United Reform Church, Temple Road

Parochial Church Council

Wednesday, 19th February 2014 at 7.45 pm
St Francis Church

Coffee Morning at St Francis

Saturday 8th March 2014 , 10am—12pm

Art and Spring (Bring your own paints or use
Skye's)

St James Old School

Visioning Meeting, Saturday, 22 March 2014,
10 am – 3 pm at St James Church Centre
To be facilitated by Sir Christopher Ball.

Christian Aid Week

11th – 17th May 2014

Cowley Festival of Christmas Trees 2014

First planning meeting

Monday, 2nd June 2014, 10am in the Ranklin
Room.

*Please note Additional Dates throughout the
year:*

To help raise funds for essential repairs to
St. James' Church a home-made cakes and puds
stall is planned. These will take place on the
3rd Tuesday of the month to carry over into
Wednesday and will be held in the Church Centre.
If you enjoy baking and would like to help by baking
a cake 2 or 3 times a year on a rota basis Chris
Woodman or Margaret Weller would be pleased to
hear from you.

A little old lady from the country went to visit her niece and her husband who lived near a smart, famous golf club. On the second day of her visit auntie decided to go for a walk. On her return her niece asked her if she had enjoyed her stroll. "Yes" she replied, "I hadn't walked far when I came across some beautiful, rolling hills. There were a few people about who shouted at me but I took no notice. After a while a couple of men followed me waving some sort of sticks but I took no notice of them either. Oh, yes, and by the way I kept coming across these strange little white balls all over the place so I picked them up and brought them home hoping you could explain what on earth was going on".

COWLEY FESTIVAL OF CHRISTMAS TREES 2013

Our third festival was MUCH bigger, better and brighter than the second – with increased media coverage (Lesley Williams was on BBC Oxford radio twice!), clear road signage from all directions and banners on railings!

Results: Facts and figures:

Trees:	2012: 34	2013: 42
Visitors:	2012: 305	2013: 1,287
<i>Money (figures rounded):</i>		
Income	2012: £820	2013: £1,272
Expenditure	2012: £120	2013: £ 272
Donation to SeeSaw & ROSY each	2012: £350	2013: £500

We acknowledge with gratitude many other personal contributions of time, talent, equipment and other resources. We particularly valued the support received from the Templars Square Management, staff and shops and look forward to developing that working relationship later in 2014. Many thanks to all.

So, the dates are set for CTF4, beginning on Friday 5 December and with no end date! We are sure we're on the 'tipping point' of becoming an acknowledged Cowley and Oxford Christmas attraction so will develop the several aspects we started this year – reception, concert, fun day, quiz trail and visits from the Parish schools.... with a target of 50 trees and £750 each for SeeSaw and ROSY, the two charities which we will continue to support.

The first planning meeting for 'Let's light up Christmas 2014' is set for Monday 2 June, 10:00 am in the Ranklin Room. The steering group would welcome new members!

Lesley Williams

NEWS FROM COWLEY WOMEN'S INSTITUTE

Our meetings are held on the 3rd Wednesday of each month in St James Church Centre at 2 pm.

Our first meeting in the New Year was on 15th January when we were told in great detail the history of the Park and Gardens of Blenheim Palace. The talk was very interesting.

Quite a few of our members went to see "Robin Hood" at the Playhouse on 7th January. We enjoyed it very much. The only disappointment was that it took us all so long to get home (over an hour from the City Centre to Cowley) due to

the buses being held up because of the floods.

Our next meeting is on 19th February when John Paine will speak about a "Pop into Portugal".

On 26th February we shall be holding our birthday lunch and on 19th March we will have our Annual General Meeting.

Why not come along and join us? We are always looking for new members. You would be made very welcome.

Jean Chilton

Film Club

Our club night in December saw members in a very Christmassy mood as it landed right in the middle of the Christmas Tree Festival week. Of course our choice of film probably had quite a lot to do with it, namely "White Christmas" with Bing Crosby and co doing their stuff. Add to that mince pies laced with brandy butter and you will see what I mean!

January was the month we showed our first Western. "Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid" was chosen by our discerning members and attracted a big audience (our second largest so far).

We are pleased to report that over the last couple of months we have banked a healthy profit of almost £100 towards parish funds.

Next month, by popular request, we are showing a comedy. "The Pink Panther" will be the February film on February 14th starring Peter Sellers as "Inspector Clouseau" – great fun.



CHRISTMAS TREE FESTIVAL

Celebrating Christmas, although a joyous occasion, can very easily become an exhausting whirlwind of preparations and valiant attempts to visit every family member no matter how far their wings have spread.

This past Christmas St. James provided my husband Chris and I with a little oasis of calm within our gift delivery road trip from Sunderland taking in children based in Birmingham and Cardiff as well as mother in Cowley.

By chance the afternoon we visited the Christmas Tree Festival with my mother, Una, the St James singing group were performing traditional carols.

We were very impressed by the ingenuity of the groups in decorating their trees with a wide range of themes. Born and bred in Cowley I know the splendid reputation St James has for providing refreshments at the drop of a hat. I was especially delighted to see knitted Christmas puddings in pride of place on the Luncheon Club tree.

Chris soon spotted the bell ringers train and has reminded me several times since that our grandson will soon be old enough to have a train set of his own.

Our congratulations go to everyone who took part in making the Christmas Tree Festival possible. We very much enjoyed our visit and appreciated the offer of a warming cup of tea (and a biscuit, of course) with the choir.

Rachel Purnell

FLOWER OF THE MONTH – ANEMONE

The anemone is a member of the buttercup or ranunculaceae family and is a native of Britain in its beautiful woodland form. The rare blue flower is worth hunting for. In Mediterranean countries the red, blue and purple anemones which find their way into our markets at Christmastime have some legends worth noting especially as we can buy the corms and grow them in our gardens. The popular name for the plant all over the world is “windflower” which is strange since our native species grows mainly in ancient woodland not on windy hillsides.

It is one of our earliest spring flowers appearing between the snowdrops and bluebells and carpeting the undergrowth with little white stars. It is not a very successful seeder and spreads very slowly no more than six feet in a hundred years according to Richard Mabey, one of our most eminent experts on botany. Since it only shows its face in bright sunlight its flowering period needs to occur before the leaf canopies of its native woodlands appear. In Oxfordshire a good place to see these lovely native flowers is along the road between Woodstock and Charlbury. The verges were once part of the ancient Wychwood forest and fortunately have not been disturbed. In the nineteenth century the botanist William Robinson recorded seeing “a tuft” of large sky-blue anemones in Oxford though my reference books do not tell me in which habitat that was – most intriguing!

The name windflower is much more likely for the plants which grow around the Mediterranean since they favour wide open windy hillsides. In the Holy Land legend has it

that when Jesus referred to “the lilies of the field” he had wild anemones in mind. They are considered sacred flowers because the story goes that they grew at the foot of The Cross and Jesus’ blood stained the blue petals red.

Needless to say there are Greek legends attached to them including the origin of the name. The Persian name for the god Adonis is Naamen and there are stories associated with him. Aphrodite (Venus) fell passionately in love with the child Adonis and tried to protect him from harm by hiding him in the Underworld. Zeus, father of the gods, forced her to share him with the goddess of the underworld Persephone. She continued to want to protect Adonis even when he was fully grown and she followed him in her chariot when he went hunting. One day a wild boar he had wounded turned and gored him. Aphrodite arrived in time to cradle him in her arms as he died. Anemones grew from the ground where her tears had fallen and became the symbol of protective love that failed and also a sign of adventurous youth and beauty that challenged life and lost.

As gardeners prepare for spring by consigning their anemones into the deep underground like Aphrodite they always hope and believe that their beauty will return.



Conserving Nature in Cowley

... 'Thus you start by watching blue tits and you end up with a religion, a moral crusade and a political commitment.'

Simon Barnes, How to be a

bad birdwatcher

(the inspiration for Dave Tomlinson's How to be a bad Christian)

At the first Cowley Deanery Synod meeting in 2013 Dr. Andy Gosler started a discussion about

conservation and our connections with nature.

Since then the Christian conservation charity A Rocha UK has taken an interest in conservation in Cowley and next year we should be able to use

their internet-based natural history recording system to document nature in the Deanery.

Oxford Deanery and Archdeacon Martin Gorick, a bird-watcher himself, are also interested in

expanding the proposed activities into a city-wide programme.

The Earthing Faith programme at Holy Trinity Headington Quarry has been progressing well but nothing else much is happening in the Deanery yet. As a next step Andy Gosler wants to find the people within our parishes who already have a passion for nature, and invite them to a deanery meeting to discuss how to go forward (see below). He has also suggested seven key principles for the Cowley Deanery Conservation Initiative:

We recognise that reconnecting with Creation reconnects us with the Creator and this is fundamental to all we do, it is missional.

We aim to reconnect people with nature for the benefit of both people and nature.

We aim to develop the Initiative from within our churches so that it is locally driven, locally 'coloured' and locally relevant.

We aim for the widest possible involvement, both within churches (e.g. all age groups etc.) and across the Deanery.

We include C of E and other schools in our parishes within our planning and activities.

We aim to explore the connections between the unique cultural and natural heritage of our parishes, for which as human beings we have a responsibility of stewardship.

We aim to reach out beyond our congregations to any sympathetic party including local experts in natural history, NGOs such as A Rocha UK, BBOWT etc., and churches outside Cowley Deanery (e.g. west of the river).

The Cowley Deanery Conservation Initiative are keen to hear from people with a passion for nature, whether it is birds, bugs or botany, whether old or young and whether expert, beginner or 'wannabe' to help take this forward. If interested, please tell your clergy, or email the Deanery Secretary at rachel@edwardsfamily.me.uk

(Contributed by Dr Andy Gosler, Cowley Deanery Lay Chair)

CHRISTMAS BOXES

I would like to thank everyone who helped with the Children's Christmas shoe boxes, with either contents or donations. I sent 70 boxes, which were very gratefully accepted.

Thanks again.
Joyce Titchell

Notes from Number 93

It's February! Signs of Spring are all around. Snowdrops are in flower and daffodils are pushing their way up but we have yet to see what winter can still throw at us. The ground is very wet on the allotment so digging for this year will have to wait.

93 needs yet another tidy up as things get dumped when you are not in and out so much. We do have our bags of bird food in there, however. We have not seen as many birds on our feeders as usual. Where are they? My theory is that 2013 was a great year for nature's bounty of berries and seeds and the birds are tucking in to those and not needing the stuff we put out in our garden.

There are three jobs I must do soon. The first is to prune the wisteria over the front door. The experts say to cut back to two buds on each stem. I try to do that whilst wobbling up a ladder and we have had success. In May, the scent and the wonderful curtains of pink flowers are my reward.

The second job is to cut down my autumn-fruiting raspberries to the ground and give them a boost with sulphate of potash. We really had a poor crop in 2013. I will give them another year. I think they are getting too old and will need to be scrapped. Also I put down a membrane between the rows to smother any weeds but I have got couch grass growing quite strongly now amongst the canes and that may be a factor too.

The third job this month is to go shopping for seed potatoes, shallots and onion

sets. I have yet to decide on the early potato variety but I always choose Desiree for main crop. They grow very well for us and we had some whoppers last year. Last spring was really cold and we could not get out onto the plot until quite late. I started off my shallots and onion sets in modules in the greenhouse and that really made a difference. They shrivel up if they are not planted and starting them off this way made a big difference to getting them going.

I lost two panes of glass in the greenhouse in the storms this New Year so they need to be replaced. I shall go over checking all the other glazing as some other panes have slipped. Some fixing clips look as though they need replacing. I inherited the greenhouse from the previous owner of the house so it has not done badly for 30 years old.

I will be soon on the starting blocks sowing seed and bringing on plants for the Plant Sale on May 17th. Put it in your diaries and please remember that, if you are doing the same as me, to bring lots of gorgeous plants to make this year's sale a bumper one!

Joan Coleman

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NEWS FROM ST FRANCIS



We held a review of our pre-Christmas events at St Francis recently, and came to the conclusion that on the whole things had gone well, and according to plan. There were a few minor things that might be improved on, but otherwise it was good. We felt that we had presented the public with an interesting mixture of services and events in the run up to Christmas that would draw them in off the streets, and show them that we really believe in putting Christ back into Christmas.

And I am sure that our friends at the other end of the Parish would feel the same.

We are grateful to all who worked so hard to make our programme a success.

By way of light relaxation a party of us went to a theatre production of *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* at a small Theatre, the North Wall in Summertown, early in the New Year.

We have started 2014 with an Epiphany Party which was a great success. Young and old

mixed very well together and enjoyed themselves.

The Food was good and well presented. The children had a high time playing games like musical chairs.

We have just had our first "All Age Service of the New Year on the subject of "The Wedding at Cana". A short presentation in costume by the youngsters was well received and made things come alive.

Our Prayer and Home study groups are starting up again. Friends of St Francis has its first meeting on Tuesday this week. We would ask for your special prayers for Maggie Giles who is starting a course of treatment for Cancer at the Churchill shortly.

New Years Greetings from us all.

John Shreeve

Two chaps, Tom and Bill, were travelling north to go skiing in Scotland. On their way they were hit by a huge blizzard and needed to take shelter. They pulled in to a nearby farm and were met at the door by a very attractive woman. They told her of their problem and she offered them her barn as a refuge for the night. "You see", she explained, "I have recently been widowed and if I took two men into my house overnight people might talk".

"Don't worry about us" they said, "if the storm passes we'll be off first thing in the morning". The weather did, indeed, clear and they continued on their trip.

About a year later Bill unexpectedly received a solicitor's. The next time he saw Tom he asked, "You remember the night we had to take shelter in that barn on our way to Scotland last year? Well, in the night did you by any chance get up, go into the house and visit that charming young lady?" Embarrassed Tom admitted that he had. "And did you use my name instead of your own?" "Well, yes, but I don't think it mattered, did it?" Tom replied "Why do you ask?" "Because she has died recently and left me everything in her will" was Bill's answer.

Rosanne interviews Josh and Claire Hordern

Every four or five weeks Alan Howell and Margaret Martin, who compile the church rota at St James, put me down to lead the intercessions at the early eight o'clock morning service at St James. So it was that a little less than a year ago when the service paused for The Peace, I turned round and found waiting to exchange peaceful greetings with me, a young couple I'd never seen before. Always pleased to welcome new people to our church, at the end of the service I asked their names and invited them to parish breakfast. Now, it was not just my welcome that they recalled when I met them recently on your behalf, but also the excellent sermon. It was preached by Howard, who, at the time was (wait for it) dressed as John the Baptist in a sack!

Josh and Claire went home pretty nearly convinced that they had found the church they were looking for. Months later they are now fully integrated into the church family, so much so that Josh has taken on the responsibility of organising St James Children's Church.

When I asked my usual opening question of my interviewees, namely "What brought you to Cowley?" they unanimously agreed that it was God. Although they have only been married for four years they have

very recently moved into their sixth home in that short time. It was not an easy decision to make their move to Oxford, because around Christmas 2010 they had just bought their first house in the town of Bury St Edmunds in the lovely county of Suffolk. Josh had heard about a post at the University of Oxford. However Claire, having just settled into her new home was less sure. Then, in 2011, the position was advertised and both she and Josh agreed that God stepped in and changed her mind. Luckily they had some friends living in Barracks Lane who were leaving for America so finding somewhere to live was no problem. And now they have just bought their house close to Oxford Spire Academy in a situation they describe as ideal. It is nicely situated between Church Cowley and the Cowley Road, an area they really enjoy with its variety of people, so many restaurants and cafes and a vibrant atmosphere in which to take an evening stroll.

Josh was born in Birmingham where his father was involved in local politics. Josh's father led his mother into Christianity through Birmingham Cathedral. Together they did some amazing work within the city. The Hordern family consisted of four children, an elder brother and older sister, then Josh and then a younger sister. The

heart-breaking truth is that Josh's mother died of cancer when he was only five years old and his little sister was still a baby. He told me that his father received huge support from the lovely parishioners in their church and from the children's incredibly helpful godparents. Even so his father was committed to taking primary responsibility for bringing up his children. It had already been decided (before his mother's death) that the children would attend boarding school. And so once he reached the age of eight, young Josh went off and learnt Latin, Greek and modern languages amongst other subjects. From his boarding school in Worcestershire he transferred, at 13, to Winchester College, the famous school founded by William of Wykeham and which Josh describes as having an ethos of liberal education. There he included Russian in his list of language studies and describes the school as like a mini university. By the way, whilst still at junior school he had professed his Christian faith and this became his guiding light from the age of ten. Claire's father was born in East Lothian, Scotland (and so she supports the Scotland rugby team!). He studied law at Edinburgh University. He met her mother in London because she was sharing a flat with his

sister. She, after graduation, moved to Glasgow to take up a career in dietetics. After their marriage Claire's parents moved to Wandsworth in London and that is where Claire was born. Two and a half years later her little brother was born. The family moved to Twickenham and little Claire started school. It was all a bit intimidating at first, fine once she was safely in the classroom but a bit scary in the playground with big boys rushing about. Out of school she had a best friend to accompany her to ballet classes and that friend is now a professional dancer. However Claire made up her mind at the age of ten that she wanted to be a doctor and since all things scientific intrigued her she was well on the way. She too went off to boarding school at eleven. Whilst there she made friends with a girl who had a strong Christian faith and it was through her that she found faith in Christ. She joined the Christian Union and went on to develop her journey of faith before finishing school and going to study medicine at Edinburgh University. The Christian Medical Fellowship, with a large Irish contingent, became an important part of her life. She attended a big Baptist church in the City where there was a strong ethic of overseas mission. To study medicine in Edinburgh was a source of joy for Claire since her great-grandmother was one of

the very first female medical students who ever qualified from there.

From Winchester College Josh came up to Oxford to read classics at New College. He worshipped at St Ebbes and spent time reading ancient philosophy and history. He went on to gain his masters' degree in theology. His supervisor suggested a doctorate and to achieve this he hit the road to Edinburgh (and I can guess that you are seeing that a rather special meeting is ahead).

In 2006 Claire and Josh met in a Bible study group led by Claire. Their relationship flourished when they, along with a group of friends, chose to rent a holiday house in the Scottish highlands and enjoyed long walks across that beautiful terrain. A month later, they started going out together after a walk on a beach in East Lothian. Claire then, as part of her medical work, went off to Pakistan to further her experience in obstetrics and gynaecology. Absence made their hearts grow even fonder and they got engaged up a hill in Edinburgh soon after she returned. In 2009 the couple were married by the same vicar who had married Josh's parents.

Claire then started her medical specialist training first in Harlow and then in Norwich. Josh took up a post at Cambridge University lecturing in Christian

ethics whilst also working as a research fellow. After three years in the east of the country the lectureship here in Oxford opened up and, as I mentioned at the beginning, God had plans for this lovely young couple to arrive in our neighbourhood.

They explored local churches in our area when they arrived and "found" St James. They had decided that a local church would be right for them and now have a sense of being where God wanted them to be. Josh is a Fellow at Harris Manchester College and Claire, after a master's degree in medical ethics and medical law, is now working as an NHS doctor in two hospitals in Buckinghamshire.

At the end of our chat I realised that I had not asked them if they were "sporty". To my surprise I discovered that Claire is a national lacrosse player who represented Scotland U21 in international matches. Josh told me he enjoyed football and cricket though he described himself as a "mid-ranker" which I learned meant that he played for the school/college second teams.

As well as running Children's Church, they have started a new home group and are now very much at home in our Parish. We, I know, are delighted to welcome them.

- How would you describe yourself as a young child?
- J: Content with my own company but enjoyed sports and my studies.
- C: Very earnest, wanted to work hard.
- Have you any special memories of childhood?
- J: I, at about six or seven, was present at the birth of my godfather's dog's puppies. That had quite an effect.
- C: I remember going to buy cakes with my dad to welcome home my baby brother.
- Has your faith been with you since childhood?
- J: Yes, God has always been there,
- C: I was not conscious of Him until my mid-to-late teens.
- Is there anyone who has had an influence on your life?
- J: My dad for his love and endurance and my godfather, David Ford, as an academic theologian.
- C: Someone with whom I did Bible study at school once
- a week (and bought cake!).
- Do you have a treasured possession?
- J: Owly (R.B. – a HUGE stuffed owl). I have had him for thirty years – a gift from my parents.
- C: Probably special letters and photographs.
- What is your opinion of modern society?
- J: Quote Jesus – "like sheep without a shepherd". We, the Church have found The Shepherd and The Shepherd has found us.
- C: Fast moving and scattered. People's lives are more disjointed. I am not sure it is good for society.
- Which period of your adult life has given you the most satisfaction?
- J: Marriage (the last four years) – loving and being loved.
- C: Ditto, also learning to love and receive love.
- How do you like to spend your leisure time?
- J: We like going out on to the Cowley Road with its people, restaurants and cafes.
- C: I like seeing or chatting on the phone to friends.
- Both: We are learning to garden and enjoy the produce.
- What plans do you have for the future?
- J: Right here. I want to see Children's Church growing and flourishing at St James and to see the Church still strong in the heart of the community.
- C: Still serving the Lord wherever he wants us to be, hopefully here in Cowley.
- Both: We are involved in an organization tackling sex trafficking and prostitution in the Philippines – RENEW. Their website is www.renewfoundation.org. We would like to see God continuing to work to help these exploited women.

HOW FEBRUARY GOT ITS NAME

The month is named after the little known Roman God, Februus. Februa is a Latin word which means "to purify". On 15th February in the days of Ancient Rome, a great festival of purification was held after the mid-winter feasting and frolicking.

SIGNIFICANT DATES IN FEBRUARY

In 1855 on 9th February the "Devil's Footprints" appeared in a snowstorm in South Devon - one hundred miles of large cloven hoof-prints, eight inches apart in a single line.

Margaret Thatcher became the first woman leader of a British political party on February 11th 1975. She was made leader of the Conservative party at the age of 49.

The physicist who devised the first battery, Count Alessandro Volta was born in the Italian city of Como on February 18th 1745.

On February 23rd 1920 the first regular broadcasting service began from the Marconi studio in Chelmsford.

In 1887 on 24th February Paris and Brussels became the first two cities to be linked by telephone.

On 25th February 1939 the distribution of Anderson air raid shelters began in Islington, North London. The sunken, corrugated iron huts were to protect people from possible raids but after the war were used to keep chickens in, store garden tools and grow mushrooms!

WINTER 2014

In autumn when all the berries were red, "We're in for a cold one" the pundits said.

I must admit when I looked at the trees I really felt I ought to agree

Hawthorns in hedges had heavy sprays
Of berries for birds on colder days

The rowans along The Grates were hung
With great orange bunches before winter'd begun

It seemed, as if to make Christmas jolly,
We had bright scarlet berries all over our holly

Along came the redwings while the year was still new
And stripped the lot as they always do.

But where is this bitter cold promised weather?
Two winter months have passed all together

Spring flowers are pushing up through the earth
And birds are courting for all they are worth.

No icicles hanging on garden walls,
No need to get snow shovels out at all.
Yet, if, in May, we get some snow
The pundits will say, "We told you so"!

Rosanne Butler

RECIPE

Chocolate Fried Bread –
makes 12 fingers

4 slices stale white bread
cut into 12 fingers

2 eggs

10 fl ozs milk

2 ½ tablespoons sherry

2 tablespoons olive oil

2 ozs sugar

4 ozs grated dark cooking chocolate

In a shallow bowl beat the eggs, add milk and sherry. Soak the bread fingers in this till soft. Drain on a paper kitchen towel.

In large frying pan heat the olive oil then fry the bread fingers over moderate heat till golden on each side. With tongs transfer to sheet of paper towel to drain. Then roll them first in sugar, then in grated chocolate. Serve at once while still hot.



CHRISTIAN AID, SUPER SOUP LUNCH and LIVE BELOW THE LINE

This is just an alert to the possibilities of getting involved in Christian Aid fundraising in 2014.

There will be a Super Soup lunch at some time during Lent – may be at the APCM on Sunday 6 April but it has not yet been discussed with the catering team! It could be a Super Soup supper instead!

Those who like physical challenges could 'go over the edge' and abseil from the tower of St Mary Magdalen Church, Magdalen Street, Oxford, OX1 3AE (as Lesley Williams did last year) on Saturday 8 March, maddeningly clashing with the Alpha Holy Spirit Day.

Abseils will be running all day with individuals given their own time slot. It costs £15 to register and you are asked to raise a minimum sponsorship of £60. You have to be 11 years old to take part but there's no upper age limit!. Register on line at

christianaid.org.uk/abseil or call 01865 246818 or email sclay@christian-aid.org

Do you remember reading about the efforts of several parish members to 'live below the line' in May 2013, eating on less than £1 a day for 5 days?

It is really an awareness raising exercise but can also be sponsored and one of the charities involved is Christian Aid. The campaign is back! This year, it is not a set week so the challenge can be accepted at any time during April/May/June.

Lesley Williams is definitely committing to another go, although probably making up her own rules again, and would be glad to hear from anyone else who will do so. Maybe we could undertake it during Christian Aid Week, May 11-17 – collecting door to door for world poverty projects when hungry oneself would have any extra significance.

Seashells Foundation: in memory of Beth Spence

On the last Sunday in 2013 those of us in St James Church were delighted to be joined by Michael Spence and the 5 Spence children – James, Phillippa, Ollie, Lucy and Felicity, as well as James' girlfriend Natalie. It was a special and poignant occasion made even more so when Phillippa and Felicity shared some of their memories of our church community, how their Mum Beth had so valued the sense of care and community here and how she had started the 'Seashells' parent and baby group.

Phillippa continued to explain how they as a family want to honour their mum and continue in her example of loving and caring for others. She said that as they watched her receive medical care and attention in hospital they realized how important the nurses were to the patients there and so they

have joined together with the University of Sydney to set up a scholarship fund in memory of Beth which will lead to multiple nursing scholarships.

We in St James and St Frances Churches have already donated £200 to this fund but we want to give individuals who remember Beth the opportunity to give too. In February and March there will be an information and collection point for those people who wish to contribute or send individual cheques, in the meantime please pray and consider whether you would like to give to this endeavour and how much you can give. The children are seeking to raise \$700,000 and have so far, in 4 months, reached a total of \$78,500. Let's see if we can help them.

Jill Ling

FROM THE ARCHIVES

Extracts from The Cowley Chronicle, January 1967.

An ecumenical Children's Day – such a thing had never happened in Cowley before last December, and it only happened then because of the vision of the chairman of the Cowley Council of Churches, Mr J Hope.

Under his leadership, a programme was drawn up so that in the afternoon the younger children from the different Sunday Schools could show the kind of thing they learnt at church and in the evening a group of children drawn, it was hoped, from all the churches, could perform a play about world hunger and the refugee problem.

It turned out to be a most worthwhile day. The children's work from all the churches was on display and ranged from cartoon strips illustrating the Gospel stories to prayer books made up from items of news and pictures from the daily papers.

The hall at John Bunyan Baptist Church was packed with children and their parents all through the afternoon. After Mr Taylor, headmaster of Donnington Junior School had officially opened the afternoon, the percussion band from Rose Hill Methodist Church – made up, that day, of six very young children – played.

Following them, the children from St Francis' presented a mime of the life of St Francis which they had originally performed for St Francis' Day. Next came the under-fives from the Anglican churches with their action songs, which included a solo from five-year-old Christopher West. Then there were two demonstrations of typical Sunday instruction, first from a group from St James Church and then by a group from the Congregational Church. And, finally, the children from the Baptist Church sang some of their action songs.

In the evening the audience was smaller, but the "Twenty Thieves" produced by Miss Telling, with a cast of over 20 was a most moving play about the plight of refugee children. The slides of the Starehe Boys' Centre were also shown and the epilogue was presented by some of the young people from the Baptist Church.

All together it was a good day. Only one question presents itself. Why does the Church so quickly lose these youngsters who are so keen at Sunday School age? Is it because what they are taught in Sunday School is not meaningful to their everyday life or is it because the Christian faith and Christian standards do not appear to mean as much to their parents and to the adults they know, as Sunday School would suggest they should?

Part of the answer is surely family church with withdrawal classes for the children, as happens in all the Cowley churches, but there seems to be more to it than that.

Otherwise, why are there so many adults who say, "I used to go to Sunday School when I was young ... but I never go to Church now because ..."



Children's Church

We are so thankful to God for the children at St James' - and their wonderful parents! Before Christmas, thanks to Lesley Williams and Jill Ling, the children had fun making stars for the Christmas tree festival and learning again the story of Jesus' birth. And now, between Christmas and Easter, we will be following through some of the times Jesus says 'I am' - I am the bread of life, I am the resurrection, I am the Way and many more. Please pray that week by week we would all grow in Christian faith and understanding - as Jesus said, we must all become like little children to enter the Kingdom of God. Thanks so much to all the volunteers who help week by week. Others are very welcome to join in - please speak to Josh at church one Sunday if you'd like to help.

Josh Hordern

ST JAMES OLD SCHOOL

Did you see the photo and article in the Oxford Times recently, opening up the campaign to refurbish the St James Old School? We are focussing on signing up lots of interested people – former staff and pupils, local businesses, councillors, inspired thinkers – to bring their ideas to a visioning meeting on Saturday 22 March, 10.00-3.00, at the St James Church Centre, to be facilitated, excitingly, by Sir Christopher Ball, one time warden of Keble College, and now long distance walker, poet, motivational speaker and fundraiser. He recognises that what we must do first is to discover the right use for the building – right for us, for the building and the community – before we can then move forward to write a business plan and seek funding. We trust God may have a say in it to.

If you are or if anyone else you know is interested, put the date in your diary, be ready to sign a list and watch this space next month for more details.

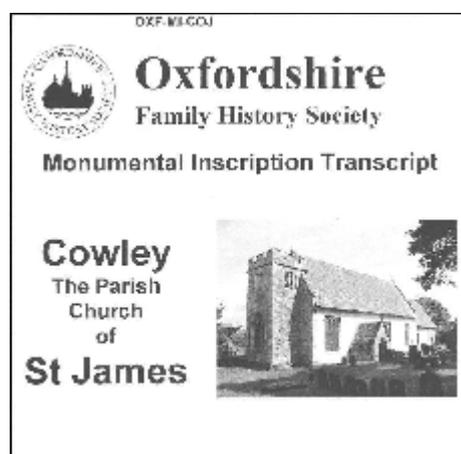
Graveyard Project

At last a positive result for all the hard physical work. Oxfordshire Family History Society has now produced the CD of all the memorial inscriptions with approx. 1100 images in St James Church and the graveyard.

The CD contains some lovely photos of the Church interior and views of the graveyard. Also of course a fully indexed plan of all the names on the memorials, with a description, an inscription and a photograph of each one.

The CD is available from Oxfordshire Family History Society and costs just £6.00. We expect it to be mostly of interest to family historians but it is a record for anyone with links to St James and if anyone would like a copy, both Erma and myself would be pleased to order it.

Sheila Tree. Tel. 01865433266



WHY I BELIEVE

When sorting through some papers the other day, I came across some words that my dear mother-in-law, Ivy Shreeve, had written during the latter years of her life. In fact they were read out at her funeral - Ivy died in 1996 aged 93. Re-reading her words after so many years, I was moved by them and realising she touches briefly on the 1st World War (which we are commemorating this year). I thought you might like to read them too – she starts - .WHY I BELIEVE:

“My early days were spent in the shadow of a large Parish Church. I went to a C of E Sunday and Day school. So I suppose it was all so interwoven with my life that I never questioned that any of it was untrue or that life could be lived without religion.

When the 1914 war came my mother was a very sick woman and died in 1916. Life then became suddenly real. It does when one's immediate future is very much in the balance. It was then that the church and Sunday School seemed the only true source of comfort. I went to live with an Aunt who was soon to become a widow. She was a great saint. Although only an ordinary working woman she had a wonderful faith and all her life was lived in the trust that God would provide. I do not mean that she sat down and waited. She was a worker, but she died some years afterwards and her faith never failed.

These were not days of the Welfare State and as many of us know - when a woman was left a widow she really was often in desperate need. People today poo-poo the Church, but it was in those days that the Church meted out bread and a few shillings a week which kept many people going over difficult times.

With other means of help today people forget how much in the past the Church has done to help men bodily. Sometimes it was in giving coal and warm clothes to those in need. I have seen this done and known what it meant to those in need. It was also the Church who provided Almshouses for the old and sick where they could live cheaply and have small comforts in old age.

I distinctly remember in the First World War going to the Wesleyan Church (which my Aunt attended) and hearing an elderly clergyman preach on "God so loved the World, that he gave". He preached with tears running down his cheeks, and it was only after the Service that we knew he had just received news of the death of his son, who was a Captain in one of the Services.

So religion and life were so much interlocked, that I have never been able to separate them. Of course one has many times of doubt, but these still fade away as the impossible. The Psalms all tell of the wonders of life and of God's goodness. We are not educated to delve into all the depths of the meanings of much of the Bible, but I am sure we were never meant to know all, otherwise there would never be a need for faith.

I cannot see His future plans, but this I know I have the smiling of His Face and all the blessings of His Grace while here below. Now I belong to Jesus and Jesus belongs to me. Not for the years of life alone but for ETERNITY.”

Marlene Shreeve

COMMUNITY EVENT
HOSTED BY ST MICHAEL AND ALL ANGELS, MARSTON ROAD
CHAIRMAN: IAN STIMPSON MBE. CHURCHES TOGETHER IN MARSTON AND NORTHWAY

BRITAIN ISN'T EATING.

FOOD BANK

THOUSANDS ARE GOING HUNGRY BECAUSE OF BENEFIT CHANGES.
CALL FOR URGENT ACTION: WWW.CHURCH-POVERTY.ORG.UK.WTB

POVERTY DEBATE
WHY IS IT GROWING? WHAT CAN BE DONE?
JOIN THE RT HON ANDREW SMITH MP
AND YOUR NEIGHBOURS
THURSDAY 6TH FEBRUARY 2014
7PM TO 9PM

Snowdrop Weekends 2014

As I write this, in the middle of January, the first aconites and snowdrops are flowering in St James churchyard heralding our Snowdrop Weekends when the church is open for refreshments for those who come to enjoy the beauty of the first signs of spring.

The church will be open on:

Saturday, 8 th February 2014	10.30 am – 4 pm
Sunday, 9 th February 2014	2.00 pm – 4 pm

Also:

Saturday, 15 th February 2014	10.30 am – 4 pm
Sunday, 16 th February 2014	2.00 pm – 4 pm

Please tell your families, friends and neighbours or bring them along yourself to partake of our "Cowley Cakes" and hospitality.

Margaret Martin

God and guards in Nigeria

In November last year I was privileged to find myself in the town of Jos in northern Nigeria. Sadly it is a city with a very bad reputation. If you search for pictures of Jos on the internet all you will find will be pictures of people killed by the fighting which has taken place between Christian and Muslim communities. To reach our guest house from the airport we had to pass through numerous military checkpoints and then at the guest house we found guards on the gate with automatic weapons – a sad place. But that is not the whole story of Jos! In fact it is far from being the true story because the vast majority of the people there want to get on with their lives in peace. Many Christians and Muslims live peacefully side by side and churches are full for worship.

I was there with James Grote the minister at John Bunyan Baptist Church. He had come to visit his church members who run a home for children there. I was there as part of my work with Faith2Share to run a training consultation for mission leaders from Nigeria and neighbouring countries, Ghana, Togo, Chad, Cameroon, Niger and Central African Republic. We had 38 leaders booked to attend and on the first day 52 turned

up! How we squeezed them into our accommodation is another story.

The story I want to tell here is about Nike (see picture). Nike is a single lady from Nigeria who has been a missionary for 23 years, first in Nigeria and then over the border in Niger. She told us how God had called her to work in the prisons in Niger, amongst prostitutes and with children. Almost everyone in Niger is from a Muslim background but as Nike said, "in prison we are all the same before God" and many of the people she meets are deciding to follow Jesus. She now has 'churches' in prison, groups of prostitutes who gather to study the Bible and children who come after their lessons at the mosque to hear stories about Jesus. It was a real privilege to offer Nike a little encouragement in her ministry. Please do pray for her.



Mark Oxbrow
Faith2Share

THE WATER IN BINSEY

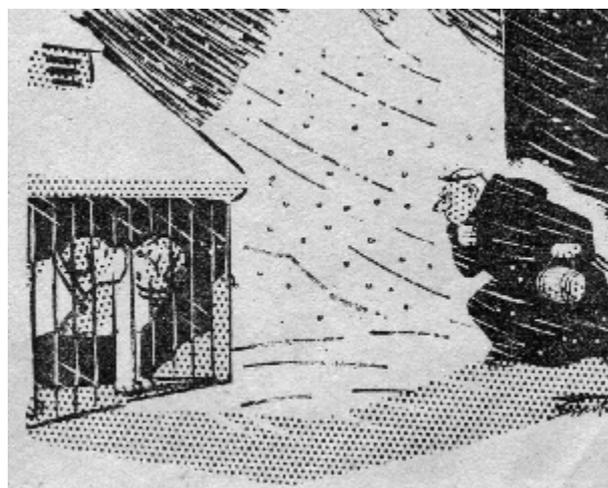
Some of us locals have been looking with alarm at the unfolding saga of the flooding in and around Oxford recently. One of the stories featured in the news media concerned the village of Binsey to the West of Oxford, which was completely cut off by flood water to the dismay of its residents. This was a situation waiting to happen in these wet weather conditions. The village is closely flanked by the River Thames on one side, and with only one road giving access to the village there was nowhere else for the water to go. Hopefully as the weather eases, the situation will be resolved soon.

However, there was a time in the Middle Ages when water was not only wanted, but greatly in demand. Large numbers of people came from miles around just to drink the water in Binsey, and thought highly of it. This was special water, what the Medieval people called 'Holy Water', 'Treacle' was their name for it, and it was sought after for its healing properties.

It all started with our City's patron saint, Frideswide, back in Saxon times. She wanted to live a quiet life of meditation and prayer, as a nun. However, she was being pursued by a young man who thought otherwise, and was making himself a real nuisance. In the end to get away from his unwanted attentions she fled to Binsey, where her father owned a patch of land. There she built herself a small shelter and began her life of prayer. After several confrontations she

sought God's help, and eventually the young man got the message and went away. One day in the course of her fervent prayer, a spring of water rose up, and our lady decided to contain it in a well, and dedicated it to St Margaret. A church grew up nearby, and the well was included in the churchyard. Both church and well are still there, and you can see them for yourself. The church lies apart from the village and is reached by a long raised causeway. It has recently had a refurbishment, long overdue, but it is still a lovely old medieval building and well worth a visit.

John Shreeve



Something tells me he's going to ask a dog to go out on a night like this.

Slimming
WORLD
because you're amazing

Would you love to lose weight, be supported by a warm welcoming group and be part of something amazing?

Come and join us and make your weight loss dreams come true!

Cowley Slimming World
St James Church Centre
Beauchamp Lane

Monday nights 5pm and 7pm Sessions

Call Rachel on 749852 or 07764844994

SAINT OF THE MONTH—St Laurence of Canterbury

Laurence was one of the young missionaries sent to England by St Gregory. The leader of the group was St Augustine. They arrived on the coast of Kent in 596 into a kingdom where pagan worship was the order of the day, determined to spread the good news of the Gospel to the “Angles” described in Rome by Gregory as “angels not Angles”. Their task was not quite an impossible one as the King of Kent had married a French princess who had already accepted the Christian faith in her homeland before coming to England. The King, Ethelbert, must have loved his French queen very much because he allowed her to practise her own faith alongside the pagan practices of his court. However, seeds of God’s love had been sown and before long Augustine and his followers had begun to convert many people (including Ethelbert) and a church was built near Canterbury.

Laurence must have been a close friend of Augustine and obviously a good communicator because once the small church had been established Augustine chose Laurence for quite a dangerous and important task. Augustine was a devout monk but not an organiser so he found himself with a long list of questions about the way forward. He sent Laurence back to Rome with his list to seek Gregory’s advice. Crossing the English Channel and journeying through the forests and mountains of France and northern Italy had its dangers especially from brigands and bandits to say nothing of the difficult terrain on foot.

On his return with Gregory’s plans and answers Augustine chose Laurence to be his successor as Archbishop of Canterbury after his death. In 604 Augustine died and

Laurence took over the consolidation of the Church in south-east England. Unfortunately when Ethelbert died and his son, Edbald, became King he refused to support them and the very existence of the Church in that area seemed in danger. Two of Laurence’s supporters, Mellitus and Justus, decided to flee across the Channel to Gaul. Laurence even thought to follow them but St Peter came to him in a dream and “beat him black and blue” for his cowardice. As it was Laurence persevered and even converted and baptised the King who had persecuted him. Laurence and his companions were able to press on with their work.

As Archbishop Laurence consecrated a new church SS Peter and Paul and when he died in 619 it was there that he was buried. The day of his death was February 3rd and this is his feast day.

KFA Moves KFA Moves KFA Moves KFA Moves

Dance Based Keep Fit Class with Barbara
St Francis of Assisi Church
Hollow Way, Cowley, Oxford OX3 7JP
Wednesdays 10.30 – 11.45 am

Improve your energy levels, muscle tone and flexibility
Come and enjoy the friendly, fun atmosphere

This class most suited to active 50+
Please bring a mat/towel **First class ½ price**

**Dance Based Fitness Class, Lean Machine, Cowley –
Tuesdays 7.30-8.45pm**

For further details of both classes phone Barbara
07752626642
KFA Fitness through movement, dance and exercise
www.keepfit.org.uk

BOOK OF THE MONTH

Oxford Suburbs and Villages through time
St Giles, Headington, St Clements, Cowley, Iffley, Wytham
By Stanley C Jenkins

Anyone who is interested in the history of Oxford will find this a delightful book. The city boundaries have changed since it originated, and a number of the surrounding villages have been absorbed into the City of Oxford, particularly in the twentieth century. This book sets out a series of photographs which trace some of the ways in which the suburbs and villages of Oxford have changed and developed over the last century. New and old photographs track the changes, and it is surprising to see how little bits of the old city have been adapted and remain, although sometimes not immediately recognizable. St James Church is included on Page 61, showing the interior c.1912.

This book makes one want to explore the different suburbs and villages. Well worth a read.

ALPHA CATERING

Chris Woodman reports that the catering for the first few weeks of the 12 week course is covered. She would still welcome help for later in the programme – late February/ March. Offers of:

1. More volunteers to join the catering team rota
2. Donations of homemade desserts/ puddings/fruit

Please contact Chris on 01865 778078 if you are able to help. She will be very pleased to hear from you.



St James Café
St James Church Centre
Beauchamp Lane
10:00 am to 1:00 pm
The last Saturday of each month,
starting the
25th January 2014
For more information and the
booking of tables contact
Vicky Hall on
07901895925
Come along for a tea or coffee
and a slice of homemade cake
then do a little shopping on the
stalls

CHRONICLE

Editorial Team- Rosanne Butler, Sally Hemsworth, May Morgan, Nicki Stevens

Deadline for the February edition:

Wednesday 19 February 2014

If possible, please send entries by email to Sally at chronicle@cowleyteamministry.co.uk

The Editorial Committee in no way accepts responsibility for goods or services supplied by our advertisers.

PARISH REGISTER

Baptisms

2 June 2013	Spencer George Leech
7 July 2013	Tyler James Hart Tamara Grace Brown
1 September 2013	Damien Thomas Slater-Pricket Faith Nevaeh Slater-Pricket Lucas Rory Sherriff
6 October 2013	Ernest Ezekiel Bilal Stocker
27 October 2013	Kashila Devi Mattu Jasbir Mattu Pankaj Hans Sangeeta Devi Mattu
3 November 2013	Isabella Anne Philpott Jesamine Joy Barber

Weddings:

1 June 2013	Steven Rose & Faye Barrett
8 June 2013	Richard Clark & Chloe Woodley
15 June 2013	Anthony Gabbidon & Leanne Shepherd
22 June 2013	John Booty & Christine Hurdley
21 September 2013	Christopher Ellis & Stephanie Murton
12 October 2013	Tristram Maragh & Paula Townsend

Funerals:

10 June 2013	Arthur William Taylor
27 June 2013	Gwendoline Fancutt
13 November 2013	James McKemey
18 November 2013	Joyce Virginia Williams

SEASHELLS SUPPORT

With Joy Harbison having moved away, Seashells requires extra support, particularly on the rota and/or just a reserve person to cover if the regular volunteers are away or ill, to help set up the hall – there are lots of toys to get out! – 9.30 – 10 am. No heavy work, and a nice cup of coffee and chat afterwards. Contact Chris Knevett on 01865 778754.

May Morgan

SAINSBURY'S ACTIVE KIDS

From January 29th to May 20th 2014 Sainsbury's will again be issuing vouchers. May Morgan will again be collecting them for Seashells at St James and Little Stars at St Francis. We will be very glad of all donations.

Thank you.

May Morgan

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PARISH OF COWLEY ELECTORAL ROLL

You will remember that 2013 was the year (which comes round every 6 years) when we prepared an entirely new electoral roll. In 2014 we can relax and just confirm membership, removing any folk who have moved or sadly passed away and adding active new members. It is also the opportunity to check that all the contact details you gave us last year, which are held securely, are still current - mobile numbers particularly have a habit of changing!

The formal notice (form SG2) about the revision of the roll will be posted on Sunday 2 February 2014, which is two months before the annual Parish meeting on Sunday 6 April, in both churches and the Church Centre.

The roll represents those who attend either of our churches on a regular basis and/or contribute financially or with their time or talents to the life of the Parish; it is a 'membership' list of those who truly love and actively support Cowley Parish, St James and/or St Francis church, in whatever ways they can.

If you have newly arrived with us during the past twelve months and wish to make this statement of belonging, please take an electoral roll form from the table behind the main door (St James), in the lobby (St Francis) or contact Lesley Williams, Electoral Roll Officer. Return the form to the labelled box or direct to Lesley Williams at

church or posted to 9 Wykeham Crescent, OX4 3SD by Saturday 1 March.

The revised roll will be displayed from Sunday 2 March and corrections may be made up to the time of the APCM but no new names may be added until the end of the meeting. Questions about the process should be addressed to Lesley, Howard or Skye.

Here's the official bit: under the Church Representation Rules you are entitled to have your name entered on the roll if you: (1) are baptised and are aged 16 or over and (2) have signed a form of application for enrolment. Anyone who will turn 16 during the year may complete a form now and be added to the roll after their birthday.

Additionally you must be (1) either a member of the Church of England or of a Church in communion with the Church of England and (2) be resident in the parish or, if living outside the parish, have habitually attended public worship in the parish during the six months prior to the application for enrolment.

We will soon also be seeking nominations for Church Wardens, Deanery Synod representatives and Parochial Church Council members, all of whom will be elected at the Annual Parochial Church Meeting.

MEMORY LANE

The Museum of Oxford presents Memory Lane reminiscence sessions and one of particular interest to Cowley residents is the Memories of Florence Park on the 27th February 2014.

Other sessions you may be interested in are:

20th March 2014 – Oxford Town Hall at War

17th April 2014 – Memories of University Church, St Mary the Virgin (this talk is being held at the University Church)

22nd May 2014 – Oxford's Famous Faces

19th June 2014 – Remembering the 1970s.

All sessions are held at the Museum of Oxford, Town Hall, St Aldates, Oxford, unless otherwise stated, commencing at 2 pm. Sessions are free of charge and light refreshments will be available.

SUNDAY SERVICES

ST JAMES CHURCH, BEAUCHAMP LANE

8.00am	Holy Communion
10.00am	Sung Eucharist
Every 2nd & 4th Sunday	Church at the Centre
Every third Sunday	Sunday Lunch

ST FRANCIS CHURCH, HOLLOW WAY

10.30am	Parish Eucharist
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MID-WEEK SERVICES & MEETINGS

Monday	8.30am	Morning Prayer—St James
	10.00-11.30am	Little Stars Playgroup— St Francis
	2.30pm	Parish Mothers' Union— St James (3rd Monday)
Tuesday	8.30am	Morning Prayer—St Francis
	10.00am	Seashells Toddler Group— St James
	12.00pm	Eucharist—St James
	12.30pm	Tuesday Lunch Club— St James
Wednesday	8.30am	Morning Prayer—St James
	7.30pm (alt wks)	Women's Group—St James
Thursday	8.30am	Morning Prayer—St Francis
	7.00pm	Cowley Parish Healing Service St Francis (1st Thursday)
Friday	2.00pm	Bingo—St James
Saturday	10.00am-12pm	Coffee Morning, St Francis (2nd Saturday)

HOME GROUPS

Leader	Time/Venue
Skye Denno	1st Monday of month, 7.30pm at Skye's home
Connie Uren	Alternate Tuesday afternoons at 2.30pm St James Church Centre, Ranklin Room
Friends of St Francis (John Shreeve/ Skye Denno)	2nd & 4th Tuesday afternoons at 2.30pm St Francis Church
Mark Oxbrow	Alternate Wednesday evenings at 7.30pm Mark's home
Rosanne Butler	Alternate Thursday mornings at 10.00am St James Church Centre, Ranklin Room
Helen Beetham	Alternate Friday mornings at 10am

The Parish Office in St James Church
Centre is open:

Tuesday, 2—5pm
Wednesday, 10—1pm
Friday, 9—2pm

The Parish Office is currently staffed by
volunteers and members of the ministry
team, and is open most office hours.

Contact details: Tel: 01865 747680
Email: office@cowleyteamministry.co.uk
Out of hours tel: 07501 908378
Website: www.cowleyteamministry.co.uk

Team Rector:

Revd Howard Thornton
Howard has Friday as his day off

Team Vicar:

Revd Skye Denno
Tel: 01865 434160 Mobile: 07720 768684
Email: skye@cowleyteamministry.co.uk
Skye has Wednesday as her day off.

Associate Priest

Revd Richard Chand
01865 701948
Email: richard@cowleyteamministry.co.uk

Non-stipendiary Ministers

Revd Canon Mark Oxbrow
01865 461953
Email: markoxbrow@aol.com

Revd Dr Amanda Bloor
Tel: 01865 208221

Revd Gordon Hickson
Tel: 07713 688079

Revd Tony Beetham
Tel: 01865 770923
Email: tonybeetham1@supanet.com

Churchwardens:

David Stanley Tel: 776602
Norah Shallow Tel: 765199

Deputy Wardens
Margaret Martin Tel: 718532
John Shreeve Tel: 717987

St James Church Centre Manager:

Chris Woodman Tel: 778078

Hall Bookings:

Church Centre: Pat Sansom Tel: 778516
St Francis Church/St James Church:
through Parish Office

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May Morgan
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