

Prayer Space

Sovereign God

It is easy to trust him when life is good, but when circumstances change, then faith is suddenly put to the test.

When one problem,
one anxiety,
one sorrow follows another,
I feel overwhelmed,
swimming against a current,
that sweeps me deeper and deeper into difficulty.

Teach me that however fierce the storm,
it can never finally swamp me,
for you will be there to rescue me
in my time of need.

Teach me to hold firmly to you,
knowing that you will keep hold of me
until the storm is past and calm returns.

In Jesus' name I pray.

Amen.

Taken from "Prayerfully Yours"
by Nick Fawcett

From the Editors

Sally Hemsworth and Nicki Stevens

Another picture of a Sunflower has been received – 15ft tall – and still producing new flowers. The plant shown last month has also continued to grow and is still flowering well.

Nony Muss has decided to give prizes to all those who sent pictures and articles to the Chronicle and run another competition next year. There were not many success stories this year – so let's hope that 2022 will be different.



We were really pleased to receive a recipe from Joan Coleman – hope you enjoy the ham and parsley terrine. It may make you think of a favourite recipe you would like to share with Chronicle readers?

There has been no response about Samaritan's Purse – but have several shoeboxes at the Parish Office if you are interested in filling one or more. Just let Sally know on office@cowleyteamministry.co.uk.

It is lovely that things are getting back to normal and this is emphasised by the news that the Craft and Gift Fair will be held on Saturday, 20 November 2021, from 10 am – 1 pm at St James Church Centre – both in the car park and indoors. More news about this next time.

Both Church Committees have met and a PCC meeting is being held on 3 October 2021 – a report will be included in next month's Chronicle. But the good news is that the toilet at St James Church has been installed and the builders will be finished the second week of October.

We recently received a request – do we know of anyone who is good at small household repair work? It is certainly very difficult to find people who do this sort of work – can you recommend anyone?

Hope to hear from you – articles, comments, pictures, ideas are always welcome.

All our best wishes to you

Sally and Nicki



What sort of Church do we want to be?

"To live out God's purpose for us, make Christ known in Cowley and raise up a new generation to love and serve the Lord." That is our current Vision Statement. Does it describe you?

We looked at Vision in 2011 and again in 2016. In 2011 we saw a focus on these themes:

Cowley Bells tower thriving, Arts and Crafts activities recognised as part of church life, Fellowship meals, Full to overcrowded preschool children's work, Greater engagement of people in Church life, a centre for learning skills, Sports activities, Strong fund raising for Christian Aid, Increased numbers of Baptisms, Alpha Groups, Reaching out to those at home with care when needed, Church Pop group, Asian Church flourishing, Prayer zones developing.

Have a think, how are we doing? O.K so the Pop group has not happened, although we did manage a worship band for a very short while. Things have been knocked by Covid, but generally, we can see success and growth in many areas. Over the time we have seen new people come to faith and join our congregations. We have seen established members offering for new ministries. It is fair to say this vision has shaped what we have done.

COVID has brought some 'knockbacks', but we are again in the place where we need to ask "Which direction is God leading us"? What is God leading us towards? What is he leading us away from? Just as Spring comes after each Winter, so we find ourselves in a season of expectation, looking for God's footprints so that we can accompany him into the future.

In 2016 we asked what was important to us in our life together as a Church? The responses we got, in decreasing frequency, were: *Community and Belonging, Welcoming others, Biblical Command, Preaching /Sermon, Music, Family, Caring, Meet with God, To learn about Jesus, Eucharist, To learn from each other, Helping others, Food, Holiness, Worship, Prayer.* I wonder if they describe your understanding of why we are a church?

So come and join us on 16th of October and help us shape the vision for the next 5 years! If you can't go to the day get your thoughts to Geoff, Mark, Alison, Sally, Christine, or Maureen.

May God be with you!

**Cowley Parish
Vision Morning**
Saturday
16th October
9:30am to 1pm
(12:30 Soup and Bread)
St James Centre
Beauchamp Lane

Join us and help shape the vision and activity of the Church for the coming years

SHAPE THE FUTURE

Living life to the Full

CHILDREN'S CORNER

Do you like jigsaw puzzles? They may not be so popular as they were when I was young but I find them very interesting and sometimes like people, all shapes and sizes. Even though we may look or dress the same, we are different to each other.

When you first look at the pile of funny shaped pieces of a jigsaw with part of a picture on one side, and nothing on the other, most of the pieces look the same shape, but they are not. In fact, that is the whole point of the puzzle. Every piece is different. When I was young the puzzles were made from thin plywood and even today the very best puzzles still are. Several thin layers of wood were stuck together to make a very strong flat surface. A picture printed on paper was stuck on top of the board and then cut in the special wiggly pattern of the jigsaw.

Sometimes the jigsaw was assembled in the box already finished, but usually there was only a copy of the picture on the top of the box and perhaps 100 or a thousand pieces inside that would keep you quiet for a long time. But it was fun.....unless a piece was missing, because it had been packed away carelessly the last time it had been used.

That always spoiled the picture and caused you more difficulty deciding which piece was missing, because all the pieces were so similar. The guide was the picture. You were always careful to gather up all the pieces when the picture was scrambled and the pieces returned to the box for the next outing.

Another piece of fun, that was also useful and kept us quiet, was knitting. Most girls learned to knit and some boys did so as well, doing simple squares in a plain stitch, using up the 'left-overs' from other knitting that mum or grandma did not need because they had finished their knitted garment. I think I managed to knit a dishcloth, but if several of you got together and everybody knitted a six-inch square, they were then sewn together into a larger piece of cloth that could be used as a 'knee-blanket' for an old person, or a bed covering if you had enough squares. It didn't matter that there were many different colours. That was all part of the fun putting them together. *But they had to be the same size and preferably the same type/weight of wool.* I still have mine *and* it is made of wool, not the modern less warm material.

The great thing about pieces of jigsaws and knitted squares is that by themselves they can't do very much. No, they don't harm anyone and they are not a nuisance, but linked together and in an organised way they can look terrific, *and* be very useful, either as a lovely picture or a useful item to help others. And if one part is missing, it shows. Aren't we like that?

It was great to meet on zoom and many more people have spoken with their neighbours, but getting together is so much better.

Keep being careful so that we can all join together. Till next time, stay safe.

Uncle Ben

MOTHERS' UNION NEWS

Things are changing in our little branch. At our meeting in September a number of challenges were presented to members and some lively discussion ensued. The main issue was to find a new leader and a new treasurer, both roles which have been filled by me – leader for over six years and treasurer for twelve years. Although we have a vibrant committee, they are all busy ladies with a plethora of roles within the parish and their own family lives, so we have a problem. Coupled with this our membership is shrinking, due sadly to death, the need to care for loved ones, increasing immobility and advancing years.

What to do about it? Members have been asked to take a few weeks to consider the suggestions presented at the meeting and bring *their* idea for the way forward to our next meeting. This will be at 2.15pm in the Ranklin Room at the Church Centre on Monday 18th October.

It is obvious that there is a lot of loyalty to the Mothers' Union in our branch, but the challenges we face are very real.

At the meeting we were very fortunate to welcome Reverend Mark Oxbrow (one of our favourite speakers) who gave us an excellent talk on the work of 'Food for Minds' – a world-wide charity which provides education for families, especially women, in third-world countries. Mark is their president and spoke passionately about the extremely important work they do.

Rosanne Butler

OPEN THE BOOK

Telling scripted Bible stories in assemblies for our three Parish schools – an essential part of our mission to the children of Cowley

New team members are urgently needed in each school for the coming term! During the pandemic, we recorded stories on Zoom and sent the link to the schools. Now we are back in person – we started in w/b 27 September - but have lost several of our faithful team members and hope there are some new volunteers out there.

The commitment is for alternate weeks in each school but you can do as little or as much as you wish:

alternate Mondays at 9:00 – arriving at 8:40 – St Christopher's School, Temple Road

alternate Tuesdays 2:45 – arriving at 2:15 * – Church Cowley St James School, Bartholomew Road *note change of time*

alternate Thursdays 10:30 – arriving at 10:00 – St Francis School, Horspath Road

To learn more about what's involved, talk to Geoff – Lesley Williams – Joan Coleman – Jill Ling

RECIPE

Ham and Parsley Terrine

I made this for the Harvest Lunch at St James' and it was suggested I share the recipe. I have a ceramic terrine dish holding 1 litre but you can improvise with a loaf tin. You can line the container with damp cling film for easy turning out.



- 2 Ham hocks
- 1 small bunch of parsley – chopped
- 1 celery stick – halved
- 1 tablespoon of chopped tarragon
- 1 onion - peeled and quartered
- 1 tablespoon of chopped capers
- 1 carrot – peeled and halved.
- Salt and black pepper
- 2 bay leaves
- 1 tablespoon of white wine vinegar

First get your ham hocks! We go to Alder's butchers (Andy's) on the Cowley Road. You will need 2 and soak them overnight if they are smoked. Next day, cover them with fresh cold water adding celery, onion, carrot, bay leaves and vinegar. Bring to the boil and simmer on medium heat for 2-3 hours.

Next, remove the hocks, reserving the cooking liquid and leave to cool. When cool enough to handle, remove skin and bones and chop the meat into small chunks. Put this in a bowl with the parsley, tarragon and capers and season, if needed.

Put this mixture into your dish and press down. Pour over some of the cooking liquor. Cover the dish and put in the fridge to chill overnight by which time, the liquid will have set to a jelly.

Turn out onto a board or dish and serve in slices with piccalilli and crusty bread or toast.

Joan Coleman

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GARDENING PARTY



HELP REQUIRED – COME AND BOOST THE NUMBERS LOOKING AFTER THE AREA AROUND ST JAMES CHURCH AND ST JAMES CHURCH CENTRE.

LAST SATURDAY OF EACH MONTH (EXCEPT DECEMBER) – 9.30 AM ONWARDS AT ST. JAMES CHURCH CENTRE.

Come and have fun, fresh air and exercise as we prepare the St. James Church Centre garden for another beautiful spring and summer showing. If possible bring your own tools but some will be available. Both heavy and light work available plus coffee and cake.

RIDE + STRIDE for Churches

RIDE AND STRIDE

(sponsored for the Oxfordshire Historic Churches Trust, shared 50:50 with the Parish)

Saturday 11 September 10:00-6:00 St James and St Francis

Thank you to June Smith who coordinated the stewards' rotas and our St/Riders.

Jane Coutanche from St Francis rode and Lesley Williams from St James strode, in training for her five-day Camino trek in the first week of October (see elsewhere in Link)

Sponsorship will close soon: both Jane and Lesley have a paper form and Lesley also has a Virgin Giving on line page <https://uk.virginmoneygiving.com/LesleyWilliams-StRide-Cowley>.

She was pleased to walk her furthest for years – 21.92 miles – albeit all somewhat flat around the City – and visit to 47 churches, happily the self-same number as 2020!

Jane reports that Saturday 11th September was a lovely day for cycling Ride and Stride: sunny but not too hot. She started by visiting St Francis and had a very friendly welcome there with offers of tea and delicious looking cake! She went on through Headington via Corpus Christi and Holy Trinity to St Mary's at Bayswater, where again she had a very friendly welcome, with offers of juice and biscuits.

Jane cycled up the hill to Stanton St John and sat for a while on a bench in the churchyard there overlooking the beautiful Oxfordshire countryside. A profusion of beautiful cyclists by the church. Back down the hill to visit St Andrew's church in Old Headington, where again she had a very warm welcome and heard the choir rehearsing – it sounded very good. She called at All Saints Church down Lime Walk and instead of heading for home, continued down Divinity Road to St Mary and St John.

She completed her ninth church by visiting St Bartlemas Chapel, such a peaceful place. Then up the hill for home and a cup of tea!

Shaun Guard

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COWLEY FESTIVAL OF CHRISTMAS TREES 2021

Shine a light

Our next planning meeting is on Wednesday 13 October, 9.00 in the Ranklin Room. Let Lesley Williams know if you are able to join in.

At our third planning meeting in September, we talked more about promotion of the event – banners, cards, social media, perhaps on the buses?

There was more exploration of the use of light, in the churchyard and inside the church; Geoff wants a disco ball!

Lesley has also met with staff from Flo's – the Place in the Park and Oxford City Farm in Cornwallis Road. They were both excited about establishing 'outposts' of the festival in those settings. We hope also to do the same at Florence Park Community Centre, Restore and Ark-T.

Please send us further ideas for activities during the festival.

AND, as ever, ideas of how we can reach and involve other community groups, schools etc.

AND if you are confident and have time to be our PROMOTION & SOCIAL MEDIA person.

AND if you have any local BUSINESS LINKS – with shops, service and manufacturing companies – and/or are able to go door knocking to them

01865 779 562 07982 439 828 ctf@cowleyteamministry.co.uk



**Cowley festival
of Christmas trees
'Shine a Light'**

**St James Church
Beauchamp Lane OX4 3LF**

10 – 19 December 2021
fundraising for : ROSY & SeeSaw
www.cowleyteamministry.co.uk

CHRISTIAN AID



BIG BRUNCH Sunday 12 September 9:15-10:45

We enjoyed our first leisurely 'brunch' in the time between our two St James services with generally the same menu as the usual breakfast but with the addition of waffles and yogurt! The longer period available meant that people tended to arrive in two 'sittings' and we need to plan for that next time date not yet set.

£90 was raised.

QUIZ AID postponed from June to Friday 24th September, 7:00, St James Centre
4 teams – 17 people – learning lots of new knowledge, enjoying plenty of laughter, challenging the Quizmaster only once, winning raffle prizes and contributing £115 to Christian Aid.

The result was excitingly close :

Cowley Trio, which grew to a Quartet half-way through the evening, won with 100 points, followed by Lucky for Some, with 97 points, Singletrees with 92 and Annesley Apples with 91. However, Annesley Apples easily won the pre-quiz warm up round.

There are spare copies of that – a mix of logos, dingbats and cryptic television programme titles - which are available for a minimum £1 donation and the chance of a prize. Ask Lesley Williams if you wish to be challenged.

Thanks to Quizmaster Rosanne for the 6 entertaining rounds. We began the evening by acknowledging Frank's absence; Lesley took on his Scorekeeper's role but couldn't do it with Frank's style.

Punters requested a six-monthly quiz evening so we will try for January/ February

ABSEIL Saturday 18 September - St Mary Magdalen church tower:

At very short notice, Lesley was offered the chance of her annual abseil 'fix'. It was a fundraiser for the church itself, rather than the usual Christian Aid event, so Lesley paid St Mary Mags to enter and then donated personally to Christian Aid too, not wishing to seek any more sponsorship with that for Ride and Stride and the Traidcraft Exchange Camino still active.

£255 has been paid into the Christian Aid account from the Parish for these three events.



A WARTIME CHILDHOOD

(Part 13)

I can honestly say that each day I spent in the little village school in Northmoor was an adventure (as school always should be) and I loved it all. That is not to say that I didn't sometimes get into trouble, such as the time I had to stand out at the front next to the piano in a singing lesson because I kept talking. (Oh, the shame!). And then there was the plasticene incident which did reduce me to tears. You see, it was wartime and resources were scarce.

In September, at the beginning of the new school year, the lovely new paper, books, pencils etc. would be given out with a warning to take care of them and, of course, there was the new plasticene. It came in strips of bright colours, wrapped in grease-proof paper and the older juniors were allowed first chance to model things. They were told to keep the colours separate. But as the year wore on the colours got mixed and by Christmas the balls of plasticene had turned into lumps of brownish-grey clay. These were then passed down for the infants to use.

I loved modelling, making little animals like rabbits, hedgehogs and such, so those afternoons were fun. However, because our classroom had dusty wooden floorboards, we were warned not to drop any plasticene on the floor because it would be spoilt. Well, of course, I did drop some of mine and my teacher swooped over and confiscated it. That meant less clay to work with. I got nervous and fumbly (I was only five years old) and I dropped a bit more. This went on a couple more times and I finished up with such a small amount that it was impossible to make anything, and I

burst into tears. I think that was the only time I cried in school. Apart from the time when the school was invaded by a large contingent of evacuees from London, (more about them later), every day was a delight.

The school was one long building with high ceilings and big high windows. It had two open fireplaces which were surrounded by big metal fireguards (very useful for drying off wet gloves after snowball fights at playtimes in winter). Between the two classrooms was a floor-to-ceiling screen which could be folded back when needed, especially when desks and tables were pushed aside so that we could do country dancing instead of P.E. during the winter months.

The infant classroom was rather smaller and was furnished with dear little wooden tables and chairs. Between the fireplace and the big end window stood a blackboard and easel and a colourful flip chart with big illustrations of bible stories which were changed once a week. I became very fond of those pictures especially the one of 'Jacob's Dream', when he dreamt of a stairway leading to heaven with angels flying up and down it. I was very partial to angels when I was a little girl. The other picture I recall with much affection was Jesus as 'The Good Shepherd' carrying the little lost lamb on his shoulder.

Around the walls were big blackboards on which we were allowed to draw our own pictures. On Friday afternoons we were each given a little Oxo tin with coloured chalks inside. Our teacher would divide the board into sections, one for each of us, and we were able

to draw whatever we liked. The pictures would stay there for the whole of the following week with our names on them.

Our head teacher had been 'Froebel' trained, an education philosophy which was to put the child's interest into the heart of all learning. So we were very lucky – lessons were excellent. Because it was wartime and teaching staff were in short supply, her daughter, who was in her twenties, looked after the infants with her mother's guidance. Reading took priority along with number work, so the rule was: as soon as you could read, or at the age of seven, you moved up to the juniors.

My best friend Margaret and I galloped through our reading scheme – 'Old Lob' the farmer with his pigs, hens and cows, with his

dog Bob (amazing how many farm animals are three letter words!) – and we were both reading by the time we were six. Then along came the important day when we were moved up to the "big children's" class.

We then had to learn our tables, have history and geography lessons and start "joined-up writing" with a dip-in ink pen. (Oh, how I struggled with that!). We wrote stories and compositions in our exercise books. I wrote one about how I was going to be a teacher when I grew up.

There were all kinds of delights to experience in the following five years, some of which I'll tell you about next month.

Rosanne Butler

WISE WORDS

When we are out of sympathy with the young, then I think our work in this world is over.

Old people are always absorbed in something, usually themselves.

We are tomorrows past!

Old age is when you know all the answers, but nobody asks you the questions.

At twenty we worry what others think of us.

At forty we *don't* worry about what others think of us.

At sixty we discover that they haven't been thinking about us at all!

Middle age is nature's way of showing a sense of humour.

It takes a long time to become young. (*Pablo Picasso*)

Millions long for immortality, but don't know what to do with themselves on a rainy Sunday afternoon.

At the age of fifty, every man has the face that he deserves. (*George Orwell*)

Time is a dressmaker specialising in alterations.

Rosanne Butler

A space for nature or an eyesore?

Not long after we moved to our present house all of 35 years ago, we decided to put a pond in the garden. We bought a pre-formed fibreglass pond, as you did in the 80's, and installed it. We were not precise about levels so it is a little bit out of true. We filled it and added plants and awaited results. We were not wanting ornamental fish but wanted those denizens of ponds to come in like frogs, water fleas, water snails, mayfly and dragonfly larvae and so on. We had lots of large green basalt stones around the garden so some were moved to disguise the edges.

It has been very successful. Lots of frogspawn appear every March though we have seen no toads, but we did spot a newt last year.

On a walk early on, I collected seed from the yellow flag iris. I do love them when they flower even though the flowering is short and the lance-shaped, strong and tall leaves make quite a feature. Once the flowers have died, big seed pods form which eventually dry and split to release quite a few seeds in each pod. So my flag iris began to expand its area, not only by the seeds but with its thick rhizomes. We were cutting out quite a few each year. In recent years, I have let the pond and the area around to be more wildlife-friendly, letting the grass grow tall. My Other Half says that it's a mess.

I have, however, taken my eye off the ball with regard to the invasive iris. To my horror, a week or so ago I find the pond is no more

but instead it is filled with hard rhizomatous roots. It is heavy work, and I did consider just covering over with lawn and then mowing the iris out, but I began down on my knees with an old bread knife sawing off slice after energy-sapping slice. Up to the present, I have cleared about a quarter. Right at the bottom are fibrous roots and a lot of smelly black sludge. I will keep going while the weather is good but I know the job will be a long one which will be curtailed as the cleared section fills up and frogs return again in the spring. I will carry on next autumn.

On the allotment, my Other Half has been enjoying himself cutting down our overgrown jostaberry bush. This must be twenty years old and given free with an order of raspberry canes. He has still got some way to go with the pruning saw but we have a huge heap to burn once we can have a bonfire. The problem is when will it be dry to burn on the days that we can do so?

Before she left us, Gemma gave me an enormous quantity of plantlets from her spider plant. This was the day before the Plant Sale. They had no roots but I did pot them up and, of course, most of them were returned to me at the end of the day. Subsequently, they have rooted and I have about 30 growing well and needing homes. Contact me if you want one (or three!).

Joan Coleman
Mobile 07935 963634

PARISH WALKS

Walks continued over the summer although with reduced numbers as many people were away. The last walk was to North Hinksey, although some people arrived early at the meeting rendezvous, thought no-one else was going and went to South Hinksey! Both walks

illustrated how quickly one can get to the countryside – a bus trip from Cowley to Hinksey Park off Abingdon Road, and a short walk brought us to a large lake and then countryside. On a sunny day a joy.

On another occasion a group went to Chilswell Hills (Boars Hill) and these pictures illustrate the marvellous views of Oxford and the countryside we were walking in.



Details of our walks are shown in The Link – do join us.

Shared Knitting and Crochet (Headington)

We are still knitting and crocheting for good causes and have started meeting again in a Covid secure Hall in Headington. We send woolly goods to reputable charities which support refugees in Syria and Greece, as well as people in need in the UK. We also knit for the JR, The Porch, and Oxford Baby Bank. Each charity gives us a list of what is currently needed (and also what they cannot use). We supply yarn at a discount to members and have patterns and needles.

We welcome new members. For more details please email sharedknitting@gmail.com, or phone Sally on 01865 738942.

CHRONICLE

Editorial Team- Sally Hemsworth, Nicki Stevens

Deadline for the next edition: Monday 25 October 2021

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

Paper contributions should be left at Parish Office for the attention of Sally.

The Editorial Committee in no way accepts responsibility for goods or services supplied by our advertisers, errors and omissions excepted.

FRANK BUTLER

Since Frank was such a well-known character in the parish, several people have suggested that the eulogy I gave for him at his recent memorial service might be entered into this month's Chronicle.

Rosanne

Towards the end of the film 'The Wizard of Oz,' the wizard tells the Tin Man that a heart is not judged by how much you love, but by how much you are loved by others and judging by the lovely warm messages I have received in countless numbers of cards, Frank truly was loved. That is why we chose that beautiful reading from the letter to Corinthians – which my daughter Helen read just now.

Frank had a lot of love in his heart – love for his family (though he did often describe his sisters as 'crazy'), for his son, daughter, and their partners and also for me, which he told me less than two hours before he died. Basically, and I know that you will find it hard to believe, he was a shy man and did not always wear his heart on his sleeve.

Yes, when I first met him, he was the most shy, retiring lad in our village and I didn't think much of him. Born in Minster Lovell, as a little boy in 'Hitler's war' (as he always described it), he and his mother moved to Oxford so that she could, as a state registered nurse, care for injured service men in the military hospital in Cowley Road. They moved into number 20 Southfield Road with his big sister, grandparents, and an aunt and I can only imagine it was a squeeze. Meanwhile his dad was serving in the Royal Tank Regiment.

Towards the end of the war, with a new baby sister in the family, his mum took up the option to move out into the country to look after land girls who were working on the farms. From then on, Frank became a country boy.

His dad came home at the end of the war to take up a post as a dairyman on one of the big farms in the area. They moved into the village

where I grew up and Frank was one of the village boys. We met for the first time when I was nine and he was eleven.

A couple of years later we would travel with the other village children, each day on the school bus to secondary school in Witney and we got to know each other a little better. However, when he was fifteen, Frank left his secondary school to further his education at Army Apprentice College in South Wales. During his time there he became a successful boxer and was part of the college's gymnastic team. He also learnt the trade of sheet metal working which gave him the opportunity at eighteen to join the Royal Engineers as a regular soldier.

Whilst he was at college, he found out that some of his fellow students had letters from girlfriends at home and he didn't. He told his mum and she decided to do something about it.

At this point, I must pay tribute to Frank's mum as she was a most astute lady and had already singled me out (I have recently realised) as a suitable girl for her Frank. Well, how right she was! At a W.I. meeting she gave Frank's address to my mum and asked her if Rosanne would like to write the occasional letter to him. Well, I did. Then in the holidays we would meet up and enjoy each other's company – long walks, riding our bikes to the cinema in Witney and endless days by the river. Frank would fish, I would take a book and there was usually a picnic. Our friendship grew but it took two years before he held my hand and another six months before he kissed me. (Boy, was he shy!).