

# Parish News

St Mary's Church, Saffron Walden

St John, Little Walden and St James, Swards End

Part of Saffron Walden & Villages Team Ministry



July 2024

FREE

## Our Newly Elected St Mary's Churchwardens 2024



**Vivian Falk**



**Simon Potter**

### **Assistant Churchwardens:**

Patrick Li, William Rose, Jan Siewertsen, Pam Russell

## New Facebook Page for St Mary's



We now have a new Facebook page for St Mary's Church, Saffron Walden. Do visit us at [www.facebook.com/stmaryschurchsaffronwalden](http://www.facebook.com/stmaryschurchsaffronwalden) and like and follow.

There is also a link to this at the bottom of each page of St Mary's website.

Hannah Razzell is kindly managing this page - [hannah.razzell@googlemail.com](mailto:hannah.razzell@googlemail.com)

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## PARISH NEWS - EDITORIAL DEADLINE

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*Cover photograph by Andy Colebrooke*

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[www.stmaryssaffronwalden.org](http://www.stmaryssaffronwalden.org)

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## The Rector's Letter

**From The Rev'd Jeremy Trew**  
Jeremy writes...



Apparently, there's going to be a General Election. If you read this early enough you might like to come along to a hustings being hosted by St Mary's Church, Saffron Walden at 7.30pm on Monday 1<sup>st</sup> July. All candidates have been invited.

Voting matters for at least three reasons. (1) Through voting we contribute to an important collective decision, namely who shall exercise the power of government. (2) The act of voting symbolises an elector's right to participate in the whole political process. (3) The voting decision itself obliges me to pass judgement on the country's rulers and aspirant rulers.

In reaching that decision there are three major directions in which a Christian might look, to God and his truth as revealed in the Bible, to the world around us, and within our own attitudes and motives. We look to the Scriptures not because they contain any clear political catechism but because the fundamental truths they teach must underlie our approach to politics. They say that government is the major social institution through which God sustains justice in the world. They affirm the breadth and depth of Divine concern for justice. They reveal God as sovereign, at work in this world in all sorts of surprising ways, not only through the Church or even through Christian people.

Our decision as voters must be influenced by what we learn about the world around us. When the Old Testament prophets spoke, they did so on a sharp understanding of the world around them. Having a good general grasp of what is going on enables us to weigh the claims of the political parties, noting what manifestoes omit as well as what they promise.

The Christian voter must also do some self examination. In general the parties appeal to the voter's sense of personal advantage but Christians must vote unselfishly. How and why we decide is therefore an indicator of the degree to which we are truly followers of Jesus. Voting simply to perceived personal benefit is plain sin. How I decide this time (compared perhaps to last time) shows where I have reached on the pathway of Christian discipleship.

Applying this involves scrutinizing policies and people. Everyone seems to agree that we need a healthier nation, but what does that look like? The

differences between parties can seem small and are generally ones of emphasis. Whatever choice you make, make it an informed and reflective choice. And make a choice.

Jeremy

## **New Team Vicar Announcement**

We are delighted that The Rev'd Lynda Sebbage has been appointed as Team Vicar with the Saffron Walden team, with special responsibility for the parishes of Debden and Wimbish with Thunderley (subject to the usual statutory checks). She comes to us from the Diocese of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich, with excellent parish experience, and a passion for caring for God's Creation, as well as interest in art history. Please pray for Lynda and her husband as they prepare to move. We expect Lynda's licensing will be in October and will confirm dates as soon as possible.

The Ven Kate Peacock, Archdeacon of Stansted

## **Prayers for July**

*provided by the Prayer Team*

Lord help us to be your eyes

so we can see clearly what you would have us see.

Help us to listen with your ears

so we can hear clearly what you would have us hear.

Help us to speak with your tongue

so we always speak the words you would have us speak.

Help us to love with your heart

so we always love as you have commanded us.

Amen

## **The New Editor of Parish News**

Please see the letter from the Editor-designate on page 23.

## Sort this ruddy weather out!

“If anyone can sort this ruddy weather out, they’d definitely get my vote!” I woke to hear these closing words on Farming Today two days after the General Election was called. Spoken by a farmer with passion and exasperation, they struck a deep chord with me.



Having sailed across every ocean of the world, helping through vast cloud formations and powerful storms, I know that the fate of humanity lies in our oceans. They drive all our weather events: the incessant rainfall of our endless Spring, the floods, the hurricanes and even the droughts. Every drop of rain falling on our heads has evaporated from an overheated ocean.

You might also have heard the farmer in Lincolnshire in despair that his farm had been under water since autumn. He had lost his winter crop and was not able to plant his summer crop either. Worse still, the absence of air in the soil meant that all the countless billions of aerobic micro-organisms in his soil had died, leaving it putrifying.

Do you remember Rambling Syd Rumpo on ‘Round the Horne’ in the sixties repeatedly saying: “The answer lies in the soil!”? He was so right!

Unfortunately you don’t hear our politicians talking about our soil or our oceans, or acknowledging with humility that our future is utterly bound up with them.

Some of you will have noticed with horror the steep rise in the price of olive oil. Drought has wrecked olive harvests in Spain and Italy and will continue to wreck others. As a species we inherited a beautifully balanced,

productive planet, but we will now have to pay the price in steeply rising food prices until our oceans are allowed to cool.

At every step, however, political action is blocked by massive vested interests. There is no restraint built into the capitalist system that evolved in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Maximising profits for shareholders is the sole fiduciary duty of company directors. They have no duty to our ecosystems or to humanity.

Within that model, political parties vie with each other about who can be trusted to generate the most growth. But their sort of growth simply doesn't fit on one planet. We urgently need '**One Planet Economics**'! An economic system that will actually fit on our only planetary home.

Whichever government is elected, that will be their challenge. But first they will need to be open and honest about the problem.

It is no secret that I am standing for election as this magazine gets published. I am doing so with absolutely no hope of winning. For the sake of my children and grandchildren, I am doing the little I can to ameliorate the future they, and all of us, face. To be honest, I do so in deep despair because I can see no sign whatsoever that anyone is 'going to sort this ruddy weather out'!

Edward Gildea, Eco Team Leader

*Photograph: Edward Gildea*

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## 15<sup>th</sup> July St Swithun (or Swithin) - saint for a rainy day

St Swithun is apparently the saint you can blame for rainy summers. It is said that if it rains on his special day, 15<sup>th</sup> July, it will then rain for 40 days after that. It all began when Swithun was made Bishop of Winchester in 852 by King Ethelwulf of Wessex. It was an important posting: Winchester was the capital of Wessex, and during the 10 years Swithun was there, Wessex became the most important kingdom of England.

During his life, instead of washing out people's summer holidays, and damping down their spirits, Swithun seems to have done a lot of good. He was famous for his charitable gifts and for his energy in getting churches built. When he was dying in 862, he asked that he be buried in the cemetery of the Old Minster, just outside the west door.

If he had been left there in peace, who knows how many rainy summers the English may have been spared over the last 1000 years. But, no, it was decided to move Swithun. By now, the 960s, Winchester had become the first monastic cathedral chapter in England, and the newly installed monks wanted Swithun in the cathedral with them. So finally, on 15 July 971, his bones were dug up and Swithun was translated into the cathedral.

That same day many people claimed to have had miraculous cures. Certainly everyone got wet, for the heavens opened. The unusually heavy rain that day, and on the days following, was attributed to the power of St Swithun. Swithun was moved again in 1093, into the new Winchester cathedral. His shrine was a popular place of pilgrimage throughout the middle ages. The shrine was destroyed during the Reformation and restored in 1962. There are 58 ancient dedications to Swithun in England.

Parish Pump

*Photograph by Andy Colebrooke, St Swithun's tomb in Winchester Cathedral*



## Radwinter Road Cemetery, Saffron Walden, CB11 3HU

Are you looking for a final resting place for a loved one? The Cemetery at Radwinter Road is an oasis in the town which is open 24/7 and there is tranquillity within.

Further information on burials is available from The Cemetery Officer at Saffron Walden Town Council, Saffron Walden, CB10 1HR Telephone: 01799 516501 or email [enquiries@saffronwalden.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@saffronwalden.gov.uk)

Our local Cemetery is a peaceful space which offers a natural environment for all types of wildlife and as a result is an important nature conservation resource in the town. Daily maintenance and gardening are carried out which ensures the space is both clean and tidy, where residents and visitors can visit for peace and reflection.

The Cemetery is divided into different areas; Lawn cemetery, Traditional area, Garden of Remembrance, scattered ashes, and areas for children and young people. There is also a separate section for War graves which is cared for by The Commonwealth War Graves Commission. A small well-appointed Chapel is available to hire.

<https://saffronwalden.gov.uk/services/cemetery/>



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## Proposed New Lighting

The results from the recent consultation meetings on the concept design for the new lighting show that there is overwhelming support for the project. We also received a number of very helpful questions and comments. Thank you to all who attended a meeting, all who sent in feedback forms and all who viewed the information that we made available on the church website. The project webpage had 736 views up until Monday 27<sup>th</sup> May! From the forms received, all of the feedback was supportive of the project moving forward. 98.6% were either enthusiastic about the proposals or in support and 2.6% were content for the project to proceed but wanted the PCC to note their comments.

These results and comments were presented to and discussed by the PCC on Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> June. The PCC approved the project to move forward, noting the comments made and asked the Lighting Team to address all of the comments received with our lighting designer. The next steps are to carry out the detailed design and we expect this work to proceed quite quickly over the summer. The detailed design will define the exact location of the new lights and control panels, how the lighting will be controlled, the location of the electronics which will power the lights, which lights will also be emergency lights and where the batteries which power them in an emergency will be located and much more too! The detailed design will be reviewed by the PCC and once approved we will be able to apply for approval to install the new lighting and to go out to tender to get a firmer price for the work. Overall, we're still looking at installation in 2025 assuming that the fundraising goes well.

With respect to fundraising, we will be making a number of applications to Trusts and Foundations for grants and plan to hold a Gift Day for the project later in the year, most likely in September or October. More details will follow on the Gift Day in next month's Parish News. The fundraising will be a considerable amount of work and we are keen to have some more members of the Fundraising Team. If you're good with paperwork and form filling, you could help us with a grant application or two. If you think you may be able to help to move this project forward, help make a huge difference to the welcome we offer and to the ambience and atmosphere in St Mary's, please do feel free to talk with me to find out more.

The team would also greatly value your prayers for the project and Paula Griffiths has written the prayer which follows, which we have made available at the back of church. We also propose to hold some prayer

sessions for the project leading up to the Gift Day and more information on these will also be in the next Parish News.

*Jesus said "I am the Light of the World. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."*

*John Chapter 8, v 12*

God our Father, who spoke at the beginning of creation, saying, "Let there be light", we give you thanks for our church building and for the way it speaks of you. Help us, we pray, as we seek to bring new light to this building. May it be light which speaks of your Light; light which opens the eyes of all who come to worship or to wonder; light which illumines the building and our many activities and reflects your eternal glory.

Give your skill, we pray, to the design team; to all who will work to install the equipment; and give us your wisdom and encouragement in all our discussions, that this work may be completed to your praise and glory: in the name of your Son, Jesus Christ, the Light of the World.

Amen.

Steve Hasler





## **FRIENDS OF THE PARISH CHURCH**

The Friends of the Parish Church is a very active group and has been so for over 90 years. We are able to help financially with minor and major projects at St Mary's. They range from the new Advent candle which we have just purchased to a substantial sum to help the proposed Lighting Project.

Almost 40% of our members have active and varied roles in the Church. We have a bookstand with an assortment of items on sale and next to that a dedicated noticeboard which will keep you up to date on our many activities. We are also on the Church website under "Groups" so do take a look. If you would like to learn more pick up a leaflet from the bookstand this also includes an application form to **join us**. Just hand it to any of the Friends Council members or pop in the Parish Office letterbox. If you feel that you would like to leave us a legacy there are forms available on the bookstand for this too.

Chairman: Denis Tindley, Secretary: Pamela Mugliston, Treasurer: Sandra Marsh

**MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTIONS:** Polite reminder that membership fees were due at the end of March, except for those set up to run from other months of the year. Your fees are a vital contribution to both The Friends and consequently St Mary's so we much appreciate your continued loyalty.

**FUND RAISER:** We are still looking for ideas for a Fund Raiser at some point during the year. Would you like to take part? Please let Pamela know on [pjmteddybear@btinternet.com](mailto:pjmteddybear@btinternet.com)

**THE FRIENDS CATHEDRAL TRIPS:** We are off to **St Albans Cathedral on 30<sup>th</sup> August** where we will have a morning tour then back on the coach and head to Ware where we will lunch in a hostelry on the river. After lunch we walk through their garden and onto a boat for a 2 hour trip with commentary. Bring your binoculars as we go through areas well known for its large varieties of birds. Should be a good day out. Watch this space for plans for 2025.

### **THE FRIENDS AGM SUNDAY 8<sup>th</sup> SEPTEMBER**

Note for your diary. Do come along to the AGM which will be after the 10.30am service at 11.45am in the Parish Rooms. Catch up on the latest news, bring your ideas along for the coming year including a fund raiser, yet to be arranged. Your participation is important to the Friends and your ideas are invaluable. See you there.

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## Gelio's Anthology of Obscure Proverbs



This month I have two proverbs for you about nature. The first one is from England and is very ecological, and the second from America is very 'folksy'.

**'Nature does nothing in vain.'**

And

**'If you want to clear the stream, get the hog out of the spring.'**

# The Calendar

*This calendar is provisional. See The Grapevine or the church website for the latest information.*

## St Mary's, Saffron Walden

One service in church each Sunday is streamed on YouTube [Y]: details on the church website. Coffee is served after the Sunday 10.30am services.

### Wednesday 3 July

1.10pm Lunchtime Concert - Arwen Newband *violin*; Anna Le Hair *piano*

### Thursday 4 July

10am Silent Prayer in North Chapel

### Sunday 7 July

8am BCP Holy Communion

9.15am Wiggle Church in Parish Rooms

10.30am Holy Communion [Y]

6.30pm H2H: Youth-led Service for all in Parish Rooms



### Wednesday 10 July

1.10pm Lunchtime Concert - Nigel Foster and Elizabeth Mucha *piano*

### Sunday 14 July

8am BCP Holy Communion

10.30am Second Sunday Holy Communion [Y]

6.30pm Choral Evensong - *Dyson in D; Stanford: For lo, I raise up*

### Wednesday 17 July

1.10pm Lunchtime Concert - Benjamin Carnell *cello*

### Sunday 21 July

8am BCP Holy Communion

10.30am Holy Communion [Y]

4pm Living Stones: Holy Trinity, Littlebury

### Wednesday 24 July

1.10pm Lunchtime Concert - Oliver King *organ*

### Sunday 28 July

8am BCP Holy Communion [Y]

10.30am Family Service

6.30pm Taizé Service



## Regular weekday services at St Mary's

### Tuesdays

5pm Evening Prayer by Zoom, see weekly bulletin for login details

### Wednesdays

8am Morning Prayer

9.30am Holy Communion (with Prayers for Wholeness and Healing on the 1st Wednesday of the month)

## St James', Swards End

### Sunday 7 July

10.30am Holy Communion

### Sunday 21 July

10.30am Patronal Festival - Morning Praise



## St John's, Little Walden

### Sunday 14 July

10.30am Family Service

### Sunday 28 July

10.30am Holy Communion



**YOU in the PEW** interviewed by Chris Bishop**Sue Birchall**

I was brought up in a happy Army family with frequent house moves. We attended local Anglican churches often in the camps where we were living both at home and abroad. Attendance at a very Anglican boarding school cemented my faith, but in my early years I attended a variety of different types of denominations and worship styles. After marrying David in 1979 we moved to Malawi where again we attended the local Anglican church. Our 3 years there were a wonderful time in our lives, and we were able to visit South Africa more frequently, where I got to know David's family well. I became very involved running a mobile blood collection service for the local hospital in Blantyre with all sorts of experiences driving a truck around the dirt roads of South Malawi.

Our 2 daughters were born when we lived in Chobham, Surrey, and we came to live in Saffron Walden in 1994 due to David's work commitments.

St Mary's was the obvious church to attend for us, and we have been grateful members of the congregation ever since. We love being part of the church family and playing our part as much as we can. Both our daughters have been married in St Mary's and all three of our precious grandchildren baptized.

I have spent my working life as a Registered Nurse qualifying in 1978. District nursing initially, followed by specialist nursing across West Essex. Retirement has brought new challenges especially as a volunteer for Uttlesford Citizens Advice and lots of childcare for our 3 grandchildren who all live in SW. Our garden also takes up a huge amount of time.

One of the most significant activities for enriching my faith used to be VBS. Sadly it is no longer running, but I was a Tigers tent helper for many years. Being with members of other churches in SW was very valuable and we all had lots of fun with the children entrusted to our care.

I am truly privileged to have my rock of a husband David beside me in every part of my life at home and in St Mary's. We have always worshipped together and have enjoyed visiting churches abroad and at home.

I would love to have the motto "Do not put off until tomorrow what you can do today" but sadly that is not the case. I am a terrible procrastinator. My uncomplicated faith leads me to "Trust in the Lord". So far that has served me well through good times and bad.

## 'He gave us eyes to see them'

### Flowers – the beauty of the Lord

We give thanks for God's blessings in all that the earth yields us. Those blessings are focused in this wonderful painting of Jan Davidsz de Heem. He was born in Utrecht in Holland in 1606 and studied art under his father's guidance. De Heem then moved to Antwerp, where for the rest of his life he created paintings of such beauty and depth that one of them – a portrait of Prince William III surrounded by blossoms and fruits - received the highest price ever paid for a painting at that time.

In the 'Vase of Flowers' de Heem has gathered together a bouquet of variegated flowers and



plants for our delight. Time stands still in his painting in two ways. First, these thirty-one blooms could never have flowered at the same time, but through the magical touch of the artist, they do for us. Caught on canvas, they are as fresh and vibrant as the day they were painted in 1645.

But there are signs that the gifts of nature do wither and die, as we look closely and see on the marble slab a snail. Nearby is a salamander eyeing his next meal as a spider hangs on a thread from one of the flowers. In the centre, another snail looks at his food, the beautiful and rare red and white tulips. Yet we look again and see also signs of new life: the reeds of wheat are symbols of the Eucharistic bread; the caterpillar and butterfly on the striking white poppy at the top are signs of resurrection; and the peas in their pod and the blackberries mark out the fruitfulness of creation.

The artist shows us a glorious range of flowers - some well-known, others more exotic and brought back to Holland through the colonial expansion of the 16<sup>th</sup> century. Tulips and poppies dominate, but to the left are some small-scented roses. Each is a testimony to the beauty and goodness of the world we live in.

100 years later, Christopher Smart wrote in 'Jubilate Agno': 'For the flowers are great blessings...for the flower glorifies God...for the flowers are peculiarly

the poetry of Christ.'

And 200 years later Gerard Manley Hopkins wrote: 'I do not think I have ever seen anything more beautiful than the bluebell I have been looking at. I know the beauty of our Lord by it.'

And we, in our own century, can echo poet and painter as we praise God, the author of such flowers and plants that make up a world of 'all things bright and beautiful.'

Michael Burgess (Parish Pump inc. the photograph)

## Film Club: 'The Old Oak'

From the comfort and warm hospitality of Hazel and Andy Colebrooke's home a group of us have watched a number of films in recent months. In May we gathered together to watch 'The Old Oak' (2023).

Think 'Cathy come home', 'Kes', and 'I, Daniel Blake'. Director Ken Loach (87) uses untrained actors and brilliant photography to address, most powerfully, social dilemmas far removed from the experience of most of us. Were our film groups affected by the experience of this, his latest, and almost certainly his last, film? I hope so, though it was not an easy ride.

'The Old Oak' centres on a run-down pub in a former mining village in the North-East of England. There are many such communities in our generally affluent 'first-world' country. Villagers affected by the closure of the pits continue to live lives of poverty and deprivation with inadequate housing, and without the bare necessities of life – food, clothing, opportunities for work. Often the most strikingly affected are the children.

The story begins with a coach load of refugees being bussed in to live in some vacant council properties. They are then largely left to fend for themselves.

Being refugees, they have come from a war-torn country, and have known terrible violence and destruction. Many bereaved of family members, have



*Photograph: Alex Dos Santos, on pexels.com*

totally lost a way of life and livelihood. Journeying away from everything they arrive in a cold country. Are the hearts of their new neighbours any warmer?

Interesting dynamics are played out as locals encounter their new neighbours. Most of the refugees speak no English, but one is an educated young woman who is a gifted photographer. She uses this form of communication to build bridges. She encourages the pub to open its doors to a 'community café' where refugee and hungry locals can eat together and discover mutual compassion and occasional solutions to their dilemma.

This is no 'happily ever after' tale, but it does display most moving moments of humanity, generosity and genuine care, as well as some attitudes of hard-hearted extremist views and threats to safety.

Fear and resentment seem to be to the fore in 21<sup>st</sup> century Britain in regard to the needs of those from foreign countries... and those closer to home. Films and documentaries have sometimes helped to highlight the worst of the recent mistakes and omissions for us: the Windrush scandal, the Grenfell Tower fire, the Post Office....

Unwanted children exiled to Australia, unmarried Mums having children removed at birth, and the treatment of immigrant workers have been the subject of past films that educate and shock. How hard we find it to maintain an attitude of compassion for the foreigner in our midst. How easily we are blinded by political 'solutions' that disregard common humanity.

'Make love, not war', was the message of the 1960's. Where is the bravery of the 1940's and 1950's? How would the heroes of the Normandy landings view us now?

Now, in the 2020's will we allow our hearts to be broken and our courage rekindled through films such as 'The Old Oak'? Will we rediscover the Christ hidden in faces of suffering humanity and return his love for us, by giving up something of our own comfort and complacency? I wonder if I will – will you?

Tricia Troughton

### Quote, Unquote

Cricket is the game which the English, not being a spiritual people, have invented to give themselves some concept of eternity. - *Lord Mancroft*

In old age I spend my time at the opticians, the pharmacy, and Greggs. Life is just specs, drugs, and sausage rolls! - *Dean Mark Oakley*

## St Mary's Music News

The younger members of the choir were much in evidence at Choral Evensong on 12 May. 3 members of the Junior Choir – Chrissie, Hoi Hoi and Nam Nam – received their surplices and Harry (a former Junior) was commissioned as a Choral Scholar. Harry, and Junior chorister Poppy, sang solos in the service, and Organ Scholar Ziyi played a significant amount of the musical accompaniments. Poppy has become the new Head Chorister for a year. Congratulations all round.

In April the choir and congregation took part in the Listening Exercise. The many pages of data accumulated have been analysed into a draft report which is now being considered by Jeremy Trew and the PCC.

Meanwhile, although the period from Easter to the end of August is relatively quiet for the choir, the SMMA is very busy. The spring coffee concert series has given way to the 8 summer lunchtime concerts which started on 5 June, where the music is always uplifting, and the “meal deal” available from 12.30pm is as economical as, and probably more delicious than, any other available in the town. On Wednesday 3 July Arwen Newband and Anna Le Hair will be performing on violin and piano, on 10 July there will be a piano concert by Nigel Foster and Elizabeth Mucha, on 17 July Benjamin Carnell will give a cello concert, and on 24 July the indefatigable Oli King will be playing the organ.

Before then, we shall have enjoyed Jonathan Scott's organ concert, and many of the choir – and, we hope – the congregation, will have attended the Come and Sing workshop and performance of Dido & Aeneas at Abbey Lane, masterminded by Philip Sunderland. On 23 June St Mary's will have hosted 5 organists over 3 hours for the Fete de la Musique, and members of the choir and the brass group will have participated in many of the pop-up musical events during the day. Oli King and Martin Huggett will have rounded off the June festivities on 29th with a Musical Entertainment.

Of course, when I say “relatively quiet”, the choir will still be singing at Sunday worship every week, including choral evensong, and other services such as Ascension Day and Corpus Christi. A recruitment video for younger members of the choir is in preparation, and new adult choristers are also very welcome to apply to Oli King. St Mary's remains a “no audition” choir, and we are a friendly bunch, so come and talk to him if you enjoy singing and feel you could help to support worship at St Mary's.

The draft Minutes of the April AGM will be published on the church website very shortly. Meanwhile, very best wishes to everyone from the SMMA for the summer break.

Ottilie Lefever

### **From the Editor-designate**

Andy Colebrooke, who has revived and edited the Parish News since 2019, but who now wishes to step back from the post, has kindly asked me to say a little about myself and my hopes for the future. I have worshipped in St Mary's since my wife Sarah and I were married there in the Olympic summer of 2012 – we managed to pick the hottest day of the year, but St Mary's was enviably cool, and we could hardly bring ourselves to step outside. Since then, we have been more-or-less regular attenders at the 8.00am Holy Communion services, where we have been made to feel very welcome. Since retiring from paid employment, I have subsequently served on the PCC, and been involved in other aspects of running this great church. My wife and I sometimes lock up the church, and are always struck by the reactions of impressed visitors.



When Andy took over the editorship of this magazine, he revolutionised not only its appearance but also its contents, to the extent that I found myself looking forward to the next edition (there are 10 every year) with expectancy. Saffron Walden has been lucky to have a professionally produced, well-written record of the past, the present and the future. He has created a format that I would very much like to continue, with an appropriate mixture of "Parish" and "News". The intention is to keep it as a free monthly A5 booklet, both in hard copy (at the back of the church) and on-line (in full colour). If there are any suggestions of how it might be improved, please let me know, either via the Office or by email to [jejpickthorn@gmail.com](mailto:jejpickthorn@gmail.com) .

John Pickthorn





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## Archive Group

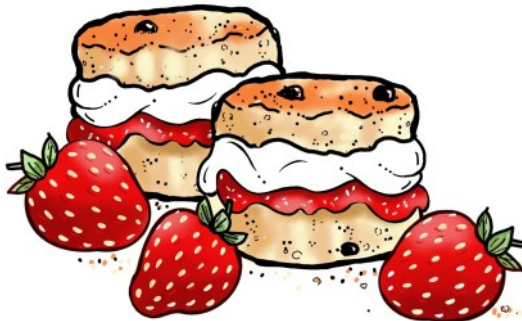
**A monthly record of pieces of interest from  
our past Parish Magazines**

**Compiled by our Archivist Canon Chris Bishop**

### A report from **July 1908**

A tea arranged for our Mother's Meeting by Mrs Merritt and Miss Stoughton, to take place in a meadow kindly lent by Mrs Turner Collin of Wendon was changed in its locality by heavy rain. Wednesday, the 8<sup>th</sup> of July, turned out wet, and meadows in rainy weather are not the happiest place for partaking of the familiar beverage and strawberries. We were quite equal to the emergency however, and at 4.30 some thirty mothers met at the Parish Room, had tea, followed by various games (for which prizes were given), and finished up with a strawberry feast. Everybody was in particularly good temper because as the mothers remarked, although the fun was to some extent spoilt the rain was making their husbands' potatoes grow, which put them in a good temper ! Seriously the rain was much wanted and everyone was delighted to see it, although it kept us all under cover.

The meeting will re-open in October. The actual date will be announced in due course, and it is gratifying to be able to state that some fresh applications for permission to join have already been made. May we once more remind our readers that all married women belonging to the Church will be heartily welcomed.



## If You Like a Lot of Chocolate on Your Biscuit, Join Our Club! (other confection is available)



My journey as a blood donor began a long time ago when a group of us workmates were **encouraged** to go along to the twice yearly visit of the Blood Donor clinic at the nearby church hall. It was convenient, and it felt like the right thing to do – I remember the self-satisfied feeling afterwards although I didn't think too deeply about it. I continued to donate until work circumstances changed and for one reason or another I stopped.

Maybe I missed the **encouragement** that was there before, and so for many years I did not donate and thought no more about it. Then, I was moved by my brother, a whole blood and platelets donor at the Cambridge Donor Centre, to start again. I have been turning up every 3 months ever since and am now in sight of my 50 donation milestone. You receive a badge and certificate for 25, 50 & 100x and after each donation there is a follow-up message of thanks. You also get told where your blood has been used, which is nice to know.

Approaching this milestone, I think on what a wonderful thing we are able to do here - actually giving a physical part of us to help others in need (a reflection of something much much greater perhaps). And it doesn't cost you anything (free car parking for donors at Cambridge) other than 1/8<sup>th</sup> of your vital fluid! I also think about the times in my own personal experience when the receiving of blood by people dear to me has been very useful, indeed life-saving.

But what has all this got to do with Club biscuits I hear you ask. Well it is the only time we are told that eating chocolate is good for us... post donation... with a cuppa!

If you are moved to become a donor then please check out the following link, and join our club!

NHS Blood Donation: [www.blood.co.uk](http://www.blood.co.uk)

Bill Jones

*This article first appeared in The Village Web and is reproduced with the author's permission*

## Death by organ voluntary vibrations

I was with some of the Choir the other night - we'd just had a lovely Taizé service at St Mary's. Ellie showed me this poor little (dead) bat up on the wall in the Choir 'tomb' room, behind the organ. It had been there a while apparently. I just had to take a photo of it as I love bats, dead or alive - preferably the latter!

Nell Hardingham



## The Hundred Parishes Society

*Editor: The Hundred Parishes Society aims to increase awareness, enjoyment and care of the Hundred Parishes (450 square miles of northwest Essex, northeast Hertfordshire and southern Cambridgeshire). It is not a church-orientated organisation - "Parishes" referring to administrative parishes. The Society is interested in all things historical and local.*



The 19th century was a period of great railway development. Several railways in The Hundred Parishes no longer exist although they played an important role during their hundred-year lifetime.

The Saffron Walden Railway was constructed in 1865. It branched off the London-Cambridge main line and ran from Audley End Station to Saffron Walden. In 1866 it was extended to Bartlow, to link up with the Stour Valley Railway. Following loss of passengers and freight from rail onto road, a report in 1964 by Sir Richard Beeching identified many lines that were now deemed uneconomic; many stations and miles of track were decommissioned, including the Saffron Walden line.

In Hertfordshire, a line ran from St Margarets to Buntingford, including stations at Braughing, Hadham, Standon and West Mill. The Buntingford Line was closed to passengers in 1964 and goods trains a year later. Buntingford Station, off Aspenden Road, is now a private residence.

Braughing station opened in 1863 and closed in 1964. It too is now a private residence but retains many of the original features including the platform, signal box and signals.

Another line ran from Bishop's Stortford via Dunmow to Braintree. Much of this is now the Flitch Way Country Park, a 15 mile route that was opened in 1994 and is largely maintained by a group of volunteers, Friends of the Flitch Way. It is used by walkers, horse riders and cyclists and is part of National Cycle Network Route 16. The demise of the original rail line can't be blamed on Beeching - it closed in 1952 for financial reasons.

Our website [www.hundredparishes.org.uk](http://www.hundredparishes.org.uk) includes a fuller exploration of local railways under the Articles section, while the Walks section includes routes from current railway stations – plus a new series of Quiet Lane walks that do not use footpaths.

Ken McDonald, Secretary



Ashdon Halt on the Saffron Walden line



Bartlow's former station



Braughing Station, the Buntingford Line



Buntingford's former station



Dunmow Cutting on the Flich Way



Takeley Station on the Flich Way

*Photographs by The Hundred Parishes Society*



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