

had a real flair for sport, and she loved horse-riding, ice-skating, golf, and latterly, croquet. In 1968 she married Sir Anthony Stainton who later became First Parliamentary Counsel. When Anthony died, Rachel moved to Otford and soon became active in the life of the village. She organised the stewarding at the Heritage Centre, maintaining the morale of the volunteers with great charm. She was Chairman of Sevenoaks Art Club, and she took an art 'A' level in her late eighties. Rachel had a love of nature; she cultivated a beautiful garden and always had a dog. She will be remembered by many for her generous hospitality and lively sense of humour. Her faith meant a great deal to her and she was an active member of St. Bartholomew's Church. She will be greatly missed, and we extend our condolences to her family.



Registers



Baptism (Our Welcome)

1st November Owen Thomas **Leadbeater**
1st November Marnie Charlotte **Leadbeater**

Wedding (Our Congratulations)

17th October Christopher David **Gubbins** and Joanne Louise **Bamford**

Funeral (Our Sympathy)

21st October Charles Sidney **Aldred** (aged 90)
23rd October Rachel Frances **Lady Stainton** (aged 94)
2nd November Marjorie Vera **Murray** (aged 83)
2nd November May Edith **Saunders** (aged 89)

Church Offerings in October 2009

Open Collections for charities and Church expenses £ 703.51
Freewill Offerings£ 7506.00

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Gloved hands grasp the blue head stocks
and ring the deafening bells for passers by.

Inside the church is lofty,
and its soaring windows glow with coloured glass.
The spacious Chancel's Easter Sepulchre
reminds us of death and resurrection.
Outside by the holy walls lies Willy Lott,
lulled in his sleep by the Bergholt bells,
and summoned by them to his resurrection
and the heavenly kingdom.

But we took our leave
and returned to our present earthly kingdom
and our bells.

YOUR VIEWS REQUESTED!

The recently formed editorial team are exploring new ideas for the magazine. These include an additional range of regular monthly articles such as focus on village clubs, societies and organisations with a different one being featured each month; a District and Kent County Councillor's article, in addition to the local Parish Council; a contribution from the Community Warden and local PCSO; a school's page with news from the schools and writing and drawings by the children; a book review; a devotional article; regular columnists; an article with news and comment at the Diocesan and national level of the Church; information from a different mission agency supported by St. Bart's each month; a recipe corner; a children's page; a favourite poem or hymn, with reasons for the choice...

If you have any comments or suggestions for the future development of the magazine, the editors would be delighted to hear from you. Please either send an e-mail to st.bartholomews@otford.net or a written note to the St. Bartholomew's Parish Office, The Green, Otford, Kent, TN14 5LD.

IN MEMORIAM

RACHEL, LADY STAINTON 1915-2009

Rachel was born at Ternhill in Shropshire. She went to boarding school in Berkshire, and then finishing school in Paris. After this she attended Chelsea College of Arts. In 1936 she married Tom Chambers who was an officer in the RAF stationed at Ternhill aerodrome. Their daughter, Diana, was born the following year. During the Second World War, Rachel joined the Mechanised Transport Corps and she became an expert lorry driver. She would also drive high-ranking officers to important meetings. Rachel

A Bellringer's Day

by Gillian Shilling

Summoned by Bobby, the Otford Guild went to ring Anglian bells.
Inworth first, dedicated to All Saint's,
and set on a low tree-girt hill.
Our sturdy ringers strode up the path thick with autumn gold,
and found a tiny church of pudding stone and ancient narrow bricks.
They climbed the tower and soon the church's narrow aisle
resounded to the peal of five great bells.
Inside the Saxon walls painted in part by mediaeval hand,
told the story of St. Nicholas,
and in an ancient stained glass window
grew the tree of life.

Next, to St. John the Baptist at Layer de la Haye.
A mediaeval church and modern reservoir side by side,
both important to their people.

From the sturdy tower with its twisting stair
can be seen the coast and Felixstowe.
Here six bells ring, with their wooden frame,
gifted to them by the monks of Colchester.
Silenced by an earthquake in Queen Victoria's day,
restored they ring with joy again.

The landlord of the Donkey and Buskin
provided splendid luncheon fare.
So now replete we sped into the next county
to Highham, a pretty village among neat fields.
Here St. Mary's church with well trimmed yews,
set back from the main street down a pleasant path.
Six bells again rang out, lighter in tone than the last
and very pleasing to the ear.
The eye was satiated too by cunning carvings
set along the beams,
whilst wooden poppyheads adorn the pews.

Last stop East Bergholt and St. Mary's Church!
Bergholt bells
Constable bells
Caged bells

For half a millennium waiting for their tower.
Five English giants inverted in their pits.
A tenor bell circled by his higher peers
all girt about by oaken beams
and caged by wooden bars and tiles.

Who's who in the Parish Church...

VICAR: Revd Richard Worssam, M.A. The Vicarage, The Green, Otford 523185
READERS: Mr Andrew Bratby, 39 Tudor Drive, Otford 525060
Mr Peter Downing, 3 Becketts Place, Otford 522327
Miss Dawn Hallam, 10 Flowerfield, Otford 526865
Mr Bill Lattimer, "Holmesdale", The Green, Otford 522058
Mrs Margaret Lidbetter, 17 Leonard Avenue, Otford 524831
Mr Brian Raynor, M.A., 5 Colets Orchard, Otford 523327
Mrs Betty Reed, 66 Willow Park, Otford 523439
PASTORAL ASSISTANTS: Mrs Susan Reid, "Burway", Sevenoaks Road, Otford 523234
Mrs Margaret Lidbetter, 17 Leonard Avenue, Otford 524831
Mrs Donna Worssam, The Vicarage, Otford 523185
HONORARY MINISTERS: Revd. David Casiot, M.A., 52 High Street, Otford 522588
Revd Chris Reed, M.A., 66 Willow Park, Otford 523439
CHURCHWARDENS Mr Derek Shilling, "Ivybank", Shoreham Road, Otford 522059
Mrs Janet Hunt, 14 Knighton Road, Otford 523820

Organist and Choirmaster: Mr Kevin Grafton, M.A., F.C.A., 34 Dartford Road, Sevenoaks 452117
Sacristan: Mr Tony Grogan, 93 Willow Park Otford 523649

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL

Vice Chairman: Mr Derek Shilling
Hon. Secretary: Mrs Susan Reid, "Burway",
Sevenoaks Road, Otford 523234
Hon. Treasurer: Mr Colin Fleetwood,
"Lorien", St Michael's Drive, Otford 523582
Freewill Offering Fund: Mr Brian Beacom,
39 Well Road, Otford 524304

PARISH OFFICE

Monday to Friday 10.30-12.30: Mrs Susan Reid,
Mr Clive Southgate, Otford 523185
Email: st.bartholomews@otford.net

CHURCH HALL

Manager and Booking Sec: Mr Robert Hunt,
14 Knighton Road, Otford 523820

MAGAZINE

Editorial team: Vicki Howie, Christine Malan,
Clive Southgate, Richard Worssam
523185
Hon. Treasurer: Mr John Miller, 7 Warham Road
Otford 523943
Advertisements: Mrs Hilary Fothergill,
7 Darnets Field, Otford 524120

BELLRINGERS: For all enquiries contact
The Tower Captain: Mrs Bobbie Fairclough,
"Vailima", St Michael's Drive, Otford 522696
or *Secretary:* Janet Whitehead, Otford 524088
Practice night: Thursday 7.45-9.15pm

YOUTH AND CHILDREN'S WORK

'First Steps' (for parents and pre-schoolchildren)
Contact: Najen Harris, Otford 522813

SUNDAY CLUB (Sundays at 10.00am)

Infant (3-7s): Donna Worssam, 524304
Junior (8-11s) Mags Southgate 524720
Senior (12-14) Liz Cole, 525404

FROGS (School years 7, 8 and 9)

Contact: Margie Torry, 524463

Young People's Fellowship

Contact: Dawn Hallam, 526865

OUTREACH

Chairman of Mission Committee:
Mr David Matthews, 01732 462485

CMS Correspondent: Revd. David Casiot,
522588

FEBA Correspondent: Miss Ruth Barclay,
522882

Children's Society:
Hon.Sec.: Mrs Sylvia Grafton, 01732 452117

Otford Benevolent Society:
Almoner: Mrs Christine Brauns, 524474

CHURCH COUNCIL

The Vicar and Churchwardens, Mrs Sam Barnett, Mrs Joan Beacom, Mr Chris Bishop, Miss Liz Cole, Mr David Crawley, Mr Colin Fleetwood, Miss Dawn Hallam, Mr Mark Holmes, Mrs Vicki Howie, Mr Bill Lattimer, Mr David Matthews, Mr Clive Southgate, Mrs Margie Torry, Mr Steve Vigis, Ex-Officio (Deanery Synod): Mrs Margaret Lidbetter, Mrs Pat Mills, Mrs Susan Reid.

SERVICES AT THE PARISH CHURCH IN DECEMBER

Please check service times carefully

Sunday in the Month				
FIRST	CW HC 8am	Morning Worship 10am	Christingle 4pm	-
SECOND	CW HC 8am	Holy Communion 10am	-	Choir Concert at 7.30pm
THIRD	CW HC 8am	Sunday Club & YPF Christmas Presentation and Nativity Play 10am	-	Service of Nine Lessons and Carols at 6.30pm
CHRISTMAS EVE	-	-	Crib Service 4pm	Christmas Communion 11.30pm preceded by carols at 11.10pm
CHRISTMAS DAY	Christmas HC 9am	Church Family Worship at 10.30am	-	-
FOURTH	BCP HC 8am	Holy Communion 10am	-	-

CW = Common Worship. BCP = Book of Common Prayer. HC = Holy Communion

Sunday Mornings

SUNDAY CLUB (for ages 3-14) with three groups:

Infant (3-7); Junior (8-11); Senior (12-14) all meet in the Church Centre during the 10.00 a.m. service, except on first Sunday when in Church.

CRËCHE: 0-2 years (every Sunday)

Sunday Evenings

YOUNG PEOPLE'S FELLOWSHIP every Sunday evening during term time in the Church Centre at 6.30 p.m. (except the second Sunday)

FROGS: 11-14 years, second Sunday of month 6 p.m. in Church Hall

Weekdays

HOLY COMMUNION

Every Wednesday 10.00 a.m. (BCP)
Saints Days and Holy Days as announced

If you would like to book a baptism or wedding, please contact the Church Office.

VICAR'S REST DAY: Monday

December 2009

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

- Morning Prayer will be said in Church on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays each week at 9.00 a.m.**
8.00 p.m. Homegroup ('Holmesdale' The Green)
- 9.30 a.m. 'First Steps' (Oxford Methodist Church Hall)
10.00 a.m. Holy Communion (BCP)

with over 1700 bookings each year. We do ask that the Treasurer attends the four quarterly Trustees meetings each year but these only last for about 1½ hours (and, sometimes, can even be interesting!). Please ring me, Ron Dullage, Secretary to the Trustees, initially and we'll progress things from there. You can contact me on either 01959 525181, 07887 780576 or e-mail me on ovmh.manager@otford.net.

SPOTLIGHT ON

PARISH COUNCIL NEWS

Chairman: Mr John Allen

Parish Clerk: Mrs B. Darby. Tel: Otford 524808

Many noticed that the clock on the front of the village hall disappeared for several weeks during the summer. The electric motor was worn beyond repair and no direct replacement existed - or was wanted because it was wired into the mains. It was also too heavy for the councillor who did the work to carry down a ladder! Rather than a direct replacement that would need adjusting twice a year, a battery powered, radio-controlled motor was sought. Unfortunately all the available stock were found to be tuned to a German radio station too far away and it took some time to get one that used the UK signal, hence the delay. However, it has passed the test of keeping time and recognising the end of Summer Time, and in future only the battery will have to be replaced when necessary.

The car park has been patched and the oil trap grating largely replaced during the school half term break. The whole surface now requires a top coating and it is intended to do this during a school holiday next year.

Looking back over this year one is aware of how much Otford owes to voluntary work. Many owe their existence to small committees where help is often sought but not received. Our three planters have looked splendid, and the flower borders on and near The Green also helped to make Otford more attractive throughout the year. Attractive front gardens give a village atmosphere as well as being enjoyable in themselves; even more clearly than traffic signs they show drivers they are in a residential area. Thanks are due to the Gardeners' Society for looking at all front gardens in Otford every year and selecting the best. The council provides the prizes.

Oxford has also benefited from the work of many people producing a Village Design Statement and, shortly, a Parish Plan. Such documents can assist councils in defending Oxford from unwelcome developments and clarify residents' wishes.

Due to the increasing flood of information on the web and the complications they cause in local government, there is increased need for people to follow the activities of other levels of government and legislation; it is very difficult for parish councillors alone to keep track of it all. There are limits to the work that parish councils can do to create a village that is pleasant in appearance and vibrant in its activities.

Christmas and the New Year are almost upon us and the parish council wishes all residents a happy Christmas and a peaceful but active New Year. JGA



ROUNDABOUT



The **Guide Christmas Post Box** will be in Otford Library between Friday 27th November and Friday 18th December, inclusive, during opening hours. A second box will be available in the Parish Council Office, Monday-Friday, between the same dates. All cards will be delivered by Brownies and Guides over the weekend 19th/20th December and all the proceeds will be divided between **Bradbourne Riding for the Disabled Association** and **St. John Ambulance, Kent**. Stamps will be 20p per card and all money will go to the chosen charities. This is an important year in Guiding as we are celebrating our Centenary and we would like our Christmas Post Service for the village to be really successful, so please give generously and support us by posting early.

Jeanette Woodrow-Clarke

Otford Primary School Christmas Bazaar will be on Saturday 5th December 2009 from 12 noon to 3p.m. Come and join the fun - Carol singing, Santa's Grotto, Teas, Crafts, and many other stalls.

Karen Wilson



Otford Evening WI Our last meeting of 2009 is on 10th December and this will be a very festive affair to which we have invited representatives from the other seven Institutes in our District. For 2010, a variety of interesting and unusual speakers (we hope) have been booked – make a note now to hear about “Kent Characters” on 14th January, have a chance to watch and sample “Simple Indian Cookery” on 11th March or on 8th July hear about “Kent in the 19th century” – surely a sharp contrast to today’s 21st century life! Visitors are always welcome to be with us, we meet at 7.30p.m. on the second Thursday of each month in the Otford Village Memorial Hall. And finally all our members wish you, our readers, a very happy Christmas and a healthy and peaceful New Year.

Brenda Young

Sevenoaks Embroiderers’ Guild The next meeting of the Guild will be on January 30th in the Village Memorial Hall, when Libby Smith will give a talk entitled *Beaded Tassels and Beyond*. The morning session begins at 10.00 a.m. (UFOs and WIPs) and the afternoon session at 2.00 p.m. Please note that we do not meet in December.

Sylvia Grafton (01732 452117)

Otford Village Memorial Hall needs a new Treasurer! Keith Stockman, who has been our Treasurer for about three years now, is finding that his new business venture is making it impossible for him to continue to look after the Village Hall’s finances as well. Keith has done a super job, not least in computerising all of our accounts, but we now need someone to take over. This really isn’t a particularly onerous task and would suit someone with a basic knowledge of accounting or book-keeping, a little time and a dash of public spiritedness. The Hall provides a tremendous facility for the community

- 3 **Material for the November magazine by today, please, to the Church Office, St Bartholomew’s Church Centre, The Green, Otford, Kent, TN14 5LD. st.bartholomews@otford.net**
- 5 8.00 a.m. Readers and Reverends Theological Breakfast (66 Willow Park)
- 6.30 & 9.00 p.m. Hopefest Presentations at the Stag Theatre
- 6 **The Second Sunday of Advent**
 - 8.00 a.m. **Holy Communion (CW)**
 - 10.00 a.m. **Morning Worship (CW)**
 - 4.00 p.m. **Christingle**
 - There will be no Evening service.**
- 7 7.45 p.m. Cameo home group (17 Leonard Avenue)
- 9 9.30 a.m. ‘First Steps’ (Otford Methodist Church Hall)
- 10.00 a.m. Holy Communion (BCP)
- 8.00 p.m. Finance and Standing Committee
- 11 7.30 p.m. Tree of Light service on The Green followed by refreshments in the Church Centre
- 13 **The Third Sunday of Advent**
 - 8.00 a.m. **Holy Communion (CW)**
 - 10.00 a.m. **Holy Communion (CW)**
 - 7.30 p.m. **Church Choir Concert (in Church)**
- 14 7.45 p.m. Cameo Christmas get together (17 Leonard Avenue)
- 15 8.00 p.m. Homegroup (‘Holmesdale’ The Green)
- 16 10.00 a.m. Holy Communion (BCP) with coffee afterwards
- 17 6.00 p.m. Russell House School Carol Service (in Church)
- 18 2.00 p.m. Otford School Christmas Service (in Church)
- 19 11.30 a.m. Wedding of Stephen Cole and Katie James
- 20 **The Fourth Sunday of Advent**
 - 8.00 a.m. **Holy Communion (CW)**
 - 10.00 a.m. **Sunday Club & YPF Nativity Play and Christmas Presentation**
 - 6.30 p.m. **Service of Nine Lessons and Carols followed by refreshments in the Church Centre**
- 21 7.45 p.m. Cameo - seasonal focus
- 23 10.00 a.m. Holy Communion (BCP)
- 24 **Christmas Eve**
 - 4.00 p.m. **Crib Service**
 - 11.10 p.m. **Carols followed by**
 - 11.30 p.m. **Midnight Choral Communion (CW)**
- 25 **Christmas Day**
 - 9.00 a.m. **Holy Communion (CW)**
 - 10.30 a.m. **Christmas Church Family Worship**
- 27 **The First Sunday of Christmas**
 - 8.00 a.m. **Holy Communion (BCP)**
 - 10.00 a.m. **Holy Communion (CW)**

Dates for your New Diary 2010!

Tuesday 19th January at 8.00 p.m. at St. Bartholomew’s Church there will be the traditional Week of Prayer for Christian Unity service.
Saturday 6th February is the date for the ‘Bartholomew’ Wind Band Concert in Church.

Vicar's Viewpoint



Dear Friends,

I recently came across a cartoon in which a weary woman shopper is shown resting for a moment with her arms filled with packages. She is in the middle of a very busy department store filled with other Christmas shoppers, and she is explaining the whole Christmas scene to her small son as follows, "No-one is quite sure how Christmas worked out like this, dear. Theologians are working very, very hard on that question right now."

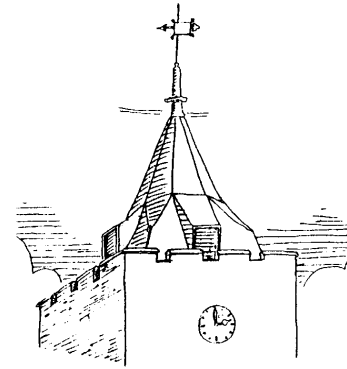
Does this scene feel familiar? If you are brave enough to make the pilgrimage to Bluewater or Lakeside this month you will probably find yourself in the middle of a similar situation. It seems to be an inevitable part of our preparations for Christmas; and of course, buying presents to give each other mirrors the most important dynamic of Christmas - a celebration of the wonderful gift that God has given us all in his Son Jesus.

However, all this busying around on the Christmas shopping trail takes its toll, as has been observed: "Nothing destroys the Christmas spirit faster than looking for a place to park." This is why the season of Advent is so important. It helps us to keep a proper perspective. The observance of Advent is an historic custom going back at least 1,500 years, and its ancient wisdom is just as relevant for us now as it was all those centuries ago. It is all about preparing ourselves for the coming of Christ. It encourages us to make room in our hearts and lives for Jesus. It helps us discern the real meaning of Christmas.

So in addition to those inevitable trips to the shops, do plan your visits to Church in this season of Advent as part of your preparations for Christmas. (Details are given on pages 2, 3 & 5). For the real issue which the woman in the cartoon was struggling to get to grips with is not how much we spend, but rather the way we spend Christmas. Our services during Advent leading up to Christmas Day will help us discover the true reason behind all our celebrations and festivities.

Your friend and Vicar,

Richard



FROM ST. BARTHOLOMEW'S CHURCH

Posada During Advent we shall be operating the South American 'Posada' scheme, whereby different families play host to a set of nativity figures which they then return to church for display on Christmas Eve, alongside the traditional Christmas crib.

The candlelit Christingle service will be held at 4.00 p.m. in Church on Sunday 6th December.

Tree of Light Service will take place on Friday 11th December when there will be a service on The Green at 7.30 p.m. followed by refreshments in the Church Centre. All are welcome and labels remembering those who have died may be obtained from the Parish Office in the High Street, or from Hospice in the Weald, for which organisation donations are invited.

The Choir Christmas Concert, including carols for choir and audience from across the world, will take place in church on Sunday 13th December at 7.30 p.m. Admission will cost £5, including refreshments, with no charge for under 16s. Please come and support the Choir - and bring a friend!

School Carol Services We look forward to welcoming local schools to church for their carol services: Russell House School on Thursday 17th December at 6.00 p.m. and Otford Primary School on Friday 18th December at 2 p.m.

Christmas Presentation and Nativity Play will be on Sunday 20th December at the 10.00 a.m. service. The Young People's Fellowship will be contributing to a Christmas presentation, and the Sunday Club will be performing a traditional Nativity play.

Service of Nine Lessons and Carols This popular choral service will be held on Sunday 20th December at 6.30 p.m. in Church followed by refreshments in the Church Centre.

Christmas Services

Christmas Eve

Crib service at 4.00 p.m.

Midnight Communion at 11.30 p.m. preceded by carols at 11.10 p.m.

Christmas Day

Holy Communion at 9.00 a.m.

Church Family Christmas Worship at 10.30 a.m.