

www.prestbury.net

Prestbury Parish Magazine

North Cheltenham
Team Ministry



February 2026

£1

Parish Directory

Team Rector

Revd Nicholas Bromfield 01242 232883
The Rectory, Tatchley Lane GL52 3DQ
nick.bromfield@northchelt.org.uk

Team Vicars

Fr David Lawrence-March
8 Boulton Road GL50 4RZ
fatherdlm@icloud.com

Revd Jacqueline Henson 01242 220053
The Rectory, Rectory Lane, Swindon Village
Cheltenham GL51 9RD
revjacquelinehenson@gmail.com

Reader

Linda Biggs 01242 510856
linda.biggs@northchelt.org.uk

Churchwardens

St Mary

Stewart Wright 07711 887317
stewart.wright@prestbury.net

Helen Mann 07814 638990
helen.mann@prestbury.net

St Nicolas

Janet Waters 01242 678458
janet.waters@prestbury.net

Margaret Compton 01242 235359
margaret.compton@prestbury.net

PCC Secretary

Stella Caney 01242 676143
stella.caney@northchelt.org.uk

PCC Treasurer

Philip Lasseter

Team Office admin@northchelt.org.uk 01242 244373

5 High Street, Prestbury, Cheltenham, GL52 3AR

When the office is unattended please leave a message on the answerphone

Baptisms (Christenings) & Weddings

may be arranged with the Team Office (*contact details above*)

Other Pastoral Matters & Reconciliation (Confession)

please contact one of the clergy (*telephone numbers above*)

Views expressed in this magazine are not necessarily those of the Editors, the Clergy, the Parochial Church Council, or of any authoritative body of the Church of England

*The Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical Parish of
St Mary and St Nicolas Prestbury Cheltenham - Registered Charity No 1130933*

continued inside back cover

Cover Picture:

Dearly Pre-Loved by Brian Wood

Our Charity Shop in Prestbury High Street

Reflections from the Reverend Jacqueline

I wonder if you have a bucket list? A list of things you would really like to fit into your lifetime. It might be a sky dive or to visit far-off shores. Whatever our age and skills, there is always time for a new experience. Perhaps 2026 will be the year when your plans will be put into action.

At the beginning of February in the church, we celebrate Candlemas, or the Presentation of Christ in the Temple. This festival marks the end of Christmas. It was the Jewish tradition to make sacrifice in thanksgiving for the birth of a son. We hear the story of two elderly people, Simeon and Anna, who have waited all their lives to meet the Messiah. This was the only thing on their bucket list and they have waited patiently for years. When they see the Holy family, they rejoice because they recognise the baby Jesus as their Messiah and give thanks knowing that their wait is over.

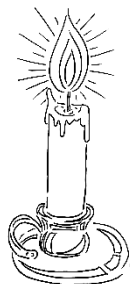
They also predict that the child will have a turbulent life but that He will save those who believe in who He is. These two older people see the light of Christ for the first time and it shines brightly for them in their darkness.

Candlemas leaves us with an important message which is that we are never too old or too young to do God's will. The Candlemas heroes are the baby Jesus and two elderly people, Simeon and Anna, both of whom have waited years to see the Christ Child. They were in God's eyes not too old to proclaim the Christ. The baby Jesus is also not too young to offer God's salvation to us. Candlemas is a festival celebrating not only the salvation offered by Christ but the wisdom of the elders in recognising who that baby really was. Simeon and Anna also prove that we are never too old to change our minds or to see something afresh or with new eyes.

Both ends of life are represented in this feast of Candlemas; this festival shows us that in God's eyes, age is no barrier to proclaiming his truth and salvation. It may not suit our human logic that it is the elderly and the very young acting as prophets of God, but it suits God's logic and shows us that God will use us as He thinks best, regardless of our age, gender or background. We don't need to lead exciting, eventful lives to meet with Christ. We are all welcomed for who we are, just as we are.

So as we venture further into the New Year, hear the message of Christ's light being for everyone and shine brightly in your endeavours, whatever they are.

Rev Jacqueline



This month's theme is GOOD HUMOUR

Advertisements




CHORLEY'S AUCTIONEERS
Cotswolds Heritage since 1862

Complimentary Auction Valuations
Contact us today for your valuation

Probate & Insurance Valuations
Monthly Auctions of Art & Antiques

Prinknash Abbey Park | GL4 8EU
01452 344499 | info@chorleys.com


chorleys.com



Ying Gibb Dip.FHP
Registered Foot Health Practitioner
Home Visits

Nail trimming	Nail Problems
Ingrown toenails	Fungal nail
Corns	Calluses
Athletes foot	Cracked heels
Diabetes foot issues	Verrucas
Foot care advice	

Ph 07478939108



ying_london2000@yahoo.co.uk




GARDEN DESIGN
by GUY

Specialist styles:
Mediterranean and Cottage Garden

I will assess your current arrangement and work with you to create a vibrant, cheerful and welcoming space to relax

- Consultation
- Site survey
- Concept plan
- Scaled working plan

01242 702212 07719 283564

TURN TO US FOR HELP AND SUPPORT

In your time of need we'll take care of all the funeral arrangements.
Call us 24 hours a day.

- Pre-Arranged Funeral Plans
- Memorial & Headstone advice and products

SELIM SMITH & CO FUNERAL DIRECTORS

74 Prestbury Road, Cheltenham GL52 2DJ

01242 525383




Part of Dignity plc. A British Company.

C1 To advertise your business please contact advertising@prestbury.net

Patronal Festival at St Nicolas

Sunday 7 December 2025

At St Nicolas we all love to have a party especially on our Patronal Festival.

St Nicolas day is on the 6th of December and this year we moved it to the following day and celebrated with a bring-and-share lunch. So we didn't have long to wait between the end of the morning service and lunchtime, we started the service at 10:30 instead of 09:30.

As you can see from these pictures we gathered in St Nicolas Hall for lunch.



Good Humour

As always, first define the question:

What is good humour?

Aristotle claims that virtuous jokers are 'witty' yet 'tactful'; they are quick to make and enjoy a joke, but not when doing so would cause pain to those around them.

So, where might we find an example of this within the North Cheltenham Team Ministry?

When my late wife, Jackie, and I moved to this area, we were drawn to St Nicolas' Church by its relaxed and easy atmosphere. I suggest that this atmosphere has become a central part of the worship at St Nicolas'. Some of the congregation say that until you have committed a Faux pas (e.g. your phone ringing during the service, leaving the microphone on whilst expressing opinions in the vestry, turning over too many pages and reading the wrong passage from the bible/lectionary), you are not a full member of St Nicolas'.

The usual reaction of the congregation in these circumstances is to gently laugh and maybe, for someone, to make a witty comment. Where else might such supportive expression for the person involved be found? I would suggest amongst the family or a group of good friends, and this surely reinforces the family atmosphere of St Nicolas'.

This family atmosphere may, further, be enhanced by the clergy gently making a joke at the expense of church members. Trickier, but if handled with tact, successful in bridging the gap between altar and congregation. Though I do wonder sometimes why I seem to be the main subject of such jests, commenting on my red shirt and trousers when presenting the Pentecostal dove (with the flames painted as if rising from the dove's mouth); pursuing a reference I have made in the notices, particularly when I have got the date wrong or promised free lunch when there isn't one, or having to be woken up* by the priest shouting John; J o h n; JOHN, in order to get me to put the lights on!!! Such interactions seem to cement the clergy and the congregation welt.

Is this exclusive to St Nicolas'? No, of course not, but I would suggest that the open octagonal worship space creates an amphitheatre for such humour to flourish. We are very fortunate in the ministers, sisters and brothers of the congregation, and the architectural shape of the building.

Now, however, it is for the members of the congregation themselves to confirm or dispute my claims and with the above in mind, and based on my previous experience, they surely will! !!!!

All I ask is that they assess my comments against Aristotle and a more recent definition:

Good humour involves maintaining a cheerful attitude and being able to laugh at jokes or minor setbacks with an unoffended, light-hearted attitude. (AI Overview).

John Moles

Footnotes: Faux pas literally means "false step" in French.

* I was not asleep, merely deeply engaged in designing an installation beneath the altar to remember D-Day, etc.

My response at school when accused of not concentrating was always, "I am concentrating, Sir, but on my design for the new magazine rack etc, for the library, which I realise is not what you were necessarily teaching, but necessary for the efficient running of the library etc.!" This usually resulted in a shake of the head, but I am afraid not very good GCE grades!!

Humour in Times of Stress

At the Battle of Copenhagen, in 1801, the Danes had drawn their fleet up in line astern along the shoaly waters off their coast. The British Admiral, Sir Hyde Parker, was in charge of the squadron, and they were being badly mauled when, seeing Vice Admiral Horatio Nelson in the thick of the fighting, Parker sent a signal indicating that, should Nelson wish to, he could honourably withdraw. Now Nelson had chosen HMS Elephant, a 74-gun ship, as his flagship, choosing it for its shallower draft to navigate the tricky waters. As the signal was reported to Nelson by a midshipman, a cannonball struck splinters off Elephant's mainmast. Nelson remarked,

'This is warm work, but I would not be elsewhere for thousands of pounds!'

It was at this point that he raised his telescope to his damaged eye and clearly stated, for all to hear, that,

"I see no signal!"

He then remarked,

"You know, Captain Foley, I have only one eye. I have a right to be blind sometimes." I would suggest that these witty responses strengthened the resolve of the men, who were under intense fire, and the saying quickly ran through the ship about him, and he successfully led his flotilla to overcome the Danish fleet.

John Moles

Footnote:

Admiral Nelson lost full sight in his right eye at the Siege of Calvi in Corsica in 1794, when flying stone and sand from a nearby cannon blast struck him, but he didn't lose the eye itself, only clear vision. (AI Overview)

There are some suggestions, in academic papers, that putting the telescope to his injured eye was below Nelson's status as a Vice Admiral. In my opinion, this is exactly part of 'The Nelson Touch', which involved his officers, 'His band of Brothers', equally with his care for the common seaman. He was, as we well know from the Battle of Trafalgar, as vulnerable as his men to injury and sudden death, to joke at this point is surely a great fillip to all around him and if the Admiral can remain cheerful in such conditions, then surely,

"Nothing much can be wrong?"

SENSE OF HUMOUR



Ronald Searle

‘Getting mythology wrong is my Hercules ankle.’ Olaf Falafel

‘There must be something very strange in a man who, if left alone in a room with a tea cosy, doesn’t try it on.’ Billy Connolly

‘The person who knows how to laugh at himself will never cease to be amused.’ Russ Dudley

‘Honest criticism is always hard to take particularly from a relative, a friend, an acquaintance or a stranger.’ Franklin P. Jones

‘Today is the tomorrow you worried about yesterday.’ Mark Twain

I suppose I could fill this page with what I regard as humorous remarks and it might leave you and me in a better humour. But jokes and comedy are not really the same as good humour, although a comic turn can leave us in a better mood and perhaps more able to laugh at our own foibles and those of others. Real geniality has to do with equanimity and a sense of proportion. ‘Laugh, and the world laughs with you;/ Weep, and you weep alone.’ There is no point sulking through the inevitable, as adolescents later learn.

When you see someone’s face in repose, it usually seems thoughtful and impassive, if not downright melancholy and sad. In company, however, expressions become animated and expressively congenial. Is good humour then an act we put on for the benefit of others and our social lives? There is no point in being morose throughout a party, although some people seem to manage it. So what does this good humour really consist of? It can be an

element of good manners and shows consideration of and for others. No point in being a 'misery-guts', Mr Glum or indeed Eeyore.

"Good morning, Eeyore," said Pooh.

"Good morning, Pooh Bear," said Eeyore gloomily. "If it is a good morning, which I doubt," said he.

"Why, what's the matter?"

"Nothing, Pooh Bear, nothing. We can't all, and some of us don't. That's all there is to it."

"Can't all what?" said Pooh, rubbing his nose.

"Gaiety. Song-and-dance. Here we go round the mulberry bush."

Is good humour then determined by temperament and disposition? Positive and optimistic or gloomy and realistic? Sanguine or melancholic, phlegmatic or choleric, as the four medieval humours dictated?

I have a taste for those writers and artists who can amuse me with their lively humour and wit. Among cartoonists, I have much enjoyed the acerbic and whimsical work of Ronald Searle (see above), man and boy I have loved Giles cartoons, and I find the surreal humour of Gary Larson ('The Far Side') witty and entertaining. Matt of the *Telegraph* can often hit the nail on the topical head. Peter Brookes in *The Times* is also one of my favourites, as is McBill who regularly produces brilliant covers for *The Week*.

Blithe and genial good humour can be found but I also tend to enjoy humour with an edge to it, sometimes cutting or acerbic or what's the point? Hence my enjoyment of satire as well as comedy. We enjoy listening to *Dead Ringers* on BBC Radio 4 and even went to a sold-out matinée in Malvern to see and hear the cast perform live on stage in an extra performance put on to meet demand during their anniversary tour. Astonishingly good scripts and vocal mimicry were retrieved from the past 25 years or so. How can one person imitate both Donald Trump and Boris Johnson or morph his natural voice from one to the other?

And why do we feel the need to mock our leaders? Partly because it's public money they are spending with a recklessness and incompetence that proves that it's not their own squillions they are squandering. Increasingly, taxes look like licensed larceny. As Mark Millar puts it in a recent *Spectator*, 'This nightmarish totalitarian rabble has done more damage to our country than Margaret Thatcher and the Luftwaffe put together.' His 'apolitical' wife has also turned against the government because 'Her parents are farmers, as is her brother, and she comes from a long line of people whose only real crime is minding their own business and supplying the country with dinner every night.'

Humour of various kinds, good or otherwise, helps us to rise above or set aside the sadnesses, disappointments and vexations of daily life and see them in proportion. Merriment and mirth provide us with a powerful antidote to mild melancholia and inevitable depressions even if it cannot quite dispel the global gloom induced by a surfeit of bad news.

A stage version of the brilliant *Fawlty Towers* is currently embarking on a national tour and it reminds one of the sparkling scripts of those original twelve episodes and the marvellous mayhem of its comic creations. There is also something of every man in the hapless Basil and of every woman in Sybil Fawlty.

Basil: "Well, may I ask what you were expecting to see out of a Torquay hotel bedroom window? Sydney Opera House, perhaps? The Hanging Gardens of Babylon? Herds of wildebeests sweeping majestically across the plain?"

Duncan Forbes

GOOD HUMOUR

I like to think I was born with a sense of humour, but if not, then I undoubtedly developed one early in life. I well remember my Dunalley Junior School days in Pittville and the fun I had there, but most of all, the pranks that some of us got up to in our teenage years at the Central School, Cheltenham, all with good humour. One of my schoolfriends, Bob Jennings, (who became a life-long friend and was also my best man) sadly died not long before Christmas, aged 95. Twenty years ago, his wife asked me to write and deliver the eulogy for his funeral (provided he went before me!). I was very pleased to do this and included some of the more memorable humorous moments we had enjoyed together, bringing to life the pupils and teachers involved and causing a good amount of laughter amongst the funeral congregation. I really felt that Bob was there with me in spirit that day when I stood at the lectern alongside his coffin. It was our good humour that had brought us together, good humour that lasted all the way through our lives.

Continuing to see the funny side of things throughout my early teenage years, which were all during WWII, I was encouraged by the humour that was widely circulated to boost morale during those very difficult times. Much ridicule was made of the enemy, especially of Hermann Goering and Adolf Hitler. That song in *Dad's Army* sung by Private Pike,

*“Whistle while you work, Hitler is a twerp.
So's his army, they're half barmy...”*

was very real. We children all sang it (and other ruder versions). *Music While You Work* incidentally, was a long-running BBC radio programme relayed by Tannoy into factories, providing cheerful music to help boost factory productivity.

Many were the posters giving advice to the population. One was to be careful not to gossip in public as enemy spies were everywhere. The slogan was:

*“Careless talk costs lives.
Don't forget that walls have ears.”*

This was accompanied, as most were, by a cartoon by Fougasse (Cyril Kenneth Bird CBE), who after the war became art editor of the magazine *Punch*. (An interesting link was that he was educated at Cheltenham College.)

There was a rhyme that went so:

*“Those who have the will to win,
Eat potatoes in their skin.
Knowing that the sight of peelings,
Deeply hurts Lord Woolton's feelings.”*

This was accompanied by a drawing created by the UK's Ministry of Food, of a comical-looking potato, “Potato Pete”, with arms, legs and a happy smile (Lord Woolton was Minister of Food during the war, established the rationing system and was crucial in preventing Britain from starving).

When I left school aged 14 and went out to work to earn my living, there was no office humour in my first job. However, I came across plenty of it in Prestbury village, at choir suppers where villagers sang and recited, and performed in pantomimes. When I changed jobs and worked in engineering, humour was non-stop. That was mainly because the war

had just ended and servicemen were being demobbed left, right and centre. After the hazards of war everyone was so pleased to be free and wanted to work very hard to rebuild our battered country. To go with the hard work was hard play and I was, as a 15-year-old with a good sense of humour, right in the middle of it all.

The firm that employed me was Spirax Manufacturing Company and the Managing Director and founder was Lionel G Northcroft, a man with high ideals. He was a brilliant engineer who began his working life as a door-to-door salesman of the Encyclopaedia Britannica. He rewarded hard work with large, six-monthly bonuses and all his staff, mostly young, educated ex-servicemen were hand-picked. Some had been decorated for gallantry and all had fascinating wartime experiences to relate. Without exception, all were very lively, wanting to make the most of the life they had been spared during the conflict. Most were still in their twenties and thirties and good humour reigned supreme. It was into this atmosphere of hard work (no overtime pay), and much fun that I was so fortunate to enter and absorb adult life.

My immediate boss was not one of the above, but he had been a member of the Home Guard to whom Dad taught the art of bayonet fighting. He was a very good engineer and draughtsman who was also a clever cartoonist/caricaturist and his name was Roland Hall (usually referred to as "Vinegar Joe").

One of the first things Lionel G Northcroft did when he began to build his company was to introduce a monthly magazine which was three quarters technical and a quarter social. He was gradually building what he liked to call the "Spirax Family" and wanted spouses of employees to take an active part in the support of their husbands/wives, hence the social side to the *Spirax News*. His father was the editor of the *Boys Own* paper and Lionel had been influenced by his interest in books and writing. Vinegar Joe, whose drawings were mostly cynical or mocking, was roped in to illustrate the social section of the magazine. After I had been with the company for 14 years and was 29 years of age, Roland Hall died during a night-time thunderstorm. A couple of days afterwards I was summoned to Northcroft's office. "*I'd like you to take over where Hall left off and do all the cartoon work in The News. And perhaps you could be less unkind?*"

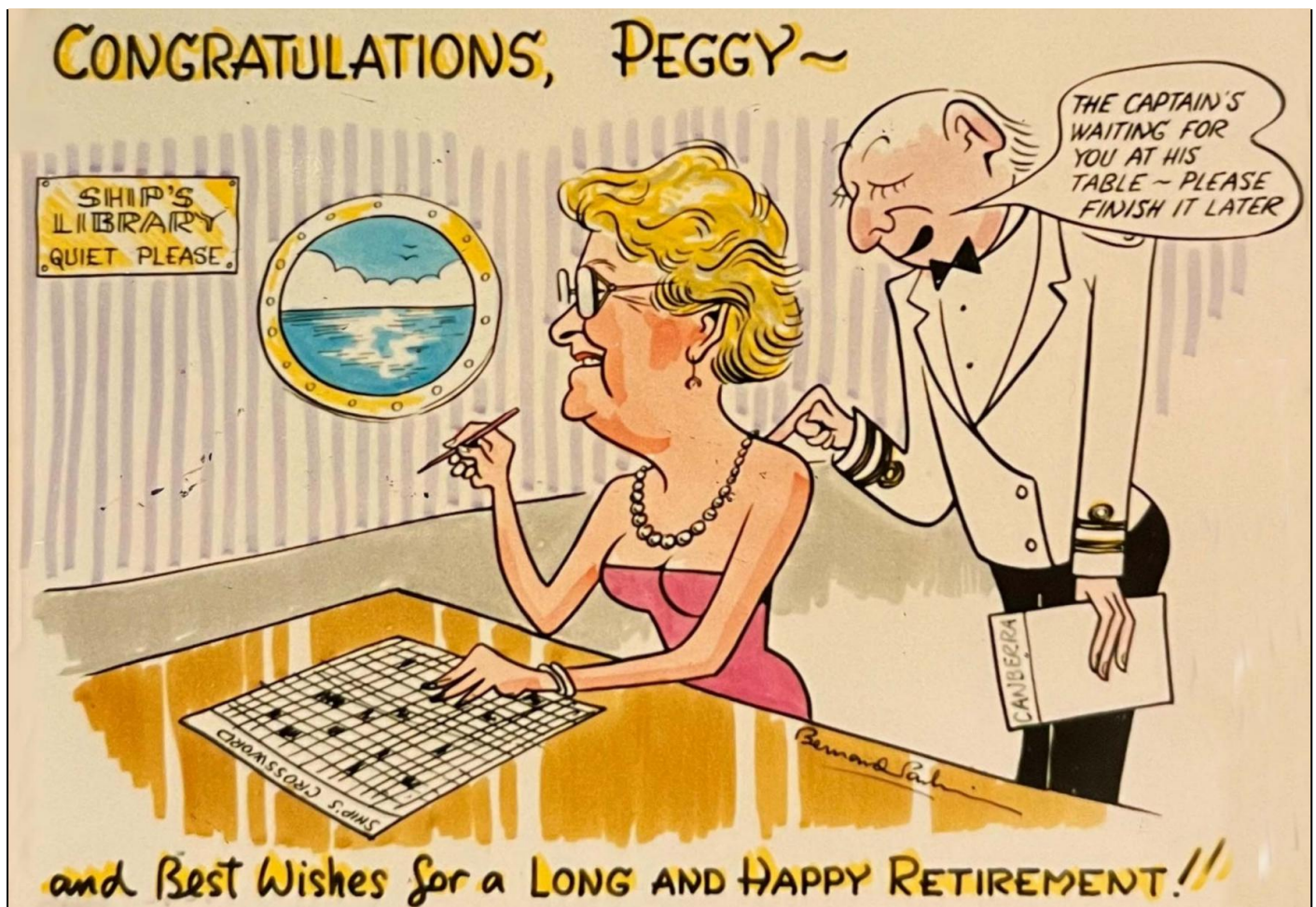
Northcroft must have seen a spark of talent in my efforts and he kept pushing me. I could see no way out of this so worked really hard to improve. Gradually, over a couple of years, I began not only to be pleased with my work but to thoroughly enjoy it. It was the feedback from all directions that was so satisfying. As the firm rapidly grew, so did *Spirax News* and with it the number of opportunities for humorous illustrations, especially as they caused laughter, whereas with Vinegar Joe, they had been mostly spiteful. Everyone wanted to be featured now, but there were a few exceptions. Sometimes a manager would displease Northcroft or rise above himself. It fell to me to take him down a peg, and drawings of this nature would be engineered by "The Boss".

I suppose it took me six months to get into the swing of things and make decent likenesses of my subjects. Frequent were the visits to Cheltenham of overseas visitors and others whom Northcroft wanted to impress, and frequent were the times when I would be summoned to his office and instructed to bring pencil and pad. "*This is Mr So and So,*" he would say, "*Please immortalise him!*" As I worked, he stood over me and watched as I tried hard to make a decent sketch, knowing well that it was rubbish. He would then take the drawing from me and hand it to his guest. Invariably the guest would say, "*But that doesn't*

look a bit like me!" and invariably Northcroft would say "I quite agree - but rest assured you will grow to look like it!" And in most cases, they did! I think it was his way of encouraging me rather than saying "Let's forget it!"

To me this was a wake-up call to keep trying to improve and not to rest on my immature laurels. After all, my junior school motto had been 'Perseverance wins the day'. Gradually, after a couple of years I was much more proficient. From then on, the social side of the magazine increased, and so did the number of cartoons. Growing up with the firm gave me an insight into the personalities of the staff. I noted the way they liked to dress and their habits; and with 'spies' all over the place telling me of 'incidents', I was improving my work all the time. Unlike Vinegar Joe, my drawings illustrated a sense of fun instead of ridicule and spite, and everyone became an eager subject for my pencil. I was now obliged to spread my wings and embrace the employees of our many overseas subsidiaries and to make all the illustrations for our French company's equivalent of *Spirax News*. For this I was obliged to introduce a French flavour to the drawings, which would often include strings of onions, berets and bottles of wine! I was loving my work and could not get to the office quick enough each day.

It was Spirax policy for the directors to present framed drawings to long-serving employees worldwide on their retirement. These took the form of humorous drawings of the subject engaged in one of their hobbies or interests. Since retiring from Spirax in 1991 I have made no less than 384 of these and Goodness knows how many whilst I was in full employment. This was great fun for me and without exception all were coveted by the recipients. Indeed, it has been known for some of these presentation pictures to be displayed next to the coffins of the deceased retirees at their funerals.





It is always fun to mix drawings and photography together. This snowdrift over the last fence at Prestbury Park presented an ideal opportunity!

Alongside my work at Spirax, I decided to introduce my humorous cartoons and caricatures into the world of horseracing and contacted several media editors to whom I was already supplying racing photographs. That was definitely a winning move and took me to never-before-dreamed-of places. Most importantly, many of these drawings and photographs made well over £150,000 for various charities, most of which supported injured jockeys, stable-staff and horse welfare in general. Had Lionel Northcroft not insisted all those years ago that I persevere and keep trying to improve, I would quite happily have given up. Had I done so, I would have missed out on the most exciting and interesting life that good humour has given me.

Bernard Parkin



Bernard enjoying his 96th birthday. Unfortunately the cake didn't travel well from Wiltshire!

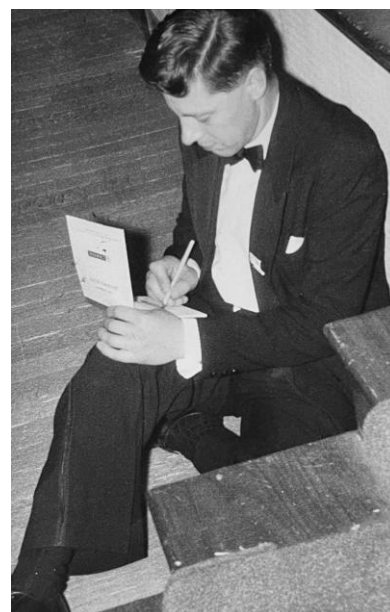


Photo by Claude Ludi, Paris

Marle Hill WI

We met on Monday 5 January 2026.

Our speaker was Sarah who gave a very interesting talk on the History of Pantomime with slides.

Our monthly lunch and book club dates were given out to the members.

Do come and join us and have some ME time and enjoy the company of like-minded ladies.

Our next meeting is on Monday 2 February 2026 and our speaker will be Sarah Davies talking about Managing Memory together. We will have the usual Bring-and-Buy table with items left over going to the charity shop.

If you want any more information, contact Sara Jefferies.

Sue Davies

Lent 2026

Lent is early this year,
Coming close after Christmas Cheer.
No time to think of the years that have gone
between the babe and baptism by John.

Lent is a time for us to repent
of anything that makes our life bent.
To be physically fit the advice is a bore,
Eat less fat and sugar, exercise more.

If you would be spiritually well,
The advice is like a fine-tuned bell,
Be regular in public worship and private prayer,
Read your Bible and study with care.

With these basic things in place
you are ready for a faster pace.
It is good to say *no* to things that you like,
But only if the heart is right.

It is good sometimes not to feed,
It is good to give to those in need.
When the spirit brings His grace
Then you will be ready for the race.

Clare Wyatt

Spring

When days are still short and cold are the nights
Through the frozen ground comes bells of white.
Walk through the woods and what do you see?
There are catkins on some of the trees!
What is the message these things impart?
It will soon be Spring, so please take heart.

When the days are longer and the nights are less cold,
The whole of the country is covered in gold.
The little celandine is the first,
And, on sunny banks, the primroses burst.
Even in the icy stream,
There the golden king cups gleam.

In every garden, and on every street,
Yellow daffodils you will meet.
In the fields, where the grass is green,
Golden dandelions are to be seen.
When the dandelions are gone
Then the buttercups come along.

As the season moves-on there is a change of hue,
From gold to mauve and white and blue.
In the woods, beneath every tree,
Are bluebells, like an inland sea.
In the field, around the edge,
White flowers adorn the hawthorn hedge.

Lift up your eyes to the wider scene;
The hills, and all the woods, are green,
Wisteria blooms on the old cottage wall,
Then the lilac, last of all.
Throughout the season the birds sweetly sing;
This is the miracle of the Spring.

Clare Wyatt

Advertisements



Whether you are a business or an individual,
***we are your local, trusted,
 and dedicated legal experts.***

Pershore

01386 562000

Tewkesbury

01684 299633

Cheltenham

01242 235250

Stratford-upon-Avon

01789 295544

- | | |
|--------------------------|------------------------------------|
| ■ Residential property | ■ Buying or selling a business |
| ■ Commercial property | ■ Family law |
| ■ Employment law | ■ Wills & Inheritance tax planning |
| ■ Managing your business | ■ Powers of Attorney |
| ■ Disputes | ■ Injury claims |

Visit the website for our full range of services tbsolicitors.co.uk

KW SHARPENING SERVICES

At KW Sharpening we can provide a professional service to sharpen almost all bladed items be it Garden Tools, Kitchen Knives or Chainsaws. We use the latest machines to give you the best service and sharpest edge for your tools. We pride ourselves on having 133 5 Star reviews on Google. If in any doubt, please give me a ring to discuss your sharpening needs.

We specialise in the following:

- Dog Grooming Scissors and Clipper Blades
- Horse Clipper Blades
- Clipper Servicing
- Hairdressing / Barbering Scissor
- Carpentry Tools Chisels, Planer Blades etc..
- Circular / Chop Saw Blades



Please give me, Ken a ring to arrange a booking, and subject to prior workload most jobs are done in 48 hrs.

If an item is needed urgently, I keep slots available for a same day service and if the workload allows it can be done whilst you wait.

Unit 15 Space Business Centre, Tewksbury Road (Behind Homebase) Cheltenham GL51 9FL

Call: **07379 422942** Email: ken@kwsharpening.co.uk

Instagram: [@kw_sharpening](https://www.instagram.com/kw_sharpening) Web: www.kwsharpening.co.uk

Fragile Humour

When I first viewed my flat in 2024 I was very taken with the view from the bedroom of an enormous pine tree. It had dignity, despite needing “heavy support” rubber strapping in random areas. It can happen to anyone.

Six men worked on it for three days with various heavy machinery. Each section of a metre or so was dropped with a warning shout and a deep thud, then minced into oblivion by the shredder.

After a protracted and infuriating time the family helped move me in. It was Mothers’ Day and the organiser daughter had thought of everything. With son, son in law and grandson in attendance I didn’t lift a finger. The only hitch was the scrambling of all cables and connections at one point, apart from me having left some cupboards unemptied. Only in the kitchen, just one or two.

At some point I found myself alone in the new flat. Everyone else was at the old property. Apparently, I was becoming overwhelmed.

This was explained properly months later - one of the braver helpers had suggested they would all get on better without me, query my escalating comments, such as “undermining my human rights”, so I had been parked.

There was a very welcome picnic lunch (one should not expect to wander into The Kings Arms without a reservation on Mother’s Day, who knew?).

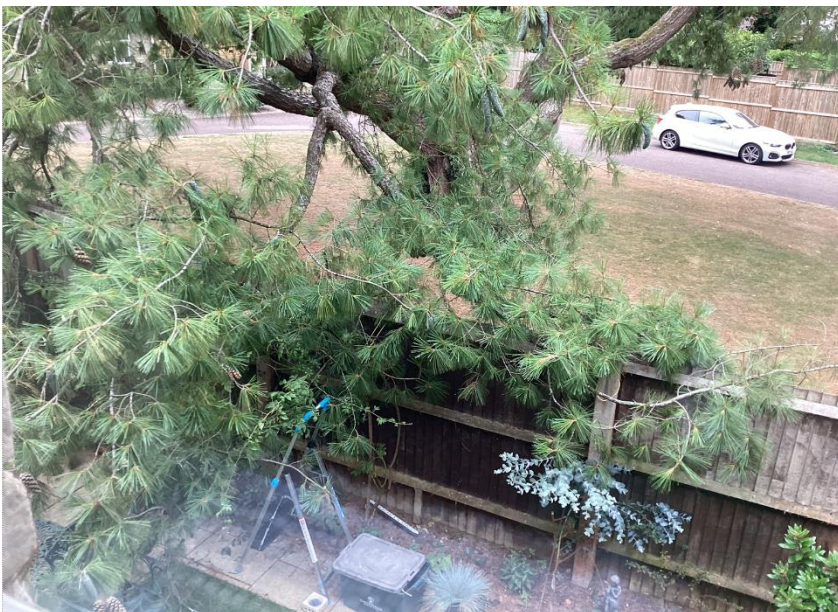
Our sometime artificer got the smart tv going. All was well.

One of the girls argued a reduction in charge from the gung-ho removal man, he gave in.

Moving forward I settled in very quickly regardless of the to-do lists.

Then one morning my neighbour rang to ask if I’d opened the curtains yet.

Aghast is how I felt, I think. I had heard a rustle of leaves maybe, and a not at all loud bump, but daylight showed our beautiful Bhutan pine weeping sap from an horrendous rip in the trunk where a branch, almost half the tree, had come away. The scent was in the air for days to come.



I don’t know where last year’s migrating swifts flocked, maybe they chose a new venue. In the past they were lovely to watch, noisy, sweeping back and forth in small groups, very distinctive shapes. The squirrel has stopped peering into the remaining nest hole as far as I’ve noticed.

If I were inclined to be fanciful I could imagine the remaining stump as a reminder of the state of the nation. Or might it sprout?

Anya Jary

Holy Humour

Submitted by Jackie Smith

During his sermon, one Sunday morning, the Vicar homed in on three men in the congregation, and asked them - "What would you like the people gathered around your grave to say about you?"

Tom said, "I'd like them to say that he was a wonderful husband, a fine spiritual leader, and a great family man."

Dick said, "I'd like them to say that he was a wonderful teacher, and servant of God, who made a huge difference to people's lives."

Harry said, "I'd like them to say - Look, he's moving!"

Billy climbs to the top of Mount Sinai, so he can get close enough to talk to God.

Looking up, he asks the Lord, "God, what does a million years mean to you?"

The Lord replies, "A minute."

Billy asks, "And what does a million pounds mean to you?"

The Lord replies, "A penny."

Then Billy asks, "Please may I have a penny?"

The Lord replies, "In a minute."

Pat and Mick decided to start a painting business. Their first job was to paint the outside of their local church. On the day they were due to start, they decided to buy half as much paint as was needed, and water it down, to make money, as they would charge the Vicar the full price. So, they did this, and painted the church. It looked beautiful. They called the Vicar out to have a look and he was really pleased. Suddenly it began to pour with rain. Pat and Mick looked on horrified as all their paint began to run down the walls of the church. Then a voice from above said, "Repaint - and thin no more."

Forthcoming Events

Bereavement Friendship Group

We will be meeting in St Mary's Church, Prestbury on Monday 16 February at 2.15-4pm

If you have lost a loved one and would like to talk to others in a similar situation, please come along. You will be most welcome, whether you are new or have come before.

Light refreshments will be provided.

Marion Povey

Welcome on Wednesday

Wednesday 18 February at 2.30pm in the St Nicolas Room. There will be home-made cakes, tea or coffee for £2 and the chance to meet friends and have a friendly chat. So please come along, maybe bringing a neighbour?



Quiz Evening

Saturday 28 February 2026 7.30pm in St Nicolas Church Hall, GL50 4PA

£10 per person to include snacks and pudding / cake during the interval

Raffle and Bar available on the evening (cash or card payment)

Teams of 6 or please do come along and join in with others and make new friends!

Please call / WhatsApp message Linda 07866762606 to book a place and I can provide bank details for payment.

All Proceeds to MOVE against Cancer

Linda Jackson

FRIENDS OF ST MARY'S AGM

All Welcome

At St Mary's Church, Mill Street, Prestbury.
GL52 3BQ

Thursday 12th February 2026 at 6.30pm

Drinks and Nibbles will be served	6.30pm
Following (Brief) AGM Business	7.00pm
Please join us for a fascinating talk	7.15pm

Gloucestershire Archaeology and Cleeve Hill Racecourse



Speaker: Phil Cox

Donations Welcome



COME AND SING!

Fauré's Requiem

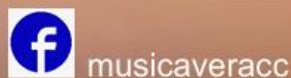
A choral workshop led by our Musical Director, Matthew Clark, with accompanist, Richard Lennox

Saturday, 7th Feb. 10.30 – 16.30 (doors open at 10.00). Harwood Hall, Christchurch, Cheltenham GL502JH. Informal, free concert at 15.30

Tickets: £20 (includes music hire and drinks / cake). 18 - 25 yr-olds free.

Bring your own lunch!

To book a place, or for more information, contact Chris, our secretary, as follows:
E: 4chriscrs@gmail.com
Phone: 07948 804480



www.musicavera.org

TIMES OF REGULAR CHURCH SERVICES

St Mary's Church, Prestbury

Sunday		0800	Said Eucharist
	1st Sunday	0930	Breakfast Celebrate! – All-age worship
	Other Sundays	0900	Breakfast Celebrate! at Infant School
		1100	Sung Eucharist
	1st Sunday	1830	Evening Prayer at Capel Court
	2nd Sunday	1800	Benediction
	Other Sundays	1800	Evening Prayer
Thursday		1030	Said Eucharist

St Nicolas Church, Prestbury

Sunday		0930*	Sung Eucharist
Tuesday		1000	Said Eucharist

All Saints Church, Pittville

Sunday		0800	Holy Mass
		1030*	Solemn Mass
Weekdays			Holy Mass usually on 3 days, check noticeboard
Saturday	1st Saturday	1000	Holy Mass for Our Lady of Walsingham

St Lawrence Church, Swindon Village

Sunday	1st Sunday	0930	Family Communion
		1700	Evensong
	2nd Sunday	0930	BCP Holy Communion
	3rd Sunday	0930	Holy Communion
		1700	Evensong
	4th Sunday	0930	Holy Communion
	5th Sunday	1000	Benefice Holy Communion alternates with St Mary Magdalene

St Mary Magdalene Church, Elmstone Hardwicke

Sunday	1st Sunday	1100	BCP Holy Communion
	2nd Sunday	1100	Family Service (no communion)
	3rd Sunday	1100	Holy Communion
	4th Sunday	1100	Holy Communion
	5th Sunday	1000	Benefice Holy Communion alternates with St Lawrence
Thursday	2nd Thursday	1900	Celtic Evening Prayer
	4th Thursday	1900	Celtic Evening Prayer

* These services are usually streamed on the internet. These and other services are recorded so may be accessed live or later on the Team's YouTube page -

<https://www.youtube.com/NorthCheltenhamTeamMinistry/streams>

Parish Directory *continued*

Children's Work

Linda Biggs 01242 510856
 linda.biggs@prestbury.net

Safeguarding Officer

Linda Biggs 07769 581822

Parish Magazine

Editor: Brian Wood 01242 515941
 magazine@prestbury.net
 Advertising: Richard Johnson 07535 417828
 advertising@prestbury.net

St Mary's C of E (VA) Schools

Executive Head Teacher: Mr Matt Ferris
 01242 383817

Hall Letting

Prestbury Hall, Bouncers Lane 01242 239590
 bookings@prestburyhall.com
 St Nicolas Hall, Swindon Lane
 hallhire@northchelt.org.uk

Parish Giving Scheme

76 Kingsholm Road,
 Gloucester GL1 3BD 0333 002 1260
 info@parishgiving.org.uk

Copy Dates and Themes for Future Magazines 2026

Issue	Copy Date	Theme
March	Sunday 8 February	Holidays
April	Sunday 15 March	Modern Life
May	Sunday 12 April	Pleasure
June	Sunday 17 May	The Sea
July	Sunday 14 June	British Summer Time
August	Sunday 12 July	Desert Island Discs
September	Sunday 16 August	Ireland
October	Sunday 13 September	Scotland
November	Sunday 11 October	Wales
Dec / Jan	Sunday 15 November	Memorials

Prestbury Parish Magazine is usually published on the last Sunday of the month. The copy date is usually the Sunday 2 weeks before this, but there may be scope for some flexibility.

Copy may be sent in a clearly marked envelope to 'Prestbury Parish Magazine'
 2 Honeysuckle Close, Prestbury, Cheltenham, GL52 5LN
 or preferably by email to **magazine@prestbury.net**

March 2026 Magazine Theme: Holidays
Please send copy by Sunday 8 February 2026
or soon after



**AWARD-
WINNING
FOOD**

**CASK ALE,
CRAFT BEER
& CIDER**

**BEAUTIFUL
BEER
GARDEN**



Planning an event or party?

Ask us about The Pavilion, our versatile private hire space.

royalookprestbury.co.uk
royalookprestbury@butcombepubs.com

01242 522344

 @royalookprestbury

The Royal Oak, The Burgage, Prestbury,
Gloucestershire, GL52 3DL



25% OFF FOOD AT THE ROYAL OAK

All day every Wednesday for Butcombe Loyalty Club members

Join the club:
butcombe.com/loyalty

Scan to download the
Butcombe Loyalty App

