www.prestbury.net

Prestbury

Parish Magazine



North Cheltenham Team Ministry

November 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
(vacant)

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:

Rhossili Beach

by Chris Horswell

Reflections from the Reverend Jacqueline

"When you go home, tell them of us and say

For your tomorrow, we gave our today".

Perhaps the most poignant moment in the Act of Remembrance comes when those gathered hear the words of the Kohima Epitaph, written by John Maxwell Evans in 1916. Its full twenty-two lines are inscribed on the memorial to the 2nd British Division in Kohima, Northeast India, honouring the Allied soldiers who halted the Japanese advance in 1944.

Although the memorial stands more than five thousand miles away, its words remain deeply familiar, recited across the country each Remembrance Sunday. They remind us that the freedoms we enjoy were secured at immense cost. The peace we are privileged to cherish—and called to use well—was won by previous generations through blood, fear and sacrifice. Their gift of a future places a responsibility upon us: to honour those who gave their lives by building a just and compassionate society, caring for our neighbours, strengthening our communities and supporting those who struggle. What, then, are we doing with the freedom and safety they entrusted to us?

For Christians, this call to remembrance also points towards the hope of the Gospel, connecting the human sacrifice of the battlefield with the sacrificial love at the heart of our faith. "For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, through Jesus, God will bring with him those of you who have died." *(1 Thess. 4. 14)* In these words, our thoughts are led beyond grief and loss towards the promise of resurrection and eternal peace in the presence of God.

As the Church moves from Creationtide into the season of Remembrance, we gather both to mourn those we have lost and to affirm this hope together.

Revd Jacqueline

In Prestbury we are celebrating All Souls Day on Sunday 25 October. At these services we shall remember our loved ones who have died and shall remember by name all those for whom we have taken funerals since 2024.

All Saints' Day is on Sunday 1 November.

The following Sunday, 8 November, is Remembrance Sunday. The Act of Remembrance will be made during the 9:30 service in St Nicolas. The Act of Remembrance will also take place at the Prestbury war memorial at 10:45am followed by the Sunday Eucharist in St Mary's Church. Everyone is warmly invited to these services, and refreshments will be served in the churches after the services have ended.



Wales, a place of rain – and spirituality

Nichola took some persuading to go to Wales for a short holiday, she was convinced that it would rain all the time, well it didn't – not all the time! We stayed at Laugharne, where Dylan Thomas is buried, the village is not well served for basic shopping. We had foolishly arrived expecting to do some shopping, when we asked in the pub where the best place for groceries was, we were told Carmarthen, which we had driven past about forty minutes earlier. We decided to visit the castle, but when we pulled into the car park you couldn't see the castle as the rain was hitting the windscreen so hard, no words were exchanged! We did visit Tenby, a favourite place of other readers, but managed to choose the day when there was a triathlon. The Gower was beautiful, especially Rhossili Beach, but it was misty. On Sunday morning we joined the eucharist at St Davids Cathedral; Nic was enthralled by the music. Nichola would still say it rained all the time - but it really was only half the time. She recalled our most recent holiday, which was in Santorini, where we barely saw a cloud.



St Davids Cathedral

My personal connection to Wales has become St Beuno's in the north to spend some time on a silent retreat, I went for eight days, which was ten when adding on a day for travel each way. The silence is only broken for 30-45 minutes a day when you talk with your guide and there is speaking at the daily eucharist, but not for individuals. It seems very daunting, but after the first day stepping away from television, radio, social media, the chatter of daily life made the silence a very special thing.

St Beuno's stands on a hillside above the Vale of Clwyd and has become a place where prayer, silence, and the beauty of the Welsh landscape have shaped lives for more than 175 years. Today it is known as one of Britain's most important centres of Jesuit spirituality, but its story begins in the mid-19th century, when the Jesuits were searching for a home that would form young priests in a peaceful, healthy environment, far from the smoke and sickness of Britain's growing industrial towns. They ended their search at Tremeirchion. The hillside farmland offered spectacular views, fresh air and a sense of stillness that felt made for contemplation. In 1847, the Jesuits began building a theology college here, naming it after St Beuno, the 7th-century Welsh abbot remembered for healing, holiness, and pastoral care. The architect was Joseph Aloysius Hansom, better known for inventing the Hansom cab, who designed the house in a simple Gothic style using local limestone.



St Beuno's

For nearly eighty years, St Beuno's served as the main theology college for Jesuits in Britain. Generations of priests trained there before being sent out to serve in parishes, schools, and missions across the country. For readers who study poetry one of its most famous students was the poet-priest Gerard Manley Hopkins, who studied here in the 1870s. Inspired by the Welsh landscape, he wrote some of his greatest poems at St Beuno's, including *God's Grandeur*, capturing the sense of wonder he found in the valley below. As an aside R S Thomas wrote his poetry not far away, the collection of his poems "Frequencies of God" is worth looking up as we approach Advent.



The chapel at St Beuno's

The modern identity of St Beuno's emerged in the 1970s, when the Jesuits worldwide renewed their focus on the Spiritual Exercises of St Ignatius of Loyola (which some of will have heard Bishop Rachel speak about enthusiastically). This centuries-old pattern of prayer, reflection, and discernment found new life in individually guided retreats, and St Beuno's became one of the first centres in Britain to specialise in this approach. Retreatants began arriving from all over the country and there is a complete mix of people, clergy, lay people, and many with no formal religious background all seeking silence, guidance, and space to listen for God.

By the 1980s, St Beuno's had become a fully dedicated spirituality centre, offering retreats ranging from a weekend of quiet to the full thirty-day Spiritual Exercises. Its purpose today is simple yet profound: to help people deepen their relationship with God, discover spiritual freedom, and find clarity in the midst of life's noise. The house welcomes people from every Christian tradition.

Within the house there are many quiet places together with the nearby Rock Chapel. The surrounding countryside offers the opportunity for lovely walks, with the view stretching across the Vale of Clwyd to the distant mountains of Snowdonia.

St Beuno's is an old building, but certainly not a museum, it remains a living place - a centre of ongoing spiritual renewal. Its heritage lies not only in its stones, but in the countless lives strengthened, healed, and even transformed within its walls. I enjoyed (really) my time there despite the obvious challenge. I know that the silence probably won't suit everybody, but if you want to know more, please talk to me.

Chris Horswell

Harvest Songs at The Ridge, Windyridge Road

On **Friday 9 October** at 6:30pm members of the choirs and congregations from both Prestbury churches met at the invitation of Jessica Bowle, the publican, to sing favourite Harvest songs to those gathered there. Fr Nick was the MC with loudhailer and Chris Horswell led the intercessions. Jerry Spence was playing the keyboard. A young member of the pub's clienteles beat the drum as we sang *We will go out with joy* at the end of our session.



Advertisements

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.

Dignity
CARING FUNERAL SERVICES

Advertise your business in this space



advertising@prestbury.net

When you answer an advertisement please remember to say:



Thomson & Bancks SOLICITORS
You matter to us

Pershore
01386 562000

Tewkesbury
01684 299633

Cheltenham
01242 235250

Stratford-upon-Avon
01789 295544

Whether you are a business or an individual,

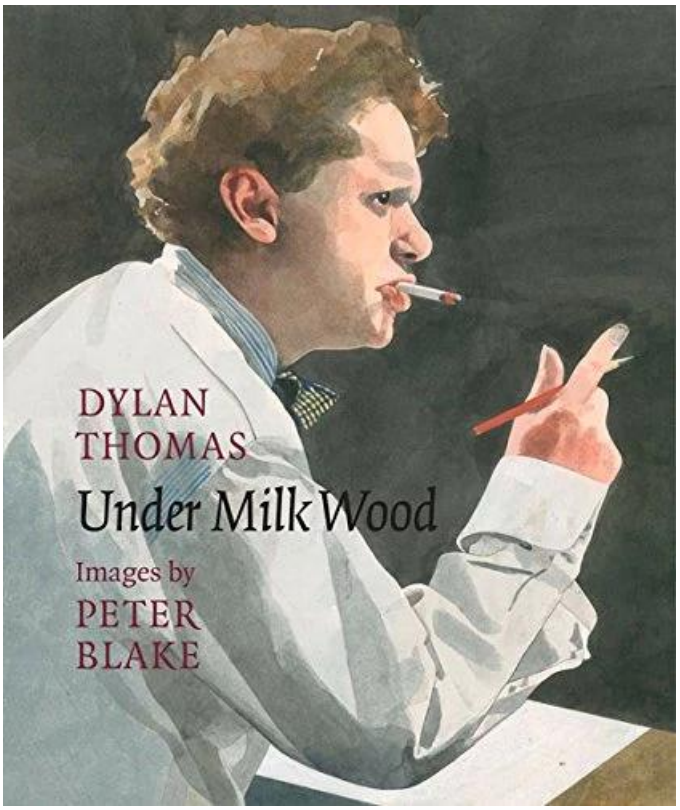
we are your local, trusted, and dedicated legal experts.

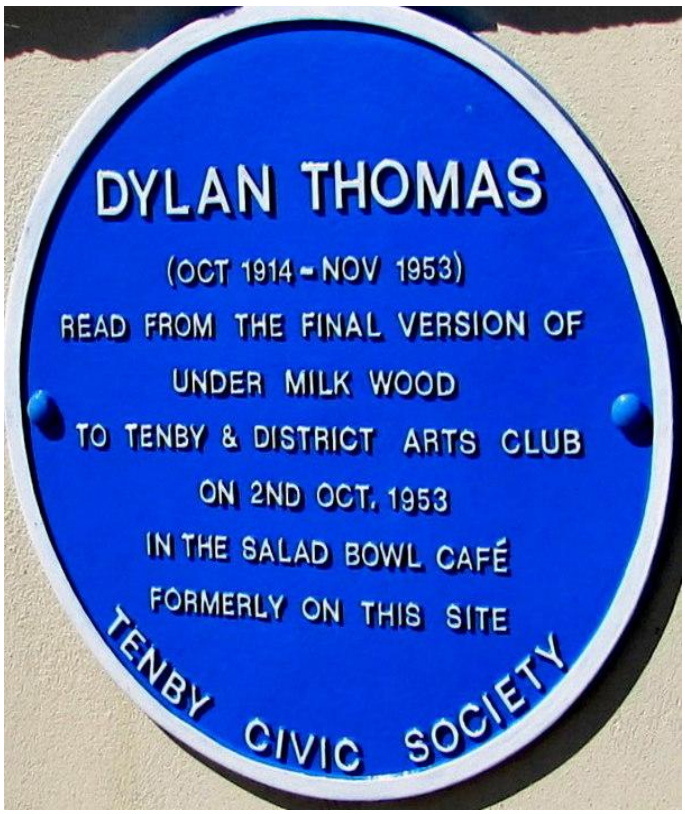
- Residential property
- Commercial property
- Employment law
- Managing your business
- Disputes
- Buying or selling a business
- Family law
- Wills & Inheritance tax planning
- Powers of Attorney
- Injury claims

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

To advertise your business please contact advertising@prestbury.net

‘DEAR GWALIA!’





‘Dear Gwalia!’ Dear Wales. The words are those of the Reverend Eli Jenkins early in *Under Milk Wood*, when the bard and preacher of Bethesda House wakes in the morning and steps outside to address ‘empty Coronation Street’ with verses in praise of his beloved hometown:

Dear Gwalia! I know there are
Towns lovelier than ours,
And fairer hills and loftier far,
And groves more full of flowers,

And boskier woods more blithe with spring
And bright with birds adorning,
And sweeter bards than I to sing
Their praise this beauteous morning.

Here the kindly preacher hymns his locality and, of course, the verses were really composed by Dylan Thomas (1914 – 1953) for his celebrated ‘Play for Voices’:

By mountains where King Arthur dreams,
By Penmaenmawr defiant,
Llareggub Hill a molehill seems,
A pygmy to a giant.

It was Dylan Thomas and his sparkling script which first introduced me to his vivid images of Wales and the inhabitants of Llareggub. When as a bookish teenager I first realized what the Welsh-sounding name meant when spelt backwards, I laughed out loud. The roguish wit and dazzlingly virtuoso wordplay of Dylan Thomas and *Under Milk Wood* are of course now widely celebrated in the English-speaking world and beyond. The drama has been translated into over thirty languages, including German and indeed Welsh. As for Wales, he shaped some of my initial responses to that 'musical nation'.

The play is rich in eccentric local characters and graphic language, humour and pathos. One remembers especially the piratical Captain Cat, the loose and promiscuous Polly Garter, Mr Organ Morgan obsessed by J S Bach, Dai Bread the baker, Evans the Death (Undertaker), and 'ox-broad, barge-booted' PC Attila Rees 'stamping out of Handcuff House'. Nogood Boyo and Lord Cut-Glass live in Donkey Street and the schoolmaster Mr Pugh slyly dreams of poisoning his wife, while reading *Lives of the Great Poisoners* under a plain cover at the dinner table. The living jostle with the remembered dead, while the tyrannically tidy and twice-widowed Mrs Ogmore-Pritchard insists that pyjamas be placed 'in the drawer marked pyjamas'.

With its Cockle Row and Goosegog Lane, the play for voices has wonderfully rich verbal music and comically evocative characters. It was written as a radio play and first broadcast posthumously in 1954 to immediate and growing acclaim, while Richard Burton was of course its original Narrator or First Voice. Recently, I heard a radio programme which said the portrait of small-town seaside Wales found fans and resonances even in East Germany because its depiction of the community was so strangely individual and yet compellingly universal. I have seen a brilliant stage version of the play which emphasized for me its surreal abundance and startling jumble of lives with Nogood Boyo and a real dog featuring on stage as well as a drawer marked pyjamas. Wayward, raw, raunchy and bibulous emotions seethe under a thin pretence of decorum and, as one gossip confides, 'Men are brutes on the quiet.'

Elsewhere in his 'poem room', the learned Rev Eli Jenkins writes lyrically about 'Llareggub Hill, that mystic tumulus, the memorial of peoples that dwelt in the region of Llareggub before the Celts left the Land of Summer and where the old wizards made themselves a wife out of flowers.'

As the day comes to a close in the small seaside town, 'at the doorway of Bethesda House, the Reverend Eli Jenkins recites to Llareggub Hill his sunset poem.' The bardic preacher Jenkins is to some extent a caricature but his sunset poem or hymn has developed something of a sympathetic life of its own, beyond the scope and play of Dylan Thomas's fertile imagination. Set to an Anglican chant by Arthur H D Troyte, it has been sung and recorded by, for instance, Bryn Terfel, Cerys Matthews, and by various Male Voice Choirs. They give the sunset poem of Eli Jenkins a fresh lease of life-affirming sentiment, beyond mere irony, spoof and parody. Here are all four of its verses:

Every morning when I wake,
Dear Lord, a little prayer I make,
O please to keep Thy loving eye
On all poor creatures born to die.

And every evening at sundown
I ask a blessing on the town,
For whether we last the night or no
I'm sure is always touch-and-go.

We are not wholly bad or good
Who live our lives under Milk Wood,
And Thou, I know, will be the first
To see our best side, not our worst.

O let us see another day!
Bless us this night. I pray,
And to the sun we all will bow
And say, goodbye – but just for now!

It is well worth watching and listening to it sung movingly online by the Male Voice Choirs of Neath, Treorchy or Dunvant, among others.

Duncan Forbes



The grave of Dylan Thomas

By Chris Horswell

St Non's Chapel

Whilst growing up my father was always quick to dismiss Wales as a place not worth visiting and the natives were unfriendly anyway or so he said! As an adult I have grown to love Pembrokeshire which is full of hints of its mysterious prehistoric and Celtic past. It is a place of legends such as those found in the Mabinogion, the book of Celtic or even earlier folklore.

About twenty years ago I was on a National Trust working holiday based at Stackpole in south Pembrokeshire. The other volunteers decided that they would like to go to Pembroke Castle on their day off, but I had visited it relatively recently so I decided to strike off on my own to the north of the county. It had been some years since I had visited Solva and St Davids and I was keen to see them again. Some things had changed since I was last there e.g. there was a much-improved car park and gallery in St Davids. It has always fascinated me that unlike other cathedrals St Davids lies in a hollow beside the grand ruins of the Bishop's palace and you look down on it rather than upwards. It was built like that to hide it from raiders from the sea. A sign indeed of the turbulent times it has existed through.

It was a grey, September day of drizzle but for some reason I decided to head out to St Non's chapel. It was a place that I had never visited before but I am fascinated by history. St Non was the mother of St David and it is said that she gave birth to him in that place. There was nobody else around as I walked out of St Davids onto the rather barren headland where you could see the waves crashing in. It made me wonder if she felt as alone as I did there as I stood in the chapel ruins but despite the wild surroundings it did feel like a place of peace. Nearby there is a holy well and I was surprised by the amount of paraphernalia surrounding it – babies' shoes, faded photographs, ribbons etc. We are always being told that we live in a secular society but here was evidence of people placing their trust in God and a little-known saint. I said a quiet prayer for the people remembered there and wondered what stories lay behind this mix of mementos before I headed back alone to the tourist bustle of St Davids. It is a memory that has long stayed with me.



St Non's Chapel ruins



Chapel of Our Lady and St Non

Janet Waters

CYMRU AM BYTH



Dai Davies, my grandfather

Mae hen wlad fy nhadau yn annwyl I mi

Anyone who has watched rugby in the Principality Stadium must be familiar with 'the best national anthem in the world', as the crowd sing with passion and conviction. I have to admit that I frequently join in and treat the television set to my rendering, complete with mispronounced and mangled Welsh. Wales is not the land of my fathers but of my mother who was pure-bred Welsh. She was a Welsh speaker; I am not. Although my father grew up in Wales, he was English and I was brought up in England as an English child. I always regretted that my mother never spoke Welsh to us but, for some reason, she didn't, although she almost reluctantly taught me the anthem at my request.

In my early childhood, we travelled annually to Wales, which was home for my mother but almost like a foreign country to me. Crossing the Bristol Channel on the paddle steamer made it an adventure. Once in Wales, we visited my grandparents in one of the green valleys, Tonypandy, where the mountains provided the backdrop to rows of terraced houses, at the back of each were the outside privies with cut-up newspaper as lavatory paper. To avoid the hazard of going outside in the night, we were provided with the kind of chamber pot which now can be found in antique shops or in which people grow plants.

Inevitably the house had no bathroom either. Water had to be heated up and poured into a tin bath which was usually put in front of the range which roared with impressive heat, thanks to the plentiful supply of coal in the valleys. To me the way of life seemed full of new and remarkable novelties like the feather mattress on the bed. The houses had of course been built for the miners who had to bath at home before 'washing up' time and facilities were allowed at the pits.

My grandfather had not been a miner but his father had managed a colliery as well as fathering a very large number of children, rumoured to be twenty-one. My great grandfather was reportedly very strict, but he died young and his numerous brood went wild, running away to sea, becoming a 'wall of death' motor cyclist and generally seeking adventure. My grandfather became a professional rugby league player rather than go to university.

Of course, the large family meant that I had a spectacular number of great aunts and uncles, all of whom we needed to visit for a sumptuous tea served in the best china and presenting a bewildering variety of cakes to be eaten after the unavoidable bread and butter. I found it baffling that my mother did not allow us to make the most of the feasts; instead we had to show restraint. The great aunts all made admiring comments, one of which I remember particularly. Looking at me, she said, "There's fine arms she's got", and I only worked out later that she meant 'fat'.

My great aunt Rosie was the most fun because her husband, Tom, was a keen poacher and had trained his dog to go away from him when he called it. He would teach my brother to say phrases in Welsh that meant things like, 'what a dump this is' and then urge him to say them to Rosie who was not amused. They lived up in the hills and I never did find out what Tom actually did for a living.

Singing was part of everyday life; everyone could sing and my memories are full of harmonies and dramas in the air. We recently watched a series of programmes on television about three male-voice Welsh choirs preparing for performances in chapel, at the Principality Stadium and at the Eisteddfod. They made me weep with nostalgia for a country to which I do not belong but which stirs a longing in me for a way of life which I glimpsed but did not share. The Welsh word for that feeling is *hiraeth,* a feeling of homesickness for Wales and the stories that my grandmother told me about her childhood, so different from mine. She was still bereft by the death of her sister, Barbara, from TB. She and her other sisters were sent to live on a farm to ensure that healthy food and fresh air would keep them safe.

So a rich heritage of song, rugby, community, humour and love has been mine and I feel the richer for it even if I am outside it.



Bronwen, my godmother, as a child

Debbie Forbes

WHAT HAPPENED TO US IN WALES

The children were 14 and 11 in 1975 when we spent a very happy summer holiday at Caswell Bay on the coast of south-west Wales. Often, when supplying folk and businesses with artwork or photography, I was not paid by cash or cheque but 'in kind'. For instance, Bollinger always settled with cases of champagne, Waterford Crystal with cut-glass of one sort or another, and private individuals with favours, such as the use of their holiday homes. The one at Caswell Bay on the Gower Peninsular, in Britain's first designated area of outstanding natural beauty, fell into the latter category.

It was an apartment in a block of about 60 others, adjacent to and overlooking the sandy beach that had rolling breakers which were large and ideal for surfing. There was no need to use the car very much as everything basic was at hand, so shopping further afield was not necessary. Walks along the coast were easy and scenic, and activity on the sands was full of interest, especially the daily exercise of the Caswell Bay Lifeguards which sent the children into fits. There were eight of these well-built males, all a similar height and wearing skull caps, not unlike the Pope but theirs were red, as were the swimming trunks they were (almost) wearing! They marched up and down the beach on patrol, two abreast and in tight formation, knees raised to their waists and arms swinging to eye level. Then their leader blew loudly on a whistle, and they broke ranks and raced into the sea. It was the Welsh version of Baywatch but minus Pamela Anderson. We could not wait for their next day's performance; it was so funny!

However, there is a downside to this story. The first thing we did wrong was to allow Fat Fred, our Jack Russell crossbred, to find and part-eat a decaying mackerel which he followed by a mouthful or two of seaweed. Back at the flat he was sick all over the carpet, and not just in one place. We had not asked for permission to take the dog with us in case the answer was 'certainly not'. A few days later I broke the mechanism which turned the settee into a bed. Things could surely not get any worse – or could they?

Pam went up to the flat to start making dinner. After some exciting end-of-day swimming in the breakers and a quick game of cricket on the beach to dry off, the children and I joined her. When laying the table, Charlie brushed against the tablecloth and the whole lot, cups, saucers and plates fell onto the floor just where the carpet stopped – and shattered! That meant getting the car out the following morning and motoring into nearby Mumbles to buy replacements! Here we found a butcher's shop selling laverbread, a Welsh delicacy which we had heard of but never sampled. It was delicious, especially with grilled bacon, and even the children liked it. However, it made sense to keep it well away from Fat Fred as its main ingredient was seaweed!

On the final day of our Welsh holiday, there was a shower of rain at the same time as the milkman drove up in his electric milk float with his morning delivery. It was the children's job to go down and collect a pint bottle each, as well as some Tunnocks chocolate caramel wafer biscuits. Charlie found a rather tatty tweed 'porkpie' hat in a cupboard and this he wore to protect his head from the rain.

On arriving back home the next day, I went into Cheltenham to hand back the keys so kindly lent to us. Of course, I had to admit and apologise for breaking the crockery and bed mechanism, which greatly annoyed our benefactor, but when I thanked him for the use of his tatty old hat, he was furious! I went no further, deciding not to mention the carpet!

The following year we had a real surprise as we were asked if we'd like to use his holiday home for the second week in August! It was obvious to me that he had a load of work he needed me to do – and so it was. That second holiday at Caswell Bay went very smoothly with no unfortunate incidents!

Bernard Parkin

THE SOW AND HER PIGLETS

Duncan Forbes' article on Irish coinage in the September issue of this magazine was of particular interest. It was probably 71 years ago when harvesting my King Edwards, that I unearthed a coin which had obviously spent a considerable time below ground. In 1954 I purchased a section of Dollar Field at Woodmancote on which Pam and I planned to have our home built and raise a family. Had I unearthed something of great value that my potato patch other than spuds might yield? A stray coin from a hoard of Spanish dollars maybe? Enough to cover all the expenses of building a house and furnishing it? Sadly, no! Research and a bit of coin-cleaning told me then, and Duncan has reminded me now, that my find was Irish, first issued in 1928 and worth about three times its value than when it first came into use, which was one half-penny. How then did this coin with its very nice design of a sow and her litter of piglets come to be in my potato patch?

When purchasing my bit of Dollar Field there was nothing but green fields, a couple of distant farmhouses, cottages, and The Apple Tree Inn between us and the top of Cleeve Hill. Our builder was a one-man-band and subcontracted all the work that was beyond his capability. Two Irishmen were tasked with the plasterwork, but they were not very good. After each day's work Pamela and I gave it a look-over and were disappointed. Empty Guinness bottles were in evidence, and we began to see why their plasterwork was so irregular!

Since finding that almost worthless coin and trying to work out how it came to be in what was now our potato patch, I realised that The Apple Tree Inn was within easy walking distance from the house if one went across the fields as the crow flies. Did it slip out of one of the men's pockets on his way to 'The Tree' for lunchtime refreshment? I can think of no better reason for it being there!

Pam acted as my mate after the Irishmen had been paid off and we covered all the faulty plasterwork with wallpaper except for the kitchen ceiling. To this day that remains in its uneven state. Sometimes I gaze up at it and think how happy in their work those men must have been – especially in the afternoons!

Bernard Parkin

Yna cymerodd Jemiman ei fforc pic

22nd February 1797

In the dark, that night, seventeen boats approached Carregwasted headland, three miles north of Fishguard; as the boats grounded on the sand, 1,400 French soldiers leapt ashore. They were under the command of an Irish American Colonel William Tate. Their aim was to march south, cross the border and take Bristol from the north. These troops consisted of 600 regular, disciplined soldiers but were predominantly made up with 800 irregular troops drawn from the dregs of French prisons and known as 'La Légion Noire'.

A general call went out for British arms, and local militia, reservists, and sailors from Milford Haven began to assemble under the command of John Campbell. Many skirmishes took place over the next two days, during which many of the La Légion Noire, looted deserted farmhouses many of which contained cider and beer breweries, with the expected outcome, the discipline amongst the French troops began to break down. The remaining forces were basically trapped on the beach and unable to break out when:

A Thin Red Line appeared on the hilltop.

Those invading troops that could, promptly began to pull back towards their boats. A British officer, realising what was happening, gathered the 'Thin-Red-Line' into squares and marched them smartly downhill towards the remaining French troops, who then unconditionally surrendered.

The Welsh ladies in their red shawls; tall black hats and white aprons, were most pleased with their success.

The French had mistaken them for a British Regiment of Red Coated Guards !!!!!

There were, however, 12 stragglers still at large, so Yna cymerodd Jemiman ei fforc pic and drove them into St Mary's Church, and LOCKED THE DOOR.

John Moles

Footnotes:

Yna cymerodd Jemiman ei fforc pic = Then took Jemima her pitchfork.

Jemima, who became known as Jemiman Fawr = Jemima the Great, was Jemima Niclas, a cobbler from the village of Mathy.

Modern Guards regiments wear blue trousers with a red stipe down the seam, but in 1797 they wore white trousers; hence the ladies in their tall black hats; red shawls, and white aprons would, from a distance, look very similar to the guards of that time.

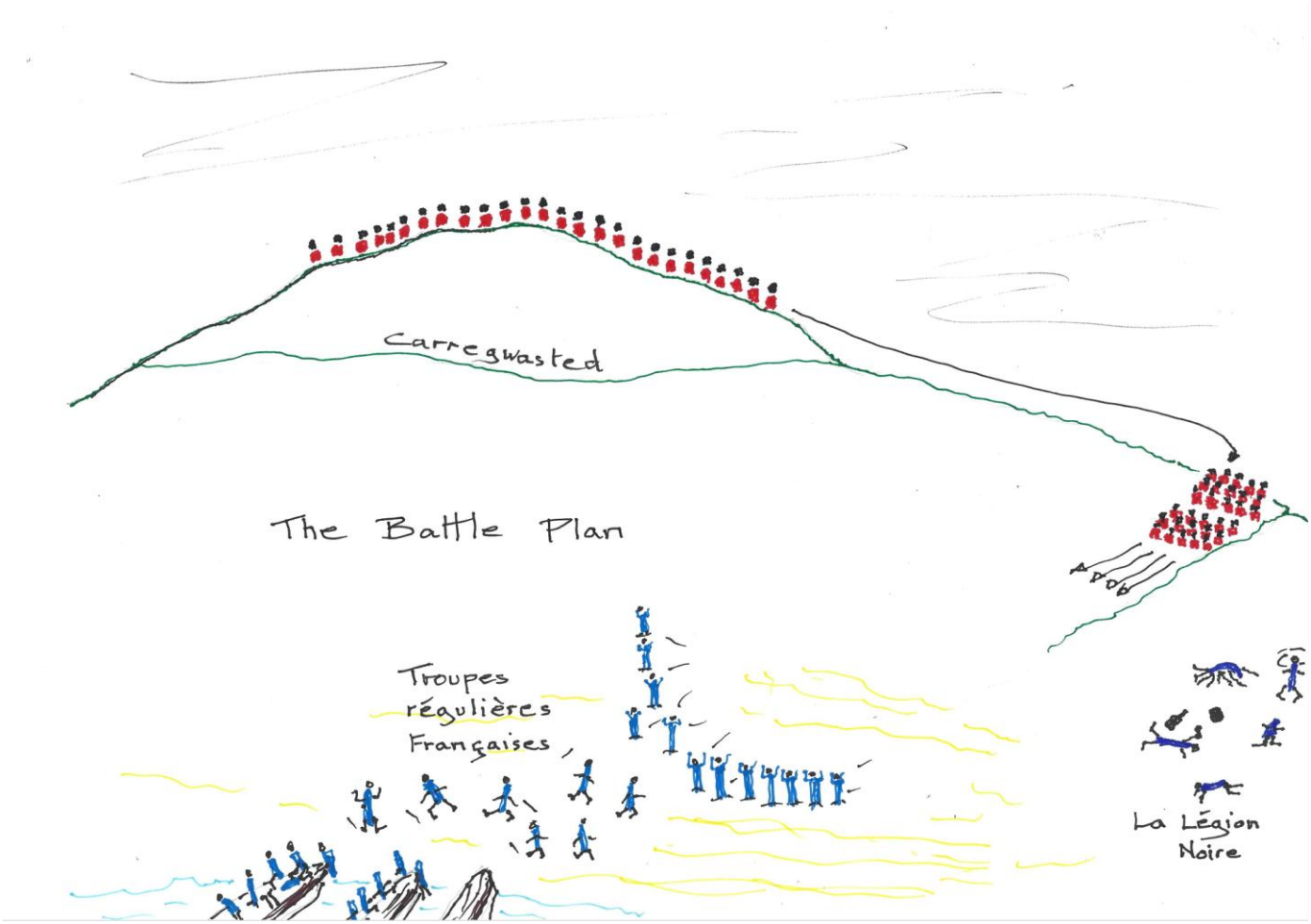
The British Square. This was a typical tactic used during the 18th and 19th Centuries by Guards Regiments. The squares could be moved quickly across the battlefield and once formed, were a formidable obstacle to cavalry; French Troops would be well acquainted with this tactic.

THE tapestry.

Move forward 200 years to 1993 to the preparations to celebrate the bicentennial of the invasion in 1997.

Over the next four years, 78 local people set out to embroider a 100-foot-long tapestry. The tapestry is now housed in a purpose-built gallery in the Library at Fishguard Town Hall and features key elements of the French Invasion, including the drunken Légion Noire and a formidable Jemima.

Why go to London to view an old tapestry depicting a French invasion when there is a new one at Fishguard?





STONE SOUP

A Ukrainian army official spoke recently in Kyiv of the terrible effects of the latest bombings: black smoke billowing, older people clinging to windowsills, children wandering around alone and confused. So here is a story of hope.

I want to tell you a story, as Max Bygraves used to begin.

Once upon a time, a stranger rode his tired horse down a country road on his way home. Both man and horse were hungry. Ahead he saw a small village.

"I'll get something to eat there and find a place for the night," he thought.

Suddenly the horse tripped, throwing the stranger to the ground. He saw that the horse had stumbled over a rock sticking out in the middle of the road. He dug it up. It was a splendid rock, beautifully shaped and smooth. The stranger liked it, so he put it in his saddle bag, climbed up on his horse, and continued into the village.

The people stopped to stare. He waved to them, but no one waved back.

"Crumbs, it's like being in Leckhampton," he quipped, to cheer himself up.

He got off his horse and approached a woman standing in her doorway. "Good evening," he said cheerfully. "Could you spare a bit of food for a hungry man?"

The woman shook her head. "We have had a poor harvest here. There is barely enough food for our family." She shut the door.

The man continued to the next house where a farmer was working. "Do you have a place at your table for a hungry traveller?" he asked.

"It didn't rain for weeks before harvest," the farmer said. "What little we have is needed for our children."

At every home the stranger heard the same sad story. Discouraged, the man sat down. "Poor people, soon they will be as hungry as I am."

Suddenly he had an idea. He reached into his saddle bag, took out the stone and addressed the villagers. "Gentle folk," he shouted, "your worries are over. I have in my hand a special stone that will help take you through the long winter. This is a magic stone. With it you can make stone soup."

"Stone soup?" an old man repeated. "I have never heard of stone soup. More worryingly, nor have I seen it in Lidl; sorry, I mean, of course, Waitrose," he added, noting the momentary look of horror on locals' faces.

"The wonder of stone soup," the stranger continued, "is that it not only feeds hungry people, but it also brings people together. Now who has a large empty pot?"

Quickly a big iron pot was found. "The pot is barely large enough, but it will do," the stranger said. "Now we fill the pot with water and start a fire."

Eager hands carried buckets of water and firewood. The pot was placed over a roaring fire. As the water boiled, the stranger dramatically raised the magic stone; then he gently placed it in the pot. "Stone soup needs salt and pepper," the stranger announced. People ran to find salt and pepper.

After the water had boiled for a few minutes, the stranger sipped the soup.

"This stone makes an excellent soup, but better still with a few carrots."

"We have carrots," a farmer replied. His daughter brought an apron full of carrots.

"You know," said the stranger, "stone soup is always much tastier when we add potatoes."

"I have potatoes," a young mum shouted, dashing home and returning carrying lots of potatoes.

"Tomatoes also are great for stone soup," he added. Someone else returned with beautiful vine tomatoes.

"A nice colourful squash is also good news for a tasty soup," he added. And someone was quickly at his side with just such a squash.

"Also, broccoli; and runner beans; peas; and radishes; and mushrooms; and cauliflower; and celeriac; and lime juice," he went on, and neighbours rushed home, returning with each.

He continued: "I am told that stone soup is enhanced by beetroot, by swede and by butternut squash..." No sooner had he finished speaking than people were off to gather these vegetables too, rushing back with beetroot, swede and butternut squash.

Then he recalled, "The last time I made stone soup was at the castle of a rich man. He added a red pepper and mini peppers."

Several people talked quietly. "A red pepper and mini peppers, and we can eat like rich people." They soon returned not only with a red pepper and mini peppers, but some brought spring onions too.

By the time the soup was ready it was dark. It was the most delicious soup that they had ever smelled, and it all came from the magic stone. The stranger invited everyone to eat, and they sang and danced until late, a wonderful party.

The next morning the whole village gathered to say goodbye to the stranger. A child called out, "You forgot to take your magic stone!"

The stranger smiled. "I am going to leave the stone with you so you remember: as long as you make stone soup, you will never have to worry about being hungry. And please remember that you can get equally good quality ingredients at Sainsbury's, Morrison's, Tesco, Lidl and Aldi as well as Waitrose."

A grandfather said to his granddaughter, "Do you remember the other bit of magic that the stranger promised when you make stone soup?" he asked.

"Yes," she said, "the stone brings people closer together."

Today we see that it is God who provides everything we have.

A wise man once said: "If the only prayer you ever say in your entire life is 'thank you', it will be enough."

Fr Nick

This was the sermon read by Fr Nick on Sunday 18 October with interactions as part of the Harvest Festival in St Nicolas' Church. To watch Fr Nick's complete sermon go to https://www.youtube.com/live/rJlyj_UrUuk It starts 33 minutes 15 seconds in.

Advertisements

COTSWOLD CHIROPRACTIC
CENTRE

HELPING PROMOTE YOUR BODY'S NATURAL HEALING POTENTIAL.

- Natural pain relief
- Stress and tension
- Back and neck pain
- Enhance overall wellbeing





- Hip pain and sciatica
- Pediatric care
- Improve posture
- Headaches and migraines

Your £70 initial consultation includes:
Full health testing, Posture screening, In-house digital X-Rays, and more!

01285 703500
info@cotswoldchiropracticcentre.co.uk
Unit 3, The Apple Store, Far Peak, GL54 3AP

Book now!

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** Web: **www.kwsharpening.co.uk**

To advertise your business please contact advertising@prestbury.net

Hello, I'm pleased to meet you

My father was a Welshman, originally from Blanaeu Ffestiniog in north Wales, and met my mother in Slough where they worked in the same factory. Dad was an engineer and Mum was a typist in the office. He was 17 years older than her, but they got on well. They both played the piano and liked singing. Dad sang in the Male Voice Choir when he lived in Wales. He taught her some Welsh, and in due course, they got engaged.

Mum's parents had some reservations about the age difference, but Dad was skilled and had been in the Royal Navy during the war.

They visited Dad's parents in Wales next, as they hadn't met Mum. When she was being introduced to her new family, she was eager to try out her Welsh. After she thought she'd said 'Hello, I'm pleased to meet you' there was a little chuckle. What she had actually said was 'Hello, 8 9 10'.

This broke the ice, and they got on really well.

While they were there, they climbed up the nearest mountain and Mum thought that the heather was very beautiful. They agreed that if they had a daughter, they would call her Heather. If they had a son, he would be called Hugh - Mum thought that it would be easier for him at school than the Welsh spelling 'Huw'.

They married in 1946, Hugh was born in 1947, and I arrived in 1949.

When I was five, I thought I'd like to be Scottish as I loved tartan. I had two different tartan skirts, and I wanted to ask Father Christmas for the whole Scottish set. I also liked the sound of bagpipes. This set would include a sporran and bagpipes! We lived in a flat at that time, so my parents were quite shocked and tried to put me off, saying that it just wouldn't be possible for Father Christmas to find anything like that, and that only men wore it, and I couldn't possibly be Scottish when I was half English and half Welsh. I felt quite downcast, but the second choice on my little note, I did get- a blackboard and weasel!

When I was 7, we went to north Wales for a holiday. It was an exciting journey on the train, and we stayed at a hotel in Harlech. The sandy beach could be reached after crossing the road from the hotel, walking through a golf course and round the sand dunes. We made friends with two brothers, staying at the hotel and had a lot of fun.

We went on a train to Blaenau Ffestiniog one day to see where our Welsh grandparents had lived. My Dad found it straight away. It was on the corner of a road with a curved front, with a door in the centre and windows each side of it. The windows had wide cills, and there were large shells on them. Dad said that they had always been there. He said that every family in the road was called Williams, which was our surname.

We visited a couple of Dad's cousins. Auntie Annie had a pig farm and there were lots of little pink piglets running around in big grassy pens.

We visited another relative who had a large, funny looking thing on the sideboard. It turned out to be her husband's diving helmet as that had been his occupation.

We haven't been to north Wales for a holiday for many years, but we plan to. I want to see if those big shells are still there on the window cills.....

Heather Atkinson

Being a Churchwarden at Prestbury St Mary's

Introduction to Clare Wyatt's Writing, by Edward Wyatt.

For over one year my wife Clare has wanted to produce a write-up of the part she played when she was a churchwarden. Having narrated poems to me she has moved on to a mammoth result by comparison of just over two thousand words. All of these words were held in her head and narrated to me, many requiring several repeats of diction. This is Clare's work, not mine, and is a most credible achievement, something I could not do as well as she has.

Being a churchwarden is not a holiday, but, like a holiday, it can conjure up a lot of fun and create many challenges. It is an honour and calls for respect and responsibility and creates comradeship and satisfaction. Clare tells me some of her favourite events were arranging and decorating the Christmas tree, leading the clergy on Remembrance Sunday, the visit of the bishop and linking the church to the eco plan.

Being a Churchwarden at Prestbury St Mary's

The post of churchwarden is an ancient one but its role has changed over the years. Ancient records show churchwardens chairing the vestry meetings with much concern with the poor of the parish. The responsibility for the poor was taken away by the parish council in the 19th century on the orders of the government. Then the Parochial Church Council (PCC) was set up and took responsibility for financial affairs. All work on the building is contracted by the PCC, which is responsible for all the church debt. Only the PCC can sue or be sued. The churchwardens have a responsibility to see that the PCC handle the money responsibly and carry enough insurance. Finally an Act of Parliament limited them to sit consecutively for a maximum of six consecutive years. There may be times when the PCC will ask churchwardens to complete some extra years. Churchwardens are elected by the people of the parish for one year. They are responsible to the bishop via the archdeacon and thus are independent of the incumbent. Some responsibility remains from the old days. The churchwardens are held to own all the movable items within the church and are expected to have an inventory of these items. Churchwardens have to have records of all the church lands and property held, known as a terrier (from Latin terra, land) and keep a Log Book of all the work done on the church. On ceremonial occasions the churchwardens, carrying their ceremonial staff, lead the clergy. Modern churchwardens have two main areas of responsibility, namely the health and safety of the congregation and also that of the incumbent. See Addendum. In addition churchwardens may be asked to do other duties which will vary from parish to parish. Finally each churchwarden brings his/her own interest to the job. Every five years a trained architect checks the building for safety but the churchwardens do a visual valuation from ground level each year and send a report to the annual general meeting of the PCC.

At St Mary's a particular concern is the church roof and the main part of it has stone tiles which can crack and slide off. The two aisles have a lead roof which is in constant need of repair. It is good to walk around the church when it is raining to check that the guttering is in working order and that the drains are flowing freely. It is the responsibility of the churchwardens to make sure the drains are free, and call in a contractor if necessary. At St Mary's we have a channel around the base of the walls which keeps the water away from

the foundations; this should be kept clear of weeds and other obstacles. St Mary's church is the tallest building for miles around and so there is a need to have the lightning conductor tested regularly. Its churchwardens are very grateful to the tower captain, who keeps the tower safe, the steeple keeper, who keeps the bells safe to ring and the clock winders for keeping the clock going.

The churchyard is the responsibility of the incumbent but the churchwardens, along with the health and safety officer, if there is one, have a duty to see that the tombstones are safe and to lay them flat if they wobble. Inside the church the floor is uneven, and its floor-tiles come up regularly and have to be refixed or occasionally replaced. Churchwardens are responsible for adequate lighting, both inside and outside the church. All electric equipment needs checking for safety. It is doubtful if members of the congregation who pick up a microphone, or plug in a kettle, realise that these appliances have been checked. The whole electrical system is tested regularly by a qualified electrician. Fire is a major hazard and the churchwardens have to ensure that there are enough fire-extinguishers which are checked regularly. A big problem is when we have a candle-lit service, especially the carol service when the church is packed with worshipers. Little do the congregation know that there are fire-watchers armed with water-spray at strategic positions. The congregation expects the heating to be on in winter and so the churchwardens spend a lot of time checking radiators and ensuring the boiler is serviced annually. At St Mary's the churchwardens are fortunate to have teams of people to clean the church, polish the brass and to provide refreshments after the services; they only have to make sure these things are done. The churchwardens are grateful to members of the Building and Fabric Committee of the PCC, who often carry out minor repairs themselves. During the services the congregation is looked after by the churchwardens' deputies, the sidesmen.

Churchwardens have to make sure that the First Aid Kit is in date and that the Accident Book is also up to date. Here in Prestbury since the diocese took over the building that is now known as the Rectory the diocese has been responsible for the safety of the incumbent when in the Rectory. The churchwardens act as a critical friend to the incumbent, they are someone the incumbent can talk to in confidence, also they have a duty to relieve the incumbent of as much of the paperwork and administration of the parish as possible. Special mention needs to be made here of the annual returns. These are figures demanded by the diocese concerning the number of baptisms, marriages and funerals conducted in the parish, as well as details of the average weekly attendance for the month of October. In most parishes this task is delegated to the churchwardens but in Prestbury the current rector has a special interest in statistics and so has elected to do these himself.

In my period churchwardens were to support the incumbent in his duties, but in the event of difficult challenges we could fall back on the bishop and archdeacon; since then help became available from the Diocese, see Addendum.

At St Mary's churchwardens are expected to give the notices after the 11.00 o'clock service. They must see that the Christmas tree is up and decorated before the Christingle Service, (held in early December) and it is the churchwardens' duty to find readers for the Carol Service, to organise the Epiphany Supper and cast the Palm Sunday reading.

I first became a churchwarden in 2018 as a favour to my friend and churchwarden, Frances Murton. I warned her that my elder daughter was very ill; her condition deteriorated

rapidly and she died in July 2018. I do not remember much about the rest of that year but I think I left all of the churchwarden duties to Frances.

2019 was very different and Matt Allison took over as churchwarden from Frances, and I became the lead-warden. It was a steep learning curve. Matt (his daytime job was a primary teacher) and I re-organised the church notice board located inside the porch. I got subject dividers and put the paperwork within the Log Books in a logical order. I set about creating a register of key-holders. That year was a quinquennial year and so we had an inspection by the architect and also the diocese sent someone to look at the Log Book and the terrier. 2019 also saw the end of the LMT (Local Ministry Team). I had hoped for a new calling-out but that was not to be. I felt very isolated without them (LMT) and then Covid happened and so my concern was academic.

The following two years (2020 and 2021) were dominated by Covid but I remember from 2019 that there was very little in writing to guide a new churchwarden. Therefore I used lockdown to draw up a calendar of things for a new churchwarden to do. Using old Log Books I made a list of contractors who had worked at St Mary's in the past. When the church reopened an old power of the churchwardens was re-activated, that of telling people where to sit; in bygone times this was to do with pew-rents but now it was to enforce social distancing. I wanted to step down at the next annual general meeting but Matt Allison moved to take charge of Celebrate! and Stewart Wright took his place as churchwarden. I had to serve another year. I knew that we had a comprehensive inventory of the church plate and the vestments but there was no list of the furniture. With my husband a catalogue of all the furniture, with photographs, was made. One hot day I took my husband and granddaughter, then a computer literate teenager, and together we went through the contents of the churchwardens' chest. I identified the items, my husband photographed them and our granddaughter entered them into my laptop.

All through the year of 2022 I became increasingly aware that I was ill, and felt like a drunk most of the time. The walk from the churchwarden's pew to the High Altar became difficult and when there was a healing service and I welcomed people to the Good Shepherd chapel I had to hold on to the wooden screen to stop myself from falling over. Early in 2023 I was diagnosed with an acoustic neuroma; this is a benign tumour not in but very close to the brain. I was relieved to hand over the job to Helen Mann. In October 2023 I had an operation in Southmead Hospital, Bristol, to remove a large part of this tumour. The operation was a long one (13 hours) and after it I was in a coma (over one week) and had a bleed. This left me with a devastating brain injury. I cannot use my hands or feet and find it hard to speak. But my mind and memory are intact, and so I was able to dictate this article, with other items, to Edward, my loving husband of fifty-five years.

During my time as a churchwarden I oversaw the removal of a chestnut sapling that was growing too close to the north-east side of the chancel wall and the removal of the dead silver birch tree at the Church Lane end of the churchyard with the planting of a replacement. I oversaw the pruning of the yew trees and the installation of new handrails on the millennium steps. All of the guttering was completely replaced, and outside lights were installed on the south side of the church to balance those already on the north side. The lighting inside the church was improved in the kitchen, the sacristy and in the boiler room; two leaking radiators were repaired, the flue was cleared and the toilet taps were replaced with a mixing tap which made hand washing easier. I started a system of recycling

where none had existed before and tied St Mary's to the eco church project. During my time a new ladder was installed between the bell chamber and the roof. Although the tower-team did the work I had to get the necessary permission from the diocese. I started the process of getting our old font back but it was left to others to complete the project.

Helen Mann, David Lyle and I worked hard to improve the biodiversity of the churchyard. I became aware that the rector was having a problem locating a site for the burial of ashes. There was a map but it was very large, old and very fragile. My husband photographed this map and I enlarged the photograph and divided it into sections. These were printed and put onto a clipboard which made it easier to take into the churchyard and mark the site of a new burial. Then I turned my attention to Plot D, which lies to the south of the church and is the triangle formed by (a) the stream, (b) the path from the King's Arms to the church on the east side and (c) the path from Church Lane to the church on the west; its nickname is the *members' enclosure* because so many former parishioners are buried there. David Lyle and a group of boys from the college uncovered a number of memorial stone slabs. When I tried putting these on the map I found the map was very inaccurate and with my husband we set about re-plotting all of the graves in Plot D. In due course the other plots will need re-mapping.

If you have common sense; If you can keep a confidence;
if you enjoy knowing what is going on before anyone else
then the churchwarden's job is for you!

Clare Wyatt

Addendum

Since the time Clare stood down as churchwarden there have been a number of changes in the Diocese.

Fr Nick wishes it to be pointed out that all dioceses now employ HR (Human Resource) departments who deal with clergy illness and clergy deal directly with HR managers and expert occupational health consultants themselves.

Also, parishes often have individual traditions about aspects of church life – like notices! - which vary from place to place.

Some 25 years ago it was usual for the priest to read out notices handed to him on scraps of paper. Nowadays one of the wardens reads the notices, and in St Nicolas, at least, members of the congregation are invited to give their own notices.

Editor

WALES THE WONDERFUL

Our industrious Magazine Editor has set a series of monthly topics which for those of us of a certain age engender many memories. So, here goes …..

Wales for me, born and bred in Liverpool, was always near at hand. north Wales that is.

Chester is very close to Liverpool, 19 miles to be exact, and it is the gateway to North Wales. Easy to get to, as I remember, by train or by bus. Even much easier now by rail and road.

My earliest experiences of Wales were Sunday School treats by bus…especially to Llangollen. Llangollen remains a favourite of mine with its lovely town centre and now its heritage Railway wending its way up the beautiful Dee Valley past the ruins of Valle Crucis Abbey to Corwen. Often, more recently, we stayed at the Royal Hotel in Llangollen with its dining room looking out onto the River Dee. Sadly, that hotel is now closed. But there are others.



When I was in my teens, my father had been ill and after radiation treatment was in Colwyn Bay convalescing. I visited him in the February and was amazed to see lots of people swimming in the sea. That part of the north Wales coast is in the jet stream and the water was warm! The River Mersey at Liverpool was not warm in February!



Betwys y Coed, near Conway, was my first taste of camping with my pals. What a beautiful place is Conway where the magnificent castle stands proud overlooking the estuary and the Conway Valley. We stayed there a couple of weeks ago and Betwys and the Swallow Falls retain their magic albeit showing signs of the hot weather drought. Lots of tourist enjoyed it.

Conway leads down to Llandudno and its lovely sandy bay nestled between the Great Orme and the Little Orme. As an articled clerk I went with the audit team twice a year to perform a week's audit of the Grand Hotel Llandudno. The hotel was then 'rather posh' and I remember guests spending their days playing bridge. Phyllis and I stayed at The George Hotel on the promenade there recently and took the tram up the Great Orme to

see the views. The Grand Hotel is not so posh these days but still stands at the entrance to the pier. Llandudno is a really nice town and very popular.





I have visited Snowdonia many times and climbed Snowden a few times in my earlier years as well as going up on the steam trains too. More often than not at the summit there is mist although three years ago Phyllis and I stayed near and the weather was brilliant sunshine You could see the summit for miles around!

Caernarfon further along the coast is amazing with its wonderful castle and an imposing statue of that imposing character Lloyd George who had been its MP. More Welsh speaking than other towns. There is now the Welsh Highland Narrow Gauge Railway running from Caernarfon to Porthmadog with great views of Snowdonia. It meets up with the Ffestiniog Railway from Blaenau at Porthmadog. A few hours cruise around the bay at Caernarfon provides great views as well. Near Caernarfon is the Cathedral City of Bangor with nearby Penryn Castle and the Menai Straits with its bridges to Anglesey where there is Beaumaris Castle and a town with the longest Welsh name, known as 'Llanfair PG' for short. Holyhead is the port on Anglesey and nearest to Ireland. A day trip across to Dublin in Ireland is a must.

Down the coast is Harlech Castle, a real tough looking place standing guard high above the landscape and the coast.

An Italianate village not too far away is a popular visitor attraction, Portmeirion. A rather beautiful folly built by an architect who wanted to create a beautiful village amongst an area of slate industry. The buildings are less than full size and there are places to stay there. It was the location for that mysterious TV serial The Prisoner.



The Ffestiniog Railway, a narrow gauge former slate industry line runs from the slate mines to the coast for shipping. It is a now a main visitor attraction. From the still bleak slate quarry Blaenau Ffestiniog town down the beautiful valley to Porthmadog the little steam trains carry thousands of passengers.

I try to visit some part of Wales each year. More recently we were introduced to South Wales. Our daughter Gillian spent 4 years at Cardiff University. We had never been there before and what a fine city it is …. again with the fine Cardiff Castle and nearby Llandaff with its Cathedral. …. Not forgetting the incomparable Shirly Bassey from Cardiff. When Gillian came to work in Cheltenham she met her husband Steve, who is Welsh originally from the Swansea area. Visits there included the beautiful Gower, Mumbles, Caerphilly with its fine castle, and Penderyn Distillery near the Brecons.

I have not touched on the Welsh language…I did buy a book about it but found it difficult, wondering whether that was because Latin was my best subject at school and there is no derivation.

Wales is always a good place to visit! Possibly I am an unofficial ambassador for it. Could it be my interest in railways especially the narrow-gauge railways there? Or my family connections?

Eddie Bestwick

Marle Hill WI

We met on Monday 5 October 2026. The speaker was Helen Plumb, who gave us a fascinating talk on the qualities of gem stones. Information on how she came about to work with Gemstones was very interesting and took her all over the world.

Our Knit and Natter, social event 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 November 2026 which will be our Annual Meeting.

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

Advertisements



CHORLEY'S AUCTIONEERS
Cotswolds Heritage since 1862

Complimentary Auction Valuations

Monthly Art & Antiques Auctions
Inheritance Tax & Insurance Valuations

Prinknash Abbey Park | GL4 8EU
info@chorleys.com | 01452 344 499

chorleys.com

VillageCare

Premium homecare
without premium prices

Rated 9.7/10 by homecare.co.uk

Local Independent
Experienced Carers
Fully Regulated

From short term to full time homecare -
Our care is highly flexible and tailored to your individual circumstances

Call us on 01242 503 517 to book a FREE care assessment

www.village-care.co.uk
enquiries@village-care.co.uk

To advertise your business please contact advertising@prestbury.net

Forthcoming Events

Taizé for Remembrance

Sunday 8 November at 6.30pm in St Nicolas Church



Time for remembrance through word and image, silence and song

Bereavement Friendship Group

We will be meeting in St Mary's Church, Prestbury on Monday 16 November 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.

Sue Challenger

Welcome On Wednesday

Wednesday 18 November 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? Give it a try!





Christmas Singalong with Festive refreshments

Friday 11 December 2pm – 4pm in St Nicolas Church

Come and join us to sing all your Christmas favourites to support MINDSONG, a local charity which supports Dementia sufferers and their carers in their homes, Care Homes and community through music and song.

A warm space for all ages to sing & socialise

No entry Fee. Just Donations



Whisky Tasting at The Royal Oak

Friends of St Mary's Church, Prestbury

Accompanied by Cake and Cheeses



6 Whiskies will be Available to Try

An Expert will Introduce each one

Cheese and Biscuits

& Fruit Cake

Monday 16 November 2026

7.30pm Royal Oak, The Burgage

Tickets £25

Tickets: Text/WhatsApp Helen Eagger 07765 903406


Vivaldi Gloria
and Concerto for Oboe and Trumpet
Bob Chilcott
On Christmas Night
Thomas Hewitt-Jones
The Shepherd's Tale
Soloists from The Royal Academy of Music:
Abigail Sinclair (soprano)
Miro Treharne (mezzo soprano)
The Regency Sinfonia
John Wright (conductor)
Saturday
28th November 2026
7.00 pm
Holy Apostles Church
Cheltenham
Tickets £20 (including programme)
Under 25s in full time education £10
Book now:
ckcsonline.org.uk/concerts
Registered Charity No. 291743
Charlton Kings Choral Society


MUSICA VERA
CHAMBER CHOIR
Marc-Antoine Charpentier -
Messe de Minuit pour Noël
Saturday 5th December, 7.30 pm. St Mary's Church, Prestbury
Also featuring beautiful choral music for Christmas by Holst, Rutter and others
Conductor: Matthew Clark
Accompanist: John Wade
Tickets: £18, Students £6, Under-18s free. Available at the door or in advance from the Three Choirs Festival Box Office (subject to booking fee) www.3choirs.org / 01452 768928. Free programmes at the door
musicaveracc
@musicavera
www.musicavera.org



TEWKESBURY CHORAL SOCIETY

DECEMBER CONCERT 2026

Our winter Concert will feature contrasting shorter works. These will include Vivaldi's Magnificat, something of a companion piece to his better-known Gloria, and Schubert's very tuneful short Mass in G, written when the composer was just 18. And to put us in a seasonal mood, we will perform Christmas Cantata, a setting of English carols and poems by Geoffrey Bush, and also two Christmas songs composed by a member of the choir, Peter Teague.

As usual, we will be ably accompanied by the Regency Sinfonia, which will also perform one of Albinoni's Oboe Concertos.

We invite you to join us for a very enjoyable evening of music as we enter the season of Advent and Christmas!

TEWKESBURY CHORAL SOCIETY

Performing for Tewkesbury & District since 1844

Registered Charity 260811

TIMES OF REGULAR CHURCH SERVICES

St Mary's Church, Prestbury

Sunday		0800	Eucharist
	1st Sunday	0930	Breakfast Celebrate! – All-age worship
	Other Sundays	0900	Breakfast Celebrate!
		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	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

* 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
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
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**

December 2026 / January 2027 Magazine Theme: Memorials

Please send copy by Sunday 15 November 2026
or very soon after

THE ROYAL OAK
CHELTENHAM

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.

royaloakprestbury.co.uk

royaloakprestbury@butcombepubs.com

01242 522344

@royaloakprestbury

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

BUTCOMBE
LOYALTY CLUB

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