

Malherbe Monthly

Number 50
September 2008



Incorporating Liverton Street & Platts Heath

Useful contact names and telephone N^{os}.
BOUGHTON MALHERBE/GRAFTY GREEN

County Councillor	Vacant	
Borough Councillors	Jenny Gibson Richard Thick	890200 891224
Church Wardens	Kenneth Alexander Joan Davidson	858348 850210
Parish Council Clerk	Pat Anderson	858350
Village Hall bookings	Doreen Walters	850387
KM Correspondent	Sylvia Close	858919
Gardening Club	Sue Burch	850381
Church Choir	Doreen Hulm	850287
Sunday School	Mair Chantler	859672
Yoga	Sue Burch	850381
Neighbourhood Watch	Keith Anderson Sue Burch	858350 850381
Incumbent	Rev: Dick Venn	
Benefice Office	Michelle Saunders (email: churchoffice@lenvalleybenefice.org.uk)	850604
Mobile Library	Wednesday afternoons	
St. Edmunds Centre	Tricia Dibley	858891
Fresh Fish delivery	Thursday afternoons at approx. 4.45 by Post Office	01580 754300
Council Rubbish Freighter	See article in magazine	
Malherbe Monthly Production Team		
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John Collins	Treasurer	850213

The views expressed in “Malherbe Monthly” are not necessarily those of the Production Team; publication of articles/adverts does not constitute endorsement and we reserve the right to edit!
Anything for the **October** edition should be left in Grafty Green Shop, or contact Mike on 01622 858937 (mf.hitchins@virgin.net) by **20th September**

Front cover:

Part of the group of students attending the Swadelands Activity Week at Bull Heath
see article on page 24

An introduction from Dick Venn, our new Vicar

I was born in Ealing, West London and grew up in Brighton, Eastbourne and Tunbridge Wells. Summer holidays were spent on the beach and on the farm in Herefordshire where my mother was born. My mother took my sister and me to church on Sunday mornings while Dad, who was an atheist, stayed at home and cooked Sunday lunch. Baptised as an infant and confirmed at 13 with only a hazy faith, I discovered a bit more about the real Jesus when I was 17 and all the pieces of the jigsaw fell into place during a conversation in a coffee bar. It was then that I decided to follow him, much to my father's disgust.

I studied Chemistry at Leeds University where Helen and I met while helping with the Student Christian Union: we married in 1974. Then I did a PhD in Bioengineering and Biochemistry at Glasgow and Lund University in Sweden. After that, a series of short-term Post-doctoral research appointments in Cardiff, Imperial College London and the University of Connecticut Health Centre in the US.

When we came back from the States, we were both unemployed for about 6 months, agreeing that whoever got a job first would take it and the other would stay at home and look after the children – we had two, Matthew and Katherine, by that time. Eventually we moved up to Liverpool where I worked with the Pain Research Institute, studying the biochemistry underlying chronic human pain. As a scientist and a Christian, it was fascinating to be able to follow God's handiwork in human biochemistry and physiology: the fine structure of a spinal cord is awe-inspiring and amazing! We were in Liverpool for seven years and then moved down to East Kent when I took up a job as Team Leader in the Clinical Assay Group of Pfizer's Drug Metabolism department. By this time we had two more children, Lucy and Rosemary. I loved working with Pfizer and gained enormously from their personnel training programmes; they seemed to love me too, and in time I became Senior Director, responsible for about half the department.

Throughout our life together, Helen and I have attended church with the family, hoping to serve God wherever we are. So we have led homegroups, been on leadership teams & PCCs, helped with music, helped with Sunday School, and so on. Once or twice before I have investigated ordination, considering it very carefully during our stay in Liverpool, but finding that there was no clear sense of call.

Through a series of events, I was appointed Authorised Lay Minister of The Carpenter's Arms Sandwich (TCAS), an Anglican Church Plant meeting in the Junior School aiming to be family-friendly, fun, relevant and accessible. It was this that led eventually to my ordination, to leaving Pfizer, to leaving The Carpenter's Arms, to leaving our home in Worth.

For the last three years I have been Curate at Holy Trinity Church in Margate, and we are now very much looking forward to coming to the Len Valley Benefice. We are surprised and excited to be coming here! Surprised because we had begun to think that we would move away from Kent and perhaps work in an urban setting; excited because we feel that God has called us to Len Valley and that people here are ready to engage with God's mission of love, reconciliation, freedom and healing.

Many blessings to you all!

Liverton Hill closing again !!

The following has been issued by Kent Highway Services:

The kerbing and drainage works are scheduled to start on Liverton Hill from Monday 1st September 2008, and the works are likely to take 3-4 weeks to complete, however BT unfortunately have got a closure already planned on Headcorn Road from the 15th September for a week so we are going to have to pull out to allow their works and then go back in. Advanced warning signs will be in place along with extra signing for Grafty Green Garden Centre

Grafty Green Heating Oil Syndicate

Grafty Green has its own Heating Oil Syndicate. We have over 200 members who benefit from cheaper Heating Oil when ordered in bulk. If you are prepared to buy at least 500 Litres 3 or 4 times a year and are fed up with Oil Tankers trundling through your village every week causing damage to our roads, not to mention the environmental cost and you want to join, email europa.13@btinternet.com or call Keith Anderson on 01622 858350. We now reach out to over 25 villages in the Ashford and Maidstone area. This club is non profit making.

Keith Anderson

Malherbe Monthly – 50th Issue

Some of you may have noticed that this is the 50th issue of the magazine, which means we have been going for over 4 years. I thought it would be a good idea to give you some insight into how the magazine came about and how it has progressed during that time.

Just over 4 years ago Christine King thought it was about time the parish of Boughton Malherbe had its own newsletter or magazine to promote activities and events that were being organised within the parish. Additionally it could carry articles and news items that would be of interest to the local community.

What to call it and how to fund it were considerations that needed to be addressed before any publication could proceed. The first - the name - was the easier. John Collins suggested the name Malherbe Monthly as it twinned the area of distribution with the frequency of publication and that has proved to be a good choice. The second - how to fund it - was a two-fold undertaking. Advertising was the obvious choice together with a monthly subscription for the magazine. However collecting a subscription fee could be onerous and would defeat the object of the magazine being distributed to all the residents of the parish so it was decided to distribute the magazine to all households free of charge. The person who made this possible is Eddie Brooke. He kindly and generously agreed to print the magazine free of charge which clearly gave the founders the ability to proceed.

The magazine was on its way..... Of course the important part was to generate sufficient advertising together with articles that were informative and interesting. The magazine is and has been fortunate in that many local businesses have placed their advertising with it and several have been with us since inception. They are all to be thanked as they now form the backbone of the revenue that the magazine needs in order to be able to continue. Articles are also vital in that they inform the parish of events and several contributors produce items on a regular basis. They are all to be thanked. We now know lots about gardening, the night sky, link words and even how to knock up interesting meals from our gourmet.

Last year in July the printing of the magazine was taken in-house as Eddie thought it was about time the magazine stood on its own feet. We cannot thank him enough for his generous contribution in enabling the magazine to be

produced free of charge in those early days. Without his contribution there would be no magazine today. We now rely on advertising and a contribution from the Parish Council to fund the publication. To this end we have purchased two printers and a booklet folding machine. Currently, income from advertising just about covers the cost of production; we have considerable costs in terms of paper and toner for the printers. During the time that Eddie printed the magazine we were able to build up some funds as our outgoings were small. We still have this money on deposit and we hope in the near future to be able to distribute it to worthy causes within the parish.

Producing and printing is one thing, but without the next group of people we would be unable to continue – they are of course the people who distribute it to all corners of the parish. They are marshalled by Silvia Close to whom I deliver the finished magazines. I, to my regret do not know all of them but I would like to thank each and every one of them for, without them, the magazine would not reach its readership.

Currently we produce 485 copies every month and generally the magazine has approx 36 – 40 pages of articles, news items and advertisements. However the magazine is only as good as its contents. This magazine is produced by me but it is really up to the readers to judge if it is worth reading. To this end I welcome any comments of additional material we could carry and any changes that could be undertaken to improve or freshen up the content - colour would be great but this would be very expensive to produce. It is your magazine and if we should need to change it please let me know.

Advertising is a vital aspect of the viability of the magazine. Simply without it we would not be able to continue for long. Our costs are approximately £110 per month and we need to take at least that in advertising revenue to cover those costs. Earlier this year I asked, via an article in the magazine, for some help in the form of someone who take responsibility for advertising – I am kept quite busy compiling and producing the magazine and would appreciate some assistance in what is now a sole enterprise; actually that is not exactly true as John Collins handles the finances and keeps me straight and true.

Mike Hitchins

News from St. Nicholas Church

Cream Teas

The sale of cream teas at St. Nicholas is going very well this year with people coming to visit from a very wide area. We are making new friends and welcoming many who return year after year. By the time you read this magazine, we will have just two more Sundays left on which we will be serving our cream teas. If you haven't been along yet, please come. In spite of the weather we have had a good attendance on most Sundays. If the weather is too bad, we set up the tables and chairs in the nave, which creates a 'Dunkirk' atmosphere. Sally and Sylvia make the scones, Joan makes the jam, Janet brews the tea and coffee, and Di lays up the trays with help from other helpers. The teas season ends on 14th September.

Harvest Flower Festival

We are having a Flower Festival on 3rd, 4th, and 5th October, 2008. St. Nicholas Church will be open at the following times during the three days of the Festival.

Friday 3 rd	1.00pm - 4.00pm
Saturday 4 th	11.00am - 5.30pm. 7.30pm - A Concert will be held. Tickets £5.00 Look for Posters, for more details.
Sunday 5 th	9.30pm - Harvest Thanksgiving Sung Eucharist The officiator will be Rev: Tony Old 11.00am - 5.00pm. Church Open 6.30pm - Songs of Praise 7.30pm - Auction of Produce - Proceeds of this will be donated to Charity.

Refreshments will be served during the day on each day. Teas and coffees in the morning, ploughman's lunches at noon and tea and cake in the afternoon. Refreshments during the concert. There will be a portalo for your convenience.

Joan Drury is organising the Songs of Praise and you are asked for your requests for this service (either a hymn or an appropriate song, a favourite reading from the Bible, a poem or suitable piece of prose). Requests to Joan Drury - there will be a list for requests in the Village Shop and Church.

We would like some volunteers to be stewards during the times of opening on all three days. The Gardening Club are organising a plant stall. Please would someone organise

a cake and/or a book stall. Get in touch with Joan on 850210 if you can help. Many thanks.

New Priest Licensing

Dick Venn our new Priest will be licensed by the Bishop of Dover The Right Rev: Stephen Venner at St. Mary's Lenham on Thursday 16th October 2008 at 7.30pm. Many official guests will be invited but there should still be plenty of room for PCC Members and parishioners from all the benefice churches. It is hoped that all members of the choirs of the benefice churches will be in attendance to help give him and his family our support and a resounding welcome. Refreshments will be served after the service.

Harvest Supper

We will be having a Harvest Supper this year which is wonderful. Mair Chantler has offered to organise the Supper for us - thank you very much Mair. It will be on Saturday 25th October.

Joan Davidson

QUIZ NIGHT

QUIZMASTER JOHN NYE

ST EDMUNDS CENTRE

SCHOOL LANE PLATTS HEATH

SATURDAY 15th OCTOBER 2008 AT 7.30PM

£3.00 PER PERSON TEAMS OF 4 OR 6

TO BOOK A TABLE RING JAN 859412 OR TRICIA 858891

PLEASE BRING YOUR OWN REFRESHMENTS AND GLASSES

Harvest Flower Festival

Church of St Nicholas
Boughton Malherbe



- Friday 3rd October 1.00pm - 4.00pm. **Church Open**
Saturday 4th October 11.00am - 5.30pm. **Church Open**
7.30pm - **A Concert** will be held. Tickets £5.00
- Sunday 5th October 9.30pm - **Harvest Thanksgiving** Sung Eucharist
The officiator will be **Rev: Tony Old**
11.00am - 5.00pm. **Church Open**
6.30pm - **Songs of Praise**
7.30pm - **Auction of Produce** - Proceeds of this will be
donated to Charity.

Refreshments will be served each day. Teas and coffees in the morning, ploughman's lunches at noon and tea and cake in the afternoon. Refreshments also available during the concert. There will be a portaloos for your convenience.

The Grafty Gourmet

Firstly, apologies for the absence of a recipe in last month's magazine. This month's recipe is another very simple, but yet very tasty dish to make. It is supposed to serve 4 people, but if you are like me, best make it for 2, and be sure to have a good bottle of wine at the ready.

PAN FRIED TIGER PRAWNS AND CREAMED ASPARAGUS

(Serves 4)

16 tiger prawns
1 bunch of asparagus
2 peel shallots
20g butter
100ml single cream
160ml whole milk
15ml dry white wine
Olive oil
Salt & pepper

1. Peel asparagus, cut off ends and put to one side. Dice shallots, then sauté in butter. When slightly coloured, add asparagus.
2. Deglaze with white wine, leave to reduce a little, before adding milk and cream. Cook over a gentle heat for 20 minutes.
3. Mix together, season to taste and put to one side.
4. Cook asparagus tips in boiling salt water for 3 minutes, then refresh.
5. In a pan, sear prawns in very hot olive oil for 1 or 2 minutes. Leave to cool, then remove heads and shells but leave tails.
6. Serve prawns on the creamed asparagus, and decorated with asparagus tips.

Grafty Green Gardening Club
Summer 2008



A few notes and reminders for the forthcoming meetings:

- ❖ September takes us back into the village hall, so on the 2nd we will be welcoming Roger Smith, who will talk on National Trust Gardens and how they are maintained. We shall also have our Autumn Show. We hope you will enter and you will be able to set up from 7pm.
- ❖ Tom Hart Dyke of The World Garden at Lullingstone Castle will be coming to the Club on Tuesday 7th October. His talk is entitled 'Plant Hunting'. Members can apply for a free ticket but guests will be charged £2. Please apply early for your tickets as we understand that his talks are a sell out. Carole Frost on 850221 or Sue Burch on 850381 will be handling ticket allocations.
- ❖ St. Nicholas Church is holding a flower festival during the first weekend of October and we have been asked to help supply plants for a plant stall; have you anything that you can pot up for this? I know any contributions will be gratefully received.
- ❖ October is the time when the committee sits down to plan next year's programme – if you have any thoughts or ideas of what you would like to be included please let us know.
- ❖ December will be a practical/social evening making a decoration for the Christmas table or for the door, so with this in mind, if you have any seed heads, cones or greenery that you can bring on the night please save them for us. We will be providing the oasis and other floristry items; you might like to bring your own secateurs/scissors. We will also be providing wine/juice and nibbles.

Sue Burch

Grafty Garden Cuttings - September

Autumn beckons with increasing insistency, coupled with the many jobs that need to be done. Hedges will want their final tidy: beech hedges should have been trimmed in late July, Yew in late August, any others when time permits. We spent August lopping back overgrown trees and shrubs and have taken out some of our Lleylandii, originally planted to form a screen as fast as possible. They make a lovely hedge if cut properly but can grow to incredible heights if neglected (those in the Bedgebury pinetum are 120 feet plus, and are still growing no-one yet knows what their ultimate height will be). They cut out light and being shallow rooted, take away moisture from anything planted nearby. There is also, now, an aphid that attacks Lleylandii and over time, either causes dead patches or kills them entirely. Can I hear the cheers?? Lleylandii do not regenerate if cut back to old wood.

Ours have been taken out to let in more light to the vegetable patch, which has been quite productive this year, with exceptions. The runner beans were not too wonderful, but the French, both dwarf and climbing, were fantastic. Spinach and beetroot were also good, likewise the marrows, courgettes, squashes and sweetcorn. As for the brassicas – for a while they looked superb, then the hordes of cabbage white butterflies descended. Time spent each day caterpillar picking leaves more holes than leaf. The harvest will be a few bare stems, if we are lucky.

Butterflies are in decline but this year's onslaught of Cabbage Whites is the worst that I can remember. There are very few small birds to help with clearing operations and although I have seen wasps feeding on the caterpillars, even they are overwhelmed by the numbers. We have had some butterflies that were more welcome, mostly Peacocks, one or two Red Admirals, Tortoiseshell and Fritillary but nothing like the usual numbers, and no sightings of the Hummingbird Hawkmoth.

Small bird numbers here at least, are well down, probably due to the raptors that are about, and also the very high number of cats visiting the garden. No rabbits though!

Time to save seeds and take cuttings from tender perennials and start planting spring bulbs, not forgetting to place a section of wire mesh over them, if squirrels are a problem, just under the soil, to prevent them being dug up. Choose mesh with a gauge that allows the bulbs through with ease or the leaves and shoots could be damaged as they emerge. Warning: be very careful if buying in manure. There as been a scare recently about herbicide contamination which could cause long-term problems, such as poor germination and stunted plant growth.

Rosemary Smith

St Edmunds Centre Platts Heath

The Trustees would like to welcome onto the management committee Margaret Mori who has kindly taken over the chairmanship. She is a breath of fresh air at the meetings and has a number of new ideas she is keen to put into practice.

The centre has now a number of regular bookings during the week with the school and the Little Angels toddlers group being the main daytime users. As we move into the autumn we welcome back the Morris dancers and Table tennis club and of course the Line Dancers continue throughout the year.

Forth coming events

The Harvest Supper which will be a cold buffet is our next event on Saturday 11th October at 7.00pm. Karen Taylor is organising the event and would appreciate any help with the food please contact her on 850383 evenings only. Our quiz night is on Saturday 15th November at 7.30pm and I am delighted to report John and Helen Nye have agreed to be our quiz masters again. Look out for our adverts.

Now I must apologize to the coffee morning ladies as I have been rather busy and have only held one this summer. It is hoped we will have one in August and one on Wednesday the 10th September from 10am to 12noon.

Line Dancing is Thursday evenings 8pm - 9pm £3.00 per person, beginners are welcome and if there is enough interest our instructor would be willing to do a beginners class at 7.30pm-8.00pm please telephone me on 858891 if you are interested.

Finally Platts Heaths "Little Angels" Toddler's group is now well established and runs Monday morning 10 - 12noon each week. A new resident to Platts Heath, Rebecca has continued the group during the school holiday period.

The trustees and management committee are delighted this group have been successful and are supporting them with the purchase of some additional equipment. Anyone wishing to join the group can telephone Karen Yardley on 858208. It was with great sadness we heard the news of the death of Sandy Bruce-Lockhart, without Lord Sandy's help we would not have secured the funding to save the St Edmunds Centre Platts Heath. He also worked very hard to save Platts Heath Primary school when it was threatened with closure. However busy Lord Sandy was he was always available to help local villages with their problems.

Patricia Dibley Secretary St Edmunds Centre

Lambeth Conference 2008

‘The Anglican Church is in good heart,’ said one bishop from the USA as he said goodbye. For two and a half weeks, no less than 650 Anglican bishops from all over the world stayed at the University of Kent for the Lambeth Conference. We sometimes forget that the Church of England is part of the world wide church known as the Anglican Communion.

The Lambeth Conference has taken place every ten years since 1867 (except during the Second World War). Spouses were excluded until 1978 when they started accompanying their husbands to the Conference. The Spouses Conference is organised separately, and husbands and wives saw each other only at meal times, Eucharist’s and special services, and on the London Day. As they were living on a university campus, all the rooms were single – and some of the wives found themselves sleeping alone for the first time in many years.

It was calculated that there were some 1,600 people on the campus during the Conference. There were representatives from other branches of the Christian church; the members of Archbishop’s Secretariat, who normally worked at Lambeth Palace in London, moved their offices to the campus for the duration of the conference. Three hundred Volunteers from the churches in Canterbury Diocese looked after the Bishops and their spouses. Also on the campus during the Conference were news reporters, interpreters, a paramedic’s team on call all the time, and security officers.

Security was tight round the Bishops’ marquee which was bright blue with two oriental type spires. Only bishops and stewards were allowed in, and none of us was allowed even ‘a peep’ when the marquee was not in use. Everyone on the campus had to wear a lanyard with a photograph and name badge attached to it. Purple lanyards indicated bishops and spouses; yellow, volunteers; red, stewards, white, reporters; and navy blue shirts for the technicians who were greatly needed throughout the conference.

I had helped at the previous Lambeth Conference in 1998, and I enjoyed it so much that I volunteered again. There were three sessions a day and I was there for seven sessions – mainly on the Enquiry Desk, though I did have to accompany a male volunteer as a chaperone when we went to fetch an Indian lady with a broken ankle and take her to see the paramedics. She had very little English - as was the case with quite a number of the spouses.

The Bishop’s spent the first three days in retreat led by the Archbishop of Canterbury – a time for reflection, prayer and study of St. John’s Gospel. The Sunday Eucharist in the Cathedral marked the beginning of the Conference proper. Much of the Bishops’ time throughout the Conference was spent in small groups of eight, and larger Indaba

groups of 40 in which they discussed a huge variety of topics such as mission, prayer, refugees, climate change, sexuality, Christian witness in minority situations, finance, health, aid and HIV, and generous love, the truth of the Gospels.

There was time for leisure and one of the highlights was The London Day. The bishops and their wives left very early, and did their Walk of Witness to World Poverty from Whitehall to Lambeth Palace where they had lunch, and on to Buckingham Palace to have tea with the Queen. Other special events were the candle lit pilgrimages round the cathedral. Only five pilgrimages were originally planned with 50 participants each time, but the event was so popular another pilgrimage was organised.

As Volunteers we were given a copy of the two week's programme, maps of Canterbury and the University campus, and copies of the 'Conference Bible' which had all the information in it that those who prepared it thought we might be asked. From our perspective, we felt the atmosphere at the Conference was great with smiling faces all around. The Bishops were very friendly and chatty, but their knowledge of the English language varied enormously, and there were a lot of laughs as we tried to understand each other.

We acted as liaison officer with notes to pin on the notice board from bishops wanting to meet other bishops and not knowing how to get hold of them because there were so many there – all wearing purple shirts or cassocks. One was very conscious of colour during the conference because, as well as the purple of the bishops there were the colourful attire of the spouses – beautiful saris of the Indians and Pakistanis, and the bright coloured dresses and hats of the Africans.

Space does not allow me to write much more. As volunteers we were fed. The food was excellent and the portions enormous. When we challenged the caterers, they said 'students are always hungry!'. On the last evening of the Conference the volunteers were allowed to go to the final Eucharist in Canterbury Cathedral. It was a very moving service – though, sitting in the choir as we were, we could not see the bishops and their spouses.

After the service we were to have enjoyed a party on the green courtyard of the Cathedral – but the heavens opened and the stewards had hastily to move all the food into the Shirley Hall belonging to the Kings School. The food was marvellous and everyone tucked in to savouries and bowls of strawberries and raspberries. There was a brass band playing, and my last memory of the Conference will be of bishops in their long purple cassocks dancing.

It was a great fortnight.

Molly Poulter

Link Word Puzzle - Answers at the back (don't look first!)

I hope you enjoyed last month's link word. Here is another to rack your brains – Paul Neaves

The answer to number 1 has been filled in – can you solve the rest?

	Word 1	Word 2	Word 3	Answer
1	Bean	Dressing	Fries	French
2	Audience	Film	Flat	
3	Point	Shop	Sweet	
4	Appearance	Beer	Paying	
5	Day	Dial	Shine	
6	Fail	Guard	Haven	
7	Bald	Golden	Owl	
8	Bath	Hole	Spark	
9	Fibre	Philosophy	Support	
10	Carriage	Crossing	Station	
11	Lucky	Odd	Wrong	
12	Officer	Open	Stretch	
13	Day	Pole	Union	
14	Cliff	Hill	Knife	
15	Grid	Pad	Smith	
16	Major	Oil	Stick	

BUS SERVICE 59

Grafty Green – Maidstone via Ulcombe and Kingswood

A new timetable is being introduced from 1st September and this is reproduced overleaf. There is only one change but it is a significant one - the Monday to Friday 09.30 departure from Grafty Green is retimed and now **departs 15 minutes earlier at 09.15**. This has been done by Arriva following the decision by KCC to revert to the 09.00 start time for over 60s to use their free bus permit.

Maidstone — Chart Sutton — Kingswood — Grafty Green

Mondays to Fridays

Service No:	School Days Only		Not School Days Only	
	59	59	59	59
Maidstone, King St, Colman House, Stop L2	1227	1402	1555	1555
Maidstone, Chequers Bus Station, Stop J4	1229	1404	1557	1557
Wheatshet	1236	1411	1604	1604
Loose, Loose Road, Old Loose Hill	1240	1415	1608	1608
Linton Corner	1244	1419	1612	1612
Cornwallis Academy	—	—	1505	—
Boughton Monchelsea, Albion	1249	1424	1617	1617
Boughton Monchelsea, Cock Inn	1252	1427	1620	1620
Chart Sutton, Buffalo's Head	1255	1430	1623	1623
Warmlake Corner	1258	1433	1626	1626
Kingswood, Village Hall	—	—	1438	—
Kingswood, Ashford Drive	1306	—	1523	—
Ulcombe, Post Office	1313	—	1530	—
Grafty Green, King's Head	1320	—	1535	—
Grafty Green, Pig & Whistle	—	—	1544	—
Headcorn, opp. Millbank Lay-by	—	—	—	—

Saturdays

Service No:	School Days Only		Not School Days Only	
	59	59	59	59
Maidstone, King Street, Chequers Bus Station	0838	1241	1525	1755
Loose Road (return Sheals Crescent, Hayle Road, College Road, Mill Street, High Street, King Street), Loose, Linton Road, Linton Cross Roads, Heath Road, Church Street	0840	1243	1527	1757
Boughton Monchelsea, Green Lane, Heath Road, Four Wents, Brishing Road, Amber Lane, Chart Sutton, Warmlake Road, Warmlake Cross Roads, Charway Street, Broomfield Road, Kingswood, Ashford Drive, Charleford Avenue, Cayser Drive, Gravelly Bottom Road, Lenham Road, Ulcombe Hill, Ulcombe, The Street, Pye Corner, Headcorn Road, Grafty Green.	0847	1250	1534	1804
Buses running via Langley run as normal from Maidstone to Loose Road, then Sutton Road, Langley, Sutton Road, Warmlake Cross Roads, then as normal route to Grafty Green.	—	—	1254	1538
Buses terminating at Kingswood run as normal from Maidstone to Kingswood, Charway Street, then Gravelly Bottom Road (Village Hall), Cayser Drive, returning via the normal route.	—	—	1258	1542
Service 66: Cornwallis Academy, Heath Road, Four Wents, King's Road, Headcorn.	0859	1312	1556	1826
	—	—	1604	—
	0907	1320	—	1834
	0914	1327	—	1841
	0921	1334	—	1848
	—	—	—	—
	—	—	—	—

Service 59: Maidstone, King Street, Chequers Bus Station, Romney Place, Lower Stone Street, Upper Stone Street, Loose Road (return Sheals Crescent, Hayle Road, College Road, Mill Street, High Street, King Street), Loose, Linton Road, Linton Cross Roads, Heath Road, Church Street, Boughton Monchelsea, Green Lane, Heath Road, Four Wents, Brishing Road, Amber Lane, Chart Sutton, Warmlake Road, Warmlake Cross Roads, Charway Street, Broomfield Road, Kingswood, Ashford Drive, Charleford Avenue, Cayser Drive, Gravelly Bottom Road, Lenham Road, Ulcombe Hill, Ulcombe, The Street, Pye Corner, Headcorn Road, Grafty Green.

Buses running via Langley run as normal from Maidstone to Loose Road, then Sutton Road, Langley, Sutton Road, Warmlake Cross Roads, then as normal route to Grafty Green.

Buses terminating at Kingswood run as normal from Maidstone to Kingswood, Charway Street, then Gravelly Bottom Road (Village Hall), Cayser Drive, returning via the normal route.

Service 66: Cornwallis Academy, Heath Road, Four Wents, King's Road, Headcorn.

Mondays to Fridays

Service No:	School Days Only		Not School Days Only	
	59	59	59	59
Headcorn, Millbank Lay-by	—	—	0736	—
Grafty Green, Pig & Whistle	—	—	0745	—
Ulcombe, Post Office	0723	—	0723	—
Kingswood, Village Hall	0730	—	0730	—
Kingswood, Ashford Drive	0735	—	0735	—
Warmlake Corner	0738	—	0738	—
Chart Sutton, Buffalo's Head	0746	—	0744	—
Boughton Monchelsea, Cock Inn	0746	—	0744	—
Boughton Monchelsea, Albion	0746	—	0744	—
Cornwallis Academy	0746	—	0744	—
Linton Corner	0746	—	0744	—
Loose, Loose Road, Old Loose Hill	0746	—	0744	—
Wheatshet	0746	—	0744	—
Maidstone, King Street	0746	—	0744	—
Maidstone, Chequers Bus Station	0746	—	0744	—
London Road, Somerfield Hospital	0746	—	0744	—
Tonbridge Rd, Oakwood Park	0746	—	0744	—

Saturdays

Service No:	School Days Only		Not School Days Only	
	59	59	59	59
Headcorn, Millbank Lay-by	—	—	0736	—
Grafty Green, Pig & Whistle	—	—	0745	—
Ulcombe, Post Office	0723	—	0723	—
Kingswood, Village Hall	0730	—	0730	—
Kingswood, Ashford Drive	0735	—	0735	—
Warmlake Corner	0738	—	0738	—
Chart Sutton, Buffalo's Head	0746	—	0744	—
Boughton Monchelsea, Cock Inn	0746	—	0744	—
Boughton Monchelsea, Albion	0746	—	0744	—
Cornwallis Academy	0746	—	0744	—
Linton Corner	0746	—	0744	—
Loose, Loose Road, Old Loose Hill	0746	—	0744	—
Wheatshet	0746	—	0744	—
Maidstone, King Street	0746	—	0744	—
Maidstone, Chequers Bus Station	0746	—	0744	—
London Road, Somerfield Hospital	0746	—	0744	—
Tonbridge Rd, Oakwood Park	0746	—	0744	—

Sundays and Public Holidays*

Service 59 does not run on Sundays or Public Holidays.

NOTE

1. The Saturday buses are provided on behalf of Kent County Council by Nu-Venture (Tel: 01622 882288), NOT Arriva.

CODES

* — These buses are provided on behalf of Kent County Council. If you have any comments or suggestions, please write to Transport Integration, Kent County Council, Gibson Drive, West Malling, Kent ME19 4QG.

• — Special arrangements apply over the Christmas and New Year period and at Easter. Please watch for announcements.

R — Sets down only upon request by passengers boarding at or before Loose Road, Plains Avenue.

HARVEST SUPPER

IN THE

ST EDMUNDS CENTRE

SCHOOL LANE PLATTS HEATH

SATURDAY OCTOBER 11th 2008 AT 7.00PM

COLD BUFFET TICKETS £6

NUMBERS ARE LIMITED AND TICKETS MUST BE PAID FOR

BY 4th OCTOBER 2008

TO BOOK RING TRICIA 858891 OF DUFF 850463

PLEASE BRING YOUR OWN GLASSES AND DRINKS

Answers at the back (don't look first!)

	Find the missing word?
1	Anna _____, Author of Black Beauty.
2	_____, Lead singer with The Police
3	David _____, Leader of the Conservative Party
4	The _____ Bud's of May, A story by HE Bates
5	_____ Lynn, WWII Sweetheart
6	Michael _____, Retired chat show host
7	_____ Church, Singer and TV personality
8	Norman Stanley _____, Ronnie Barker's part in Porridge
9	_____ Matilda, An Australian song
10	The Living _____, 1987 Bond Film with Timothy Dalton



Did you take any holiday snaps?.....
.....now learn what you can do with them!

ARE YOU STRUGGLING WITH VISTA?

Situated in the centre of the village of Egerton, the Telecottage is run by volunteers and offers computer courses for all levels, starting with the absolute beginner. All classes are run for four weeks with the exception of the two week course for Vista.

**To book onto any of the courses listed below or for further information,
please telephone Sylvia Tillman on 01233 756050**

Basic IT - Monday mornings 10am-12noon - 8th/15th/22nd/29th September

Basic IT - Monday mornings 10am-12noon - 3rd/10th/17th/24th November

Basic Word Processing - Wednesday mornings 10am-12noon -
8th/15th/22nd/29th October

Intermediate WP - Wednesday mornings - 10am-12noon - 3rd/10th/17th/24th
September

Intermediate WP - Wednesday mornings - 10am-12 noon - 19th/26th
Nov/3rd/10th Dec

Vista - an introduction - Wednesday evenings – 7-9pm - 1st/8th October

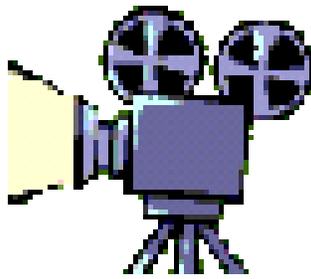
Digital Photography - Tuesday evenings 7-9pm - 7th/14th/21st/28th October

Desk Top Publishing - Tuesday evenings 7-9pm - 11th/18th/25th
November/2nd December

Internet - Wednesday evenings 7-9pm -12th/19th/26th November/3rd December

There will be further classes in the New Year including a peep into Ebay where perhaps you could sell some of those unwanted Christmas gifts!

Remember we have a free drop-in session every Saturday morning between 10am to 12 noon – come along and meet some of the team, log on to the internet or just and have a coffee and a chat. We would be very happy to see you.



EGERTON FILM SOCIETY

NEW SEASON OF FILMS

FOR 2008-2009

COME AND JOIN US IN SEPTEMBER

The Egerton Film Society has been running successfully since 2000. Our new season of monthly films will start on the evening of Thursday 25th September 2008, which is when the new annual membership begins.

Most of the programme for the Autumn season has been chosen by members and the selection is really exciting and wide-ranging – imagine a full high-quality widescreen DVD video projection and Dolby EX 5.1 Surround Sound with our first film “*The Bucket List*” (everything you need to do before you “Kick the Bucket”), “*Polar Express*” and French classics like “*Le Boucher*”.

The Film Society is the place to come to see films you have always wanted to see or films you haven’t seen for years and welcome the chance to see again, we try to provide a varied programme for you.

We are always looking for new members and will give a warm welcome to all. You are cordially invited to apply for membership from Pat Parr – pat.parr@scottwilson.com, or telephone 01233 756601.



PRESS RELEASE

Wild Time had at Bull Heath

Pupils from Swadelands School joined wildlife experts from the Kentish Stour Countryside Project to successfully complete a week of environmental management at a Bull Heath, a wildlife haven deep in rural Kent. The site is owned by the Heath's Countryside Corridor, a community based group, which is committed to conserving areas of natural beauty between Charing and Lenham.

Bull Heath, once a busy industrial sand quarry, is now a thriving sanctuary for birds, insects and plants. Sand martin's (*Riparia riparia*) are summer visitors to the UK and the quarried sand cliffs at Bull Heath provide invaluable nesting sites for this small bird. Common storksbill (*Erodium cicutarium*), vipers bugloss ([Echium vulgare](#)) and pyramidal orchid (*Anacamptis pyramidalis*) are just a few of the colourful specialist plant varieties that prosper in the nutrient poor sandy soils.

Under the guidance of Debbie Adams, Ashford Countryside Officer for the Kentish Stour Countryside Project, pupils from Swadelands School put down their pens and picked up their tools as they worked on a number of environmental management projects on the site. Areas of scrub were cleared to increase sunlight reaching the ground. This exercise will encourage the existing lichen and moss, a rare plant community, to spread further across the site. Other heavily shaded areas were cleared of trees to encourage a greater diversity of flowers to grow.

As well as management of the site, pupils learnt about the wildlife that lives there and why it is so important to protect it. Pupils carried out wildlife surveys for reptiles and wildflowers and discovered much more about the site during guided walks lead by Kentish Stour Countryside Project staff.

Woodland skills were put to the test with mallet making and shelter building, and a host of energetic games aimed at discovering the wonders of the natural world rounded off each day.

Debbie Adams says “The pupils from Swadelands School worked really hard all week. It was rewarding to see how individuals’ confidence grew with the use of tools and identification of plants in their natural environment. Educating the next generation on the management of wildlife sites is imperative to their protection and longevity.”

The Kentish Stour Countryside Project run practical conservation tasks in the Ashford area every Wednesday, for more information please telephone 01233 813307 or email kentishstour@kent.gov.uk

If you would like to advertise in Malherbe Monthly and reach the whole of Boughton Malherbe, Grafty Green, Liverton Street and Platts Heath, the monthly costs are:

$\frac{1}{8}$ page	£3.00
$\frac{1}{4}$	£5.00
$\frac{1}{2}$	£10.00
Complete page	£20.00

Phone 01622 858937 or
email mf.hitchins@virgin.net

The September Night Sky

At the beginning of the month the Sun is in the constellation of Leo, and moves into Virgo on the 16th September.

The Autumn Equinox occurs on Monday 22nd September. This is when the Sun crosses the celestial equator, and therefore at this point night and day are the same length.

This month Full Moon occurs on Monday 15th September, and rises in the east at sunset and sets in the west at sunrise. The September Full Moon is often called the “Harvest Moon”, because it continues to rise around sunset for several evenings in succession, and its light used to help farmers to continue harvesting after sunset. New moon occurs on Monday 29th September.

A lunar occultation will occur this month. This is when the Moon passes between the distant stars and us. It is surprisingly rare for the Moon to occult or hide any of the brighter stars, but in the early morning of Saturday 20th September, it passes in front of Pleiades or the “Seven Sisters” star-cluster, which can be seen in the northeast.

Unfortunately only Jupiter and Saturn can be seen this month. Jupiter is low in the south at sunset, and sets in the southwest about four hours after the Sun. It is almost stationary in the constellation of Sagittarius, and appears like a very bright, steady star.

Saturn is directly behind the Sun on 4th September, and by the end of the month can be seen in the east just before dawn. Although conditions are not ideal for observing Saturn, it should be possible to see the famous rings through a small telescope.

Finally, I have some good news for the supporters of Pluto. You may recall that in my articles I mentioned that Pluto had been down graded to a dwarf planet, and subsequently re-classified by the International Astronomical Union, as a celestial body to be known as a plutoid. Apparently some leading astronomers, including senior space scientists, are attacking this decision, and demanding that Pluto is reinstated to the status of a planet.

John Maunder

LEN VALLEY CHRISTIAN UNION

HARVEST SUPPER BARN DANCE

HARRIETSHAM VILLAGE HALL

SATURDAY 4TH OCTOBER, 2008

TICKETS ADULT £8.00 CHILD £4.00

7pm for 7.30pm start

PLEASE BRING YOUR OWN DRINKS AND GLASSES

USUAL HARVEST SUPPER FAYRE WILL BE SERVED

Tickets are available on a first come first served basis from

Barbara Verga - Telephone 07919 597665

COME AND ENJOY A GOOD OLD FASHIONED HOE DOWN!!

Friends of Kent Churches Annual Sponsored Bike Ride and Walk

This event has been running for over 20 years and this year promises to be a really successful day. The event takes place on Saturday 13th September 2008 from 10am to 6pm. Over 700 churches across Kent will be involved, welcoming riders and walkers, often with refreshments. Money is raised through sponsorship and is shared between your nominated church and the Friends of Kent Churches, who give grants for church repairs. Last year more than £140,000 was raised.

Plan your own route, long or short, flat or hilly, challenging or relaxed, whatever suits you. This is a lovely day out for all the family.

Visit the website – www.friendsofkentchurches.co.uk for more information, sponsor forms, tee-shirts and more. Or contact – Carolyn Millen on 01622 843383, carolynmillen1@btinternet.com

Ulcombe – dates for your diaries

Although Ulcombe is a small village it seems to have a lot of things going for it.

The Ulcombe History Society has an interesting programme ahead. **On Saturday the 27th of September** we will be taking a coach to **The Weald and Downland Open Air Museum** near Chichester. The cost is £23.50, and details can be obtained from either Molly Poulter (Chairman) on 01622 842988 or John Moore (Treasurer) on 01622 850384.

Then on Tuesday 4th November at 7.30 pm the great grandson of Charles Dickens will be coming to entertain us. All welcome.

Then there is **the Ulcombe Friendship Club** which meets on the last Thursday in the month. Many say it's the friendliest club they've ever joined!

On Thursday the 25th of September we are taking the train from Tenterden to Bodiam Castle where we will have a cream tea.

All are welcome. Details from either Molly Poulter, Chairman (01622 842988) or Dorothy Playford, Treasurer on (01622 842988).

Music also figures in Ulcombe's activities.

On Saturday the 11th of October the Sutton Valence Choral Society will be presenting a **Come Sing the Messiah** in Ulcombe's beautiful church, All Saints.

If you would like to take part:

3.00 pm rehearsal

6.00 pm Tea

7.30 pm performance

please contact Mrs Alexandra Brown on 01622 853791. Tickets from Molly Poulter (01622 842988).

On Saturday 18th October Joanne Parker and friend will be giving a very different concert but details are not yet to hand. A few years ago Joanne Parker gave a hugely successful concert based on the Joni Mitchell style of singing.

Bulky Refuse Collections (Weekend Freighter Service)

Maidstone Borough Council has now issued the timetable for this service up to 2nd November 2008. Please find below the dates of when the weekend freighter service stops near your home during this period:

Grafty Green

Saturday 13th Sept: 07:45 – 08:45 -: Church Rd - Junction Headcorn Rd

Saturday 1st Nov: 13:30 – 15:15 -: Church Rd - Junction Headcorn Rd

Platts Heath

Sunday 12th Oct: 12:15 – 13:00 -: Green Lane

Ulcombe

Sunday 19th Oct: 11:15 – 12:30 -: Lodge Gardens (cul-de-sac)

Lenham

Saturday 13th Sept: 09:00 – 10:30 -: Lenham Heath Rd - Boughton Rd

Saturday 1st Nov: 07:45 – 08:45 -: Lenham Heath Rd - Boughton Rd

Malherbe Monthly Magazine

This magazine can now be viewed on the Internet via the Boughton Malherbe Parish Council Web Site. As well as the current edition, all back issues for 2006, 2007 and 2008 can be viewed. You even get the front cover in colour!!!

This web site also hosts all the minutes of Parish Council Meetings and give details of up-coming events in the Village Hall. The below link will get you there:

www.boughtonmalherbepc.kentparishes.gov.uk

Ulcombe History Society

**Visit to the Weald and Downland Open Air Museum at Singleton,
Saturday 27th September 2008**

Everyone is welcome to join the above trip to explore a fascinating collection of 50 historic buildings dating from the 13th to the 19th century, many with period gardens, farm animals and woodland walks. This is a working museum with many period workers and craftsmen demonstrating their trades, making this a unique experience of living history.

Rescued from destruction, the buildings have been carefully dismantled, conserved and rebuilt to their original form and bring to life the homes, farmsteads and rural industries of the last 500 years.

A majestic timber framed farmhouse from Kent; a striking market hall from Hampshire; a Victorian school; a medieval shop; carpenters, plumbers and brickmakers workshops; barns; a granary and a tread wheel from the South Downs, will be amongst the many buildings that can be explored.

The museum will provide an expert guide for those who wish to tour as a group. We Leave Ulcombe (Lodge Close) at 7.45 a.m. and return at 7 p.m. Coach and museum entry (and a great day out) for only £23.50 per adult and £19.50 for children aged 5 – 15.

**Ulcombe History Society visit to
Weald and Downland Open Air Museum**

Name(s):

Cheque enclosed for.....(£23.50 each adult and £19.50 per child)

Please return this form to John Moore or Geoff Beale with a Cheque made payable to The Ulcombe History Society **or cash** if you prefer.

Treasurer, John Moore, Eastville, Eastwood Road, Grafty Green, Maidstone, ME17 2DQ. Tel: 01622 850384

Vice Chairman, Geoff Beale, Glenville House, The Street, Ulcombe, ME17 1DU
Tel: 01622 842823

ACOUSTIC, RHYTHM & PEWS

An intimate candlelit evening featuring the music of
Paul Dunton and Joanne Louise Parker

All Saints Church, Ulcombe, Kent
18th October 2008 at 7.30pm



Local Singer Songwriter Joanne Louise Parker will finally perform a set of her own haunting melodies to **All Saint's Church in Ulcombe on 18th October 2008**. Teaming up with fellow singer/songwriter Paul Dunton each will perform a 45 minute set. The two have spent the summer touring Kent and Surrey and this is the last in this year's series of concerts.

Having achieved their aim of taking their music out of the noisy pub and club venue and into a more acoustic and atmospherically pleasing environment, they plan to expand the programme in 2009. During the tour, they have played to a good mix of audiences with music club fans venturing into the churches and church people trying out an acoustic concert for the first time.

Ulcombe resident Joanne last performed in the church in 2001 with a sell out concert featuring songs by Joni Mitchell. Since then, she has gone onto write and performs her own songs at clubs and festivals throughout the UK. Based in Tunbridge Wells, **Paul Dunton** is a fast emerging singer songwriter talent whose ballads have been described as "powerfully moving and inspiring". Dunton runs a twice weekly songwriter's showcase at the **Grey Lady Music Lounge** and also regularly performs throughout Kent.

Tickets are on sale at £7.50 in advance, £8.00 on the door and are available either by calling 01622 843691 or online from www.wegotickets.com

Further information on each artist, please visit:
www.pauldunton.co.uk and www.joannelouiseparker.com

Answers to the Quiz and Missing Word Puzzle

	Word 1	Word 2	Word 3	Answer
1	Bean	Dressing	Fries	French
2	Audience	Film	Flat	Studio
3	Point	Shop	Sweet	Talking
4	Appearance	Beer	Paying	Guest
5	Day	Dial	Shine	Sun
6	Fail	Guard	Haven	Safe
7	Bald	Golden	Owl	Eagle
8	Bath	Hole	Spark	Plug
9	Fibre	Philosophy	Support	Moral
10	Carriage	Crossing	Station	Railway
11	Lucky	Odd	Wrong	Number
12	Officer	Open	Stretch	Prison
13	Day	Pole	Union	Flag
14	Cliff	Hill	Knife	Edge
15	Grid	Pad	Smith	Lock
16	Major	Oil	Sick	Drum

	Find the missing word?
1	Anna Sewell, Author of Black Beauty.
2	Sting, Lead singer with The Police
3	David Cameron, Leader of the Conservative Party
4	The Darling Bud's of May, A story by HE Bates
5	Vera Lynn, WWII Sweetheart
6	Michael Parkinson, Retired chat show host
7	Charlotte Church, Singer and TV personality
8	Norman Stanley Fletcher, Ronnie Barker's part in Porridge
9	Waltzing Matilda, An Australian song
10	The Living Daylights, 1987 Bond Film with Timothy Dalton

The Len Valley Benefice
Lenham & Boughton Malherbe; Harrietsham & Ulcombe
Sunday/Main Services – September 2008

Date	Time/Location	Service
Sunday 7 th September	08.00 L 09.30 BM 09.30 H	BCP HC CW 1 Family Service
Blessed Virgin Mary	11.00 L 11.15 U	CW 1 Family Service
Sunday 14 th September	08.00 L 09.30 BM 09.30 H 11.00 L 11.15 U 19.00 U	BCP HC Family Service CW 1 Family Service CW 1 Taize Service – All Saints Ulcombe
Sunday 21 st September	08.00 L 09.30 BM 09.30 H 11.00 L 11.15 U 18.30 BM	BCP HC BCP HC CW 1 CW 1 CW 1 BCP Evening Prayer
Sunday 28 th September	08.00 L 09.30 L 18.30 H	BCP HC CW1 - Benefice Service at Lenham Informal
Michael & All Angels		

Major Dinsmore, of the Salvation Army will give an address at the Informal service at St John the Baptist church, Harrietsham, on Sunday 28th September at 6.30pm.

Transport can be arranged. Please contact Pamela Cuerden on 859442. Everyone welcome.

Key

Parishes / Churches

L: Lenham
BM: Boughton Malherbe
H: Harrietsham
U: Ulcombe

Services

BCP HC = Book of Common Prayer (1662) Holy Communion
BCP EP = Book of Common Prayer (1662) Evening Prayer
Fam Svc = Family Service (not Communion)
MS = Morning Service (not Communion)
CW 1 = Common Worship (Order One)
H = Holy Communion
Informal = Informal! (not communion)

Donations

Collections at the monthly Family Services in St. Nicholas church last year amounted to £300 which was shared by three charities chosen by those involved in running the services. My choice was Fegans Child and Family Care which is based in Tunbridge Wells.

Fegans provides support to families in difficulties in Thanet, East Sussex and Lambeth. Counselling is available to adults and children experiencing emotional problems and inevitably demands for this service are increasing. At the Whitehall Estate in Thanet there is a Community Drop-in and Super-nanny style parenting support is on available.

Members of Fegans teams conduct Christian assemblies in schools and individual children benefit from the Talk Time sessions on offer. This system enables children suffering from the effects of domestic violence, bereavement or marital breakdown to talk in confidence to an understanding and skilled adult.

A booklet describing Fegans' work is available in the church.

Joan Drury

Bible Study Evenings

The Tuesday evening Bible Study group will resume on Tuesday 2nd September at 8pm, at Deans Hill Lodge, Deans Hill, Harrietsham and every alternate Tuesday evening after that.

Please come along to share your views, questions, concerns or enthusiasm, in a friendly group environment. Refreshments are served and help with transport can be arranged.

Please phone Pamela Cuerden on 859442.

Canterbury Cathedral Open Evening

Tuesday 7th October 5.30pm to 9.30pm

See many interesting displays showing behind the scenes at Canterbury Cathedral, including a large photographic exhibition: A Day in the Life of Canterbury Cathedral.

FREE ENTRY, ACTIVITIES & GUIDED TOURS

5.30pm	Choral Evensong
6.15pm - 8.40pm	Displays and activities
8.40pm	Concert by the Choristers
9pm	Compline

EVERYONE WELCOME - BRING FRIENDS AND FAMILIES

For more information call The Friends' Office on 01227 865292

Christian message

As a young woman in the days when the Book of Common Prayer was the staple diet in our churches, I felt frustrated by the often repeated words, 'As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be.' The prospect of unending sameness depressed me.

No one had told me that God is actually the originator of new things. In Isaiah 43:19 he says, 'I am doing a new thing.'

He certainly did something new for me 20 years ago' I was a well paid civil servant doing routine work when he called me, using a management course and my local Vicar as his messenger, to become the Personnel Officer for a Missionary Society.

It proved to be a wonderful job enabling me to visit parts of Africa and to see at first hand what we describe as 'the third world' and 'the developing world. I was privileged to meet and recruit many young people called by God into mission and development work; to play a part in their lives and to see them grow in faith.

Working with the poor changes your life in a positive way. You find that you are no longer completely comfortable in the comparatively easy way of life of the developed world. God's perspective on the poor becomes influential in your thinking.

My years with Emmanuel International led me to value the words of God in Isaiah chapter 58 which motivated the work of the Mission. This chapter has remained lodged in my heart. From it I learned that what pleases God and what he wants his people to do is:-

to loose the chains of injustice;
share food with the hungry
provide the poor wanderer with shelter
clothe the naked
not to turn away from your own flesh and blood

Jesus modelled these attitudes while he was on earth and we as individuals and the churches of the Benefice are called to follow his example and there is a promise for those who obey:

'You will be like a well-watered garden,
like a spring whose waters never fail.'

Do read Isaiah 58. I am sure that, like me, you will be challenged and changed.

Joan Drury