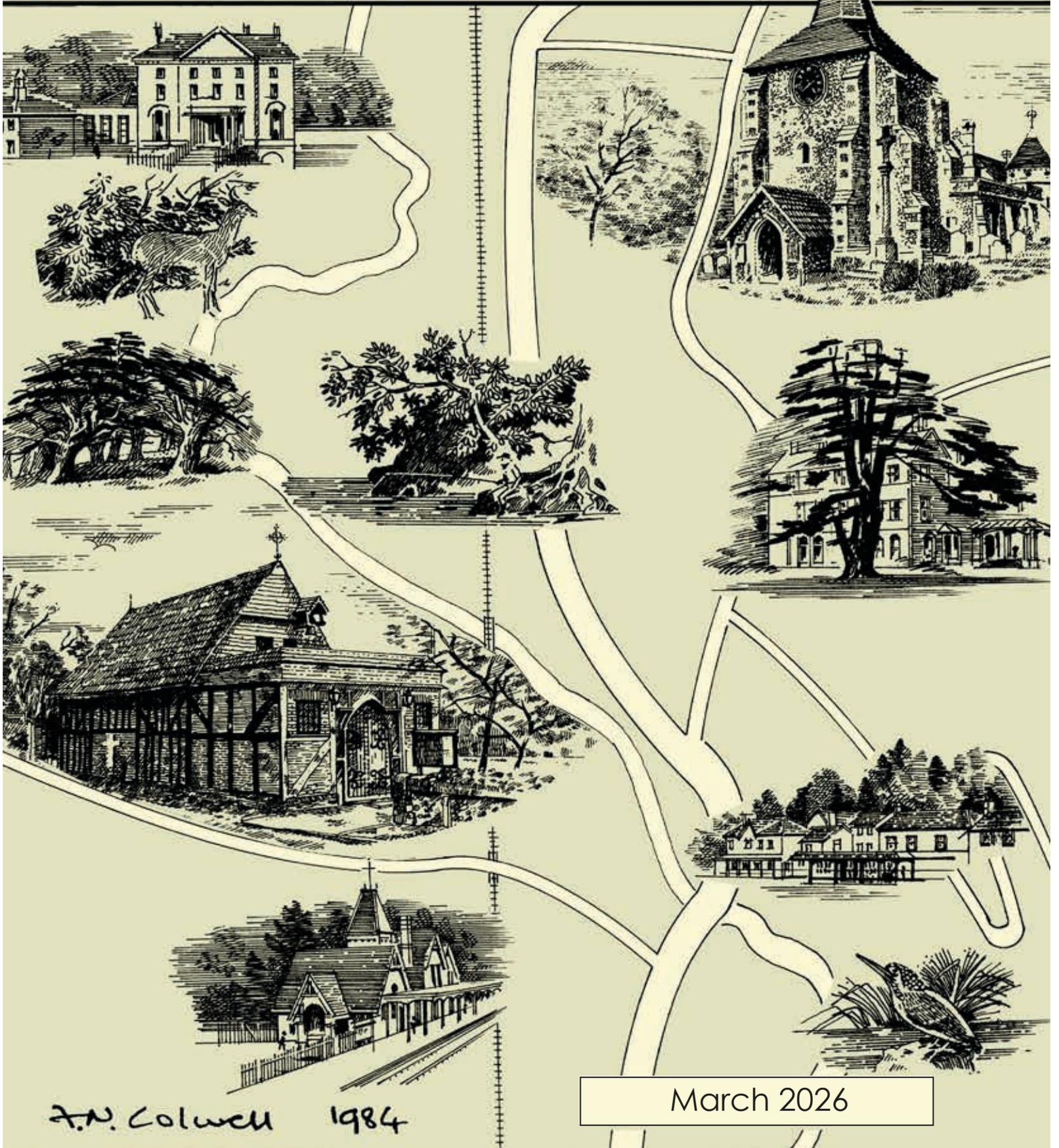


MICKLEHAM PARISH Magazine

A community magazine for Mickleham and Westhumble



A.N. Colwell 1984

March 2026



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MICKLEHAM PARISH Magazine

March
2026

Mickleham Parish Magazine

A community magazine for Mickleham and Westhumble published under the auspices of Mickleham PCC with an independent editorial panel.

The magazine is published at the beginning of each month except January and August.

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Contributions in any form are welcome as are good quality photographs. There is no charge for advertising local charity and community events. However the editors reserve the right to shorten, omit or reformat articles submitted for publication depending on space. Copy published is not necessarily the views of the editors or panel.



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Mickleham Rectory

Hi

We have had some very sad news for the village in recent days as our much valued and loved infant school is facing closure at the end of the summer term, following a consultation. This will of course be upsetting for the staff, pupils and many in the community who have had links with the school in the past. It has been such a lovely environment for children to begin their schooling and many of you will have happy memories of it. The church will miss the children coming for services, workshops and assemblies and singing at Lent or autumn lunches. This loss is unwelcome and some of you will be exploring ways forward for the school.

My grandmother was born in 1899 and lived to be 95. When we chatted in her later years she would often say that she couldn't keep up with the way things kept changing. She felt left behind. She never understood about computers or kilograms but was pleased about some things; she was proud of me as the first woman in the whole family to get A levels, a degree and a PhD. She had received a basic education, taught to write on slates, learnt by rote and punished with a cane, and she had to leave school at age 14 to 'go into service,' which meant she was a maid in a large house for a while. Educational opportunities thankfully are now so much better for everyone. St Michael's Infant School, which was founded roughly at the same time my grandmother was born, has seen many changes in its long history of serving the local community and providing many wonderful early educational experiences.

Change is happening all the time. The world order is changing, technology is changing, fashions are changing, the climate is changing. Change can be for the good or for the detriment of those involved. It can feel exciting or scary and unsettling and it often involves loss of what is familiar or valued.

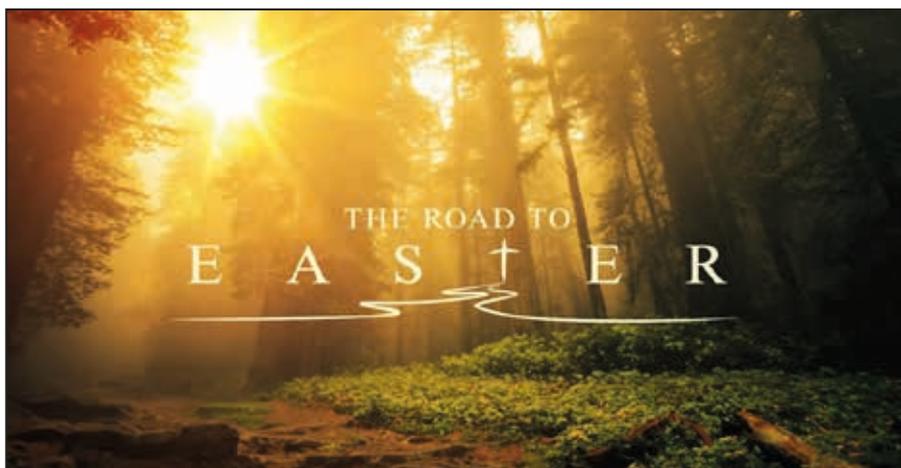
Thankfully some things do not change. The Christian values this church has stood for, modelled on the teaching of Christ, have changed very little in over 1000 years, although the building has changed as different generations have adapted it. The most important of all the values is love. The Bible reminds us that love will last forever and that God's love for us will never fail. The infant school has taught and practised the Christian values, and I trust that all those associated with St Michael's will continue to love God and neighbour, trying to be compassionate, kind, respectful and honest.

I was given a prayer years ago 'God grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, courage to change the things I can and wisdom to know the difference'. There is much we have to accept even if we do not like it and, with wisdom, we may be able to bring about positive change. I commend the future of the school and all those affected by the threat of closure to God. Please pray if you can.

God bless.

The Rev'd Dr Sandra Faccini, Parish Priest

PS I look forward to seeing many of you at church for the workshop and service for Mothering Sunday (15th March) and for our Easter service.



ST MICHAEL'S CHURCH, MICKLEHAM (All these services will be held in church)

Sunday 15th March at 11 am
Family Worship for All for Mothering Sunday

Sunday 29th March at 10 am
Service of Morning Worship for Palm Sunday

Tuesday 31st March at 7 pm
Compline for Holy Week

Thursday 2nd April at 7.30 pm
Service of Holy Communion for Maundy Thursday

Friday 3rd April at 2 pm
Service of Reflection for Good Friday

Sunday 5th April at 10 am
Family Holy Communion for Easter Day
Followed by an Easter Egg Hunt in the rectory
garden

EVERYONE WELCOME

St Michael's Church Services

10 am Sunday Services available on Zoom

Joining information for both Zoom and telephone users is available in Pews News Online each week. If you would like to join us by Zoom then contact Alison Wood for the codes or to ask her to include you on the emailing list for Pews News: admin@micklehamchurch.org.uk / phone 01372 376443. We hope as many of you as possible will be able to join us for worship.

Please refer to Pews News Online for the latest information. If you missed any of the services or would like to revisit them all are available on the church YouTube channel: <https://youtube.com/channel/UCl4pbewCT91iZhcd0EjBlw>



Bible Study

Monday Evening Group

Contact Amanda Wadsworth
aewadsworth@hotmail.com

Thursday Morning Group

At Westhumble Chapel
11.30 am - 12.30 pm
Contact Alison Wood 01372 376443
admin@micklehamchurch.org.uk

ALL WELCOME TO EITHER GROUP

Quiet Afternoon



Saturday 7th March

St Michael's Church

1.30 to 4.30 pm

As we gather for an afternoon of quiet reflection, our focus will be on our journey through Lent. It is traditionally a time for self-examination and contemplation, as we accompany Jesus through his forty days in the wilderness of the Judean desert. In this quiet afternoon we will be using scripture, art and poetry as a way of connecting deeper with God and seeking to learn more about what might sustain us as we follow Jesus in our everyday lives.

Further information:

Amanda Wadsworth
aewadsworth@hotmail.com
Elaine Machin 07725 123210

The cost is £10.



Church Community Group



Lent Lunches

If you missed the February Lent Lunch, don't worry, you still have three more chances to enjoy the much-loved soup and cheese lunches that are always a firm village favourite!

Dates for your diary:

5th, 19th and 26th March

Location: Mickleham Village Hall

Time: Arrive at 12.45 pm

Lunch served at 1 pm

These friendly gatherings are always popular, so places are limited. To secure your seat, please contact Andy Diamond on 07789 775 354 or email adiamond714@gmail.com

There is no charge, but donations are warmly welcomed, with all proceeds going to local charities. If you are looking to enjoy good food, great company, and support a good cause, why not come along? Everyone is very welcome!



St Michael's Church Community Group Food Bank Collection

We welcome items for adults, children and infants including:

- non-perishable food
- laundry and cleaning supplies
- personal hygiene products



LOCAL COLLECTION POINTS

MICKLEHAM

Garden Corner off Old London Road
Mary Banfield 01372 373912

WESTHUMBLE

St Anthony Pilgrims Way
Sue Tatham 01306 882547

The Stepping Stones
Westhumble Street

Or bring items to Coffee Mornings at Westhumble Chapel and St Michael's Church on Sunday mornings

To make monetary donations go to: <https://dorkingarea.foodbank.org.uk/give-help/donate-money/>

CHECK THE COMMUNITY WHATSAPP EACH WEEK FOR ITEMS CURRENTLY IN SHORT SUPPLY



First Saturday of the month

Coffee Morning

Westhumble Chapel

Saturday 7th March

Come along between 10 am and noon

Coffee and cake £2 Free drinks for children

Everyone welcome

For further information call Jonathan Blake 07787 126966



Tea @3

No Tea@3 in March. Why not come to a Lent Lunch instead?

See next month's issue for April

ALL WELCOME TRANSPORT AVAILABLE

If you can help with future events, please contact Julia at siberrman@btinternet.com

Men's and Women's Breakfasts

9-10 am at The Stepping Stones pub

WOMEN'S BREAKFAST
3RD SATURDAY OF THE MONTH
NEXT BREAKFAST

21ST MARCH

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NEXT BREAKFAST

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Update on exhaust noise since our petition

Mickleham Parish Council (MPC) have been in correspondence with each of Surrey County Council (SCC), Mole Valley District Council (MVDC) and the police. Despite a significant amount of work, we have not made a great deal of progress. Mole Valley District Council have not agreed to our proposal that acoustic cameras be trialled. They say that acoustic cameras will not work for our problem, which is mainly motor bike noise because bikes ride close together and use flipped number plates. In fact our volunteers on the Speed Watch team tell me that most motor bikes ride separately and do not flip up their numbers plates. Clearly budgetary considerations must influence that decision. They are drafting a Public Space Protection Order (PSPO) but, in

my view, their drafting will not address the issue. We have provided what we believe to be tighter and more effective drafting. We do not currently expect that our draft will be accepted. We expect their report on 23rd February and for MVDC cabinet to make a decision on 3rd March. SCC, who own the Rykas site, have informed us that they do not accept our contention that Rykas are in breach of their lease by using the car park for events. They have also told us that they will not ask Rykas to revert to their original opening hours, unless we indemnify them against the loss of income. Clearly financial considerations have also influenced this decision. Next year, of course, SCC and MVDC will both have been absorbed into East Surrey Council, so we will be

dealing with one council and not two and decisions may be different. We have had more engagement from the police. The Borough Commander, Inspector Green attended our November meeting and spent some time discussing the issues. Ideas include community engagement days at Rykas (who the police believe are keen to find a solution) and, of course, the PSPO. Lastly we understand that there is a Christian Bikers group who dislike the anti-social behaviour and are keen to become involved in resolving it. We can only hope that they and other responsible bikers will have more success than the statutory bodies.
Will Dennis
Chair of Mickleham Parish Council

The Big Plastic Count 8th to 15th March

By taking part in The Big Plastic Count, you will help gather important evidence to show the true scale of the problem of plastic use. This may inspire you personally to cut back but the information will also be used to inform the government of

the need to produce less plastic and do more about plastic waste. I have signed up by following this link <https://thebigplasticcount.com/>
I hope you will join me.
Sandra and the Church Eco Group



Image from the website for the Big Plastic Count

Teas and Cake in the Church

Don't forget teas in the church will be starting again on 26th April and will continue on the last Sunday afternoon of the month until 27th September. Do come along and bring your friends.

Tea @3



From left: Feena Graham, Navin Mehta, Miriam Jones and Caroline Jones

The New Year got off to a convivial start with Tea@3 hosted in January by Julia and Richard Siberry. About thirty people enjoyed tea and a selection of delicious homemade cakes at this event which takes place each month but at a different venue each time. All are welcome! Look out for the details in the Parish Magazine or email Julia at siberrman@btinternet.com for more details. Do come along to the next one.



Church Eco Group

Switch to a Green Energy Tariff

Some Guidance

As St Michael's Eco-Group has said in previous articles in this journal, an effective move, which is available to all households in respect of carbon emissions, is to switch to a green energy tariff. However, not all such green tariffs are the same. The most effective are those that either derive their energy directly from UK-based renewable energy source (these may be operated/ owned by the tariff company itself or by contractual arrangement with others) or those that help to fund the development of new green power or gas generation.

Less good are those which rely on 'offsetting' of carbon emissions by the investment in overseas 'green' energy projects or tree-planting.

The Church of England has carried out considerable research into the background and claims made in respect of green tariffs 'on the market', and have produced, an 'approved list' of the best tariffs available, tabulated below. PLEASE NOTE that this is simply guidance on the BEST (2025), and that if you have already switched to a green tariff NOT on this list, you have not erred or been misled. A switch to ANY green tariff adds to the pressure on suppliers

to invest in new green energy provision/ generation.

The Church has switched to Crown Gas & Power '100% Biogas', and to Scottish Power's 'Simply Green' tariffs.

Just a few years ago, there were substantive cost penalties from switching to a green tariff. This is no longer the case, indeed, depending on your current and selected new, green, tariff, there may even be some savings to be had.

Mark Day

Fuel	Supplier	Tariff
Electricity	Ecotricity	Green Electricity
	Octopus (Own Bulb and Shell Energy Retail)	All tariffs
	100Green (previously Green Energy UK)	Sparking, EKO Tide
	Good Energy	Standard Variable Tariff
	Opus Energy	Advance Plus
	Engie UK	UK Green Plus Green Select
	Smartest Energy	Traceable Renewable Supply
	SSE (Business Energy)	SSE Protect SSE Choice SSE Shaping SSE Cash Out Green Journey
	EDF	Clean Renewable Select Renewable
	Scottish Power	Simply Green Energy
	Total	Parish Buying Green Energy Basket
Gas	100Green (previously Green Energy UK)	Sparking EKO Tide
	Crown Gas and Power	Bio100 (100% Biogas only)
	SSE (Business Energy)	SSE Green Gas Plus (100% Biogas only) Green Journey (100% Biogas only)

Mink on the Mole

Angling clubs/societies play an important role in monitoring the health and condition of many of our rivers. 'Our stretch' of the Mole...from the Burford Bridge to Young Street, is fished by both the Dorking and Leatherhead Angling Societies, with their 'territories' split where the rail bridge crosses the river in Norbury Park. Both are working with the **Waterlife Recovery Trust** to address the presence of non-native mink on the Mole. The work was started in 2025, primarily to address the dwindling numbers of water vole in the river. A single mink is estimated to kill some 500 prey animals a year, including other mammals, ground-nesting birds, and fish, of course. To date the Dorking Society has trapped 13 animals. There are also

newly installed 'mink raft traps' on the Leatherhead stretch.

The Mole is suffering from the effects of other non-native invasive species. The American Signal Crayfish has all but wiped out our native White-Clawed variety in many rivers in the south-east. It carries a fungus fatal for our native crayfish, as well as competing for food/habitat, and eating fish eggs. Crayfish trapping has resumed on the Mole, again via volunteers and the angling fraternity.

Lastly, there is the non-native Himalayan Balsam, a pink-flowering invasive plant introduced in Victorian times. It accelerates bank erosion, and its high nectar volume causes under-pollination of our native species. The angling Clubs organize Spring 'Balsam Bashing' duties,

uprooting and digging out plants along the river banks.

The Angling clubs also carry out river water quality monitoring, River-fly/invertebrate sampling, and litter picking as part of the 'Anglers against Litter' campaign. The Angling clubs work closely with the **Environment Agency, River Mole River Watch, Friends of the River Mole** and other bodies up and downstream of 'our stretch'. There are many opportunities to help, via any of these organisations, on the ground, with water sampling, habitat improvement and other work. Our river could do with a bit of help!

Volunteering: Please do Google and contact any of the organisations in bold type.

Mark Day

Tiny Steps to fight Climate Change

Macro eco warriors may foreswear flying, turn their heating down to chilly levels and buy their clothes in charity shops. Then there are micro eco warriors (that includes me) who, perhaps, waste their time with baby steps to fight climate change. I try to avoid using the term 'saving the planet'. The planet will survive what ever we do to it. We just might not recognise it when we have finished ourselves off.

First thing in the morning, a nice cup of tea. What to do with the tea bag? They are supposed to be plastic free these days but I find they survive quite well in the compost heap and I read somewhere that they are stuck together with something not very 'green'. So, they are squeezed out and then dried out in the airing cupboard in the kitchen before being torn open and the tea leaves emptied into the compost bucket. The bags go for landfill. Shame.

Later in the day I make a big batch of soup. Some goes into grot pots, otherwise known as empty spreadable butter boxes, and into the freezer. The sticky labels I use are about 2 x 1 cm in size. But hey, one per pot is a sorry waste so long names are written twice and the label cut in half. Short names are written four times crossways. Oh, how virtuous I feel!

At bedtime we have squeezed the last out of the toothpaste tube. Oh no we haven't. I cut off the end and the next half centimetre. There is plenty of toothpaste inside that little ring of plastic for the two of us. The so-called empty tube lasts another week or more and the small amounts used each night reminds us to go easy when we start the new tube.

So, what are your mini compulsions/hacks?

Barbara Jones



Hands-on Work by the Church Eco Group

The second phase of the laying of the new hedges planted by the Eco-Group around the Churchyard extension was completed this week. This is the northern boundary, adjoining the Glebe Field. And a very neat job too.



Spring Exhibition

Betchworth Village Hall, Station Rd, Betchworth, Surrey RH3 7DF

Open to the public: Friday May 1st – Sunday May 3rd 10 am – 5 pm

Monday May 4th 10 am – 4 pm

The Dorking Group of Artists, known for their artistic merit, return to Betchworth Village Hall for their ever-popular Spring Exhibition.

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KING WILLIAM IV

Dear Friends/Neighbours,

We have now fully re-opened from Wednesdays to Sundays, and have plenty of reasons for you to come and see us.

Our ever popular log burner is still roaring. It's Mother's Day on 15th March (booking essential). Also the final two weeks of Six Nations excitement, so still time to savour our famous speciality burgers of your nation (or another nation if you prefer!).

Let's hope the blue sky and sunshine finally make a welcome return.

See you soon

Eamonn, Kat & Anne.

Byttom Hill Mickleham 01372 372590 www.thekingwilliamiv.com

Has the CofE banned Oasis?

The Church of England's parliament, the General Synod, was scheduled to vote on 12th February on a motion brought forward from the Diocese of Worcester to ban the use of floral foam and other non-biodegradable products in all Church of England churches in a bid for greater environmental sustainability.

By the time you read this article, the vote will have taken place. What is all the fuss about? And why does it matter here in Mickleham and Westhumble?

Flower foam (the most commonly available commercial variety is called Oasis) is sold usually as lightweight green blocks, which when wetted hold a large amount of water. Oasis or its equivalent has been used since the late 1950s by florists, amateur as well as professional, to hold the stems of flowers and foliage in place in floral arrangements and keep flowers hydrated.

Unfortunately, being a plastic-based material, flower foam does not biodegrade and releases microplastic particles when handled or washed away. Opponents of the material argue it persists in soil and waterways, posing risks to wildlife and contributing to plastic pollution.

As part of its net-zero by 2030 strategy, the motion urges parishes to end the use of floral foam because of its long-lasting environmental impact. The Church's proposals also encourage greater use of locally-sourced flowers to reduce carbon footprints, urging congregations to rethink the use of imported blooms.

This initiative forms part of a wider effort to make church practices more environmentally friendly.

The Sustainable Church Flowers movement was started by Candy Connolly, wife of Shane Connolly, who provided (foam-free and locally-grown) displays for the King's wedding and coronation and was awarded an MBE for his services to sustainable floristry. It aims to encourage churches to 'glorify God sustainably', by using sustainable, seasonal, locally-grown and biodegradable flowers and foliage, with traditional and environmentally-friendly methods of presentation and display, while

discouraging the use of all floral foam by 2030. Want to know more? There is a good website with lots of photos and some theology: <https://suschurchflowers.com/>

So what are we doing about it here? At St Michael's Church, for the past few years, the flower team has not used Oasis. Instead, the arrangements, even the very large ones shown in the photos here and on other pages, have been arranged directly into vases of water. Hardly revolutionary, some of you may think, as that is how most people arrange their flowers at home. In fact, that's how my mother arranged flowers when I was a child: I remember being puzzled by the cupboard containing crumpled balls of chickenwire, flower 'frogs' or pinholders and a variety of vases.

We try to use flowers and foliage from our own gardens, which reflect the changing seasons. Sometimes have to rely on bought flowers, which are often imported. Each year we are trying to reduce these 'flown, not grown' blooms, and to find more imaginative ways of bringing natural local beauty into our church. For example, at Easter we have used pots of flowering bulbs, which were then planted in the ground to flower for many more years.

We have also found that the flowers do better and last longer in large vases full of clean water, rather than in flower foam which is difficult to rewet if it dries out. However the floristry industry finds Oasis convenient and it is what many people are used to, so the majority of florists are unlikely to change their practices without pressure from the paying public.

These initiatives by the flower team have also contributed to the church achieving a Silver Eco-church award from A Rocha, and we will continue to see what improvements can be made in this area to support the wider work of the Eco-group.

If you are interested in finding a foam-free florist, ask around: I know that Kingfisher Farm Flower Shop in Abinger is committed to foam-free and offers wonderful arrangements. You could buy a hand-tied bunch in an Aqua pack (cellophane wrapped with a reservoir of water around the



More images on page 23 and elsewhere in this issue.

stems), which many traditional florists are familiar with. Village Greens at Denbies now has a very established cutting garden and often has hand tied flowers available in season. There are a number of prestigious wedding florists now who embrace foam-free and use locally-grown flowers. There are wonderful arrangements and tips available for how to do this yourself on Instagram or other websites.

If you would like to join the friendly flower team, or find out more about what we do, please contact me at admin@micklehamchurch.org.uk or telephone 01372 376443.

Alison Wood

PS The motion, which was passed on Thursday 12th February, specified that churches should use local, seasonal, and fully compostable flowers and foliage, and eliminate the use of floral foam and other non-biodegradable products.

John Logie Baird – Centenary of TV

One hundred years ago, on 26th January 1926, Scottish engineer John Logie Baird gave the first public demonstration of television in the attic rooms of his home in Frith Street, Soho.

Until 1929 John had been living in boarding houses, then a friend persuaded him to take a three-year lease of Swiss Cottage at the top of Box Hill to the south of the National Trust centre. He lived there until 1932. He said of this period 'While I was at home we spent happy hours tramping over Box Hill'. He installed electrical apparatus at Swiss Cottage and invited scientists and journalists to see another of his inventions, 'Noctorvision' which was a device for detecting objects in fog.

At Swiss Cottage in 1931 John was introduced to Margaret Alu, a concert pianist from South Africa. Within a week they had decided to get married even though he was 19 years older than her. Margaret found life at Swiss Cottage lonely, so in early 1932 they moved to a house in Hampstead. John died in February 1946 leaving Margaret with two children.

Margaret Baird wrote a biography of her husband in 1973 and, on 1st December 1988 came to Box Hill to unveil a plaque commemorating her husband near Swiss Cottage. I was fortunate to be present at the unveiling and bought a signed copy of her book.



Margaret Baird unveiling the plaque with Cliff Michelmore (presenter of the BBC television programme 'Tonight' and many others)

John Logie Baird's development of his version of television and his pioneering transmissions were amazing technical achievements and world firsts. They were followed by the first video recording (on wax discs), the first colour television and the first 3D television. In 1936 he provided the apparatus for one

of the two systems used by the BBC for the first public broadcasts of television in the world. All his developments came to an end on 13th February 1937 when the BBC decided that the Marconi/EMI technology was better. John was the pioneer, but others gained the rewards.

Ben Tatham



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All welcome

A Journey to Byzantium

Over the past few years I have been working on a PhD on the economy of the Byzantine Empire in the 11th Century. Several people have expressed an interest in this, so I thought I would give a brief summary here.

I'd been interested in the Greek world since first hitch-hiking down through then Yugoslavia to Greece in 1978. We ended up on a Cycladic island called Tinos and had an idyllic time, sleeping on the beach and living on retsina and moussaka, but on this and subsequent visits, I started to find out about the island's medieval past. Tinos is covered in hundreds of simple chapels, many with icons of saints. It was one of the last places in Greece to fall to the Ottoman Turks in 1715, having been governed by Venice since the 13th Century. Before that, Tinos had been part of the Byzantine Empire.

The Byzantine Empire was the Greek-speaking half of the Roman Empire, which continued long after Rome itself had fallen. After losing over half its territory to Islam in the 7th Century, the empire gradually recovered and by the death of Emperor Basil II in 1025, was the strongest it had been for centuries. However, after several decades under a series of weak emperors, it lost most of its territory and when Alexios I took the throne in a coup in 1081, the empire was in dire straits. The Turks had conquered almost all of Anatolia (present day Turkey) and the Normans had just invaded the Balkan from their base in southern Italy. To make matters worse, the Byzantine currency had collapsed and the treasury was empty. Yet somehow, Alexios was able to stabilise the situation, throw back the invaders and found a dynasty that would rule for a hundred years. My thesis was about what actions Alexios applied to the economy to make this happen, and what was going on in the rest of the Byzantine economy at the time.

While the rest of Europe at this time used silver coinage, Byzantium used the



The Byzantine empire in the reign of Alexios I

gold nomisma. The nomisma until the mid-11th century had a reputation for its purity, but from the 1040s its fineness declined, so by the time of Alexios' ascent to the throne its gold content was down to 8%. Several theories for this debasement have been proposed, mostly concerning the Byzantine treasury watering down its coinage to fund lavish imperial expenditure and expensive wars. Instead, I focused on the supply of gold that would have come from West Africa and could have been interrupted by rebellions in what is now Tunisia, and by Islamic expansion towards the goldfields. I also looked at how the Byzantine emperor made use of land to reward his supporters and how the taxation system worked. At this time, the only countries in Europe with systems sophisticated enough to tax every individual based on their landholdings were Byzantium and England (Domesday).

At the same time, the rest of the economy seems to have been coping pretty well. The biggest logistical exercise anywhere in Europe at this time would have been the provisioning of the capital, Constantinople, which had a population of perhaps 400,000 (London during this period was about 18,000). This would have involved fleets of vessels transporting grain to the city from all around the Aegean and

as there were no records of famine at this time, it seems to have functioned smoothly. Simultaneously, commerce was expanding with new markets opening up in Europe driven by the expanding city states of Venice, Genoa and Pisa.

I did not have many original documents to work with; some chronicles of contemporary historians, a handful of land registers and a few imperial edicts. The most important manuscripts came from the archives of Mt Athos, a peninsula of monastic communities in the northern Aegean (which still exist today) who were scrupulous at recording their landholdings. From these, along with archaeological and numismatic evidence, I was able to put together a story of what might have happened almost a thousand years ago.

It was a huge privilege being able to spend my Fridays in the University of London libraries, buried deep in 11th century Byzantium. The Byzantinist community in the UK numbers just a few dozen in the UK and perhaps a few hundred worldwide and I have been made very welcome. Since 2014, I've been treasurer of the Society for the Promotion of Byzantine Studies and it's rather nice to see my name recorded in the minutes as 'Dr Budleigh'. At last.

Chris Budleigh

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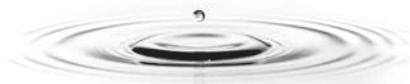
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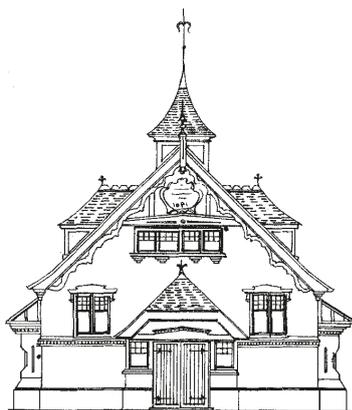
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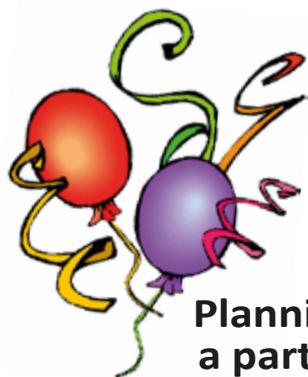
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lyn@mra.uk.net
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* Main working days: Monday, Tuesday and Sunday

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For information about services for other
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Search on 'Churches Together Mole Valley

CALENDAR MAY

1	Second SUNDAY of Lent	10 am
3	Tuesday	7 pm
5	Thursday	
7	Saturday	10 am to noon
8	Third SUNDAY of Lent	8 am 10 am
15	Fourth SUNDAY of Lent	10 am followed by 11 am
17	Tuesday	7 pm 7 pm
19	Thursday	
20	Friday	7.30 pm
21	Saturday	9 - 10 am
22	Fifth SUNDAY of Lent	8 am 10 am
26	Thursday	
28	Saturday	9 - 10 am
29	PALM SUNDAY	10 am 7.30 pm

APRI

2	Thursday - Maundy Thursday	7.30 pm
3	Friday - Good Friday	2 pm
5	SUNDAY - EASTER DAY	10 am

Dates for

Saturday 25th April
Saturday 11th July

NDAR RCH

Family Service

Compline in church

Lent Lunch Village Hall p3
Coffee at Westhumble Chapel p3

BCP Holy Communion at Westhumble Chapel
Holy Communion

Mothering Sunday Workshop in church
Worship for All Service **note change of time**
Compline in church
Westhumble Residents Association AGM

Lent Lunch Village Hall p3
M&WLHG AGM in Mickleham Village Hall

Women's Breakfast at The Stepping Stones p3

BCP Holy Communion at Westhumble Chapel
Holy Communion

Lent Lunch at Mickleham Village Hall p3

Men's Breakfast at Stepping Stones p3

Morning Worship
GS talk at The Stepping Stones pub p10

L

Holy Communion
Service of Reflection

Family Holy Communion followed by
an Easter Egg Hunt in the Rectory Garden

or your diary

Hort Soc AGM and plant sale:
Hort Soc Summer Show:

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Caroline Jones	Beverley Mehta
Vickie Leney	Richard Siberry
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Community Directory

Continued from page 13

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MICKLEHAM AND WESTHUMBLE LOCAL HISTORY GROUP
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ben@thetathams.co.uk or www.micklehamwesthumblehistory.co.uk

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councillor.budleigh@molevalley.gov.uk

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Dorking – Sue Tatham 01306 882547
Leatherhead – Beverley Mehta 01372 374304

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davidkennington144@gmail.com

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westhumble.neighbourhood.watch@gmail.com

WHATSAPP GROUP
Neil MacKay nlpm@lineone.net

ADDITIONAL CONTACT INFORMATION

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*Parent/partner's mobile number

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Sandra Wedgwood

Alexandra Mary, Lady Wedgwood, FSA

1938 – 2025

On 23rd January we bade farewell to Sandra Wedgwood, a truly remarkable woman who in her quiet and unassuming way accomplished so much. Sandra's childhood home was Berry's Croft, Westhumble where she lived with her brother Charles and her sister Cecilia. Her father was A A Gordon Clark, judge and crime writer who wrote under the pseudonym Cyril Hare. She was educated at Guildford High School and received her advanced education at the Courtauld Institute of Art. Sandra was an architectural historian and in her early career worked with Nikolaus Pevsner. In 1966, she was named as joint author of the Warwickshire volume in his *The Buildings of England* series. She became an expert on the work of Augustus Pugin and was patron of the Pugin Society. In 1983 she was elected a fellow of the Society of Antiquaries of London. Sandra served as architectural archivist to the House of Lords from 1980 to 1998 and revised the Palace of Westminster entry for *The Buildings of England* volume London 6: Westminster (2003). Her publications include books on Pugin, the Houses of Parliament, Art and in 1990 *A History of the Church and Parish of St. Martin's, Dorking*. In 1963, she married Martin Wedgwood (later 3rd Baronet) stockbroker, and linguist. They had one son, Ralph (now 4th Baronet) and two daughters, Julia and Frances. They came to live in Pixham Mill in 1972 where they established a delightful garden filled with unusual plants, hedges and sculptures around the flowing water of the Pipp Brook. Sandra and Martin were active in many community organisations including the Friends of Box Hill. Sandra had lived close to Box Hill for most of her life and so did both her parents. She, therefore, had a very strong emotional as well as historical attachment to the place, its associations and its beauties.

She felt working with the 'Friends' a good means of helping the National Trust to look after the Hill. She was chairman of the Friends for 24 years and on the committee until her death. During her time as chairman, she was enthusiastically supportive of the

Hill and worked hard to advance the education of the public regarding Box Hill and its ecology and to conserve its natural beauty. She instigated the beautiful 'Box Hill Book of ...' series – finding the authors, commissioning the illustrators and editing the text on subjects such as Box, Archaeology, Orchids, Bats, Butterflies, Invertebrates and Geology.

Martin was her great support. He served as treasurer of the Friends for many years and was chairman of the Dorking and District Preservation Society (now the Dorking Society) until his untimely death in 2010.

In her funeral service at St Michael's, Ralph spoke of his mother's character. 'The first impression that she made on almost everyone was as an extraordinarily kind, quiet, and understated person. But underneath this quiet exterior, she lived a life of intense feeling, dedicated to a luminous system of values that guided her at all times.' She had told him 'The first is *truth*. In my scholarly work, I pursue the truth – my goal is to understand the truth about what happened, for example in the design and building of the Houses of Parliament, and so on'.

Among her professional colleagues, she was widely loved and admired, but she was also known for her formidable insistence on the highest standards of historical accuracy. Occasionally, she would become positively fierce with those who gave inaccurate accounts.

Sandra's second value was *beauty*. 'In the garden, and in the house, I try to create beautiful things – beautiful flower arrangements, and beautiful spaces where beautiful things can be seen and appreciated.' Ralph added 'Her love of looking at art, architecture, and gardens was boundless. On family trips, she typically wanted to spend twice as long in every art gallery or historic building or public garden as anyone else. "Look at that – look at that!" she would exclaim in delight, while the rest of us were starting to feel weary on our legs'.

Sandra's love of gardens was well known. Over the years she was an



enthusiastic exhibitor of vegetables, fruit, flowers and floral arrangements at the Horticultural Society's annual Village Shows. She was an amazing plantswoman and very generous with her cuttings.

Ralph continued 'Above all, however, he believed in *love*. In her quiet but entirely dedicated way, she was a devout Christian; and for her, Christianity was fundamentally a gospel of love.

'She loved spending time with other people – and most of the time, other people found her to be a gentle, calm, and reassuring presence. But her professional colleagues also appreciated her ability to enjoy the absurdities of the workplace. She sometimes also revealed a sly and mischievous sense of humour.

'Her family held a special place in her heart. The family that she grew up in was a great clan – she had 24 first cousins. But she was particularly devoted to her parents, her brother, sister and her husband our father Martin who died before her, but she also loved all the younger members of her family: her children, her son-in-law, her seven grandchildren, and nephews and nieces.

'These central values – truth, beauty, and love – guided her, and she followed their guidance with extraordinary resolve and determination.'

Ralph concluded 'Every part of the world that she touched she made more truthful, more beautiful, and more loving. We should be immeasurably grateful to her, and proud of her life and her accomplishments. Her memory is a blessing for us. It is our privilege to follow her example in all the years ahead'.

More about Dandelions

It was a pleasure to read Sue and Janet's article in the February issue about dandelions. Apart from their impeccable ecological properties it is my view that, if they had a reputation for being 'difficult' garden plants, those of us for whom they didn't thrive would be envious of those who had fine displays of them.



Did you know they have economic potential? Their white sap is a form of latex akin to that produced by rubber trees. Most vehicle tyres contain about 10% natural rubber. Rubber trees only grow in tropical regions. A Russian dandelion, *Taraxacum kok-saghyz* which can be grown in temperate regions on poor soil unsuitable for other crops, produces significantly more latex in its roots than most varieties. Rubber from it is now being used in the manufacture of bicycle tyres and research is on going into other uses for it.



I read about this two or three years ago and have been digging up surplus dandelion roots in the garden, washing, drying and storing them, thinking that one day I might try making rubber from them. How? Today I read that the process involves grinding the dried roots, extracting the latex, 'often using water-based methods', and then clumping the latex 'using an acid like vinegar'.

but sounds hopeful so watch out for a follow up article sometime in the future. Maybe I should register the Westhumble Rubber Co just in case it is all a huge success.

Barbara Jones

The method is rather light on details

Mickleham & Westhumble Horticultural Society New Membership or Renewal

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Please use your name/house as the reference and email the Membership Secretary, Judith Long when you have paid: judith.long2@btinternet.com

We also encourage you to set up a standing order for 2027 and onwards, payable on 1st January each year. For those unable to pay online, committee members will be going house-to-house to collect cash payments during March and April.

Dates for your diary:

AGM and plant sale: Saturday 25th April

Summer Show: Saturday 11th July



Friends of Juniper Hall
12th March at 11.30 am

A talk by Nigel Bond
of River Mole River Watch on
History of the River Mole
and its Current State

followed by lunch.

Guests are welcome and the cost including lunch is £15. If you intend coming it would be helpful to let us know via email on friendsofjuniperhall@gmail.com

Community News

We were sorry to hear of the death of Rosarai Anderson who lived in Burney Road for many years. We send deepest sympathy to her family.



A Perspective on Mickleham Cricket Club

Many years ago, I read an article in this parish magazine about Mickleham Cricket Club. At the bottom of the page it said if you are interested in coming along to play, please ring Jim Evans. I mulled it over for a while, I liked the idea of playing cricket but was not sure if it was going to be for me. I thought I would give it a try. Jim Evans answered the phone and I explained to him that I had not played since school and that I could not bat or bowl. 'You sound perfect' he said. I knew immediately that this was the team for me.

The 'other MCC', as Mickleham Cricket Club is known, has all the qualities of a quintessential Sunday afternoon side. A fantastic ground to play cricket on, courtesy of (then) Box Hill School, possibly the best clubhouse in the world called the Running Horses and a pool of extremely genial players of all ages.

This all sits very well with the game that is cricket. When you think about a test match, it is absolute genius

that somebody came up with a game that includes five lunches and five teas. There are many different cricket formats to suit the time available. At Mickleham we play a thirty-five over Sunday afternoon game with just the one tea and it is always delicious.

The nuance of cricket is that every action taken counts. Scoring with the bat, bowling well, stopping the ball going over the boundary, taking a catch, an umpire's decision. Who knows at the end of the game, one over left, nine wickets down and eight to score, which of these small interactions might be the difference and the winning margin.

Sometimes it does not go so well, and in this club, willing participants get fined for virtually anything. One season I was fined two weeks in a row for getting a duck. The third week I scored one and was fined for duck avoidance! Other crimes include padding up, unnecessary diving in the field, wearing the wrong trousers and showing off.

Many of the teams that come to play us

tell us that it is their favourite fixture of the season. Not only because it's a lovely ground but importantly because the game is played in the right spirit. Something that this club is very proud of.

So, if you have international cricketing experience, often hit centuries and regularly take fifiers please come along and play. Alternatively, if you don't have those credentials, and feel like coming along for some competitive but fun cricket, please get in touch. Our season runs from the end of May until the end August. We play most Sunday afternoons from 2 pm until about 7 pm. All are welcome. Our age range is, broadly, 10 to 80+. Any and all genders. No annual sub, just a flat £12 match fee. We have spare kit available so no need to invest heavily either. In short, the only requirement is to turn up and enjoy yourself, (weather permitting)!

Will Perks

william.perks@aol.com



Mickleham Parish Council: Future Meeting Dates for 2026-2027

Annual Parish Meeting (APM)

Wednesday 20th May 2026 @ 7.30 pm

Annual General Meeting (AGM)

Wednesday 20th May 2026
(follows the APM above)

Full Council Meetings

Start at 7.30.pm

Wednesday 8th July 2026

Wednesday 11th November 2026

Wednesday 17th March 2027

Details of Agendas/Minutes will be available on the website.

(www.micklehamparishcouncil.gov.uk)

Anyone wishing to attend or raise any issues please email: clerk@micklehamparishcouncil.gov.uk

Wednesday 9th September 2026

Wednesday 20th January 2027

Westhumble Residents Association AGM

is on

17th March

at 7 pm and

will be held at

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Lesser Celandine

Last time we wrote about the lovely dandelion, this time we are back with another beautiful, native spring plant; the lesser celandine *Ficaria verna*. A member of the buttercup family, this cheerful, star-shaped, bright yellow flower carpets the ground of woodlands, hedgerows and riverbanks. It's well known that the poet, William Wordsworth, was a big fan of the daffodil – you may know his poem about them 'I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud'. However, his favourite flower was the lesser celandine – he wrote three poems about them! The first verse of one poem, 'The Small Celandine', reads: There is a flower, the lesser Celandine, That shrinks, like many more, from cold and rain; And the first moment that the sun may shine, Bright as the sun himself, 't is out again! Clearly, it's a flower that works to rule! On fine days, it rarely opens before 9 am and closes up at 5 pm. As the poem suggests, it won't open at all in the rain. Wordsworth's memorial in Poet's Corner in Westminster Abbey is decorated with a celandine to commemorate his love of this flower but, unfortunately, the greater celandine (*Chelidonium majus*) was accidentally put on the memorial instead of the lesser celandine. The greater celandine is neither related, nor similar (except in colour) to the lesser

celandine! It is much taller, flowers from May to August and is a member of the poppy family.

The lesser celandine's heart-shaped leaves begin to surface in February on stalks no more than 5 cm high. The flowers appear in March and April and by the end of May, the whole plant has withered and died back underground until the following spring. All the goodness for the following year is stored in tubers. If you dig them up in late summer or early autumn, you will find these tubers in bunches of maybe a dozen or more. They are reminiscent of figs, hence the plant's Latin name, *Ficaria*, from the Latin *ficus* (a fig). It is its ability to store so much goodness in the tubers that allows the lesser celandine to emerge so early the following spring. These pale tubers also inspired another name for the lesser celandine, Pilewort. As the name suggests, they were a traditional remedy to treat piles (haemorrhoids).

Like the dandelion, some gardeners consider it to be a thuggish weed, and it can be invasive in lawns. However, the Royal Horticultural Society (RHS) recommend allowing lesser celandine to grow as ground cover in shady areas under shrubs, and embracing it for its beauty. It flowers at a time when the ground tends to look bare, and its lovely yellow flowers complement spring-flowering bulbs and early perennials.



Lesser celandine *Ficaria verna*

It also provides a source of pollen and nectar for insects such as bumblebees, flies and beetles.

If you wish to remove it from your garden, you will have to carefully dig up and remove the whole plant, including all the white roots and tubers. As the roots and tubers are easily broken apart, it can be almost impossible to remove them all. If you accidentally leave a fragment in the soil, it will pop up as a new plant next year! In lawns, it can be easier to keep mowing the area and the plants will eventually weaken and die. Taking these factors into consideration, it is no wonder that the Gardener's Question Time team once joked, the only real way to rid yourself of celandine is to move house!

Sue Willis and Janet Barker



Church Flowers

See Article On Page 9

Large arrangement without the use of floral foam. An arrangement from Easter time

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An extract from School records in the 19th Century

Extracts from the log books of Mickleham New National School-1865-1884 Attendance and behaviour

- **26/09/1864:** Cooper to stay in one hour each day this week for being absent without leave on Friday. Mary Worsfold reported sick, a very frequent occurrence on Mondays.
- **19/02/1866:** Elizabeth Andrews suspended for disobedience to the Rector, in being absent on Friday when leave was refused. Very poor reports of sermons, showing great inattention on the part of the children.
- **14/05/1866: EDWARD SLATER.** Things have not gone well-several children had leave for Bookham Club, their fathers or brothers being members. Notice given that leave of absence would not be granted this week (Epsom Races) except in cases of sickness. Edward Slater's behaviour very bad again both yesterday and today.

15/05/1866:EDWARD SLATER applied for leave, it was refused

16/05/1866: Derby Day – all children at school except **EDWARD SLATER**, who is suspended for breach of rules



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Winter sports without snow

Last month, we wondered whether many of our nursery children might grow up to be future environmentalists. During Forest School sessions, the children have been using cameras to capture photographs of things that interest them. Alongside several enthusiastic shots of the tractor in the neighbouring field, we were delighted to see some truly thoughtful images of tree bark, insect tracks, and our spring bulbs. These bulbs are being carefully protected from curious feet by willow hoops that the children helped to make themselves.

This month, we're busy training future Olympians! Exploring winter sports without snow can be a challenge, but paper-plate carpet skating has certainly raised the heart rate of the

nursery grown-ups. The children have also been ski-jumping in the sandpit, table painting to create ice-skate-like marks and enjoying imaginative play with Duplo figures fitted with lolly-stick skis gliding through pretend snow. The Winter Olympics has allowed us to create imaginative movement experiences that motivate the children and support them in achieving the recommended minimum of 180 minutes of physical activity each day. At nursery, children also have the opportunity to take part in a ballet movement class and, new this term, Primal Cubs—a fitness activity session led by one of our current parents.

Hilary Budd



From left: winter sports without snow including centre and top right; bottom right willow hoops





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Sad News at St Michael's School



It is with great sadness that we share the news that it is proposed that St Michael's School will close at the end of this academic year. Although this follows Surrey's statutory consultation process, the decision reaches far beyond procedures and documents. For many in our parish, this marks the end of a school that has been a cherished presence in village life for generations. St Michael's has long stood as a place of welcome, nurture and Christian care. Countless families will remember school productions, Christmas services, sports days, and the sight of children walking up and down the lane each day. Its history is woven into the story of the village, and its influence will continue to be felt long after the building falls silent. Over recent years the school has faced significant challenges linked to falling birth rates, a trend affecting many small rural schools. Despite this, every effort was made to secure a different future. Staff, governors and the wider community worked incredibly hard to keep the school viable. Initiatives

included developing a flexi schooling offer to meet the needs of a wider range of families, as well as employing a dedicated marketing team this year to help raise the school's profile. These actions reflected the strength of feeling and the genuine hope that St Michael's could remain open.

Throughout this period, the governing body provided unwavering commitment, wisdom and support. The Diocese offered guidance and encouragement and the church community was there consistently, both financially and pastorally - walking alongside the school with prayer, presence and practical help. Their contribution has been immense and deeply appreciated.

The dedication of the St Michael's staff must also be recognised. Their professionalism, compassion and commitment ensured the children continued to feel safe, valued and inspired, even during uncertain times. Their focus never wavered.

As we look ahead, we are pleased that

families from St Michael's have been offered places at our federated partner school, Newdigate Infant School. Newdigate is a warm, nurturing and thriving setting, and we are confident that children will continue to flourish there within a familiar ethos and community spirit.

In these final months, our priority is to ensure that this last chapter is filled with celebration, gratitude and meaningful moments for the children and the wider community. The legacy of St Michael's - its kindness, its faith, and its community spirit, will remain an enduring part of the village story.

Nicola Cleather

The editor added:

Consultation document

The information about the proposal to merge St Michael's School with Newdigate School was quickly followed by a consultation document for the parents and carers. It was too long for inclusion in the magazine but here is a link for anyone who has not so far seen the document.

Amalgamation of St Michael's CofE Aided Infant School and Newdigate CofE Endowed Aided Infant School

Public meetings have taken place. The document gives information about how to make your views known.

Easter Day 5th April Easter Egg Hunt in the Rectory Garden

**following the 10 am service St
Michael's Church, Mickleham**

Family Activities at Dorking Library



The Museum is pleased to continue its collaboration with Dorking Library.
World Book Day:

Come and see some old books that your grandparents or great grandparents might have used at school and make a bookmark: Saturday 14th March, 10 am-noon.

**Create a Blue Plaque for yourself:
What are your hopes and dreams?**
How would you like to be remembered

in the future? Create a blue plaque to commemorate the life you hope to lead: Saturday 21st March, 10 am-2 pm. Free, materials provided and children must be accompanied.

Dorking Museum, 62 West Street. Thursdays 1pm-4pm, Fridays and Saturdays 10am-4pm, free entry. www.dorkingmuseum.org.uk. Visit dorkingmuseum.org.uk/digital-guide/. 01306 876591.

Cryptic Crossword

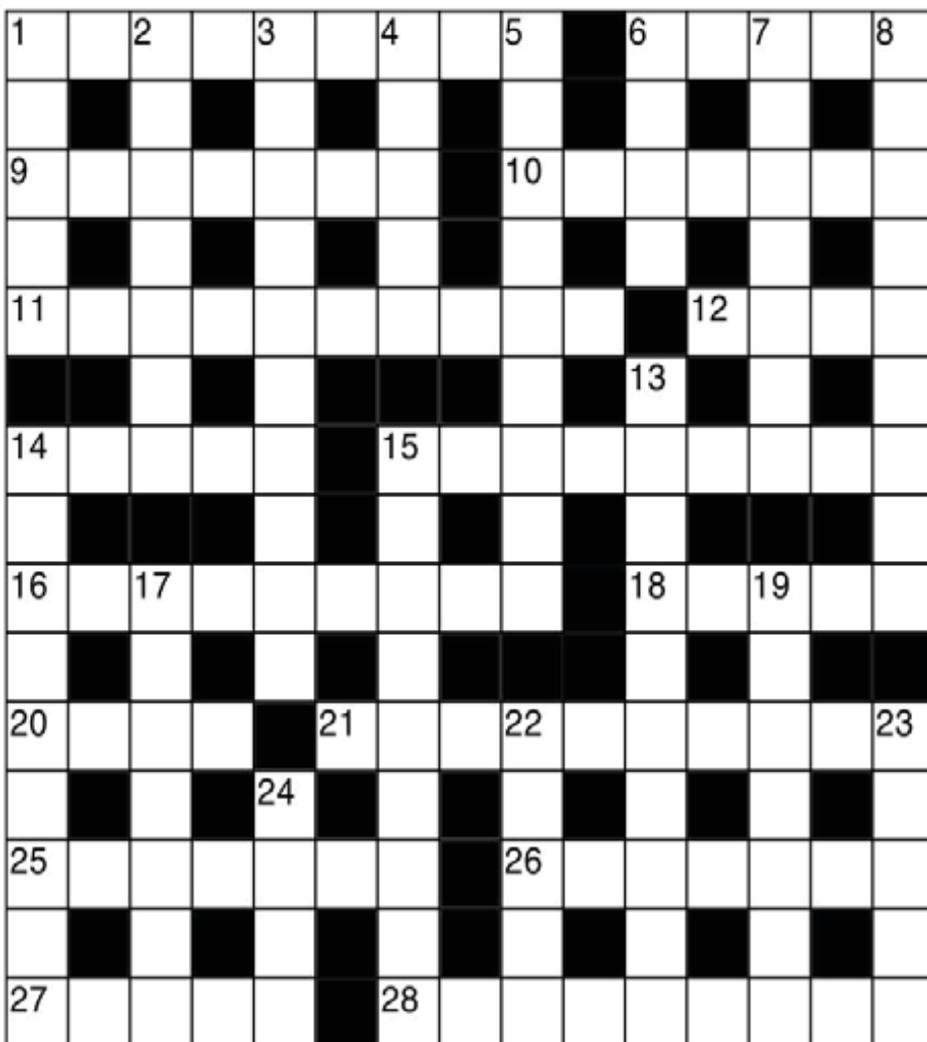
Another crossword compiled by the late Richard Roberts-Miller. It made its first appearance in the March 2016 issue of this magazine with the B&W illustration from the same issue.



Across

- 1 Sacking of defender had adverse consequences (9)
- 6 Repeat note about take-off (5)
- 9 A remedy in order to silence guitars? (7)
- 10 Took a jerk back to a refuge (7)
- 11 Disorder as a bear boards vessel? (10)
- 12 This bearing is reported to be tight (4)
- 14 Who concealed the editor? (2,3)
- 15 Belittles theatrical performances in the Surrey Hills (9)
- 16 Party policy has obvious zero content (9)
- 18 A sailor has key part in a steamship (5)
- 20 An oddly cultured hint (4)
- 21 Those who have joined up parts of the body are fashionable! (10)
- 25 Liver damage can follow one too many (7)
- 26 A second edition rent rip-off? (7)
- 27 Sound car parts (5)
- 28 Fiona's German friend is often at sea (9)

More flower pictures: Christmas and Harvest



Down

- 1 Bath or Chelsea leading church group? (5)
- 2 The players showed the way back and moved king (7)
- 3 Golf warning article: daft, from beginning to end (4,3,3)
- 4 Strange degree of rhythm (5)
- 5 He travels with cod up hill to White House (6,3)
- 6 Story of a girl with a lisp (4)
- 7 Crazy time one had in island (7)
- 8 Company with lists about first Old Norse settlers (9)
- 13 Perhaps too abused by grocers! (10)
- 14 4 Poet holds invitation to prodigal son (9)
- 15 Scepticism over diesel fib? (9)
- 17 Colourless gear (7)
- 19 Possibly has time for 15D (7)
- 22 Was elected mayor, or got in twice? (5)
- 23 Foreign president was elected? (5)
- 24 An archaeologist's quarters? (4)

Solution in April's issue

EST. ——— *The* ——— XVI

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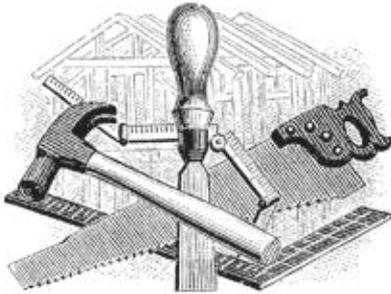
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