

Services at St John the Baptist Halling & the Jubilee Hall Upper Halling		
28 th October Ss Simon & Jude		11.00 Holy Communion Isaiah 28 vv 14-16 p711 Ephesians 2 vv 19-22 p1174 John 15 vv 17-27 p1083
2 nd November All Souls		9.30 Holy Communion Romans 5 vv 1-11 p1132 John 5 vv 19-25 p1069
4 th November	Trinity 23	8.00 Holy Communion Jubilee Hall Philippians 3 vv 17-21 p1180 Matthew 22 vv 15-22 p990
	Fourth Before Advent Blythwood Service	11.00 Holy Communion Deuteronomy 6 vv 1-9 p185 Hebrews 9 vv 11-14 p1207 Mark 12 vv 28-34 p1018
11 th November Third Before Advent Remembrance Sunday Trinity 24		10.50 Holy Communion (1662) Colossians 1 vv 3-12 Matthew 9 vv 18-26
		10.50 Service of Remembrance Amos 3 9-15 Hebrews 4 vv 14-16
		5.30 Evening Prayer Jubilee Hall Amos 5 vv 1-27 p920 John 2 vv 1-25 p1064
18 th November Second before Advent		11.00 Holy Communion Daniel 12 vv 1-3 p898 Hebrews 10 vv 11-25 p1208 Mark 13 vv 1-8 p1019
25 th November Christ the King		11.00 Holy Communion Daniel 7 vv 9-14 p892 Revelation 1 vv 1-8 p1233 John 18 vv 33-37 p1087
2 nd December Advent Sunday YEAR C Gift Service		8.00 Holy Communion Jubilee Hall Romans 13 vv 8-14 p1140 Matthew 21 vv 1-13 p988
		11.00 Holy Communion Jeremiah 33 vv 14-16 p796 I Thessalonians 3 vv 9-13 p1187 Luke 21 vv 25-36 p1057
Services at St Michael & All Angels Cuxton		
28 th October Ss Simon & Jude		9.30 Holy Communion Isaiah 28 vv 14-16 p711 Ephesians 2 vv 19-22 p1174 John 15 vv 17-27 p1083
2 nd November All Souls		7.30 pm Holy Communion Romans 5 vv 1-11 p1132 John 5 vv 19-25 p1069
4 th November Fourth Before Advent Blythwood Service		9.30 Family Communion Deuteronomy 6 vv 1-9 p185 Mark 12 vv 28-34 p1018
11 th November Third Before Advent Remembrance Sunday		9.30 Holy Communion & Parade Colossians 1 vv 3-12 Matthew 9 vv 18-26
		7.30 pm Centenary of the Armistice
18 th November	Trinity 25	8.00 Holy Communion Collect, Epistle & Gospel Epiphany 5. Epistle & Gospel BCP
	Second before Advent	9.30 Holy Communion Daniel 12 vv 1-3 p898 Hebrews 10 vv 11-25 p1208 Mark 13 vv 1-8 p1019
25 th November Christ the King		9.30 Holy Communion Daniel 7 vv 9-14 p892 Revelation 1 vv 1-8 p1233 John 18 vv 33-37 p1087
2 nd December Advent Sunday YEAR C Gift Service		9.30 Family Communion Jeremiah 33 vv 14-16 p796 Luke 21 vv 25-36 p1057

The 8.00 service at Halling on 11th November will be substantially the service which would have been held on the corresponding Sunday in 1918. The 10.50 will not be Holy Communion and there will be special contributions from village organisations. The 9.30 at Cuxton will be substantially the same as we do every Remembrance Sunday and the 7.30 pm Centenary of the Armistice will take a similar format to the event with which we marked the beginning of hostilities four years earlier.

“My God, My God, Why Hast Thou Forsaken Me?”

We can't answer Jesus' question. We can only die *with him* and await God's answer in him. Gerhard Forde – cited in *Expository Times* October 2018.

Copy date December magazine: 9th November 8.30 am Rectory.

Holy Communion Wednesdays at 9.30 am at Cuxton		Holy Communion Thursdays at 9.30 am at Halling	
31 st October Martin Luther	Ephesians 6 vv 1-9 Luke 13 vv 22-30	ALL SAINTS DAY	Revelation 7 vv 2-12 Matthew 5 vv 1-12
7 th November	Philippians 2 vv 12-18 Luke 14 vv 25-33	8 th November	Philippians 3 vv 3-8 Luke 15 vv 1-10
14 th November	Titus 3 vv 1-7 Luke 11 vv 17-19	15 th November	Philemon Luke 17 vv 20-25
21 st November	Revelation 4 Luke 19 vv 11-28	22 nd November S Cecilia	Revelation 5 vv 1-10 Luke 19 vv 41-44
28 th November	Revelation 15 vv 1-4 Luke 21 vv 12-19	29 th November	Revelation 18 v1 – 19 v9 Luke 21 vv 20-28

Interesting

A woman asks her husband to call in at the Co-op and pick up a pint of milk and adds, “If they have any avocados, please bring six.” He returns with six pints of milk.



War

I’ve just been reading Bob Ogley’s “Kent at War”. It tells the story of the county through the Second World War and is lavishly illustrated with photographs of the period from the “Kent Messenger” collection. I found it very thought-provoking. After all, I know many of the places featured in it very well. The people depicted are my parents’ and grandparents’ generation. Our minds have been rather on war this year as we approach the centenary of the armistice which ended the fighting in the First World War. In both world wars, Kent was in the front line and men from Kent fought in our armed forces including my own family and, most probably, yours as well.

As I say, the book made a deep impression on me and I am a little surprised at how proud it made me feel. The county was shelled as well as bombed. It provided many of the little ships which supported the Royal Navy at the evacuation of Dunkirk, and most of the men brought home, some of them badly wounded, were brought back on our railways and roads or treated in hospitals in the county. Those left at home continued to do all the necessary jobs which always have to be done – not least maintaining food production in fields open to enemy attack – as well as additional war work such as making munitions. Many of these jobs were done by women with the men away at war. People went about their ordinary daily business despite the threat of gas attacks, air raids and even the possibility of invasion. There was rationing of such basic necessities as food and clothing to contend with. In addition to long working days, many were firewatchers or served

in the home guard in the evenings and at night and weekends. And, of course, many lost their homes and factories because of the bombing. Then there was the grief caused by the loss of loved ones and anxiety for family members in danger both on the home front and fighting overseas, where communications could be difficult and unreliable. Many of those who refused to fight on grounds of conscience were even braver, going unarmed onto the battlefield as medical orderlies, for example.

Courage is an obvious quality for us to admire. To it must be added fortitude, resilience, just carrying on in the face of tiredness, discouragement and fear. A lot of ordinary people displayed amazing qualities in wartime and it does make me proud of the people of this county. Actually, in my experience, what you might call ordinary people can and do display amazing bravery and strength in all sorts of circumstances in peacetime as well as war. People endure pain, disappointment and loss in circumstances which they would never have believed possible. There is an enormous resilience in the human spirit. It’s the way God made us.

But thinking along these lines, it occurred to me that of course there were plenty of other people from other counties and other countries who displayed comparable courage and resilience. They too were exhausted, scared, faced the loss of their loved ones, their homes. They too were exposed to the possibility of what might be worse than death – terrible injuries which would leave them always in pain and unable to work or to enjoy the ordinary pleasures of life. As human beings, we should be as proud of them as we are of those who are obviously our own people.

And that, of course, goes for the enemy too. They were no less human than we are. They had to be brave and to display fortitude in the face of bombs and shells, the loss of loved ones, the loss of their homes, going about their daily lives in fear, putting up with hardships and shortages. Towards the end of the war, they were suffering very badly and had a great deal more to fear than we did.

The week I finished the book, the next Sunday the reading contained the words, “My brethren, these things ought not to be so.” For all that there is to admire in the way people survived and overcame in the world wars and all the other wars which have defiled this beautiful world with which God has entrusted us, *these things ought not to be so*. We can go into the reasons for war – the politics, the economics, the lust for power and wealth, the desire for glory, the pleasure of conquest, the claims of vengeance for past injury, the desire to right wrongs, to defend the right, to acquire territory, to protect our people and our culture, for justice, for peace even – yet *these things ought not to be so*. We can argue about what should and should not have been done – the imperial expansion of European nations in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, our arms race with the Kaiser’s Germany, the complex web of treaties which meant that the assassination of an Archduke in Serbia could plunge Europe into carnage, the terms of the Treaty of Versailles which ended WWI, whether Hitler and Mussolini could have been contained earlier, appeasement, whether we should have intervened to save Czechoslovakia, and so on and so forth – and yet *these things ought not so to be*.

The quotation is from James (3¹⁰). James is writing about the way we speak to one another. How can the same mouths which sing praises to God, swear at or curse or gossip about our fellow human beings? Words are often the fathers of

deeds. I’m sure James would agree that hands lifted up or folded in prayer ought not to be wielding weapons. Such things are contrary to our very nature as Christians. Christian people have the mind of Christ and everything we say and do ought to flow from that fact. The UK and the nations of Europe, which were at the centre of both world wars, were supposedly Christian countries. War was contrary to our nature, to what we professed. *These things ought not to be so*. For all the virtues people display in war – courage, loyalty, love – and despite the fact that there may be times when we cannot see any other way but war to avert an even greater wrong, *these things ought not to be so*. They ought not to be so for Christian nations because killing and hating and destroying are contrary to our nature as Christian people.

I think of good men who had to go to war and fight contrary to their own good nature and the conflict it created within them. I am not saying that they ought not to have fought. They had no real choice. Their country’s very survival was in danger and we would have suffered horribly in the event of defeat. Some of us might never even have been born had we lost either of the world wars. And yet, I don’t know how, but I do know that *these things ought not to be so*.

And what of countries which are not Christian? Is war OK for them? No, the Gospel of Peace is for all nations. The Christian Gospel is to be proclaimed to the ends of the earth.

The Great War of 1914-18 was supposed to be the war to end all wars. Well, you can’t overcome evil with evil. You can only overcome evil with good. So that’s our task and it requires even more dedication on our part than did waging successful wars for previous generations. Are we up for it? Roger.

The owner of one of the little ships who aided the evacuation from Dunkirk when presented with the opportunity not to go, but went anyway: *I’m glad I didn’t have the pluck to refuse*.

St Michael and All Angels, Cuxton Sunday, 11th November, 2018 at 7.30pm
ARMISTICE - A PRESENTATION OF WORDS AND MUSIC

To commemorate the cessation of hostilities on the Western Front of the Great War 1914-18
Tideway Folk Group Cuxton Church Choir with audience participation and readings
“The more we learn about war, the more important it becomes to sing about peace.”

Refreshments afterwards in the hall Retiring collection for Service Personnel Charities.

Fostering and Adoption.



This was the topic for our Mothers' Union meeting on 19th September, when Billy-Jo O'Leary of "Home for Good" came to speak to us. There is both a huge shortage of suitable people able and willing to foster children or adopt and also a tremendous need. Children may be in care because they have lost their parents, because their parents are unable to care for them or are unfit to do so, or because they are at risk of abuse. There is also the issue of refugee children from war zones, many of whom are unaccompanied by adults and are susceptible to becoming victims of abuse, trafficking and slavery. Yes slavery in twenty-first century Britain! Children in care don't have an easy time of it themselves. They may be moved frequently from one carer to another, perhaps changing schools and being cut off from friends they have made, taking little with them in the way of personal possessions, having nowhere to call home. A large proportion of adult prisoners have been in care as children. For them, the system obviously hasn't worked.

The Diocese of Rochester is leading this initiative with "Home for Good" and "Diagrama Foundation" to assist children who come into the care system – through prayer, through the welcome and support churches can give to children in care and their foster or adoptive parents, through encouraging and supporting prospective foster parents and adopters and by smoothing the path of those seeking suitable placements. This is for the benefit of children now and for the future. Bishop James is also the Bishop to Her Majesty's Prisons and sees this initiative as a compassionate response to children and their needs today and also a means of helping them to make a better life for themselves in the long term.

What is fostering?

Fostering is an opportunity to give vulnerable children and young people a safe place in a stable and loving home while their birth family is unable to look after them. Some may need a home for a few nights and others for a few years. All will need care, compassion and support.

Each year in the UK, tens of thousands of children come into care, usually from difficult or desperate circumstances. Children may have suffered a lack of care or stability, abuse or trauma, or their family may be experiencing crisis. Many of these children will be placed in foster care.

Foster carers are needed for children of all ages, but there is a particular need for carers who are able to look after groups of siblings, children with disabilities or additional needs, teenagers and asylum seeking children.

Who needs fostering?

Children of all ages and from a wide variety of backgrounds need fostering. They need safe, caring and loving homes whilst the best solution is worked out for their future.

Carers are especially needed for the following groups:

1. Children over the age of ten
 2. Siblings groups, so that they need not be separated from each other on entering care
 3. Children with additional needs, who need ongoing and targeted support through their childhood. Often this can be respite care for parents to give them a break
 4. Unaccompanied asylum seeking children who are an increasing proportion of looked after children in the UK
 5. Children and teenagers who are placed in residential homes, but would flourish better in a family setting
- 40% of children who come into care return to their birth family within six months. The role of foster carers during these six months is crucial to ensuring that the child receives the support and stability he or she needs during a challenging period. For those who are unable to return to their birth family, long term permanency through a foster placement, kinship care or adoption may be in their best interests, and they will need the care and love of people around them who are committed to seeing them flourish.

What is Adoption

Adoption is a way of providing **permanent families for children who are unable to live with their birth families**. To adopt means taking a child permanently into your home and bringing them up as your own. The child will legally become part of your family.

Children who can no longer live with their birth families because of loss, neglect or abuse, need the love and support of a parent who will help them come to terms with their earlier life experiences

Who needs adopting?

Over 120 children are waiting for adoptive parents in the areas covered by the Diocese; boys and girls, brothers and sisters. Most are aged between two and 10 years old and many are part of a family group of two or more children who need to be placed together.

Around three quarters of children waiting for adoption are 'hard to place', which means they are likely over the age of 3, part of a sibling group, from a Black or Minority Ethnic Background or have additional needs. More than 15 of these children have been waiting for a family for over 18 months.

<https://www.homeforgood.org.uk/kent> kent@homeforgood.org.uk 0300 001 0995.

How to Help Homeless People – Church Homeless Trust

The number of homeless people is increasing, and some of them will turn to their local church or community for help. It can be hard to know how to help because homeless people often have multiple needs, and accessing support services is complicated. The purpose of this guide is to help churches and community groups respond to this growing need safely and effectively. There are many reasons why people lose their home. It may be due to a relationship breakdown, physical or mental illness, debt, addiction, or simply the end of a tenancy. There are also those who grew up in an abusive household or in care, and have never had a truly safe and secure place to call home. Every homeless person is an individual with their own unique story. It is important to show an interest, and listen to them. This guide gives information on helping people at different stages of homelessness: from those about to be evicted, to long-term rough sleepers who call asking for money. It also provides advice on personal safety, and practical ways in which your church or community group can help.

Usually the best way to help someone is to put them in touch with local services. Finding appropriate support can be difficult, as services and eligibility criteria vary from place to place.

There are hundreds of thousands of people in England who do not have suitable accommodation on any given night. Some of them are sleeping on friends' sofas or floors; some are sleeping in abandoned buildings or tents; some of them are sleeping on night buses or pavements. Even having a home does not mean that someone is secure. More people now rent in the private sector than in the social housing sector. Rents have risen ahead of incomes, and this, along with benefits cuts and sanctions, results in many private tenants having to go without food or heating in order to pay the rent. Private rental tenancies can be ended with just two months' notice. The end of a private tenancy is now the main cause of homelessness.

Under new legislation your local council must help anyone who is homeless, or at risk of becoming homeless. This covers a wide range of circumstances, including people sleeping on friend's sofas and people who have been served an eviction notice, to those fleeing domestic violence. Anyone who does not have a safe and secure home of their own is eligible for help from the council. The council must help anyone facing eviction to keep their home or find another one. This help begins as soon as an eviction notice is served and continues until a home is secured. If the person becomes homeless the council will help for another eight weeks. It is important to seek council help as soon as someone is under threat of becoming homeless. Only people who are in priority need will be offered emergency accommodation if they become homeless, this could be in a Bed & Breakfast or homeless hostel. Priority need is defined as anyone who is particularly vulnerable or has dependants. Only those with a local connection and in priority need will be offered permanent accommodation by the council. Most councils do not have enough housing to offer, so people can end up in emergency accommodation for years, or be offered a home many miles away from their family or support network. Many people will only qualify for advice from the council. Persistence in asking for, understanding and following up on advice is essential but very difficult for people facing the stress of homelessness. Offering to help with filling in forms, making phone calls and attending appointments is an invaluable way of helping someone to find or keep their home. Look on your local authority website to find out how to contact your local Council's Housing Officer. Many people do not

qualify for housing from the council, but the council will still give them advice on where to go next depending on their circumstances. People who do not meet immigration and residence conditions will only be given general advice and information. The council must provide a letter giving their reasons for not providing help.

Advice is also available from: Shelter Helpline 0808 800 4444 & The Citizen's Advice Bureau (England) 0344 411 1444. There are also organisations that help particular groups of people:

16-25 gear olds Nightstop UK helps young people into emergency accommodation - Runaway Helpline 116 000 (24-hour)

The Mix provides advice and help to **under-25s** 0808 808 4994 (24-hour).

People escaping **domestic violence** National Domestic Violence Helpline 0808 200 0247 (24-hour)

Veterans: The Ministry of Defence's Veterans UK helpline provides assistance on many issues, including housing 0808 191 4218. Veterans Aid will assess a person's needs and find appropriate support, including housing 0800 012 6867.

People with mental health problems: Mind Infoline 0300 123 3393, The Samaritans 116 123 (24-hour)

Refugees: if a refugee needs specific support or advice, visit Refugeecouncil.org.uk and search their support directory for your nearest service.

Helping homeless callers



Be polite but wary

If you have time, talk to the individual and listen to their story

However, do not let uninvited callers into your home or office. Instead, speak to them in a public place.

Ensure that they are not a danger to themselves or others

If you are worried for the safety of someone sleeping rough, use the StreetLink app, or call them on 0300 500 0914

If the homeless person is in immediate danger, call an ambulance or police on 999

If you believe that they may be a danger to you or to others, call the police on 999

Never put yourself, your family, or your colleagues at risk

Put your own safety above the needs of the caller

An addiction or mental illness can sometimes make a person abusive, dishonest, or violent. Do not leave valuables or keys in sight. Have your mobile phone to hand.

Never give money to someone with an addiction

Money will feed the addiction that is destroying them

Instead, if it is appropriate, give them food and drink. Do not be embarrassed about closing the door on someone while you get the food or drink.

Never tolerate abuse or bad behaviour

If they are abusive ask them to stop

If they won't, and pose an imminent threat, call the police on **999**. Otherwise, inform local police on **101** of any abuse so that they can monitor people who may be a threat to others.

Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink? When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee? Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee? And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me. (Matthew 25 vv 37-40).

Cuxton from the 1930s

[What follows is based on the recollection of a Cuxton resident.]

Let's start with Cuxton School around 1935. Kind Miss Norman taught the infants, Miss Sedgewick the intermediates and Madame Bone was the quite strict headmistress. During the war, an air raid shelter was provided for the school. There were separate playgrounds for boys and girls and outside toilets. The classrooms were heated by a warm stove. After school, the children weren't met by their parents. Some had to hurry home to help with household tasks. Some lingered to play games with their friends on the way.

Cuxton was very quiet in those pre-war days. There were just a few cottages west of the bungalow then known as Pelicans (now 130 Bush Road), and eastwards of 120 no buildings at all on that side of the road (except one) right down as far as the Social Club, which at that time consisted of two old army huts left over from the Great War with tennis courts at the side. From 120 to 106, there were apple trees, chicken and rabbits. There were not many motor cars. The number 20 bus did not run round the village and you had to go to the end of Bush Road to catch it. There was much excitement when the steam thrashing engine was brought up to Bush. It took up the whole road and was only manoeuvred into the stack field with some difficulty, where it might sink if the ground was at all wet.

There was also a lot of interest when Bush Road was dug up to install a 10" water main linking the pumping stations in Cuxton with another further north and also under the River Medway to Nashenden Valley. Local boys enjoyed playing around the workings on the way home from school. [Later there would be PLUTO, the fuel pipeline secretly constructed during the War.] The first few council houses in James Road were built at this time, but building work ceased for the duration of the War and was only completed afterwards. The big change would not come until the 1960s when the rest of the estate was built and new homes were advertised to large numbers of people from London and elsewhere.

The post office at this time was on the corner of May Street and Bush Road, where the Enigma Hair Salon is now, and was kept by Mr and Mrs Langford. The post office was part of a much larger business, a general store. Children were fascinated by the saucepans and frying pans hanging up for sale. Later on, this building was for some time Cuxton's Co-operative store. On the opposite corner was Kent's sweet shop. The boiled sweets were kept in large glass jars. When they were stuck together, they had to be chiselled out before being weighed, usually in ¼ pound quantities, and put in paper bags. Sometimes the bags would disintegrate and the sticky sweets would acquire a liberal dusting of pocket fluff!

People affectionately remembered from those days include Mr Richmond the postman, Mr and Mrs Knight, who also worked in the post office and Mr Ledger, the police constable, who lived in May Street. Mr Woolmer was the school caretaker and again is remembered as a very kind man. The school inspector was Stanley Feltham for the whole area. You had to be careful of him. He checked up on truants from school. The Feltham family were active members of Borstal Baptist Church.

Coming back towards Bush, where the Coop now stands, Mr Willard had a dairy and Rosie Saunders a shop. In the 1950s, Mr Pether took over both and converted them into one business.

Many local men worked in the paper mills or the cement works. In those days, the works at Wickham and Rugby and Holborough were still busy while the works at Whornes Place was coming to an end. The tunnel under the main road to Bores Hall was used as an air raid shelter during the war. Another shelter was provided where the 1960s shops are now situated.

Farming was very important. South of Bush Road, there were hop gardens. There was a pumping station to water them in Bush Road. Also cereals were grown. Hence the need for the visit of the thrashing machine. There were also some elm trees which later succumbed to Dutch Elm disease. Not only local people, but families from Strood and farther afield would come to Cuxton in large numbers in the Autumn to pick the hops, the Strood hop pickers' bus stopping specially to buy local produce for the workers.

You can still see Court Lodge Farm House among the new buildings of Mayflower Heights. Captain F J Haney was the farmer. He also farmed at the Delce, Rochester. During the war, this land was taken over by the RAF and Shorts Brothers, who had a drawing office there. In the big barn, at one time, there was a mock up of the Stirling Bomber, which was designed by Arthur Gouge of Northfleet and, it is believed, was built at the old Pobjoy works at Rochester as well as in Belfast. Subsequently, of course, this site became the GKN paint factory and is now attractive modern housing.



On the subject of Shorts Brothers aircraft production at Rochester, the best remembered are probably the flying boats and seaplanes, especially the Mercury and the Maia. The Maia was a large flying boat capable of transatlantic flight. The Mercury was a smaller 'plane which assisted it to take off by piggy backing the larger craft. People remember these taking off up the river, coming up to Cuxton. The M2 bridge was not of course there until the early 1960s!

On the north side of Bush Road was what is now called Tar Tank Lane, but was then called Lee's Lane. Mr Lee kept cattle in the fields the village side of the Victoria line and took them their hay using a motor bike and sidecar. Through the arch, on the other side of the line, Jim Cogger grew cereals and potatoes, which the village women were employed to dig. During the war, access through this arch at the top of White Leaves was restricted and Mr Cogger had special permission to pass through it to his fields.

There was also the Besto Basket works down by the River Medway. Mr Fisher was the engineer and lived at Forge Cottage. The Clifton family had been blacksmiths there until 1932, but the forge ceased to operate when they left. Horses then were taken to Cobham to be shod.

People worked hard and walked long distances if they had to go anywhere, often carrying heavy loads.

Upper Bush was then a substantial settlement with up to 27 houses, an off licence, a bakery, a place of worship, and a woodyard and sawmill run by Mr Mitchell, who also had an extensive greengrocery round in Cuxton and the surrounding villages.

People all knew one another in the village in those days and Cuxton was a very peaceful place.

On 3rd September 1939, war broke out with Germany. Some people heard this on the radio and the news was given out in churches. Some people were most alarmed. It turned out that panic was premature. Nothing much happened to impinge on Cuxton for some months during the period of the so-called phoney war. Then the guns started up and the peace was shattered. There were anti-aircraft guns at Cobham and Borstal. Not only were they very noisy, it was as well to keep indoors because of the shrapnel falling on the village. After the raids, the boys would go out to see what they could find.

Our correspondent remembers five aircraft coming down in Cuxton during the war, including a Battle of Britain Hurricane and a Halifax bomber at Bush and also a Mosquito reconnaissance and fighter aircraft. Towards the end of the War, three doodlebugs fell on Cuxton – one at Brockles, one which seriously damaged Ranscombe Farm and farmhouse and one on Church Hill. The blast from the last one knocked over a schoolboy waiting for the bus at the stop by the *White Hart*. The bus didn't come and he went home to discover the flying bomb had also blown out the windows and the tiles off the roof. He spent the day helping to clear up the mess instead of going to school.

Another terrible day not to be forgotten was 4th March 1941. The children were in school, comfortably ensconced around the fire. All of a sudden, there was a terrific explosion and a fireball went up to heaven. The tug *Silverstone* towing four lighters full of fuel oil had struck a mine in the River Medway. The crew

were all killed and the oil continued to burn on the surface of the river for days, going in and out with the tide.

Many of the men of course were at war and boys, who might leave school at fourteen in those days, were in demand to do the work, including such things as making good war damage in places like Lewisham, Stoke and Swanscombe which was particularly badly hit.

Housing developments in Bush Road, Rochester Road, Sundridge Hill and Pilgrims Way were spasmodic, often proceeding a plot at a time as can be seen from the different ages and designs of neighbouring properties. Charles Drive was constructed and the associated housing developments in the 1960s. At the same time, some of the land belonging to the Rectory was sold for building the Glebe and part of Woodhurst Close, much of the rest of which had been Cuxton Recreation Ground. Older people may remember sledging there in the Winter. If the gate was open, you could carry on sledging right down Wood Street.

The vastly increased population led to some changes. The school was enlarged. There was a new recreation ground. The library moved from the Scout Hall to the present purpose built establishment. A purpose built doctors' surgery was provided. Previously, clinics had been provided in the Scout Hall and some private houses including that of Bill Ledger the policeman in May Street. There were new shops in Bush Road – including the post office and butchery, newsagent and general store, briefly a greengrocery, also a hair dresser and Chinese takeaway. For years, Jim Cogger sold fruit and vegetables from a little shop at the front of his house, 1, Bush Road.

One unwelcome consequence of the estate when it was first built was a great flood in Bush Road. The drains now seem to be adequate for the task and this has not recurred.

The nature of employment has changed with fewer people required to work on the land, the gradual closure of the cement works and the running down of the paper industry in the Thames and Medway valleys. A number of local people had been employed in the paint factory before it closed. Many of the houses on the new estate were sold to Londoners who commuted daily back to the capital. In the rush hour, Cuxton Station was for a time a heaving mass. Speaking of the station, until at least the '60s, a stopping goods service used to pick up local farm produce to take to market. In due course, the station became unmanned and the buildings have been allowed to deteriorate.

The hop gardens and orchards have largely gone, as has the commercial production of vegetables – such as potatoes and beans. Cereals are still grown locally, as is oil seed rape and sometimes linseed. In the last couple of years, fields have been planted with wildflowers as a sort of fallow crop – a beautiful sight. There are several small flocks of sheep, some horses and cattle. What do people do for a living now? We seem to like living in Cuxton and many have stayed into old age and retirement, despite the hills and steps. Some travel to work still and others work more locally. Some are self-employed in businesses within the village like building and shop-keeping.

In the late '60s, a Sunday School was started independently of the two village churches, meeting in homes. As this grew, they moved first into the Social Club and then the school. Harvest Festival was a big celebration when the parents of children would also come and bring fresh produce, which was distributed to the residents of Downsland House. At this time, the Miss Hanchetts ran the Sunday School at St Michael's.

So much for the past. What of the future? We can't know what life still has in store for us but we do know that we can trust in Him Who has brought us safe thus far. What we have received in this life is but a foretaste for what there is laid up for us in Heaven. *We know not what the future holds, but we know Who holds the future.*

Query?

How do you tell the sex of an ant? Drop it in water. If it floats, it's a buoyant.

From the Registers

Baptisms:

16th September
16th September
7th October

Jaxx Ellis Thompson
Georgie Louise Goodayle
Ryan Henry Reynolds

Clay Place
Chatham
Wood Street

Funerals:

3rd October
5th October

Lynda Fay (59)
Peter Henry Crundwell (88)

Ladywood Road
Charles Drive

Peter Crundwell RIP

We were all sorry to hear of the death of Peter Crundwell on 18th September. The attendance at his funeral and the tributes paid well expressed our appreciation of a long and valued life. Peter had many talents and was extremely hard-working, committing himself to the care of his family and offering his talents in the service of the Church in many capacities – above all by his faithful presence and support for whatever we were doing – as well his other interests, notably in amateur dramatics at which he excelled. Peter will be much missed and our prayers and love are with Shirley and the whole family.

The Pilates Element

Pilates is a body conditioning exercise programme suitable for all ages and abilities. My classes are friendly, fun and enjoyable.

Emily Pollington, member of
FHT, qualified instructor.

Pilates classes are held in the church hall on Tuesdays from 6.30-7.30 & 7.30-8.30 pm. For more information, please contact instructor Emily Pollington, 07940233296, emilypollington@btinternet.com Also on Facebook.

Please book through website

<https://the-pilates-element.pilatesnearyou.co.uk/>

From Peter's Family

A farewell to a dear Husband, Father, Grandfather and Great Grandfather took place on October 5th. A glorious sunny afternoon, the Sun shone as we celebrated the life of Peter and all he achieved. It was a joy to see so many friends and family coming to join us in saying our farewells and tributes to Peter and remembering what a great man he was. I have been overwhelmed by all the kind words, messages and tributes about Peter. Thank you to Roger, our Rector, for a meaningful Service. Also thanks to John Bogg, the Choir and the Bell Ringers for making the whole afternoon one that will never be forgotten. Thank you to everyone for coming and the contributions to Cancer Research and Church Funds which will be used towards the Organ Fund. Finally, thanks to Chris and Jenny Beanie, together with their helpers for serving refreshments in the hall to round off the occasion, giving us time to share our memories of Peter with family and friends. We know that Peter will live on, forever in our hearts. With love Shirley Crundwell and family.

Sylvia Garland RIP

Halling ringers write that they were sorry to hear of the passing of Sylvia Garland who rang both tower and hand bells at Halling for a few years. RIP Sylvia. Peter Silver.

Sylvia is also remembered for her contribution to every aspect of the parish's life. Her husband Tony was for many years our church treasurer. Sylvia was also the booking secretary for the hall many years ago. Also she participated in our drama productions and assisted with the parish magazine.

Forthcoming Attractions

25th October: Autumn Garden/House Party & Grand Nearly New Sale, 106, Charles Drive, 2.00 & 6.00.

27th October: 7.30 pm Quiz for Church funds in the Church Hall. £7.50.

11th November: 7.30 pm Concert in Commemoration of the Armistice at St Michael's.

21st November 10.45 church hall: MU meeting with the subject the Kenward Trust

1st December: Church Christmas Fayre at 10.00 am in the Scout Hall.

2nd February 2019: 5.00 pm Folk Mass for Candlemas pm at St Michael's followed by refreshments and folk music.

Prayer Group Halling

For details, please contact Rev'd Ruth Bierbaum on 01622 722180.

House Group Cuxton

We meet at the church hall at 10.45 on the first Wednesday of each month to pray together and to discuss the things which concern us in the light of our faith. All welcome.

Quotation

“The amount of eccentricity in a society has generally been proportional to the amount of genius, mental vigour, and moral courage it contained. That so few now dare to be eccentric marks the chief danger of our time.” John Stuart Mill

Estate Walks Around Ightham Mote

There are three well sign-posted estate walks around this delightful medieval moated manor house. The



first walk, Red Walk, begins at a bridle path very close to the Mote Cafe and is just 1.2 miles in length. This bridle path leads up an enclosed track to a left turn that opens out into a field.

The hedgerows seem full of small birds busy catching insects and feasting on the berries. The field pathway follows a gentle incline before entering a wood. This wood is known as Scathes Wood and has a designated walk of 1.4 miles. Again the signage is clear and you are directed around the lower half of the wood. Last spring there were lovely displays of bluebells and campion. Today I can hear a woodpecker and there are many pheasants making quite a noise as they bustle about their business. Staying on the Red Walk I emerge from the wooded section and walk down the path next to the main drive to the car park and entrance to Ightham Mote. This walk finishes, for me, back at the Mote Cafe, just beyond the entrance, and time for light refreshment.



The second estate walk is the Green Walk. This leads around the other half of Ightham Mote Estate to the west of the manor house. The walk is approx 2.5 miles long. I

start my walk from the main drive. The first signed

pathway leads down a short wooded track to a small country lane. Just beyond the lane are some buildings.



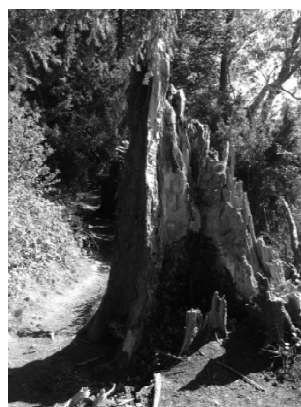
These are hoppers huts which were used by families from London during the September hop picking season. Moving on, the walk takes a track leading up to a lovely pond.



On the bank is a well placed bench to sit in this tranquil setting punctuated pleasantly by hovering gleaming dragonflies and damselflies. The walk leads up through the woodland known as Dinas Dene. So many old trees and beautiful wild flowers. There are several gaps in the boundary hedging

to allow views of the surrounding farmland and countryside. At the highest point the views become even more fantastic. There are marvellous vistas of

the weald beyond the Ightham Estate. The path narrows and winds its way downhill. You need to watch your footing as there are many tree roots and a steep drop to the right. Pass a partially fallen tree and go on down to join the Greensand Way. At the Greensand Way turn left and walk beside the



fence. There are still great views to the right. A short distance further brings you out at a most beautiful cottage, Wilmot Cottage. It must make you feel very special to wake up in the morning and look out of your window onto such a spectacular view - just a tad envious! The walk follows a bridleway, passing farm fields along to Mote Farm. Then cross Mote Road and walk along the side of the manor house and back into Ightham Mote behind the cafe. And so to lunch. An

enjoyable time walking. The views on the Green Walk are magnificent. We are so lucky to live in a county that has so much to offer. Holly Croft.



St John's Draw: £5 each to Mr S Head (4), Mr J Marler (5), Mrs R Clarke (180) & Mrs K Fallows (184) – drawn by Mrs H Winter.

St Michael's Draw: £10 to Mrs Fenton-Scott (38) & £5 each to Mrs Maxwell (11) & Mr Crundwell (14).

Thanks

Thanks to those who decorated both churches with such beautiful flowers, bread and hops for harvest and for the kind donations to the food bank. There will be an opportunity for shoeboxes for Blythswood on 4th November. Thanks to those who supported the FKC Ride & Stride. We made £425 – ½ each FKC & us.



Tommy's Talking Points

We haven't done any more Saxon Shore Way since I last wrote. Minnis Bay to Margate and beyond is in a couple of weeks. We did, however, have a nice ride in the car to Ramsgate where we picked up another of Master's friends. (He has got more than one!) We drove to Minster and set off for Pluck's Gutter, which Master has never been to, but which a lot of people have and say that it is very nice, and where there is supposed to be a very good, dog friendly pub. Somehow we got lost, however. The paths were quiet. The scenery was lovely. I enjoyed a lot of freedom while they admired the landscape and what was growing in cottage gardens. There was an excellent display of dahlias and a very fruitful hop bine. Unintentionally, we came out into the village of Monkton and I had to be put on my lead along the long road, although it is now relatively free of traffic since they blocked off the Canterbury end of it. It was a really sunny day and Monkton is a pleasant village. Two of Master's friend's relatives are buried in the churchyard and she took the opportunity to tidy up the grave before we progressed. We had to backtrack to find a plausible path, part of which was theoretically closed because of infrastructure work to do with whatever they are doing with the old Richborough power station site. We ploughed on and came to the River Stour. Master's friend though she could see Pluck's Gutter through the trees across the river. Master was less convinced, but then he is very short-sighted. Anyway, we followed the path and failed to come to a bridge. The land is very flat and, after a bit, Master said, "Isn't that the spire of Minster Church up ahead?" So it proved and it turned out that we'd walked round in a big circle back to where we'd come from. That wasn't so bad. It was where the car was parked and, next to the car park, was another pub with good food and a nice garden and friendly staff. But we'd missed Pluck's Gutter. I'd had a good run, though, and they'd had a good walk and plenty of time to talk.

Round here, it's amazing really. Mid-October and it's still very warm in the day time and hasn't rained much. So I'm still getting plenty of walks round about Cuxton & Halling, mostly in the woods and fields, even if we do often have to start in the dark. If he can't see, he calls me back on the grounds that he can just about make out my white shape on the path in front of him. He also eats plenty of carrots. We're still meeting lots of other dogs, some of which I'm friendlier with than others. Flowers you would normally associate with early Summer are blooming again – like dead nettle. There were also some poppies. The leaves are turning more orange and yellow and red and brown each day. We're also enjoying plenty of time in the garden and he's still having to cut the grass and weed the flower beds. I've enjoyed the Michaelmas Brunch, the Harvest Supper and the parish lunches. I love the company and the attention as well as the possibility of extra rations which he doesn't know about. He saw a good joke on his computer today which he's allowing me to share with you. "Why can't your nose be 12 inches long? Because then it would be a foot."

Tommy.