

Services at St Michael & All Angels Cuxton		
1 st September Trinity 14	9.30 Family Communion	Ecclesiastes 10 vv 12-18 p676 Hebrews 13 vv 1-16 p1211 Luke 14 vv 1-14 p1047
8 th September Trinity 15 & Birthday of the BVM Archdeacon of Rochester preaching	9.30 Holy Communion	Deuteronomy 30 vv 15-20 p209 Philemon 1-25 p1200 Luke 14 vv 25-33 p1048
15 th September Trinity 16 Battle of Britain Day	8.00 Holy Communion	Epistle & Gospel BCP Trinity 16
	9.30 Holy Communion	Exodus 32 vv 7-14 p91 I Timothy 1 vv 12-17 p1191 Luke 15 vv 1-10 p1048
22 nd September Trinity 17	9.30 Holy Communion & Holy Baptism	Amos 8 vv 4-7 p922 I Timothy 2 vv 1-7 p1192 Luke 16 vv 1-13 p1050
29 th September Michaelmas	9.30 Family Service A Service of the Word and Holy Baptism	Daniel 10 vv 4-21 p896 Revelation 5 vv 1-14 p1237
	6.30 Confirmation	Genesis 28 vv 10-17 p30 Revelation 12 vv 7-12 p1242 John 1 vv 47-51 p1064
6 th October Trinity 19, Dedication & Harvest Festival	9.30 Family Communion	Habakkuk 1 vv 1-4 p940 Habakkuk 2 vv 1-4 p941 Luke 17 vv 5-10 p1051

Services at St John the Baptist Halling & the Jubilee Hall Upper Halling		
1 st September Trinity 14	8.00 Holy Communion Jubilee Hall	Isaiah 33 vv 13-22 p717 John 3 vv 22-36 p1066
	11.00 Holy Communion	Ecclesiastes 10 vv 12-18 p676 Hebrews 13 vv 1-16 p1211 Luke 14 vv 1-14 p1047
8 th September Trinity 15 & Birthday of the BVM Archdeacon of Rochester preaching at 11.00.	11.00 Holy Communion	Deuteronomy 30 vv 15-20 p209 Philemon 1-25 p1200 Luke 14 vv 25-33 p1048
	5.30 Evening Prayer Jubilee Hall	Isaiah 43 v 14 – 44 v5 p728 John 5 vv 30-47 p1069
15 th September Trinity 16 Battle of Britain Day	11.00 Holy Communion & Stop! Look! Listen!	Exodus 32 vv 7-14 p91 I Timothy 1 vv 12-17 p1191 Luke 15 vv 1-10 p1048
22 nd September Trinity 17	11.00 Holy Communion	Amos 8 vv 4-7 p922 I Timothy 2 vv 1-7 p1192 Luke 16 vv 1-13 p1050
29 th September Michaelmas	11.00 Holy Communion	Genesis 28 vv 10-17 p30 Hebrews 1 vv 5-14 p1201 Revelation 12 vv 7-12 p1242 John 1 vv 47-51 p1064
6 th October Trinity 19, Dedication & Harvest Festival	8.00 Holy Communion Jubilee Hall	Nehemiah 5 vv 1-13 p489 John 9 vv 1-41 p1075
	11.00 Holy Communion	Habakkuk 1 vv 1-4 p940 Habakkuk 2 vv 1-4 p941 II Timothy 1 vv 1-14 p1195 Luke 17 vv 5-10 p1051
	6.30 Harvest Praise & Harvest Supper Jubilee Hall	

Holy Communion Wednesdays 9.30 am St Michael's.		Holy Communion Thursdays 9.30 am at St John's.	
September 4 th	Colossians 1 vv 1-8 Luke 4 vv 38-44	September 5 th	Colossians 1 vv 9-14 Luke 5 vv 1-11
September 11 th	Colossians 3 vv 1-11 Luke 6 vv 20-26	September 12 th	Colossians 3 vv 12-17 Luke 6 vv 27-38
September 18 th	I Timothy 3 vv 14-16 Luke 7 vv 31-35	September 19 th	I Timothy 4 vv 12-16 Luke 7 vv 36-50
September 25 th	Ezra 9 vv 5-9 Luke 9 vv 1-6	September 26 th	Haggai 1 vv 1-8 Luke 9 vv 7-9

14th is Holy Cross Day & 21st St Matthew: HC St Michael's 8.00.

Copy Date October Magazine: 13th September 8.30 am Rectory.

SHORNE CHURCH OPEN DAY

Saturday 14 September 10 am to 6 pm

- Church open from 10 am to 6 pm – come & see our lovely ancient church
- Church history tours at 2 pm, 3 pm and 4 pm
 - No need to book
 - No charge but donation to church welcome
- Afternoon teas from 2.30 to 5 pm
- Knitting/crafts sales stall
- On same day as Friends of Kent Churches' *Ride & Stride*

Further information from Andrew Moffat
01474 822280 or aimoffat@btinternet.com
or www.shorneparishchurch.co.uk



Friends of Kent Churches Ride and Stride

This takes place on 14th September. The sponsorship raised is half for our own parish and half for Friends of Kent Churches who help churches throughout the county. If you can ride or stride or man one of our churches for all or part of the day, please speak to Rector.

100th Anniversary of the Outbreak of the Great War.

This is August next year. Have you any information about any of the people commemorated on our WWI war memorials? If so, please let me know. There will be a special commemoration next year. Roger.

These are the Cuxton names. Halling next month.

1915 Oscar G. Pye 1st Life guards
1915 William G. Simmonds R.W. Kent. R
1915 Robert Woolley R.W. WAR.R
1915 William Rowe R.W. Kent. R
1915 Edwin G. Brown E. Kent. R
1916 Victor Slingsby R.W. Surrey. R
1917 Percy Bonnywell RN

1917 Edward Earl RGA
1918 Frederick Pooley RN
1918 Frederick Sudds 1st Can Div
1918 George Cogger RN
1918 Percy W Chalklen RFA
1918 Frank M Burchfield RFA
1918 Stanley Randall E. Kent. R

!!!??? Two Quizzes ???!!!

Both: 7.30 pm in the Church Hall Cuxton

Both: including Ploughman's

(please bring own drink)

Both: Teams of 6-8 or come as an individual and join a team.

For Either or Both: Book with Rector

(contact details inside cover)

21st September
Quiz in Support of
Christian Aid £7.00.

19th October
Quiz in Support of Parish
Funds £7.00.

Forthcoming Attractions.

8th September: Preacher @ 9.30 & 11.00 The Archdeacon of Rochester.

21st September 7.30 pm: Quiz in Support of Christian Aid Church Hall.

29th September: Confirmation at St Michael's 6.30 pm.

6th October: 6.30 Harvest Praise & Harvest Supper Jubilee Hall.

19th October 7.30 pm: Quiz in Support of Parish Funds Church Hall.

30th November: Ukulele Concert.

14th December 10.00: Christmas Coffee Morning & Minimarket

6th January 2014: 9.30 am Epiphany Service at St Michael's followed by brunch in church hall.

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The Logic of Pardoning Alan Turing

Alan Turing was a great mathematician who pioneered modern computer science and paved the way for the wonderful world of modern computing without which our world today would be very different. He was also the key brain at Bletchley Park breaking the Nazi codes, hastening the end of the Second World War and probably preventing a German victory. He was also a homosexual and in 1952 he was found guilty of gross indecency. Two years later he killed himself.

It is now suggested that Alan Turing should be pardoned for that offence of 1952. I think most people would agree that a great wrong was done to him. A man was driven to suicide by our legal system. We ought not, however, to be moved only by our emotions and we should consider the logic of this proposed pardon. Maybe it is the only restitution we can think of, but there ought to be something better - maybe an apology.

Our starting point is that homosexual acts between consenting adults are no longer illegal as they were in 1952. We might logically say that they ought never to have been illegal. It could be that there never should have been laws against consensual homosexual sex because there is nothing wrong, you might think, with the physical expression of love between two men. It never was illegal between two women.

You could also argue, however, that sex between two people of the same sex is wrong but that it ought nevertheless never to have been illegal. It would be a very oppressive society in which every wrongful act was forbidden and every good action was compulsory. There is no freedom if we are not free to choose the good or the evil. If we respect one another, we have to trust one another. Even the government has to trust us if we are not to become subjects of an all-encompassing but finally petty tyranny. I personally have a lot of respect for John Stuart Mill who maintained that so long as I am hurting nobody else, the state has no right to poke its nose into my private life. Even for my own good, the government or the local council have no right to interfere in my affairs unless I am causing harm to other people.

What I do in private or with other consenting adults is nobody's business but my own and I am answerable to God and my conscience rather than to the law of the land.

Thirdly, you could also argue cogently, that even if it were right that homosexual acts between consenting adult men should have been treated as a crime, nevertheless any punishment should result in the redemption of the offender, not his suicide. Punishment is about restitution, deterrence and reformation. It has failed in one of its prime objectives if it destroys rather than reforms the offender. Since the 1950s prison sentences have become longer for many offences. There is very much the risk that the desire to deter crime has led governments to punish beyond the demands of restitution (which allows no more than *an eye for an eye*) and to destroy the lives of criminals rather than to attempt to redeem them.

If you believe that homosexual acts between consenting adults ought never to have been illegal, it is not clear what is the logic of a pardon. You are pardoned by the Queen when you have broken the law, but there is some reason why you ought not to suffer the consequences. Alan Turing has suffered the consequences of breaking the law and that cannot be undone and if what he did wasn't wrong (or if it was wrong but not the business of the law) the word "pardon" is meaningless. You can only be pardoned if you have done something wrong. You can only be pardoned by someone who has the right to resent what you have done. Would an apology be more appropriate than a pardon?

If you believe that Alan Turing should be pardoned or that he should receive a posthumous apology because what he did ought not to have been illegal anyway, what about all those other men who were convicted of similar offences? Are we saying that an extremely clever man should be excused when other lesser men are not? Do war heroes effectively have a *get out of gaol free* card? Presumably we would say not, but, if not, we cannot logically justify treating Alan Turing any differently from other men who suffered under the same law, which we now consider to be unjust.

If we somehow rescind all those convictions for consensual homosexual acts, what do we do about people convicted under other laws which have

now been repealed? The last two convictions for witchcraft were as recent as 1944. Should we pardon or apologise to the witches and mediums so convicted? Or the people who committed or attempted suicide when suicide was still illegal (until 1961)? Or the women who had abortions before 1967? If we're going to pardon or apologise (and perhaps make restitution) to people convicted under laws which have now been repealed, how far back do we go? To the heresy trials of the Middle Ages?

Are we open to the idea that one day a British government will be apologising to people convicted today under laws that might at some future date be repealed? Many people think that the present extradition laws are unfair and that under them the current government has wrongly sent innocent British people to face trial by foreign jurisdictions. Will they eventually be due an apology and maybe compensation?

In confessing that the law in the past got it wrong, we are surely admitting that the current law could be wrong. Is murder a crime because murder is wrong? Or is murder wrong because it is a crime?

It is generally wrong to disobey the law, even stupid and unnecessary laws like the sillier provisions of the Licensing Act, because that way lies anarchy and anarchy is generally worse even than tyranny. Citizens have a general duty to obey the law. Otherwise there can be no civilisation.

But those who make the laws and those who enforce the laws sometimes get it wrong and it may, in certain very exceptional circumstances, be our duty to disobey the law. Suppose, for example, we were required to deliver the Jews to the gas chambers or forbidden to worship Jesus. Murder is against the law in every civilised country because murder is wrong. A civilised country enacts and enforces good laws, which means that there has to be a standard of goodness apart from the law. If there were not such a standard of goodness against which to measure the law, it would not be possible to know whether laws were good or bad.

Which brings me right back to a matter not entirely distinct from the question of pardoning Alan Turing – marriage. If marriage is something human society has invented, human society can

change the definition of marriage. If the lawfully appointed government, acting on behalf of the whole community, decides that marriage need not necessarily be lifelong, or that it may be polygamous, or that it may be contracted between people of the same sex, or that people of different races may not marry, or that incest is sometimes permissible, we, as a society, are free to make that decision. Human society defines marriage and we can therefore define marriage to mean anything we want it to mean. However any such definition would be ultimately meaningless. It would have no more authority or standing than the people who made the definition.

Suppose, however, marriage has a meaning apart from the way any particular human culture defines marriage. Some culture somewhere has adopted every one of the definitions suggested above. But suppose marriage is as the *Common Worship* marriage service has it *a gift of God in creation*, or, in the words of the BCP *an honourable estate instituted by God*. Suppose marriage is given by God in the terms that other religions teach. Or leave God out of it for a moment and consider whether the idea or form of marriage exists independently of the human mind? Do our brains create the concept of marriage? Or do we discover the idea of marriage? Would the idea of marriage exist if there were no human beings to think about it? Is the ideal of marriage eternal and therefore outside our realm of time and space? If marriage exists in itself or is created by God, our human marriage laws and customs must tend towards conformity with the ideal – which we may apprehend through philosophy or religion. If, on the other hand, marriage is a purely human invention, we can do what we like with it, but ultimately it is meaningless. Yet if marriage is meaningless, why do people care so much about gay marriage when on paper gay marriage offers no more in the way of rights and responsibilities than a civil partnership? And if a civil partnership is not the same thing as a gay marriage, why aren't civil partnerships open to heterosexual couples and to people who have no intention of a sexual relationship (close relatives, maybe close friends?), but who need legal protections because they share their homes and their lives together?

What goes for marriage goes for all our laws and conventions. Do we make them up or do we seek to conform our institutions to a greater truth?



Church Army

The Church Army is one of our principal agencies of mission in this country – caring for people in material need and proclaiming the Gospel. We try to support the Church Army in this parish and one of the ways we do so is to invite people to have boxes at home in which to collect their change. Some old boxes now have the wrong addresses on them and ought to be replaced. Some people who do not yet have a Church Army collection box might like to have one. So if you would like a new or replacement Church Army box, please ask Gillian Feraday or me.

Magazine Advertisements



The advertisement pages are an important source of revenue for this magazine. They also help people to find the local services they need and they assist local traders to obtain business. The advertisement pages are put together annually in the spring. We now need someone who can take this on from next year, please? If you think you can help, please speak to me or to Zoe Tapson who is currently performing this vital service. Roger.

St Michael's Draw: £10 each for Chris. Beaney, Fiona Silverthorne & Trudie Fenton-Scott, £5 each for Martin Hills & Malcolm Curnow.

St John's Draw: £5 each to Stevie Head (8), Mrs M Burren (55), Mrs G Mitchell (61) & Mrs L Hesketh (115) – drawn by Norman Head.

Chancel Repair Liability

EXTREME CLEAN

Cleaning for perfection in your home
£20 per hour
Established over 13 years
Excellent references
Please contact Vic Crook on
07716573397

This relic from half a millennium ago has lately struck terror into the hearts of ordinary decent householders and PCC members. Fear of CRL has indeed proved lucrative for lawyers, insurance companies, estate agents and the like. (I eschewed the word parasite. The Church of England might have been accused of being equally parasitical!) What in fact is Chancel Repair Liability and why has it caused anxiety for so many people?

CRL is related to that other popular, but ultimately trivial question, what is the difference between a rector and a vicar? Oversimplifying slightly, when our ancient parishes were founded, what usually happened was that a rich landowner built his villagers a church. He appointed a parish priest and provided the means to support him – an endowment. The parish priest was the rector and out of the endowment he had to maintain the chancel of the church (the front end) as well as support himself. The people (laity in Greek) had to maintain the nave (where they assembled for worship and for numerous other purposes). Many of these rectories were generously endowed and during the Middle Ages were taken over by other institutions such as monasteries. The monastery would provide a priest, a vicar, but would retain the rector's responsibilities for maintaining the chancel. The surplus endowment would ideally be used for charitable purposes.

When Henry VIII dissolved the monasteries the wealth they had accrued ought to have been used to carry on the educational, charitable and hospital work which the best of them performed. Much of it, however, came into the hands of Henry's wealthy supporters. Those who inherited the monasteries' wealth also inherited their liability for chancel repair. They are known as lay rectors. This was only fair and it is fine when the lay rectors are wealthy individuals or corporations. It is doubly right when these institutions are themselves Christian foundations – such as cathedral chapters and university colleges.

However, over nearly five hundred years, many of the estates belonging to lay rectors had been broken up and CRL theoretically devolved on ordinary people, sometimes quite poor people, some of whom had no interest in the Church of England. It suddenly seems very rough justice that you can be expected to fork out thousands of pounds for a church you don't go to because it turns out that you are living on land which Henry VIII confiscated from the Church 500 years ago!

Gradually these unfair CRLs were being allowed to lapse quietly and common sense prevailed. However we then come to the bureaucratisation which has afflicted English life over the last few decades. Once upon a time, amateurs like you and me happily ran charities on a voluntary basis and the Charity Commissioners

provided helpful advice and support. Normally the state only got involved in cases of fraud or extreme mismanagement. More recently, however, presumably forgetting that both *amateur* and *charity* are derived from Latin words for love, the Charity Commissioners have acquired powers to control the way charity trustees conduct every aspect of their business. This includes the power to force us to sweat our assets as if we were bankers, energy companies or train operating companies, with no moral scruples whatever about extorting as much money as we can from whomsoever we can extort it. English Heritage and the Charity Commissioners combined to compel PCCs to enforce CRL. Their threat was that a PCC which failed to extract the last farthing from every householder who owed this archaic and absurd “tax” could itself face prosecution and its members be forced to pay themselves out of their own money the sums they had failed to extort from parishioners. The first step was that PCCs had to register all CRL before October 2013.

This obviously caused a great deal of consternation. Ordinary householders were suddenly faced with the possibility of being presented with enormous bills which they could not pay for repairs to a church which they did not go to. Ordinary decent people on PCCs were being bullied by the Charity Commissioners and English Heritage to behave in a way which was morally repugnant and likely to make them very unpopular indeed with their neighbours.

I am happy to say, however, that to some extent the government has now seen reason. The Lottery Fund has taken over from English Heritage in assisting churches to fund their repairs and they are now taking a more sensible attitude which the Charity Commissioners are accepting. So PCCs are off the hook if they can pass any of three resolutions. I think that we can pass all three and I shall propose them at our PCC meeting on 27th September. If our PCC passes them, you can all rest assured that you will not be liable for CRL even if the land on which your house was built was pinched from the Church by Henry VIII and, since land cannot be registered for CRL if it is sold after October 2013, as far as this parish is concerned, you can forget about paying all those lawyers, insurance companies and estate agents to protect you from a risk which will not exist.

These are the resolutions:

That this Parochial Church Council believes that there is no Chancel Repair Liability for either Cuxton or Halling church, except for the CRL acknowledged by the Dean and Chapter of Rochester Cathedral for the chancel of St John’s.

That this PCC believes that if there were any other Chancel Repair Liability applicable to this parish, it would be not worth the trouble and expense of enforcing it.

That (most importantly) any attempt to enforce Chancel Repair Liability apart from that acknowledged by the Dean and Chapter would be entirely contrary to the Christian principles on which our pastoral and evangelistic mission is based. Roger.

Michaelmas, Back to Church Sunday & Confirmation

29th September is of course Michaelmas and our Patronal Festival at Cuxton. Being the last Sunday in September, it is also Back to Church Sunday. Maybe you have drifted away from the Church and would like to come back. Maybe you’ve never tried Church, but are curious. Back to Church Sunday is for you. Just turn up at any of our services and you will be made welcome. The Family Service at 9.30 at Cuxton includes a Baptism. We shall celebrate our normal weekly service of Holy Communion at 11.00 at Halling. At 6.30 pm at St Michael’s the Bishop of Rochester will preside at our Patronal Festival Eucharist and Confirmation. This will be followed by refreshments in the church hall. You are welcome to any or all of these services, just as you are welcome every Sunday and weekday. Or maybe you are a regular worshipper in the parish and have someone in mind you would especially like to invite for BTCS? There will be special invitation cards you can use. And please pray for the people you could invite and for God to reveal whom He is calling so that you can respond.

Please also pray for Bishop James and for our confirmation candidates: Zac Daunt- Jones, Alexander Fenton-Scott, Francesca Fenton-Scott, Jane Joyce and Amy.

Desperate About Debt? Call Christians Against Poverty 0800 328 0006 <https://capuk.org>

From the Registers

Baptisms:

21 st July	Natasha Faye Collins	Hillcrest Drive
21 st July	Brendan Dean Collins	Hillcrest Drive
4 th August	Sienna Rose Spalding	Ranscombe

Wedding:

27 th July	Ross Gordon Mitchell & Sarah Lee Oakley	Halling
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Funerals:

23 rd July	Reginald Thomas Horner (83)	Rochester Road Cuxton
26 th July	Beryl Margaret Sutton (79)	formerly of Cuxton

Offertory Bowl

We thank Derek and Ann Morgan for the gift of an offertory bowl in memory of George and Edna Morgan to St Michael's Church.

Barbecue

We thank Jenny and Chris Beaney for once again hosting a splendid parish barbecue for all of us in their garden – for the fine, food and drink, the company, for access to their grounds and the views of the river. We were also thankful that the forecast rain did not materialise, though we cannot give Jenny & Chris the credit for that!

Bluebell Walk

Pat Lawry would like to thank all the walkers, their sponsors and all those who made donations to this year's total (so far) for the Eve Appeal of £949. www.eveappeal.org.uk.

You are invited to

A celebration of our overseas Diocesan partnerships with Harare (Zimbabwe), Kondoia & Mpwapwa (Tanzania) and Estonia

with Bishop James of Rochester and Bishop Brian of Tonbridge

Rochester Cathedral
Sunday 22 September at 6.30pm

This year's focus: Harare
Theme: "Our God is faithful"
Preacher: The Rt. Rev. Chad Gandiya, Bishop of Harare

Nature Notes July 2013

"Summer Suns Are Glowing" S Smith

Summer suns are glowing
Over land and sea,
Happy light is flowing
Bountiful and free.

Everything rejoices
In the mellow rays;
All earth's thousand voices
Swell the psalm of praise.

I have chosen this verse of a favourite hymn because it brings back happy memories of my time spent as a child at Tilehurst Methodist Sunday School in Reading.

On the first day of the month there is cloud and sunshine with warm westerly breezes as I walk round the lake at Bluewater with Murphy. Flowers, especially pink, white and mauve goat's rue, are blooming in clumps among the tall grasses. I see too meadow cranesbill, bird's foot trefoil, hawkweed, lucerne, vetch, ox eye daisy, buttercups, white umbellifers, pink and white clover and various grasses. The sun shines brightly and with comforting warmth well into the afternoon when eventually more clouds appear. The next day skies are grey as we drive to Tenterden for cricket. The lanes are lined with large creamy elderflowers and dog roses, as well as tall grasses and beautiful trees. The day remains grey and rather chilly. Rain falls in the middle of the afternoon but eventually ceases to allow the match to continue. The evening remains dull and damp. The following day we drive to Rodmersham for a match. The sun shines from blue skies brushed with white clouds and a pleasant breeze blows. Sparrows chirp on the roof of the cricket pavilion and in the nearby hedge. Elderflowers and lime flowers bloom while mallow blooms along the road's verges. Evening skies are clear. The morning of 5th is warm with blue skies and golden sunshine. The temperature rises rapidly to give a very hot day. In the afternoon, while in the garden, I watch a squirrel as it attempts to drag the fat ball in its holder along the ground into the undergrowth. I step in and the squirrel flees. I enjoy listening, in the evening, to a blackbird singing as the light begins to fade. The night sky is clear and the air is balmy. On 8th I watch bees collecting nectar from bramble flowers on the embankment and a speckled wood butterfly, the first I've seen this year, hovers over the buttercups near the pond. Young blue tits come to feed. The 9th is a beautiful hot Summer's day with golden sunshine beaming down from a clear blue sky with easterly breezes blowing. I drive through Bush Valley where fields are seas of pale blue flax and deep red poppies bloom along the verges. On the grassy banks near Cobham pale blue scabious blooms, such pretty flowers. There are beautiful views across the valley when I return. I drive through Cuxton to Halling Marsh where I walk by the rippling river. A heron glides overhead and warblers call from the reeds. A painted lady butterfly nestles on a blade of grass. Mallow, dog roses and ragwort bloom. At home, I hear magpies calling from the conifer. There are some young there. The lovely weather continues. In the afternoon of 11th, I watch three young dunnock come to investigate

the grass for fallen bird seeds. As I look up into the sky I watch a marsh gull flying overhead. The evening is very cool. On the morning of 12th, I watch a feral pigeon being attacked by a wood pigeon wanting all the seed. The feral pigeon gives up in defeat. In the evening of 13th I sit in the garden listening to the melodious songs of birds and enjoying the balmy air. Several hot days follow. It is very humid on 16th when I walk with Murphy at Bluewater. It is a short walk. Grasses have become straw-coloured while ox eye daisies are being replaced by knapweed. Goat's rue still blooms in profusion. Murphy rubs his neck in the grass, attracting seeds in his fur. I remove them before they cause him any distress. The 17th is another very hot and humid day as I walk along the road. On the way I experience the bitter sweet perfume of privet flowers. It is the hottest day of the year so far, over 30°. The next day easterly winds bring some freshness which is very welcome. On 19th I drive along the Halling by-pass to Addington. Tall maillot blooms along the verges. The 20th is much cooler and rather overcast but welcome as I walk Murphy round the lake. The ground is very dry through lack of rain. Temperatures reach 33°C on 22nd. The afternoon is very hot. The birds have hidden away. Storms and heavy rain are forecast. A bright moon shines from clear skies. A storm and heavy rain occur during the night but not as heavy as forecast. The sun eventually shines on 23rd but it is unpleasantly humid. The 24th is a fine sunny day with less humidity. I walk round the lake with Murphy. A variety of flowers are in bloom: knapweed, lucerne, viper's bugloss, buttercup, ragwort, bird's foot trefoil, pink clover, hawkweed, and yarrow. Small acorns are forming on oaks and tiny nuts on hazels. A pair of ducks probably mallards, glide on the water. In the afternoon of 26th, as I walk to the post box, I am aware of the beautiful shape of the silver birch tree by Whornes Place. The slender branches sway in the breeze. There are some heavy showers on 27th. On the 28th I discover a white admiral butterfly in the greenhouse. I had never seen one before and it was beautiful. I recorded it immediately with the British Trust for Ornithology another recorder reported seeing two that evening. Steady rain falls on 30th in the morning. The ground needs it. The early morning of 31st is grey but no rain falls. The sun eventually shines and it becomes very warm and humid. This has been the hottest July for a number of years. Elizabeth Summers.

A Funny Tale

A young boy was ashamed that his house was the last one in the row to have an outside WC at the bottom of the garden. One night he decided to get rid of it and pushed it over the embankment and down into the river. Next morning his parents were stony faced at breakfast. His father told the story of a little boy called George Washington. His father was so impressed that George admitted cutting down the cherry tree that he refrained from punishing him. Encouraged by this, our little boy confessed to what he had done with the WC. He was very hurt and surprised when his father hit him. "George Washington's father let him off," he said. "Yes," said the father, "but George Washington's father wasn't sitting in the cherry tree when George cut it down!"



Cuxton WI

This month our speaker did turn up and we were able to sit back and enjoy the talk. Although we had all heard Bob Ogle before, after bursting into our lives with his vivid book and talk about "the hurricane" way back in 1987, he still comes over as fresh and interesting as then. He told us about his early life when he started his career in the newspaper business. Funnily enough, this involved walking from Sevenoaks to Hastings at the tender age of eleven and the appearance of his photo in the local paper after an interview by a reporter. From then on his ambition in life was to be a reporter and this he achieved by starting as the proverbial Tea Boy and progressing to village reporting, obituaries and then general stories. He also spent two years working in Africa and becoming friendly with a young Robert Mugabe. Now reporting has given way to writing and he has produced many well illustrated books about our county. After this and a cuppa we settled down to the business section of the evening. We welcomed



Halling WI

We had a goodly number for our July meeting considering it is holiday time. We started in our usual way with Jerusalem. Some of our members are not too keen on singing, but how else do you start the meeting? Our new secretary Jemma Graves read the May minutes, almost history now. The correspondence was mainly cream teas, and ploughman's lunches, all lovely get togethers, and all that food. Next year's National Federation Annual meeting is to be held in Leeds. This is a new venue for the National, I wonder if we shall be able to go? Art and Craft annual days will be on 19th-20th September, Four of us will be going. This year's Cream Tea will be held in Ann and Jemma Graves garden on Saturday 10th August at 3 o'clock and our Ploughman's lunch will be held in Betty and Norman's garden from 12 o'clock on 13th August.

Our speaker for July was from the RNLI. Diana from the Gillingham branch gave us the history, how and when it started and even now it is still a voluntary organization. Unknown to me, the

Another Distinction for Halling

Apparently very few churches still make use of their piscina even if they have one. Well we do at St John's!

Joan a new member and gave birthday cards to two members this month. We heard that there is a trip to Bath being arranged for December. The craft group are going to try their next meeting in the pavilion in the sports ground. Three people had been to the West Kent headquarters for flower painting. Several members had been to see the open air production of Richard III. On the one wet day of the recent hot spell the walkers had turned out! Catching the train to Yalding they had enjoyed a lovely walk along the banks of the Medway seeing fishermen and canoeists on their way. Next month it is the turn of the members to take the meeting and give the committee a night off. It sounds as if it will be a very good evening. They have arranged a speaker and we have all been asked to take along a photo of our gardens past or present - must make sure mine is long distance and not showing the weeds! If you would like to join us you will be sure of a warm welcome so we hope to see you on Thursday September 5th at 7 30 pm in the Church Hall. Sheila.

RNLI have a training school at Poole in Dorset. Not only do they use various kinds of craft for rescues but Jet skis and even surf boards. After the history of the organization, Diane showed us a DVD of three actual rescues, one in the dark. It was quite scary. The men and women volunteers are very brave. When the alarm goes off, they stop whatever they are doing and get on with the job. Since I was a small girl the "Lifeboats" has always been my favourite charity. After the DVD I now know why. It was Queen Victoria who allowed the "Royal" to be added to the name. After refreshments, the two speakers judged our competitions. Sylvia Mitchell won the Flower of the Month and Ann Hayward won the item beginning with P, with her wedding photo.

Next month's meeting is going to be an open meeting when you can bring a friend or two. The subject and demonstration will be on Makeup with a speaker from Fenwick's. The competition is the letter Q. Now this is a hard one. You may have to kill your neighbour's goose to make a quill pen, but come along to see what a little bit of powder and paint could do for you. Phyllis.

FRIENDS OF ROCHESTER CATHEDRAL

There are fascinating links between the mission of 7th Century invaders and 21st Century men and women of Kent. While the iconic Cathedral, overlooking the Medway, has developed and grown over the centuries, the mission of the Cathedral community is still the same, nurturing radical human flourishing in Jesus Christ. To put it another way, the Cathedral community puts into action the love of Jesus Christ by welcoming hundreds of visitors and worshippers each week, through welfare work in the Medway Towns, by close involvement in the Dickens festivals and other events, and by facilitating the working out of Christian ethics in business and commerce.

You may have heard by now that your Cathedral has been successful in its application for a Heritage Lottery grant (HLF). This will enable work to be undertaken in improving access for the disabled, re-roofing the library and refurbishing the Crypt as an exhibition space, displaying some of our hidden gems. As with all HLF bids, matching funding is required from local sources and in this context we, the Friends of Rochester Cathedral have been able to offer our support, as we have done concerning numerous aspects of the care and maintenance of our Cathedral's fabric, since our foundation in 1935.

The Friends of Rochester Cathedral help finance the maintenance of the Cathedral fabric and assist the Dean and Chapter of the Cathedral in preserving the worship and its services. The Friends are a diverse community with a wide range of interests but share the common goal of preserving this ancient hallowed place, or as one recent Dean put it 'these living stones'.

Rochester's first Cathedral was founded in 604 AD and has been a place of religious worship and quiet reflection ever since. Ensuring its survival for another fourteen centuries needs our care.

A very small sample of the projects funded by the Friends in recent years are :- New Gas Central Heating £126,000 – Internal toilets £40,000 – Fire Alarm System £39,000 – Audio System £64,000 – Electrical Work £19,000.

The association of the Friends Of Rochester Cathedral was started in 1935 and has been funding such projects ever since. There is also a social side of the Friends' activities and their excursions and social evenings are very popular. If you would like more information about the Cathedral and Friends or would be interested in joining the Friends of Rochester Cathedral please contact The Friends' Secretary at 1 The College, The Precinct, Rochester. ME1 1SU. tel. 01634 832142 or email at friendsofrochestercathedral@btinternet.com.

Thanks From Our Hosts

A big "Thank You" to everyone who came to the Church BBQ in Pilgrims Road and gave so generously to the churches of Cuxton and Halling. Thank you also to those who were unable to attend but still gave raffle prizes or donations to Church Funds.

Gerry Robinson, our local butcher, provided the delicious lamb kebabs, sausages and kindly donated the chicken which was much appreciated. Jenny & Chris

Hymn Writers 8

Frances Ridley Havergal 1836 – 1879

Frances, one of the significant figures of the Victorian Age, was born in Astley, Worcestershire. Her middle name came from Nicholas Ridley, a bishop martyred in Oxford in 1555. Her mother and father were sincere in their Christian faith and Frances was their youngest daughter. She was a bright, happy and vivacious child with a mind hungry for knowledge. At the age of three she could read well and was often found hiding under a table engrossed in a story. Her father, a Church of England clergyman and hymn writer, called Frances "Little Quicksilver". She had frail health and was unable to study regularly, but even so she was composing poems by the age of seven. Before long she quoted passages from the New Testament, the Psalms, Isaiah and the prophets. She learned Hebrew and Greek, and spoke several modern languages. She was a good pianist and loved to sing. She learned at eleven that her beloved mother was not going to live long but Frances refused to believe it. Her mother told her sensitive child often, "Fanny, dear, pray God to prepare you for all He is preparing for you" and this became her lifelong prayer – She developed an unusually disciplined prayer method which helped her in later life.

Sometime after the death of her mother, Frances' father remarried but her stepmother came between father and daughter which was a deep source of hurt to Frances who had a close and deep relationship with both her mother and father. Although writing was difficult under such a stressful situation for her to continue, she persevered because of her discipline and faith knowing that any gifts she had were from God whom she felt wanted her to win people for the Lord. Early in life she wrote, "I committed my soul to the Saviour, and earth and heaven seemed brighter from that moment". When she was eighteen, Frances developed an illness which lasted for nine years! During this period she did little writing but continued studying the Bible and finding a great deal of time to pray. In her book '*Frances Ridley Havergal*' Janet Grierson quotes Frances describing how she did her creative work: "Writing poetry is easy for me. Most of the time I just put down in verse a personal experience. Writing hymns is like praying, for I never seem to write even a verse by myself." She added with a smile, "I feel like a child writing. You know a child will look up at every sentence and ask, 'What shall I say next?' That's what I do. Every line and word and rhyme comes from God."

Her hymn 'Like a River Glorious' (from Isaiah 48:18) was composed in one of her periods of illness. Had she not had the courage to get up and move about in spite of considerable pain and discomfort, this affliction could have left her invalid. Most of her poems urges those who believe in Christ not to complain in trial or sorrow. In her early twenties, Frances studied in Düsseldorf and here she saw a painting of the Crucifixion with this engraving underneath it; "This I have done for thee; what hast thou done for Me?" She was deeply moved and, like Count Zinzendorf a century earlier who was moved by these same words, she reached into her bag and, retrieving a pencil and paper, began writing the hymn "Thy Life was given for Me". Later, thinking it fell short of what she wanted to say, she threw it into a stove but the crumpled paper fell out untouched by the fire. Some months later, she showed it to her father who was so moved, he composed a melody for it and, the hymn that was so nearly destroyed, is an inspiration to those who hear it.

Despite her poor health, Frances made several trips to Switzerland where she loved to climb the mountains and take extended walks through the green valleys. Each time she was refreshed and this was manifest in renewed hymn writing. Written in 1874, four years before she died, she wrote, "Take My Life, and Let it Be". She was visiting the home of a friend where there were several guests, some not Christians and others were half-hearted followers with little spiritual joy in their lives. She suddenly felt a deep longing to be used by God to bring these people to a living faith in Christ. After much conversation, questioning and answers, her prayer was answered and, in a time of rejoicing, the Holy Spirit opened the lives of these guests to a new life in Jesus Christ. She told her sister that she was too happy to sleep that night and so spent the time praying and writing the rest of the hymn – "let it be, consecrated, Lord, to Thee...."

In her last few years, Frances considered this hymn to be a measure of her own commitment to God – consecrated to loving and joyful service. The second verse "Take my silver and my gold, not a mite would I withhold" were not empty words. She heard that there was a need to teach women in India the bible and she packed up her jewels, nearly fifty pieces, and, saving a few special gifts for members of the family, sent the rest to the Church Missionary Society. She said she had never packed a box with such pleasure.

She was only forty-two when she died. When her physician told her that her condition was so serious she did not have long she told him that it was too good to be true. In her last moments she began to sing "Golden Harps are Sounding" for which she had written both words and music. Her sister Maria said that there was a radiance on her face as she passed away – as though she had already seen her Lord.

Other fine hymns by Frances Ridley Havergal are "Lord, Speak to Me that I may Speak", "O Saviour, Precious Saviour", "I am Trusting Thee, Lord Jesus", "Who is on the Lord's Side", "Thou art coming, O My Saviour" and many more. On her tombstone at her own request are these words from I John 1:7: *The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin.*

*O fill me with Thy fullness Lord, until my very heart o'erflow
In kindling thought and glowing word, Thy love to tell, Thy praise to show.*

JGB

STAMPS - Please bring your used (and even unused) stamps into us. We are still collecting them –they are appreciated and for a good cause!! JGB

Daily Bible Reading

As well as preparing this magazine I am currently engaged on preparing the next quarter's daily Bible reading notes on St Paul's two letters to the Thessalonians. Those of you who don't know the Bible don't know what you're missing. Everybody should read the Bible every day. To me the very foundation of our Christian life is daily prayer and Bible Reading and Holy Communion at least on Sundays and other holy days. You can of course just read the Bible yourself. There are also many reading schemes available. Every three months, however, I prepare daily readings with commentary with you in mind as a possible readership. To that extent they are personalised in the hope of encouraging you to read the Bible and to make up your own mind about it. If you would like to use these readings which I prepare, you can find them on the parish webpage <http://www.cuxtonandhalling.org.uk> under teaching. E mail me on roger@cuxtonandhalling.org.uk and I'll e mail you a copy or ask me for a paper copy or pick one up in church. Roger.



Max's Tail Piece

You do change your tune quickly! Until April last year, you were all complaining about the unprecedented winter drought. Then it started to rain and it rained and rained for over a year, the winter was cold and the spring and early summer were cool and you complained about that. Then all of a sudden the weather got hot and I think it was just 24 hours before I heard the first moan from someone who thought it was too hot. When the temperatures were in the eighties, there were warnings in the media that vulnerable people could die and "campaigners" were saying that it ought to be a criminal offence to allow your children to get sunburnt. [Master says that there is no end to the possible health and safety risks which can be claimed to justify officials in poking their noses into people's personal lives!] However, as soon as the temperature dropped back to 70°F, they were saying on the radio that this was bad news for the British holiday industry as everybody would be going abroad – presumably to places where the high temperatures put vulnerable people at risk of "excess deaths"!

Anyway on one very hot Monday a couple of weeks ago Master and his friend had arranged to tackle the next section of our walk along the North Downs Way – Bluebell Hill eastwards. It was so hot that he wondered whether he should take me, but this time he did bring plenty of water and was grateful to share it with me, though we didn't drink from the same bowl. Having got lost last time coming down Bluebell Hill, he went out on the previous Monday (also very hot) on his bike to reconnoitre. Having cycled several times up and down the lower slopes of Bluebell Hill, he ascertained that there is a cycle route from Allington towards Rochester which uses the old Chatham-Maidstone Road, now almost entirely devoid of motor traffic and worth knowing about. There is also a footpath towards Boxley which probably cuts off the corner, but that would have been cheating.

So we took the train to Maidstone Barracks and met our friend at Maidstone East. Thence we walked to Allington along the River Medway towpath – a beautiful walk under cool shady trees. After briefly getting lost near the Malta Inn, following the river instead of cutting through the car park, we threaded our way through the maze of slip roads where the A229 connects to the M20 and the Aylesford road. A motorist even stopped for us to cross the road. A long pedestrian and cyclists' bridge brings you on to the almost deserted Old Chatham Road. This part was very hot in the sun, but the road eventually intersects with the North Downs Way and we turned off into relatively cool woodland. We saw the White Horse Stone, another Neolithic monument towards making the set – along with the Coldrum Stones and Kit's Coty, which we have already seen. As usual, I left them well behind, but unusually I then waited for them lying in shady cool grass wherever I could find it. So long as I was well-watered I didn't get overheated or tired and neither did they. We found ourselves on a narrow metalled road with no traffic. We had missed the North Downs Way and we were on the parallel Pilgrims Way. The NDW was higher up the hill, but Master and his friend were not inclined to climb the steep incline. All of a sudden, Master recognised where we were at that very sharp bend at the bottom of Boxley Hill. He recalled how when he was a teenager his brakes had failed coming down that hill and his bike had come off the road on the wrong side, pitching him into the gravel. Such was the shock he had got back on his bike and cycled another couple of miles before he lost his nerve, got off and pushed it all the way home. We carried on along the road to Detling with me now on my lead. There were lots of cyclists on the Pilgrims Way from Boxley and hardly any cars on what is a very narrow lane. Over the Detling bypass on the much needed footbridge and through the village to Thurnham and the *Black Horse*. Master used to go there a lot forty years ago when people were silly enough to drive to country pubs instead of walking to the local. We had to sit in the garden though, as Master failed to meet the dress code! That was no hardship given the beauty of the garden and the warmth of the sun. Then down the road to Bearsted, a late pub lunch and home on the train. Next time Charing? Max the Rectory Spaniel.