



Thanks to all for Christmas boxes



Local Operation Christmas Child co-ordinator, Nicola Elsegood, was delighted at this year's response to the annual appeal for filled shoeboxes which are sent to needy children across the world. Nicola delivered over 280 boxes to the OCC's Wrexham depot which will be sent on to Swaziland and the Ukraine. She writes:

"At the depot I met a committed volunteer who has travelled out to the Ukraine over many years. She described the impoverished schools and orphanages they visit delivering the right numbers of boxes for each age group of boys and girls. The Christmas shoeboxes are considered so special by the staff at orphanages, hospitals and schools that she referred to them as being treated almost like 'currency'. They are all accounted for to ensure that each child

receives an appropriate gift. Children, often sharing a room with 8 or more others and having no possessions of their own, keep careful hold of their shoeboxes, treasuring not only the contents but the container as well. These homes rely on OCC for Christmas gifts and recognise all too well their value to the children they care for."

Nothing like a dame for YCs



Mike Ridley as Widow Twanky, in this year's YCs panto, Aladdin

A Christmas welcome

All our local churches would be delighted to welcome you and your families to one (or all) of our special services over the Christmas season.

We look forward to seeing you at:

St. Boniface Nativity, 10.00am 16th December (see page 3).

St. Boniface Candle-lit Carols 6.30pm 16th December.

St. Jude's Carols 9.30am 23rd December.

St. Boniface Crib Service 4.30pm Christmas Eve.

See Diary page 13 for other services on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day.

Mike and Geoff honoured by Haberdashers

Mike Thomas and Geoff Vickers (pictured below) were honoured in November by the Haberdashers who made them freemen of the Company in recognition of their long service as governors at Bunbury School. In a further ceremony at the Guildhall in the new year they will be granted the Freedom of the City of London, an honour which Geoff says entitles them 'to drive their flocks over London Bridge' for free, though sadly not the waiving of the modern-day congestion charge. Many congratulations to both. More about Mike on p15.



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A Happy Christmas and New Year to all our readers

Light in the dark



'John came as a witness to testify concerning the light, so that through him all men

might believe. He himself was not the light: he came only as a witness to the light.' (St. John 1, 7-8)

Two people were visiting the Batu caves in Malaysia. The man, who'd not been there before, was keen to explore one of the less-visited caves. It was pitch-dark in the cave, and the woman, who knew the caves well, called out, 'You shouldn't go in there without a torch, because in some parts the floor drops away suddenly.' 'No problem', replied the man, groping his way forward, 'It's perfectly....' But the end of his sentence came from six feet lower! Fortunately, he was largely unhurt, but he'd learned two important

lessons: you should always listen to the witness of somebody who knows the truth, and a torch or light of some kind is ideal for showing up what the truth really is.

Jesus called his cousin, John the Baptist, a witness to the truth and a lantern which shows up the truth. Suppose a child in a dark room calls out in a panic, 'Mummy, Daddy, there's a bear in my bedroom!' Mum comes in and puts the light on, to reveal that the dark shape isn't a bear after all, but just the child's dressing-gown hanging behind the door. John came to witness to the truth that Jesus is the Son of God and to illuminate that truth to the world, with light energized by the evidence of John's own eyes.

As the man in the Batu caves discovered, it's just crazy to step in to the darkness if you

begin by ignoring the witnesses who'll tell you the truth from their own experience. It's crazy not to take a light to reveal the dangers we face day by day. Yet millions do just that every day.

In Psalm 19 we read, 'Your word is a lamp to guide me and a light for my path'. And the Bible contains the witness of hundreds of people who experienced God's activity in their own lives and saw Jesus at work. There are many, many people

in this country alone who could tell what they've experienced of the love of God and how that experience has changed their lives. Let's listen to the witnesses and look at the evidence.

At Christmas we celebrate the coming of the Light of Life into the world in a stable at Bethlehem. He still comes to bring light into our lives and to empower us to witness to others the richness of life he also brings.

Eric Wallington

I said to the man who stood at the gate of the year,
'Give me a light that I may tread safely into the unknown.'
And he replied, 'Go out into the darkness
and put your hand into the hand of God.
That shall be to you better than light
and safer than a known way!
So I went forth
and finding the hand of God,
trod gladly into the night.

M. Louise Haskins (1875-1957)

Our vicar, **Rick Gates**, is always available in times of sickness, bereavement or any distress. You can contact him at The Vicarage, Bunbury, on **01829 260991** or at **Rick@prayer.fsnet.co.uk**

Other church contacts:

The Reverend Jane Stephenson (parish curate)	250249
Peter and Kath Collinge (pastoral support)	260077

St. Boniface

Churchwardens:	Barbara Croley	260344
	Walter Done	01244 332563
Secretary	Neil Dewson-Smyth	261680
Flowers	Margaret Bourne	260944

St. Jude's

Churchwardens:	Bob Gardner	260555
	Linda Downey	732017
Secretary	Ann Posnett	260251
Organist	Ann Badrock	260343

Calveley

Churchwardens:	Barbara Croley	260344
	Walter Done	01244 332563
Organist	John Batchelor	261056
Secretary	Sue Woodward	01270 522822

Link is edited by **Lucy Munro (tel. 260487)** and **Jill Robey (tel. 260081)**. We welcome all contributions. Our deadline for the February edition (which will be available from 27th January) is Tuesday 15th January. Please send material to lucykmunro@hotmail.com or by post to Heath Cottage, School Lane, Bunbury, CW6 9NR.

Visit the St. Boniface website for pictures of recent weddings and the confirmation and for the Link on-line.

www.stbonifacebunbury.org.uk

Community news

Congratulations to **Melissa and Steve Randles** on the birth on 8th November of second son **Thomas James**, little brother for **William** aged 2. Steve's parents **Sue and John Randles** farm at Four Lanes End Farm, Tarporley.

Welcome to **Amelia Holly**, daughter of **Graham and Debra Jones** of Alpraham Green who was baptised at Calveley Church on Sunday 4th November. Amelia has a big brother, **Harvey**, who is 5.

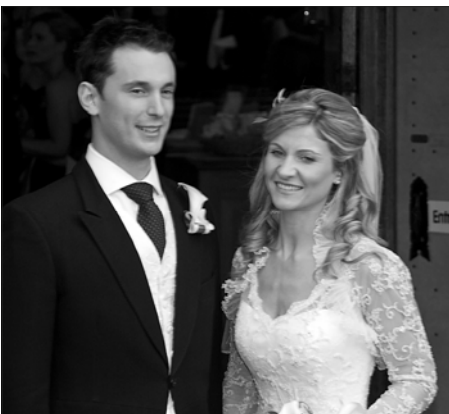
Welcome also to **Ethan Henry**, son of **Chris & Melissa Popple**, and grandson of Steve and Wendy Slack who was baptised at St. Boniface on 18th November.

Happy belated birthday to **Alison Wheatland**, 18 in November.

Happy Birthday to **Carol Ridley** who we hear on the grapevine reached a significant milestone also in November.

Congratulations to **Bob Capes** of Willow Drive, Bunbury on his engagement to **Jenny Roberts** of Heswall whom he met at the Open. The happy couple are planning a wedding for 2008.

Pictured here are **Hannah Morrey** of Bowes Gate Road and **Mark Simpson** at their wedding on 17th November at St. Boniface.



Our sincere sympathies to the family of **Gordon Bostock** whose funeral was held at St. Boniface in November. An appreciation is on page 7.

Our sympathies also to **Sandra Dykes** who has lost her brother. Sandra writes: "May I thank everybody for the cards and flowers I received following the sudden death of my brother.

Ken Bebbington was not just a brother to my two older sisters and me, but following the death of my

father 50 years ago he became at the age of 18 the male figurehead of the family as we all grew up in Haughton. He gave away all three of us girls at our weddings when we all got married at St Boniface.

"Ken was a man of true rural life whether working the land or off with his dogs shooting. When he was 14 he caught a 14 pound pike from the Pool at Spurstow Hall.

"At Ken's funeral at Doddington the church was so full that many people had to stand outside, showing the respect he had in the rural community. This was a great support to his wife, their four children and us all as a family. The sun was shining and two pheasants flew over as the hearse arrived, and I believe they were showing their respects to a true man of country life."

Congratulations to **Sam Murphy**, talented daughter of **Gerry and Barbara**, on the first public performance of **Xibit**, the girl band she has formed with two friends. At a party at Bunbury village hall in November the three girls were a real hit and are surely destined for success in the future.

Bonfire Night was celebrated in high style at Bunbury Pavilion, with the traditional event this year held on November 3rd. Good weather brought out the crowds who also enjoyed some delicious refreshments while admiring the truly spectacular pyrotechnics and impressive bonfire. Many thanks to the parish council and pavilion committee for continuing to organise this popular village event, despite rising insurance premiums and ever-increasing red tape. The entry charge has to be one

of our village's best bargains, given the extraordinary cost of fireworks. Well done to all involved.

Sandbach Voices present a medley of seasonal items and carols at St Mary's Church, Sandbach, on 8th December at 7.30pm. Conductor Martin Cook, tickets £8, children under 16 free, 01270 841727/01244 540511 www.sandbachvoices.co.uk

Congratulations to **Peter Crump** who won a very fetching large white handbag in the raffle at Bunbury Christmas Fair. It was large enough to fit in the Christmas cake that he successfully guessed the weight of. Fix!

Church news

Anybody wishing to join the choir for this year's **carol service** at St. Boniface on 16th December, is invited to attend rehearsals at Bunbury Aldersey School, on 3rd and 10th December, commencing at 8pm.

The **Nativity service** will be on Sunday December 16th at 10am. Any children wishing to take part, please come to Kingdom Kids on December 9th at 10am when parts will be allocated. If you can't come then but would like to take part on the 16th, please contact Sarah Tomlins on 730814.

Amidst the season's general celebration please pray for all those who find this time of year difficult. We pray especially for those remembering loved ones and all those troubled in body, mind or spirit.

Attention All Scots! Return of the fantastic Target 1250

Burns Night Ceilidh

With traditional dancing to the **Usquebaugh** band
On

Saturday January 26th 2008 at Bunbury Village Hall

Tickets £15, supper included
To reserve your tickets please
contact Katie Mason 260374



All profits to
'Target 1250',
the St. Boniface
building appeal

Eli the innkeeper: this year's quiz

In this year's quiz you need to identify as many references to Christmas carols as you can in the following story. For example, if you think there are 2 references to Hark the Herald, the answer would be "Hark the Herald x 2". Jane Stephenson has promised a prize to the winner. Please send your entry to Lucy Munro (see address p2) by 15th January.

Eli the innkeeper had had a rotten day. The town was packed with visitors, so no one could move and some really bossy Roman officials had taken all his best rooms for a corporate day out. "Blow it," he said to himself, "Oh, our little town of Bethlehem is just a bit overcrowded tonight. I knew it would be crowded, but I didn't realize all ye faithful would be coming. How on earth I'll feed them all tomorrow I don't know. I'll run out of chicken and beans, and it'll have to be the holly and the ivy. Fancy decreeing that the whole world should be taxed, and in the bleak midwinter too. It's daft!"

Eventually Eli was able to usher the last of his guests to bed: "God rest ye merry gentlemen." And to no one in particular he said, "Let's hope for a silent night."

But no sooner had his head hit the pillow than "Ding-dong", merrily the doorbell rang. Down he went, rubbing sleep from his eyes. He flung open the door to see a little donkey and a pair of very forlorn and definitely not rich, customers. "Was it you playing jingle bells on my door?" They nodded. "Well pack it in, we're full. Go away." Even the little donkey looked reproachfully at Eli and he felt a bit sorry for them. "Look I can't deck the halls with grubby visitors, but I suppose you could use the stable. What's your name?"

"Joseph"

"Oh, born of David's line?"

"Yes and Solomon who begat Rehoboam who begat..."

"Enough! Will your wife be ok? I hope her baby won't be born in the stable, it's so bare. I'll get you a blanket, the earth's hard as iron, snow's falling, snow on snow, ugh! and it'll be cold out there. Can't give you any water - it's like a stone tonight. Good night." And with that he left them.

Mary looked at Joseph: "Are we spending the night where oxen feed on hay then?"

"Looks like it" said Joseph, "At least it will be quiet, away in a manger."

The innkeeper, back indoors, snuggled back into bed. He was snoring deeply, crisply and rather unevenly when a huge burst of singing filled the room. Cursing his noisy neighbours he leapt up and flung open the shutters. The whole sky was filled with some song about peace on earth, goodwill to - "I'll give 'em goodwill!" he said, leaning out into the starry night, but gradually the music faded and he crept back to bed and dozed off again.

Half a minute later, "Ding-dong", merrily the doorbell rang again. He shot downstairs, to his annoyance some shepherds were standing there... "Sorry to bother you, mate, but we were out in the fields abiding and washing our socks ... and suddenly there were angels, you know from the realms of glory....and.."

"Yes! So what actually do you **want**?!"

"Oh. Have you got a lowly cattle shed by any chance?"

"It's round the back, but there are people in it, you can't stay."



"No we want to meet them... we're bringing tidings of great joy..."

"Tidings of great rage more like... go away, leave me alone."

Eli slammed the door and staggered back upstairs. He was trying to sleep when suddenly all went from calm to bright. He dashed to the window to see... a star, a star of some wonder moving round the back of his inn and behind it a line of camels. Whatever next? He stamped downstairs, furious "Do you know what time it is?" he bellowed, "... it's past 3 o'clock that's what it is mate."

"Sorry, but according to our calculations it's the dawn of a new era...."

"Wise guys eh?" he said through gritted teeth.

"Well, yes and no.... we're three kings

from the Orient and we're bearing gifts..."

"Look, park your camels round the back and leave me alone."

Before he could shut the door, Joseph appeared: "the ox and ass are doing their best, but I need another blanket for the baby."

"Baby? Oh that's all I need!"

Eli stomped off to get the blanket and in his rush he tripped over a small lamb. Sore, but cross not afraid, he banged on the stable door ready to express tidings of ... well not exactly good will and then he saw them, all of them around that animal trough.

Reverently on bended knees. "Hark," whispered an angel, "this is the First Nowell and we're hailing the Heaven Born Prince of Peace... come let us adore him."

"What? ... I don't understand....."

"Tidings of comfort and joy mate," said a shepherd

And there was the baby neatly wrapped in swaddling bands, lying in the manger and Mary took the extra blanket and smiled at him and suddenly Eli felt small and a bit ashamed and he went and knelt by the donkey, round the back in the dark ... and that's why you never see the innkeeper in the nativity pictures!

Well done to those who organised St. Judes Christmas Fair on 24th November. It was busier than usual with plenty of youngsters enjoying meeting Santa.



A Christmas moan



Here we go then, another Christmas! Another chance to panic about the number of shopping days left, the overcrowding in the car parks, the jostling in the streets, the high prices, the secularisation of Christmas, the terrible television programmes, the..... Well I could go on, but I hope I won't spoil our enjoyment of a good moan if I begin by trying to cheer us up with a couple of seasonal jokes, courtesy of Woodlands Junior School in Kent:

What did Adam say on the day before Christmas? It's Christmas, Eve!

What do you get if you cross a snowman with a shark? Frost bite!

I've tried then, it's up to you now what you decide to make of Christmas and particularly how far you feel that you could slow things down a bit if you tried.

Perhaps it would be good for all of us to take some time to think about the meaning of Christmas, before it all dashes past us at the speed of light (which I gather would be how fast Santa would have to travel in order to deliver presents to every household in the world over the space of 24 hours!).

We live in a world of extreme speed: communications through text, mobile phone and e-mail and rapid air travel around the globe can make communication almost instant. This has advantages in allowing people to stay in touch, but also extreme disadvantages in tying us to cyber-networks which demand constant attention and to virtual worlds where we communicate, but never speak and certainly never meet. Many of us now seem to inhabit only a space, where time is unimportant and place is irrelevant: In some ways this approach to the world should sit very well with our faith in a God who transcends time and space, who is global in his relevance and whose Kingdom is universal. Yet what we must remember is that the coming of Christ was not a virtual reality, but a real birth. The birth of Jesus was in the flesh. He came as a real person to share in our humanity and to live life in all its fullness and in all its frustrations! This incarnation of Christ in the stable at Christmas is not a game, not an excuse for a party, but an event of such earth-shattering proportion that we should stop dead in our tracks and, in amazement, contemplate the gift we are being given.

Someone recently described the new Apple 'i-phone' as "awesome," it's certain to be the "must-have" gift this Christmas, but although it is a fine piece of technology, it is nowhere near so awesome as the truth that Christ was born into our world. Jesus was raised in a real family and he lived in a real place, one which he described vividly in his parables. However the presence of shepherds and wise men at his birth serves to bring us into a world where some do recognize the awe and

wonder of this event. They abandon their everyday lives to come to seek the child, because his arrival is more important than anything else they could ever have to do. Making that effort to come close to him, they are drawn to recognize the Son of God emplaced in this world freely and lovingly by the grace of His Father and they instinctively kneel to worship him.

None of this is to say that we shouldn't celebrate, shouldn't throw parties or buy presents for each other, but it is to suggest that as a community we need to take time out to find the stable. We need to take time to recognize our God in that manger and to thank Him for his gift of life, by valuing both our own lives and those of others. In that sense we need to ensure that our modern technologies are used to reduce inequalities in society, to prevent exploitation of workers and their families and to improve the lives of all God's people, allowing them also to be rooted in community both where they live and in the global Body of Christ.

And if we take the time and trouble to do this?

Then the birth of Christ will have a relevance and a symmetry that will make our celebrations real and heartfelt and we can give our presents in the understanding of the joy and love of Christmas.

In fact we might even be able to justify a good moan about the run-up to Christmas. Oh, and in case you still need cheering up - **What do sheep say to shepherds at Christmas?**

Merry Christmas to ewe (of course).

Every blessing

Jane Stephenson

New sound system for St. Boniface

Final plans have been agreed for a new sound system for St Boniface, after months of squeaks, whines and crackles. (Or maybe that was just the choir? - ed.) There was also a malfunction at a recent wedding – the time had come for a change. Three generous donations towards the cost have been received, and the balance will come from church funds.

There are also plans to change the way repairs and restoration are funded. Full details in the next edition of the Link. The changes will make the work of the

Target 1250 group even more valuable: they made a significant contribution to the recent, essential repairs to the north wall. Please support all their fundraising efforts to keep this beautiful building in good repair. (See p9 for more about the work of Target 1250)

P.S. People often think that because St. Boniface is a large, well-used and well-kept church, we have loads of money – not so! We have just had our annual insurance renewal quote – well over £5,000 just to cover the building.

Walter Done



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Christmas Opening Hours

Christmas Eve	Open all day from 11.30am to 11.00pm, Last orders for food 9pm
Christmas Day	12.00 – 2.00pm (drinks only)
Boxing Day	12.00 to 6.30pm, Last orders for food 5.00 pm
New Years Eve	Closed Lunchtime, Private party for dinner, (tickets only)
New Years Day	12.00 – 6.00pm Last Orders for food 4.00pm

For more information please contact
Darren or Elizabeth Snell - Tel: 01829 260183
or check out our Web site:
www.dysartarms-bunbury.co.uk

E-Mail: dysart.arms@brunningandprice.co.uk
Please note that we do not take bookings by E-Mail

Rick writes: The best Christmas present - and it costs nothing

As December approaches, there are many parents in the village who will be wondering what to give their children this Christmas. No doubt their offspring will be keen to have their say.

Adverts for Christmas gifts are becoming more prevalent on our TV screens and playground discussion will soon turn to Christmas if it hasn't done already.

One of the most valuable gifts we can give our children this year doesn't cost a penny. It is something children today seem to lack: Freedom.

I am not talking about freedom to act in an

impertinent and disrespectful manner, but more the freedom to choose and know of the consequences of their actions. For example, many of us will have been fortunate to enjoy childhoods where we were free to explore our neighbourhoods, make dens, and go on 'adventures'.

I am not sure there are any statistics to back up the fear among us that predators lurk around every corner but one would think there were, given the restrictions we now place upon our children.

As I write this, I am hesitant to recommend we unleash

our children entirely, out of some unfounded fear that some harm may come to them.

Media coverage affects us all. But maybe we should go back to the old 'stranger danger' rule and allow children to be children rather than caged up in a house with a Playstation for company.

Whilst parents appear to have restricted the physical freedom of their children, they seem to have compensated by allowing greater freedom of expression.

This is no bad thing, as long as children are aware that their actions have an impact upon those around them.

Indeed, it often seems that the parents need this lesson more than the children.

Children should not always

have their own way, and should not be disrespectful to their parents without consequences.

The cotton wool generation needs its freedom but also needs to consider the world around them and what better time to do that than now?

May you all have a wonderful Christmas.



Your Vicar, Rick Gates

Gordon Bostock - a family man

This is taken from words delivered by a friend of Gordon's at his funeral:

'Gordon was a man of few words, a man proud of his family and family name. He didn't want fame and fortune, he didn't want to travel abroad. He was just happy to be near his family and friends he made while living and working all of his life in the local area.

Each weekend, Gordon would visit two or three members of his family, socialising and gathering and passing on news. Maintaining family bonds was an important and enjoyable pastime, especially when the visits involved 'a drop of the hard stuff'!

Football and mountaineering were his favourite sports. Although he was a quiet man, he could get wound up and passionate over the fortunes of his beloved

Liverpool F.C. In his younger years Gordon played football for Tarporley Vics. I asked a friend of mine who had played in the same league what sort of player Gordon had been. In very colourful language he indicated that he was 'a robust player'. Perhaps that was just sour grapes, because The Vics were a good side.

A man who had principles and stayed true to them

Gordon was a walking 'who's who' in the local area. He was the man to ask if you wanted to know 'Who lived at so and so, married to what's her name?' If he couldn't answer you there and then, his first words the next time he saw you would be the name you were looking for. Not, 'Hello Jim how are you?' but 'Charlie Jones! I remembered it last night when I was having my tea',

he would say, pleased you had not been able to catch him out. Spending all his working life on the Peckforton Estate must have helped him with his local knowledge.

We all have our own special memories of Gordon. I shall remember him as a good and loyal friend, who put his family first, a man who had principles and stayed true to them.'

Gordon's widow **Anne Bostock**, added these touching words:

'I'm so glad that Gordon chose me, he made me so happy. It was just nice him being there for me all the time. We met in the pictures on Forest Road in Tarporley. It wasn't a date, he just sat next to me, and then we married on the 5th October, 39 years ago, and he's been sitting next to me ever since.'

Tree of lights

There was a good response to Target 1250's search for sponsors for the Tree of Lights this year, though if you are reading this in the first week of December, there's still chance to sponsor your own light. Dedications range from a daughter remembering her mother's links with the church, to grandparents celebrating the birth of a grandchild and parents simply being grateful for the gift of their children. The tree is intended to mark all sorts of significant events, and those who last year saw their own dedication recorded in writing said how much the opportunity meant to them. The short service of dedication for sponsors will be held around the tree on Saturday 8th December at 4.30, followed by a chance to read the dedications in our special book, and to enjoy a mince pie and a glass of mulled wine, and of course to admire the tree itself.

Bunbury's "secret cyclists"

The annual Christmas dinner came early this year for the "secret" cycling club which meets in Bunbury every Saturday morning throughout the year and also every Tuesday evening in the summer months.

Bunbury Wheelers, as they style themselves, are an informal group of road cyclists from in and around Bunbury, many of whom are former runners. The early celebration dinner in November allowed Chris Latter, a founder member, the chance to be there before setting off to sail the Atlantic the following week. We all wish him and wife Chrissie "bon voyage" and look forward to their safe return after Christmas.

If you are a keen cyclist why not join this group. It is a good way of improving by learning from more experienced riders. We meet at the Nags Head, Bunbury Saturday 9.30 am. Rides usually between 30 and 50 miles. No one gets abandoned!

Some junior sports successes

Congratulations to Alex Caldwell on his recent selection with two friends from Whitchurch Rugby Club for the North Midlands Rugby Academy under 14 squad. From a pool of around 600 they're now working with about 22 boys. And congratulations too to Alex Ryder who has been selected to play for the county after nomination by Tarporley High School.

The skiers from Abbey Gate College have also had recent success making it through to the national finals and competing in the British championships. The photo shows Sophie Caldwell on the slopes.

Bunbury Youth Football Club are currently topping their Sunday league and in the quarter finals of the Duke of Westminster Cup.



Chris and Andy Moore of Bunbury would like to wish everyone a merry Christmas and a happy and prosperous new year. Instead of sending cards this year they have financed three pigs for developing third world countries.

The Beeston Castle



Henry and Pat wish all their customers a very merry Christmas and a happy new year

- Accommodation
- Good Food
- Fine Ale

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Tarporley High School Christmas Fair



Tarporley High School's traditional Christmas Fair became this year a Christmas market with lots of new stalls and attractions including Charlotte Okell's stall pictured left. Also pictured left is Frances Lawford who is secretary of the School's Home School Association and played a big part in the event's success. Also shown are the Stockman sisters busking Christmas carols and three well-known Bunbury ladies having fun helping in the tea room.



Well done cubs

On September 23rd Bunbury cubs took part in their first district sports day at the recreation ground in Crewe, where they were pitted against other cub teams from south Cheshire.

It was a very hard fought event with some very close races, but despite the inclement weather (some very damp parents there) the cubs won through and took the district title. Only two short

weeks later, on October 6th, Bunbury cubs were defending their district swimming gala title; and what a battle they had!

Despite some very stiff competition from the other packs Bunbury put in a brilliant team effort and brought home the trophy once more. Everyone involved had a great time and a very big thank you to all of the parents who supported the events and cheered on the cubs; roll on next year!



Target 1250 needs you

Target 1250, St. Boniface's fundraising group, has been operating now for just over two years. The group sprang from the idea that the St. Boniface building is not just important to churchgoers, but it also the most important and loved building for many people in the area. Target 1250 arranges social functions for our whole community, so that we can all, churchgoers and non-churchgoers alike, contribute to the upkeep of this beautiful, ancient landmark. Our first event was the sell-out talk by Sir Ranulph Fiennes and since then we have raised money through balloon races,

greetings cards, a treasure hunt, the tree of lights, a ceilidh (with another ceilidh planned for January – see p3) - in total we have raised about £9,000 so far. It was great to be able to contribute £6000 towards the repair of the north wall, in the knowledge that our efforts are helping to fund work of lasting value.

Our problem now is manpower. We have loads of great ideas for fundraising and organizing popular social events, but there just aren't enough of us. Could you help? We are an energetic and committed group (honest!) but would really

welcome a few new pairs of willing hands. We meet every month or so, always open a couple of bottles of wine – and our meetings are completely non-religious, in case you were wondering! We need people who want to play their part in helping to preserve St. Boniface for the future and can offer a few hours' work every time an event is put on. Please, please consider joining us – we can't afford for this important work to stop.

Lucy Munro 260487

Panto dress rehearsal photos



Cast and back stage helpers hard at work at the dress rehearsal of Aladdin. Well done to everyone involved in this annual extravaganza, always a not to be missed highlight of the Bunbury cultural scene.



All ages united in Remembrance



Remembrance Day was one of the beautiful late autumn days we enjoyed just a few weeks ago. Bunbury's Remembrance Parade formed up as usual in the village centre and it was heartening to see the number of youngsters who turned out in support of the British Legion. Some members of the British Legion also paid a visit to Bunbury School's service of remembrance, where the



young pupils listened to headteacher Alison Phillips talk about the importance of remembering in their own lives.

Children in need

Esther Gillett and Charlotte Greenbury have been working hard to collect money for Children In Need. Charlotte did a sponsored 5 mile run and the two of them had some special Scratch and Win Pudsey Games to play with their friends at Guides - the winners were Florrie Kirby and Ruth Tough. However,



Esther also put her dad up as a fundraiser - the sponsored hair cut! after 16 months of avoiding the scissors, Johnny allowed his curly locks to be cut and raised £150.

Bunbury Surgery have written to say they raised £93.45 for Children In Need. "To raise money the surgery sold treacle toffee and fudge presented in Children in Need gift bags, also drinks and home made biscuits. Huge thanks to all patients who supported us.

Special thanks also to Dr Berry and family for the contributions of drinks and the delicious home made biscuits

and also Jackie and Brian Cowap who made all the scrumptious toffee which sold out very quickly!"



Johnny thanked for his work in our parishes



Alex's talk at the Sunday service on 4th November, soon after All Saint's Day, was all about the saints we all encounter in our lives and how indeed

we can all be saints in some measure ourselves. There was an impressive congregation as many people had made a special effort to say a proper goodbye and thank you to Johnny, our first parish youth worker, as he embarks on the next phase of his youth work journey. It



was a testament to his work and personality that so many young people and their parents were present, and we were all treated to a 'This is your life'

presentation for Johnny, which was a real surprise to him as he had no idea that Debs had sneaked out photos of his own childhood and adolescence for us all to share. Johnny summed up the ethos he has brought to his work with young people in Bunbury by reminding us of the importance of building bridges within our society. Johnny was presented with special cards and pictures from Kingdom Kids, a celebration cake and a cheque, which we hear will go towards fittings in the new extension to his house.

The Children and Youth Committee want to thank all the young people who filled out questionnaires regarding future youth provision in Bunbury and hope to be able to implement many of their suggestions.

Amber Middlemiss

Christmas cooking with the experts

We have asked three renowned local cooks to suggest some seasonal recipes for Link readers to try. Well-known caterer Sarah Thompson has given us her recipe for foolproof sweet pastry for mince pies (which she swears never sticks to the tins). Bunbury School cook, Kath Roden's recipe is for shortbread biscuits (why not get your children to make and decorate these for Christmas?) and Darren Snell of the Dysart, who trained as a chef, suggests chocolate pots which are great for a dinner party because they can be prepared the day before. Bon appetit!

Pastry for mince pies

1. Cream together 8oz each white Trex, Stork margarine (or similar) and caster sugar
2. Add one egg, then 1 3/4lbs of plain flour. Mix together, then use 3 tablespoons cold water to bind.
3. Leave to rest in the fridge for 30 mins.
4. Roll out as normal. The top and bottom of the pies will 'self-adhere', preventing the mincemeat escaping during cooking.
5. Cook at 200C for 10 minutes.

Shortbread

4oz/100g plain flour
3oz/75g margarine
2.5oz/60g sugar
1oz/25g semolina
1 medium egg
vanilla essence

1. Cream margarine and sugar until light and fluffy.
2. Add egg and beat in.
3. Add flour, semolina and vanilla essence and work to a soft consistency. If too soft add more flour.

4. Grease or use non-stick baking tray and cut out with Christmassy cutters.

5. Bake in a moderate oven (180 C, gas mark 4) for about 10-15 minutes until golden brown. Remove from the baking tray while still warm. Cool on wire tray. Decorate when cool.

Chocolate Pots

Makes 8-12 ramekins (depending on size)

340g bitter dark chocolate (preferably couverture)
5 whole eggs
290g caster sugar
225g unsalted butter – softened
250ml water
50g cocoa powder – sieved

Method

Beat the eggs with 200g of the sugar in an electric mixer until the volume roughly quadruples. Heat the remaining sugar with the water until completely dissolved.

Place the chocolate and butter into the hot syrup and stir until it has all melted, then mix in the cocoa powder and allow to cool slightly. If the mixture starts to set, very carefully melt over a very low heat.

Add the melted mixture to the egg and sugar and beat very gently for no more than 30 seconds. Pour into your ramekins.

Place the ramekins in a water bath, cover with foil and cook in the oven 100 – 120° C for 15 – 20 minutes. Do not allow them to cook for too long or at too high a temperature as this will cause them to soufflé.

For the water bath

Take a roasting tray and line the bottom with a cloth or newspaper (this is to prevent direct heat between the roasting tray and the bottom of the ramekins) place the ramekins on the cloth, add water to 3/4 height of the ramekins, cover with foil and place in the oven. (The easy way to do this is by placing the tray on the oven shelf before adding the water to the tray).

When cooked, remove from oven and leave to cool.

Frank falls off mountain

The recent weekend trip to Scotland by the Bunbury Unlimited Mountaineering Society was not without incident. Frank McHale returned sporting a very mangled nose which we gather was damaged when he stopped and was momentarily distracted by the view before him. Unfortunately he was on a narrow ledge at the time and fell about 20 feet. Needless to say once his companions had ascertained he was alive they got out their cameras to record the damage before stitching. The result was too gory to reproduce on a colour page but you can see opposite that he emerged smiling.



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December/January Diary

2	8.00am 9.30am 10.00am 11.00am	Holy Communion Holy Communion Family Worship Holy Communion	St. Boniface St. Jude's St. Boniface Calveley
9	9.30am 10.00am 4.30pm	Morning Service Family Communion Evensong	St. Jude's St. Boniface St. Boniface
16	8.00am 9.30am 10.00am 6.30pm	Holy Communion Holy Communion Family Worship Carol Service	St. Boniface St. Jude's St. Boniface St. Boniface
23	9.30am 10.00am	Carol Service Family Communion	St. Jude's St. Boniface
24	4.30pm 7.30pm 11.30pm	Crib Service Holy Communion Midnight Mass	St. Boniface Calveley St. Boniface
25	9.30am 10.00	Family Communion Family Communion	St. Jude's St. Boniface
30	9.30am 10.00am	Holy Communion Family Communion	St. Jude's St. Boniface

On 8th December at 4.30 there will be a short service of dedication of the **tree of lights** followed by mulled wine and mince pies in St. Boniface and an opportunity to view the Book of Lights.

Bunbury School Carol Service is on Thursday 20th December at 7.00pm at St. Boniface.

Education Sunday is on Sunday 20th January. Justin Blakeborough the Headteacher of Bishop's High School Chester is going to preach, Jane (ex teacher) is leading and Bunbury School will be involved.

January 2008

6	8.00am 9.30am 10.00am 11.00am 4.00pm	Holy Communion Holy Communion Family Worship Holy Communion Christingle	St. Boniface St. Jude's St. Boniface Calveley St. Boniface
13	9.30am 10.00 4.30pm	Morning Service Family Communion Evensong	St. Jude's St. Boniface St. Boniface
20	8.00am 9.30am 11.00am	Holy Communion Holy Communion Matins	St. Boniface St. Jude's Calveley
27	9.30am 10.00am	Morning Service Family Communion	St. Boniface St. Boniface

On 22nd February the **London Chamber Orchestra** is giving a Concert at St. Boniface in the evening and will be working with local schoolchildren earlier in the day.

Watch this space....St. Boniface is hoping to run children's **holiday clubs** on 3rd and 4th April and the 28th July to 1st August 2008

February

3	8.00am 9.30am 10.00am 11.00	Holy Communion Holy Communion Family Worship Holy Communion	St. Boniface St. Jude's St. Boniface Calveley
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There is a service of Holy Communion every Wednesday at 10.00am at St. Boniface



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Every year towards Christmas, eager anxious faces peer out of windows up and down the land scanning the heavens for a change in the wind to a northerly or easterly point which might bring the promise of leaden skies and snow. Why do we dream of a white Christmas - because there was a white Christmas every year for the first eight years of the life of Charles Dickens. Remembering his unusually snowy childhood, Dickens made much of this in his famous tale A Christmas Carol. The lasting image created by Dickens led to the myth that a really good Christmas should always be white. Exactly a century after Dickens wrote his tale Bing Crosby sang the song 'I'm Dreaming of a White Christmas' which became a lasting hit repeated year after year. Amazingly, despite this enduring legend of a typical Christmas Day with the snow falling 'deep and crisp and even' England has only known two such Christmases in the entire twentieth Century. Snowbound scenery has become a standard illustration for Christmas products. To complete the snowy scene reindeer often appear in pictures on Christmas cards as reindeer are well adapted to living in a snowy landscape. In winter they dig through snow to feed on the grass and lichens underneath. Fine powdery snow is easy enough for them to handle, but if the snow is too deep or too hard feeding becomes difficult and then they venture into the pine and birch woods where they find the fly agaric toadstool which they have developed a taste for. These toadstools have intoxicating and

Was Rudolph really Rosie?

euphoric effects on the deer. The fly agaric is instantly recognisable for its brilliant scarlet cap with white warts and often appears in Fairy Tale books. It is believed that reindeer have been domesticated in Eurasia for at least 7,000 years which is longer than the horse. The Lapps (also known as the Sami) used to depend entirely upon reindeer for milk, meat and leather. They also fed the fly agaric toadstool to their deer and collected their urine to drink. Drinking the urine gives a 'high' similar to taking LSD. Under the hallucinatory effects of the drink, the Sami thought their reindeer were flying through space looking down on the world. When the first missionaries reached Lapland they heard stories of such reindeer flight and integrated those tales into the existing Christmas folklore of Western cultures concerning Saint Nicholas wearing a red and white coat emulating the colours of the fly agaric toadstool. Reindeer are the only deer species where both sexes have antlers. The primary function of the

antlers is for achieving social dominance and secondary function to sweep the snow aside to uncover 'reindeer moss'. The branch close to the base which projects forward functions as a shovel. They are covered with a thin layer of skin which looks like velvet. The mature male's antlers are at their largest during the breeding season when they are essential for ritual combat and fighting. Afterwards their antlers fall off and when this occurs even the largest reindeer in the herd drops to the very bottom of the pecking order. They can take up to four months before the new ones grow in the spring. By the time Christmas arrives, the only adult reindeer with antlers and enough energy to drag around a sleigh full of presents are females. Perhaps the Christmas song should more accurately be entitled 'Rosie the Red-Nosed Reindeer.'

Liz Jones



Thoughts on Christmas shopping

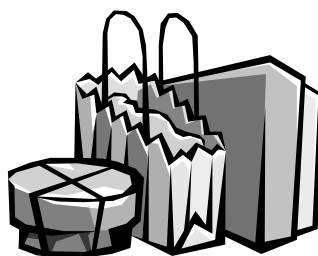
Advent is the time of waiting for the arrival of Christmas, and the birth of our dear Lord Jesus, our Saviour. But for most of us, it is also a time of rush, hurry and worry as we strive to get things done. Here is a prayer for frantic shoppers.

Dear God, as I make my Christmas shopping list, I slowly bring before you each person I love. I ask that you bless each one richly and keep them in your love. May the gift I find for them bring joy into their life. As I choose, I pray that I will keep my buying in perspective and not spend more than I need or can afford. Let me remember all those who have so much less than I, for whom Christmas will be bleak, and find a gift for them, too.

And help me, God, in all my busyness, to find time to centre myself on you, as I walk through the shops, sit on the bus, or drive my car. Let these times be moments, when, as I wait for your coming, I remember your incredible love for me.

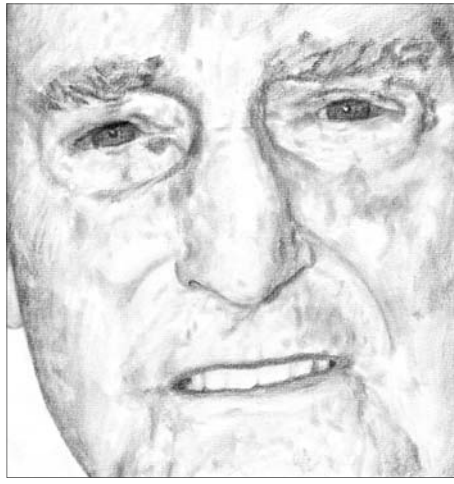
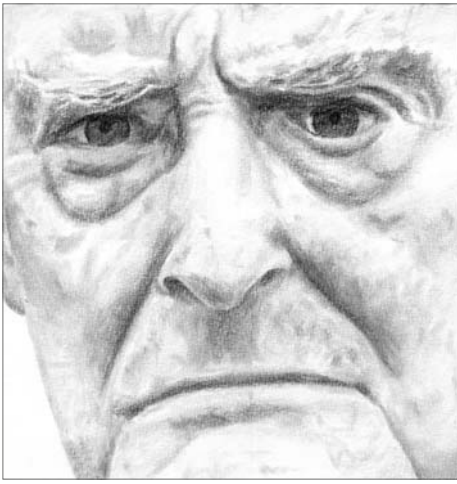
Amen

Pat Edgley



Bunbury Amazon?

Daily Telegraph readers (24th November) may have read that whether in the fictitious Cranford of Elizabeth Gaskell depicted in the current BBC drama or modern-day Knutsford (on which Cranford is based) "the women rule the town". In the article, "From bonnets to boutiques", Bunbury's Sue Briggs (editor of the Knutsford Guardian) is held up as an example of a modern-day "Amazon". Sue has been helping recently with the Link. Would a modern-day Elizabeth Gaskell think that the women of Bunbury rule the village? Peter Crump thinks that the men-folk of our village are indeed down-trodden and seldom allowed to put their heads above the parapet. Your thoughts please.....



These are the stunning pencil drawings of John Phillips, done by Oliver Bruce as part of his A Level Art. Oliver, former Tarpорley High School pupil, starts at Manchester University next year where he will study architecture. Liz Mulcahy, John's daughter, is amazed at how accurately Oliver has caught her father's expressions.

Give us two minutes

This is the first of a new series of articles in which Nick Sanders interviews a well-known or not so well-known member of our community with a series of revealing questions. Nick has brought this idea from the Falkland Islands' "Penguin Post". His first subject is Bunbury's **Mike Thomas**.

Born in Oswestry in Shropshire, Mike moved to Sadlers Wells in Bunbury in 1979. After leaving school, he trained as a computer programmer in the days when a computer needed its own room and subsequently worked for Shell until taking early retirement in 2005. He is married to Trish and they have a son and daughter, Dan and Vicky, and three grandchildren. He has been the Chairman of Governors at Bunbury Aldersey Primary School for the last 7 years and as reported on this month's front page has recently been made a freeman of the Worshipful Company of Haberdashers. He can also be seen on Village Day performing as the Village Crier!

If you had a motto, what would it be?
Try to leave things a little better than you found them

It's a celebrity beer call. Where is it and who do you invite? In the Long Bar at Raffles Hotel in Singapore with Winston Churchill, Freddy Mercury and Jeremy Clarkson

What would the title of your biography be called? 'He did very little harm' (the late Paul Eddington suggested that he'd hope for that as his epitaph & it struck a chord with me) - Trish says it should be 'lastminute.com'!



What was your first job? I had a Saturday job in an ironmongers shop when I was about 14.

Where did you meet your partner? We lived in the same market town and travelled on the school bus - first date was in 1965 and we went to the local Regal; I don't remember the film so I must have had something else on my mind!

What is your biggest regret in life? Not seeing our son Matt at 30 which he would have been this year - and our grandchildren will never know the uncle they would have had.

If you could change something about Bunbury, what would it be? Much as I dislike them, I'd put a speed camera on School Lane!

What is one thing about you that people may be surprised to learn? I 'played' the violin (an instrument of mental torture!) in my teens and was a member of the Shropshire Schools Symphony Orchestra - I wasn't much

good and when I left school my tutor said it had been a waste of time trying to teach me (I felt obliged to agree!).

What would you like to achieve most in the next 12 months? The loss of a stone.

Where and how would you spend your ideal weekend? I'd take Trish to a good hotel in Paris - restaurants, Musée d'Orsay, Galeries Lafayette, bateau mouche, - the whole shooting match.

Monthly web watch

Link readers may like to hear about interesting websites we come upon during the month. In fact if you find one yourself please let us know!

This month, one of our young readers has suggested you have a go on **www.freerice.com**. "You will improve your vocabulary, and feed a starving third world person, all for free. For each word definition you guess correctly, you get 10 grains of rice sent to someone through the United Nations World Food Programme, paid for by the advertisers on the site. That doesn't sound much, but be warned, the site is addictive! A few hundred grains was the total earned the day the site opened, now it is millions per day Another important point is that if your computer suddenly broke down or you closed the window, the rice would still be counted and distributed as it is paid for by the advertisers per question."

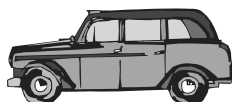
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Preparing for Christmas at Bunbury School



Year 1 made these fantastic self-portrait calendars for their parents to buy at the Christmas Fair. We think the children's characters really shine through and we love the uniforms.



These are just a few of the customers at this year's School Christmas Fair and for those not brave enough to venture out in the below freezing temperatures here on the left is proof that children really don't feel the cold when they are having fun on a swing boat. For those who preferred the indoor pursuits face-painting was the enduring attraction.



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