

The
Keston
Magazine
News of your Parish and Village



June/July 2024

Keston Parish Church

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Rejoice with those who rejoice; mourn with those who mourn
Romans: 12:15

Ramblings from the Rector..



Celebration

Who does not like a celebration? Each year we spend many thousands of pounds celebrating – a birthday, a wedding, a new baby, a life well-lived, the Coronation, Christmas, Easter and a myriad other occasions. And why not?

Celebrations have been part of the Judeo-Christian heritage since God created the world and are an integral part of human existence. They are a natural expression of our gratitude and praise for God's goodness. He created the world and all that is in it in six days, the bible tells us. However we might interpret the Creation story, what is important is that God then created the Sabbath – a day to stop, reflect and rejoice in his finished creation. A day to celebrate. God's intention for his people is to 'have life and have it abundantly.' It is not his will that we should live dry, uninteresting, joyless lives.

Jesus's celebrations give a glimpse of God's kingdom, where everyone is welcome especially the outsider, the poor, the needy, the weak and despised (Luke 14.12-14). He fed five thousand; he helped out at a poor family's wedding celebration; he celebrated and ate with sinners and tax collectors. He taught about welcoming the prodigal and banqueting with the uninvited.

Jesus has set the example that we are now called to follow.

The church has set aside and commands a range of Feast days marked for celebration, for gathering together as a community, joyfully singing songs of thanksgiving and praise and, of course, always with food and drink. Nearly every weekday marks a Saint's day or a key biblical event, and every Sunday offers a gathering for the community, including the Eucharistic feast of bread and wine, a remembrance of Christ's saving act, when he died a shameful death, crucified like a common criminal.

I see celebration as an essential part of our spiritual practice. Welcome, hospitality and generosity – all key elements of celebration must inform our understanding of how we are to respond to the two commandments, 'Love God and Love your neighbour'. Having celebrated Easter, not so long ago and Pentecost just recently, we look forward to a season of what is called 'Ordinary Time' when significant Christian festivals are few and far between, but let that not be a reason for us not to celebrate. May we continue to thank God for his goodness in our regular worship. May we spend time looking around us as the trees and woods are re-clothed in splendour, the animals re-awakened and the whole community is re-energised and let us find reasons to rejoice and thank God. Let us find reasons to celebrate, together in community. Let us embrace the gift of celebration in our lives.

Rev'd Belinda Beckhelling

From the Editor

Volunteers' Week runs from 3rd-9th June this year, and has been going for 40 years now. It's a chance to recognise, celebrate and thank the UK's incredible volunteers for all they contribute to our local communities and society as a whole. It's human nature to feel good after helping someone. In this issue we feature a volunteer at St. Christopher's Hospice and the work done by the Friends of Keston Common. Many of the volunteers in our community go unnoticed as they help with shopping or child care for instance. Others deliver this magazine, come rain or shine. Some I know of help run Bromley Local History Society, or do gardening at Down House. There are plenty of volunteers needed to keep Keston church running, including our Licensed Lay Minister, Tricia Coward, Churchwarden Geoff Carr and Treasurer, Anna Bailey. Of course there are many more volunteers in Keston – thank you for all you do to make the world a better place.

There have been a number of letters in the newspapers recently about hymns, some particularly scathing about 'All things Bright and Beautiful' – but everyone to their own! On page 5 we have a piece about 'Praise my Soul the King of Heaven', which you may find of interest.

Sally Churchus



Cover Story

The picture on the front cover was taken after Rev'd Belinda's licensing service on the evening of Monday 8th April. The Bishop of Rochester, the Rt. Rev'd Dr Jonathan Gibbs presided. Churchwarden, Geoff Carr, is also in the photo.

It was a very happy occasion and marks the end of the 19 month vacancy. We look forward to a new chapter in the history of Keston parish church with Rev'd Belinda at the helm.

The Lord bless you and keep you;
the Lord make his face shine on you
and be gracious to you;
the Lord turn his face toward you
and give you peace.
Numbers 6:24-26



"I suppose you'll be having
the Shepherd's Pie?"

CartoonStock.com

Rev'd Belinda's Service raises the roof



Rev'd Belinda with daughter Natasha after the service



Tricia Coward, Licensed Lay Minister at Keston Parish Church

- Apparently as people were arriving before the service, a Greeter (roped in at the last minute) saw a man arrive and asked which group he was from as there was a list of Belinda's friends and family, local clergy etc. The reply was 'the Bishop' – much laughter ensued! *Anon*
- We had an amazing service on Monday 8th April to install our new Rector Belinda. Everybody was uplifted by it and to have the service conducted by the Bishop of Rochester with the High Sheriff of Kent and all of the local clergy was a very special occasion. *Geoff Carr, Churchwarden*
- A fantastic Service. Nearly blown off the organ bench with the volume of the congregational singing! Lots of wildlife around – a fly attacked my hearing aid and a ladybird wanted to play the organ. *David Cook, Organist*
- What an amazing service! The singing was so wonderful – the first hymn nearly blew us away... and I thought I would burst singing 'Christ be our Light!' So many committed people singing, together with lots of clergy. How great to have the Bishop there with us, and lovely to have people there from our local community, and a packed church. Well done to all those who worked so hard to make all the arrangements, and a huge thank you. *Angela Godfrey*
- It was a wonderful occasion. When the singing began I had to check the roof was still there. The volume of 'Tell Out My Soul' was immense. *Tonia Crouch, Choir member*
- Rev'd Belinda's Licensing was a great occasion, well worth waiting for. The church was packed with nearly 150 guests. The food afterwards was fabulous, (and great not to have to do the washing up ha ha). *Anna Bailey*



The Rt. Rev'd Dr Jonathan Gibbs, Bishop

The Story behind the Hymn

Praise my Soul the King of Heaven

Praise, my soul, the King of heaven,
To His feet thy tribute bring;
Ransomed, healed, restored, forgiven,
Who like me his praise should sing?
Alleluia! Alleluia!
Praise the everlasting King.

Praise Him for His grace and favour
To our fathers in distress;
Praise Him, still the same as ever,
Slow to chide and swift to bless:
Alleluia! Alleluia!
Glorious in His faithfulness.

Father-like, He tends and spares us,
Well our feeble frame He knows;
In His hands He gently bears us,
Rescues us from all our foes:
Alleluia! Alleluia!
Widely as His mercy flows.

Angels, help us to adore Him;
Ye behold Him face to face;
Sun and moon bow down before Him,
Dwellers all in time and space:
Alleluia! Alleluia!
Praise with us the God of grace.

Henry Francis Lyte (1793-1847)

This paraphrase of Psalm 103 has been included in probably more ceremonies than any other hymn in the English language. It was sung at the weddings of Queen Elizabeth to the Duke of Edinburgh in 1947 and of King Charles to Camilla Parker Bowles in 2005.

Henry Lyte had been a brilliant theological student at university in

Dublin, with a gift for versifying. After graduation he moved to a tiny and remote parish in County Wexford to serve his curacy. It was here, when he was about 25, that Henry had a religious experience which transformed his life.

A close friend of his, another clergyman, had fallen ill, and was clearly dying. Henry went to visit him. The friend was not as distressed as Henry had imagined he would be. Instead, the friend confessed that he had been re-reading the New Testament, with an eye on eternity, and had made a great discovery. There was no need to rely on religious duties and formalities and good deeds to gain peace with God. Instead, we can trust completely in the mercy of Christ and His saving power.

This encounter with his friend's faith at death's very door, made Henry reconsider his faith. He wrote later that his dear friend 'who died happy in the thought that there was One who would atone for his delinquencies' made him 'study my Bible and preach in another manner than I had previously done'. Soon after this hymn appeared, in 1834.

Lyte rejoices in the majesty and wonder of the living God, who in turn loves us. He captures the measure of the Psalm in enduring lyrics, which combine time, eternity, God and man all swept up into one embrace. Its last verse summons all the created order to join in a great act of joyous praise – surely a preview of eternity!

Parish Pump



Little Foragers Forest School

Coming Soon in Keston Parish
Church Woodland



What is Forest School?

Forest School is a unique educational experience, based outdoors, which promotes many different skills and ideas such as raising self-esteem, health, wellbeing, confidence, emotional intelligence, and teamwork. Children take part in a variety of activities which gives them hands on opportunities to develop their understanding of many topics with a child led approach to planning and learning, so the children get the most out of their sessions.

What do we do there?

Little Foragers allows children to join in a variety of outdoor activities and encourages them to learn about the natural environment as well as developing key social and emotional skills. Some of the activities are:

- Den building
- Use and practice of a variety of knots
- Safe use of fire lighting and cooking
- Identification of plants and animals
- Exploration of the natural world
- How to look after the natural world
- Use of sustainable resources within the Forest School
- Safe use of tools to support learning

- Finding out about the seasons
- Developing key social and emotional skills, e.g. spiritual development, health, and wellbeing
- Playing in the outdoors
- Taking risks in a safe way
- Building relationships/supporting each other
- Achieving manageable tasks both individually and in a group
- Mindfulness

Forest School Session every Saturday

Ages: 4 (Reception) - 10 years
9am - 11am

Forest School Stay & Play sessions every Tuesday

(accompanied by parent/carer)

Ages: confidently walking - 5 years

Session 1: 10am - 12:00 noon

Session 2: 12:30pm - 2.30pm

Stay and play is an opportunity for young children to explore, play in the natural environment and experience the use of natural resources. This ranges from looking for bugs, getting creative and playing in our wonderful mud kitchen area/ book corner and more.

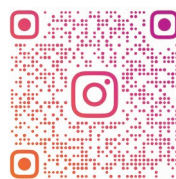
Birthday Parties every Saturday

(2 hour sessions) 1pm - 3pm

For more information, please visit littleforagersforestschool.co.uk.

We are so excited to get Little Foragers up and running and hope to see you!

Zoe, Tia and Lucy



LITTLE_FORAGERS_FOREST_SCHOOL

Golf Club Rules

Temporary Rules 1940 Richmond Golf Club

1. Players are asked to collect bomb and shrapnel splinters to save these causing damage to the mowing machines.
2. In Competitions, during gunfire or while bombs are falling, players may take cover without penalty for ceasing play.
3. The positions of known delayed action bombs are marked by red flags at a reasonably, but not guaranteed, safe distance therefrom.
4. Shrapnel and/or bomb splinters on the fairways, or in bunkers within a club's length of a ball, may be moved without penalty, and no penalty shall be incurred if a ball is thereby caused to move accidentally.
5. A ball moved by enemy action may be replaced, or if lost or destroyed, a ball may be dropped not nearer the hole without penalty.
6. A ball lying in a crater may be lifted and dropped not nearer the hole, preserving the line to the hole, without penalty.
7. A player whose stroke is affected by the simultaneous explosion of a bomb may play another ball from the same place. Penalty one stroke.

When did we two begin to grow so old?

Matured to Garden Centre café meals
our cups of tea come free with loyalty points,
so supping slow we rest our aching joints
and search the menu for the small-meal deals.

We eat our bowls of soup with buttered toast
among the walking sticks and Zimmer frames
see friends with only half remembered names
who sit and eat the midweek Sunday Roast.

We wear wide fitting Velcro-fastened shoes
avoid all spicy foods and only drink
one glass of wine a night and fondly think
of student days and parties packed with booze.

But now our lifetime membership is fully paid
we've joined the 'two spoons just one pudding' Life Brigade.

A sonnet by Roger Bloor

Obituary

Ida Beckett 16/12/1922-23/2/2024



Ida Beckett loved coming to Keston Church, she had a great appreciation of history and ancient buildings and really enjoyed the atmosphere in the church. She was also a woman who greatly valued relationship and friendship so she also looked forward to catching up with friends after the service! Ida attended the Sunday services regularly until reluctantly she had to stop coming due to poor mobility and frailty.

Intelligent and amusing with a great interest in English, Ida had a happy childhood and was the middle of three children. Her parents Mabel and Kenbryd James are buried in Keston churchyard.

Ida met Allan, her husband-to-be and it was love at first sight. (You may remember an article in The Keston Magazine in 2015 about Allan, who served as a Royal Engineer in the Second World War and designed the

floating roadway for the Mulberry Harbours. The long roadways connected floating pier-heads to the French coast and allowed the British and American troops, equipment and supplies to land successfully in Normandy on D-Day + 1). They married in 1949 and had three children, Mike, Tim and Sian.

Family and friends were key to Ida and she ran a bright, cheerful and welcoming home. She loved a party and there were many parties. She was busy and volunteered with various organisations like Orpington Mental Health and the Tate gallery; this is what she loved, fun and laughter with friends and all in a good cause.

Ida had loads of friends and was good at keeping friendships going, she also had a deep heart of kindness.

She took a keen interest in her family and other people and this was genuine and enduring, she rarely talked about herself unless probed, she always wanted a full and detailed update on what everyone was doing.

Ida had a beautiful smile end even in her very old age and last days her smile lit up your heart.

Her concerns for others is nicely summarised in the postscript at the bottom of her funeral instructions, it was written to her three children but it applies equally to us all. She wrote simply "Always care for each other", and she had underlined the 'care'. I cannot think of a better way to honour Ida's memory than doing just that.

Ida Beckett died peacefully at home on February 23rd. Mike and Sian were beside her. She was aged 101.

Sian Bennett

Death and Dying in the UK

Less than half of the UK population now want their death to be marked with a funeral, according to a major research report called Love, Grief, and Hope: Emotional responses to death and dying in the UK, released by the religion and society think tank Theos.

The findings are based on polling commissioned from YouGov, and reveal significant changes in the ways that people in the UK are approaching death and dying. Less than half of respondents (47%) said they wanted a funeral. Just over one in 10 (13%) of respondents who did not want a funeral said this was because they did not have enough money saved, but far more said they felt the money could be better spent another way (67%). Others said “I don’t see the point” (55%) or “I don’t want a traditional service” (43%).

Polling indicates that direct cremation, (or ‘take-away funerals’ where the body is taken directly to a crematorium without any service or other event), is now chosen for 18% of all deaths. This new polling by Theos suggests that this trend could grow further, translating

into a potential crisis for the funeral industry as a whole.

The researchers found that financial factors are significant in these decisions, but religious and spiritual adherence is even more influential: 76% of frequent worshippers said they wanted a funeral compared to 38% who never attend. Author Dr Madeleine Pennington, head of research at Theos, said: “It appears that the UK population no longer has a shared conviction on the importance of ritual frameworks to say goodbye. Market forces have a bigger impact on how we grieve, when we no longer approach grief itself through a ‘transcendent’ frame. In an age of declining formal religious affiliation, this is driving a significant realignment of British bereavement practices”.

“This is such an important report for our time,” says Archbishop Justin Welby in his foreword to the report. “It is shocking to discover that death may be seen as expensive, time-consuming and irrelevant, and that it is better just to move on”. He calls for the Church to re-offer its “honed compassionate skills” and to “re-open conversations about death”.

www.theosthinktank.co.uk

From the Registers

Baptisms

14th April Wynter Frame (born 8/12/2017)

14th April Ivy Frame (born 29/1/2019)

21st April Henry Edward Jacques Turner (born 22/6/2023)

Burial of Ashes

3rd March John Charles Ivey (aged 81 years)

15th April Andrew George Bickford (aged 68 years)

Church Services

1st Sunday of each month

8am Holy Communion
Book of Common Prayer (1662)
10am Celebrational Worship

All other Sundays

10am Holy Communion

Celebration Service

To celebrate Rev'd Eric Heslewood's 60 years of Ordained ministry we will be holding a special Holy Communion service at 3pm on Sunday 7th July. There will be light refreshments in the hall afterwards.



On the afternoon of Sunday 14th April, Ivy Frame (aged 5 years) and Wynter Frame (aged 6 years) came for Baptism by Rev'd Belinda Beckhelling. It was her first Baptism as Rector of Keston. The girls are pictured here with their parents, Ian and Clair. Afterwards they enjoyed celebrations with family and friends at The Warren. The family have lived in the village for over six years, and Wynter and Ivy were born in Keston and go to school locally. Ian is a Commander for the London Fire Brigade and Clair works in the security industry as a Director of Sales and Business Development.



10 month old Henry Turner was Baptised on 21st April by Rev'd Belinda. He is pictured here with his parents, Eddie and Alex, who were married at Keston church in 2021. Alex was herself Baptised at Keston and her parents were married there. The name Jacques is the same as Alex's maternal grandad, Jacques Blanc, who was a resident of Keston. Celebrations following the service were at the Two Doves pub.

Excuses for School Absence in late Victorian Keston

Keston National School Part 5

The reasons provided by parents or guardians to explain the absence of the children in their care provide an insight into the lives of the children, the families and the society of Keston at the time.

Mary Welland was already seven years old when she first entered the school having received no previous education. A note from Mrs Bentley written from Leaves Green explaining that Mary Welland whom she was boarding, stated she was an orphan and *'from the Union'*, which meant she was a workhouse girl probably from Bromley Union Workhouse at Farnborough and Mrs Bentley was receiving assistance from the Poor Law Guardians to act as foster mother. The same explanation was given for Richard Lettington who was a nine year old workhouse boy when he first registered at school.

children's labour made an essential contribution to the income of poor families

Edgar Cowland of Blackness Lane was absent on a number of occasions in 1885, the first time because his mother was ill, a few months later he was again absent because his sister was *'in the last stages of consumption'*.

One delightful letter explaining future absence arrived on the Master's desk in October 1885, when he received a note

from Mrs Gilbert of Nash, that informed him, *'she was going to Buxton for the benefit of her health and Daisy Sargeant would not be in school for three weeks'*. Daisy was an orphan who lived with Mrs Gilbert and would probably benefit even more than her guardian from the exciting experience of travelling to Buxton and staying in a high class resort for three weeks. Explaining absence from school in order to benefit from an out of season, low cost holiday, does not possess the same resonance.

Poor Lilly Borer, also of Nash, was frequently absent and in a rare event for Keston, her parents were issued with a summons by the Attendance Officer. The Managers asked the Master to approach the Poor Law Guardians to provide some assistance to the family. Two years later in 1888 a note in the Master's log book explained the dire circumstances of the family when it was recorded that all the children were sent to an orphanage on the death of their father.

George Stephens was recorded by the Master as *'scarcely at school'* in January and February 1887; the note explained his absence as the consequence of, *'working as a newspaper boy at the Post Office'*.

A note received by the Master in 1886 reported that Alfred Lovett was absent because he had cut off his thumb and first finger; no explanation was given for the accident.

Another aspect of life for some residents of Keston was recorded in 1886/7, when Florence Lucas's mother wrote from Notting Hill, to say she would be absent because she was visiting her mother in London. Six months later Florence was again absent,



The old school on the Common (built 1855), photographed after 1908 when the flagpole was erected. Headmaster Mr Frederick George Taylor BA is outside the front door. He became Headmaster on 9th September 1890 and his last day was at the end of the summer term 1924. During the Great War, his interest in the welfare of his scholars took practical shape in the opening of a canteen kitchen, where they were able to obtain cheap mid-day meals. For 28 years he was Organist and Choirmaster of Keston Parish Church



this time because *'her mother had come from London'*. Although not stated, it seems clear her mother was working in London and at home only rarely.

Horace Banham returned to school on 23rd November 1907, just in time for Christmas, having been working since the summer. In a letter to the Master his father asked that he not be caned; certainly father knew and

probably approved of his son adding to the family income. Everyone living in rural villages before 1914 accepted that children's labour made an essential contribution to the income of poor families and enforcing compulsory attendance proved impossible, with or without a Labour Certificate.

Tudor Davies

Current Keston School Motto: In God's hands, we love, learn and grow.

Glorious Spring Lilies in Keston



Solomon's Seal

“Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they neither toil nor spin, yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not clothed like one of these”.

Matthew 6:28-29

In Keston and Hayes, we can count at least seven members of this beautiful family growing wild, with some familiar names (Bluebells, Daffodils, Wild Garlic, Lily of the Valley), some with names of biblical resonance (Solomon's Seal, Star of Bethlehem) and one surprise member (Butcher's Broom). April and May are the best times to see these delicate flowers, before the trees have shaded the woodland floor completely.

It is often difficult to decide whether these flowers are native UK species or have been introduced. Because of their popularity, even true UK species have also been widely planted in gardens for centuries and also readily hybridise, making identification very challenging.

Solomon's Seal

(Polygonatum multiflorum)

No-one knows for certain the origin of the name, perhaps in part due to the medicinal quality of “sealing” wounds and broken bones. This plant can be found along the riverbank down from the Ravensbourne Pond, where it was probably introduced in the 19th century as part of the garden created by the Bonham-Carters. It is likely to be the garden hybrid with a ridged stem, as opposed to the wild plant which has a round stem.

Star of Bethlehem

(Ornithogalum umbellatum)

This can be found on the second smaller meadow walking in from Lakes Road towards the river. One of nature's shyest plants, it curls up its pretty star shaped petals by midday or earlier if overcast. Its name is not only a reference to its shape, recalling the star of the Nativity, but also the fact that it grows in profusion in Palestine.



Star of Bethlehem



Lily of the Valley

Lily of the Valley

(*Convallaria majalis*)

In May the nodding bell shaped flowers exude their delightful sweet scent to attract insects, but they can also self-pollinate if needed. Fruits are not often produced and the plant mainly spreads from its creeping rootstock. It has been cultivated for over 500 years for its beauty and perfume. There are some patches on Hayes Common near Croydon Road and Baston Road.

Butcher's Broom

(*Ruscus aculeatus*)

There are few stranger lilies in Britain than this, as it has no true leaves. Instead, it has leaf-like flattened stems, which have tiny greenish flowers



Butcher's Broom

growing in the angle of the "leaf". These remain all year, giving the plant an appearance of being evergreen and rather holly-like. The female flowers are followed by a red berry. According to tradition, bundles of the mature branches were used by butchers for sweeping their blocks. You can find some by the first bridge over the river near the Ravensbourne Pond.

Ramsons or Wild Garlic

(*Allium ursinum*)



Wild Garlic

At their best, Ramsons can carpet the woodland floor, especially damp shady spots. Look for them on the left roadside bank as you walk down Fox Lane. Its strong odour of garlic is quite noticeable. The white five petalled flowers form an attractive cluster. Don't confuse this with the Three-Cornered Garlic which has more slender leaves and drooping flower heads. This is a garden escapee and on its way to being an invasive pest around here.

Do take time while admiring the usual bluebells and daffodils this spring to seek out the shy member of this wonderful family in all their subtle glory.

Bob Harrop

The Boy who Fled the Russians



Many of you will know Richard Geiger and his wife Pat, who live in Leaves Green. Geiger is a German name, meaning Fiddler, as in playing the fiddle. His father, Eugen, was from south Germany and Richard's mother, Stella, came from Bushey, Hertfordshire. Both his parents were born around 1906-1908.

After school Stella worked for a while as a governess in a big house during the summer holidays. Originally from Swabia, Richard's father was an anglophile. After completing his apprenticeship in engineering in Germany, he came to Pitman's in Hampstead to improve his English.

Stella loved German at school and became proficient, so in the mid-30s decided to go to Germany, explaining that she 'wanted to see what Mr Hitler was getting up to'. So off she went to the historic city of Magdeburg, later flattened by the RAF and Americans, to teach English. Stella was a fine pianist and loved opera. One day Eugen and Stella saw each other at the opera, so he enrolled in her English classes. They married and set up house in Magdeburg. Stella's family weren't too pleased, as Eugen was working as a draughtsman for Krupp, the famous engineering

company and the main weapons manufacturer for Germany in both World Wars. He carried on working for Krupp during the war, and was therefore excused National Service.

Along came Richard in 1941, the youngest of the three. He remembers sleeping in the cellar of the house. Just before Liberation, he recalls the Americans coming through; the locals hung out white sheets. The only conflict in the Magdeburg area in the Old East Germany was when the Russians came through in 1945.

The family dynamics weren't that easy. Richard's brother Eugen was his mother's favourite but Richard, the youngest, was the naughty one! He remembers his mother saying, 'You're a horrible boy. If the (deceased) twins had lived, I wouldn't have had you'. Richard remembers a Russian staff car coming by while he was swinging on the metal front gate. He picked up a stone and threw it at the car. The car stopped and an officer came up the garden path. His mother had a hard time pacifying him!

When the Russians came through, Richard's mother started to make plans to leave, but Richard's father would have to stay in Germany. In 1946 no Germans were allowed into England .

A cousin collected a petition for the Home Office; the local MP for Hemel Hempstead was Lady Davidson. She brought up in Parliament the situation of this English-German family where the whole family was stuck in Germany. As a result of this, Richard's mother was given permission to enter England; however, they weren't allowed to leave

East Germany even after a visit to see the Consul General of Magdeburg, who was a Russian.

After the war his mother had taken up the custom of giving tradesmen a Christmas box. One of these had access to a lorry that went to Berlin once a week. One day mother and the three

He picked up a stone and threw it at the car

children boarded the lorry, picking up other people as well. Richard remembers going through a German forest with pine trees on either side. During a comfort break in the forest, people suddenly emerged from the woods, also wanting to get on board. Even now going along a road with pine trees triggers this memory from when he was six!

They reached Berlin and stayed with two Russian ladies, who had fled the Revolution and were living in a grand building which had not been destroyed. The family stayed for two days and then came the moment of truth: they went to Berlin Tempelhof airport, where they boarded a Dakota. He remembers looking at this aircraft and thinking, 'This is the highlight of my life'. He doesn't remember take-off, but does remember crossing the Channel. At this point his mother was getting quite excited. They landed at RAF Northolt and went to live at Hemel Hempstead at the cousin's house who had been instrumental in their exit.

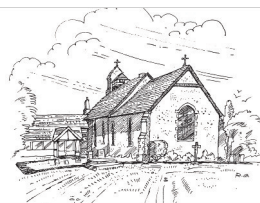
Then the family troubles really began. According to the Russian authorities, the family weren't meant to have left.

His father, not having permission to come to England, kept on buying the same amount of goods with the ration books, then distributing the rest that he didn't need, but someone reported him. Richard's father was quizzed by the Russian authorities, who sentenced him to two year's hard labour. He was used as slave labour on the building of a dam in the Harz mountains.

Meanwhile in England, Stella needed work and as she was unable to secure work in England, went to Edinburgh High School for Boys to teach, taking the two eldest children with her. Richard, aged seven, was put into a council run children's home in Harpenden which, he says, was awful! His mother found out the situation and managed to get all three children into West Lulworth Church of England children's home. This, Richard says, was the best time of his life! On the first night the lady who ran the home complimented Richard on the way he folded his clothes at bedtime! The three of them went to the local school and at one point there was a county-wide painting competition by Brooke Bond Tea, which Richard won!

Richard's brother went back to Germany in 1959, and his sister became a teacher and lives in Leicester.

Mark Newman (edited version)



Richard's sketch of Keston church used to be on the cover of The Keston Magazine

Local People Design and Install Boards



Caesar's Well board in situ

The two new interpretation boards have now been installed by the Friends of Keston Common, (FoKC), one by Caesar's Well and the other by Pond 3, down from Fishponds Road.

Local resident, and artist Yana Wolanski did the wildlife drawings on the Pond 3 board. She is a volunteer with FoKC, and is on the committee, as is Bob Harrop who did most of the words on the Pond 3 board.

Larry Herbert, Chair of the FoKC created the layout and design of both

boards using the elements provided for him from various sources.

The words on the Caesar's Well board were mostly written by Tudor Davies, (FoKC Treasurer), who also provided the archive photos on that board, courtesy of the Bromley History Society.

Thanks are due to the Co-op who helped to fund this venture. It is hoped that visitors to the Common will find them a useful addition and benefit from the information displayed.



Pond 3 board being installed



Pond 3 board finished

What I Do



Anne Blanc has been volunteering with St Christopher's, Caritas House, Orpington for about 11 years. After school she trained as an SRN nurse and by retirement she was Head of Care at St Cecilia's Cheshire Home in Bromley.

How did you become involved in working for St Christopher's?

My husband, Jacques, received wonderful care from the hospice at the end of his life, and I wanted to give something back. They will not take you for the first year after bereavement, and after that I had an interview. This was followed by initial training for one day a week for eight weeks.

What hours do you work?

I work on Wednesdays from 9am till about 3pm, but it depends on what's needed.

What do you actually do?

Whilst at Caritas House I meet and greet patients and their families and look after those who are waiting, chatting to them and making tea or coffee for them if needed – basically making them feel welcome. The centre

is used by outpatients, who come for appointments, physiotherapy, speech therapy, exercise in the gym, to see the Lymphoedema team or for one-to-one Bereavement counselling. I also help at the drop in for Bereaved folk on a Friday afternoon once a month, and help run it with the Chaplain Sue Gilder. In addition I am part of the Compassionate Neighbours initiative, and visit bereaved people in their homes who would like chat and company.

Do you help St Christopher's in other ways?

Yes, I help with fundraising. I have helped with marshalling, (at the end of Fishpond's Road), for many years for the Fun Walk that takes place in May round Keston every few years. I also help with the Bluebell walk at Cudham and at the plant sale at Caritas. Last year I helped with fundraising by the sale of hundreds of metal snowdrops that people could buy in memory of a loved one, which were put into an amazing display in the garden of Down House. The scheme was run again this year, but this time the display was in Sydenham and then people were invited to collect them from Orpington afterwards. I also help out at the Summer and Christmas Fairs, but I am just a small cog in a large wheel, there are many many volunteers.

What do you enjoy/not enjoy about your work with St Christopher's?

I am not so keen on the colour of the polo shirt uniform (!) but enjoy meeting people and mixing with the other volunteers and going to help at the different events. Contrary to many people's expectations, St Christopher's is a happy, positive place.

As told to Sally Churchus

Sporting Success at Keston CE Primary

Y3/4 Bromley Borough Tri-Golf Competition at Chelsfield Lakes Golf Club

On Thursday 25th April a team of children from Y3/4 took part in a Tri-Golf Competition at Chelsfield Lakes Golf Club. Nine schools took part and I am delighted to report that we won the event. All team members received a winners medal and the school received a trophy.

Bromley Small School's Y5/6 Boys Football Competition

After beating St Philomena's Primary School 1-0 in the semi finals, Keston went through to the final of the Bromley Small School's Y5/6 Boys Football. On Friday 26th April we played against The Highway School at Petts Wood Football Club in the final

competition and I'm pleased to report Keston won the match 2-0 and were awarded a lovely trophy. Well done to both teams!

Josh Hunnisett, Sports Teacher
Keston CE Primary (below)



KESTFEST
KESTON VILLAGE FESTIVAL
2024

A celebration to bring family & friends together

KESTON VILLAGE GREEN
1st June 2024
1pm - 6pm

LIVE ENTERTAINMENT - FOOD STALLS - SHOPPING - DOG SHOW & DOG AGILITY - FUN STALLS

What's On

- **Prayer Walks**

1st Tues & 3rd Wed 9.30am

The Green opposite Greyhound pub

We usually return about 11am. Well behaved dogs welcome too!

- **Men's pub social**

3rd Wed 7pm The Greyhound

Join us for chat and drinks, plus a meal for those who want it. More details from Martin Becker on 07484 609102.

- **Keston Book Club**

1st Wed 7pm The Fox

More information from 07503 268001 or angelahollamby@gmail.com.

- **Friends of Keston Common Walk**

1st Wed 2pm from Keston Village Sign opposite The Greyhound

Well behaved dogs welcome and good footwear advised.

- **New Keston WI**

2nd Wed 1.30pm-3.30pm

Keston Church Hall

Contact Helen Best on 07715 880889.

- **Book Reading Fellowship**

Mon 15th July 2pm Gravel Road

Come and discuss books with some Christian content that you have read over tea/coffee and cake. Please let Sally Churchus know on 020 8462 8750 or editor@kestonparishchurch.org.uk if you would like to come.

- **Mental Wellbeing Coffee Morning**

Sat 27th July 10am-12 noon

Keston Church Hall

Come for chat over tea/coffee and cake with a mental health professional at hand. We will hear tips about how we can keep ourselves well.

- **Messy Church**

Tuesday 30th July 10am

Keston Church Hall



Your Travels

The sunrise is so consistent that we take it for granted, but few things are as miraculous as the celestial dance that takes place on a daily basis. The earth spins on its axis at 1,000 mph at the equator and, while it is rotating through 360 degrees every 24 hours, it is also hurtling through space at an unimaginable speed of 67,000 mph. You might not have any big plans for today as you're reading this, but you will travel 1,600,000 miles in your annual lap around the sun. Quite an accomplishment. So, take time to wonder and to thank God.

God saw everything that He had made, and indeed, it was very good.

Genesis 1:31

Taken from the quarterly booklet *UCB Word for Today*. You can get free issues from the publishers: United Christian Broadcasters ucb.co.uk.

A colorful poster for a Summer Fair. The background is dark blue with yellow stars and green circles. The text 'Keston CE Primary School's Summer Fair' is at the top. Below that, '£1 ENTRY' and 'EVERYONE WELCOME' are in pink and blue circles. A green banner says 'SATURDAY 29TH JUNE 12-4PM'. At the bottom, there's a yellow banner with 'Lakes Road, Keston Kent BR2 6BN' and 'To book a stall, message 07985 660710'. A small logo for Keston CE Primary School is in the bottom right corner.

Keston CE Primary School's
Summer Fair
*
£1 ENTRY
EVERYONE WELCOME
SATURDAY 29TH
JUNE
12-4PM
Lakes Road, Keston Kent BR2 6BN
To book a stall, message 07985 660710
KESTON
CE Primary School

Magazine Deadline

Please send photos and articles for the August/September issue of The Keston Magazine to the Editor, Sally Churchus, before Friday 5th July by email: editor@kestonparishchurch.org.uk or contact her to discuss ideas on Tel: 020 8462 8750. Thank you.

Laughlines

☺ Four bishops decided to keep in touch with each other in their retirement. They thought it would be good to play golf occasionally, so they met one morning as arranged, wearing various styles of golfing dress. They hired a caddy to drive the cart holding them and their clubs. After one particularly bad hole, the caddy asked,

“Do you guys happen to be churchmen by any chance?”. The Bishops were puzzled by the question and one replied, “Yes we are, but why do you ask? The caddy said, “Oh, that’s easy, it’s the first time I have come across such bad golf and such clean language”.

☺ With Christenings/Baptisms in mind

A baby website conducted some research into ‘The most unfortunate names in Britain’. Here are some of the results...

Terry Bull, Tim Burr, Rose Bush, Justin Case, Mary Christmas, Chris Cross, Sonny Day, Teresa Green, Doug Hole, Jo King, Lee King, Hazel Nutt, Will Power, Stan Still, Paige Turner, Anna Sasin. (Editor’s own favourite: Nora Bone).

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