

The

Keston Magazine

News of your Parish and Village



October/November 2024

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'He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death'
or mourning or crying or pain. *Revelation 21:4*

Thought for the month



Down House

Image: Anthonycatworld at the British Wikipedia

Remembering

'Remember the days of old; consider the years of many generations.' Deuteronomy 32:7. Last week I visited Down House, the home of Charles Darwin, whose theory on evolution by natural selection sent shock waves through society especially in religious circles. As I reflected on how the natural world evolves by adapting in response to experience of its habitat, my thoughts hovered around the concept of 'memory' and how key this is to human development. From infancy we learn the consequences of our actions by experience – eg. when we touch something hot and it causes us pain we know not to do it again. It is the memory of the pain associated with the action that deters us from repeating it. When we find something that brings us joy, we want more of it.

Of all the gifts God has blessed humanity with, undoubtedly, our memory is the most precious. Remembering connects humanity with its past and the past is the key to the future. Inventors build on proven knowledge and understanding to imagine new possibilities. Ecologists study observed phenomenon to predict

future patterns. Historians document events, for better or worse, and sociologists interpret their impact on society. Learning from the past helps us to shape a more informed future, even if life throws up new challenges.

In these autumn months the Christian church joins in with wider national and international commemorations. Black History Month in October and Remembrance Day in November offer occasions to recognise the contribution of specific groups of people who have changed the course of people's lives by their sacrifice, to acknowledge the human propensity for transgression and to ensure that our current and future actions build on the thoughts etched in our memories towards making a better world.

Remembering is a key theme in any major religion. Did you know that the word 'remember' occurs 240 times in the Bible? In the Old Testament as the Israelites, God's chosen people, wander the wilderness in search of the promised land, they are continuously urged to remember God's faithfulness. Remembering helps to connect them with who they are and to redefine their purpose, that they may be sustained as they travel on. In the New Testament, Jesus Christ commands those who would follow him, *'Do this in remembrance of me.'* (1 Cor. 11.24-25). As Christians gather for Holy Communion, we remember who God created us to be and are re-membered into Christ's body, one with Christ and one with each other. Wherever in the world we are by our remembrance we evolve stronger in the faith.

Rev'd Belinda Beckhelling

From the Editor

I've recently had toothache, and have never been so pleased to see my dentist! I don't normally relish the thought of going as I had a lot of work done as a child, although I do go regularly and my dentist is actually lovely. A course of antibiotics has thankfully cleared up the problem and it has made me grateful that I live in this day and age, rather than over 100 years ago when you would probably have to visit some kind of quack with a set of pliers and no anaesthetic! Although the news is full of depressing information about the state of the country and indeed the world, most of us are definitely better off than previous generations.

I know many readers like the history articles, and may be interested to see the details of the Holwood History walk. I enjoyed hearing about the church painting that has returned to Keston after nearly 60 years, but I expect many people will think the best article is the one about the snails on p10. Apparently it brought a smile to the face of someone who has already read it.

Speaking of smiles, at our last Mental Health Wellbeing coffee morning we learnt that even a 'fake' smile releases feel good hormones in your body, so that may be worth a try if things are getting you down – particularly on World Smile Day on 4th October!

Sally Churchus



Cover Story

This beautiful photo was taken by Anna Bailey whilst walking her dogs at Farnborough Fields in July, and could be seen from Shire Lane. Poppies usually grow in wheat fields, but they were not sprayed back this year to the delight of passers by.

Magazine Donations

Thank you once again to everyone who has kindly donated towards the costs of producing The Keston Magazine. It is much appreciated.

Coats Wanted

Keston Church are collecting your unwanted coats to donate to Wrap Up London, a scheme run by charity HandsOn London distributing warm coats to the homeless and people at risk during the winter. Please bring them to church on a Sunday morning any time from now until the last drop off date of 24th November. Alternatively, you can leave them in a back bag and deliver to Elm Gables, Westerham Road, Keston, BR2 6HH. Our Treasurer, Anna Bailey, has taken responsibility to deliver them to the charity collection point.

So this is your opportunity to go through your unwanted coats and donate them to a good cause, at very little inconvenience or cost to you. We know they will be appreciated and given new life by their end user. Thank you. See wrapupuk.org for more information.



Anna Bailey

New Chapter for The Greyhound



Dave Lee at the Custom Car Rally on Sunday 18th August

After 16 years at the helm of this wonderful pub, both Toni and I have decided it's time to step away and have a bit of a rest. All good things must come to an end and we feel this is the time for someone else to take over the reins and inject some new enthusiasm and direction into The Greyhound. We will be putting the lease on the market this September.

We want to thank all our amazing staff and customers that have supported us over the years. We've never considered ourselves owners, rather 'custodians' and hopefully you will all support whoever comes in to take our place. Thank you again one and all.

Dave, Toni, Libby, Ben and River Lee



Photographer Caroline Miller/Picture Partnership

High Flight (The RAF Poem)

By John Gillespie Magee Jr

Oh! I have slipped the surly bonds of Earth
And danced the skies on laughter-silvered wings;
Sunward I've climbed, and joined the tumbling mirth
of sun-split clouds, – and done a hundred things
You have not dreamed of – wheeled and soared and swung
High in the sunlit silence. Hov'ring there,
I've chased the shouting wind along, and flung
My eager craft through footless halls of air

Up, up the long, delirious, burning blue
I've topped the wind-swept heights with easy grace
Where never lark nor ever eagle flew –
And, while with silent lifting mind I've trod
The high untrespassed sanctity of space,
Put out my hand, and touched the face of God.



THE KVRA
**Keston
Wonderland**
16TH NOVEMBER
3PM TO 7PM

KESTON VILLAGE HALL

JOIN US FOR SHOPPING,
SANTAS GROTTO, FOOD &
DRINKS STALLS AND LIVE
ENTERTAINMENT INTO THE
EVENING....!



Harvest Lunch

12.30pm Sunday
6th October
Keston Parish
Church Hall

Tickets to be
bought in advance
£18 each
from Chris on
07988 712873
Bring your own
drinks & glasses

Remembrance and the Keston Poppies



The origin of the Keston Poppies can be traced to the 2014-2018 Great War Centenary Commemorations. In 2016 Peter Zieminski proposed to the Keston Village Residents' Association, (KVRA), that large Royal Legion Poppies should be displayed in the village from Commonsides to the Village Hall. The KVRA, together with others, sponsored the Poppies which at the time cost £1.00 each. Each year since then KVRA volunteers (Peter and Andrew Zieminski, Shelley Sturdy, John Wiltshire and his family), have been responsible for erecting the Poppies one week before Remembrance Sunday and then taking them down again a week later. The Poppies are then cleaned and examined for weather damage. Wherever possible, damaged Poppies are repaired and stored for use the following year. Unfortunately, over the years however, the number of reusable Poppies has considerably diminished and they now cost £5.00 each to replace. The KVRA are grateful to those

residents who have sponsored Poppies in the past but now there is a need to purchase 75 replacements if the village commemoration is to continue. The KVRA would like to appeal to residents to consider supporting the continuance of the village commemoration by sending a donation to the KVRA Treasurer, Hilary Ryder (who can be emailed at kestonvillagera@gmail.com), or direct into the KVRA Bank Account Sort Code: 09-01-29, Account Number: 35321237. Thank you.

Peter Zieminski



Both photos courtesy of local photographer Laurence Pierce

A painting comes home to Keston



Angela's painting by Ivor Hayes

When my sister, Jenny, visited me last year from Lincolnshire, she brought with her an intriguingly large parcel. She said it was a birthday present for me. Imagine my surprise when I unwrapped it, and found a very lovely painting of Keston Church, signed and dated by the artist – “Ivor Hayes, September 1968”. The story of how it came back to Keston is fascinating and I wondered if some of our readers might find it of interest.

My sister's first husband, Michael Starky, passed away last year. This painting of Keston Church hung in his study. Michael's late father, Rev'd John Coventry Starky, was Rector of Keston Church from 1959 until 1968, and we

believe that this painting was presented to John as part of his retirement gifts, when he and his wife Molly retired to live in Exmouth in Devon. Michael's second wife and widow, Valerie, had thought that Jenny would like the painting as it depicted the church where she was christened and where she and Michael were married by John in 1964.

It is amazing to think that this painting had made the journey from Keston to Exmouth, and back to Lincolnshire and ultimately home to Keston over its (nearly) 60 year history. When I attended John Starky's retirement party in 1968, I never thought that his gift would be passed to me all those years later. Life is



Rev'd John Starky on his wedding day 1935

interesting like that, isn't it? It is such a lovely painting and very 'alive', and I am thrilled to have it on my wall.

I know that there are at least three other Ivor Hayes' paintings of the church in existence and owned locally, and it would be interesting to find out how many he had painted of the church in particular. I wonder if he sat in the churchyard, to capture the church as it was then (without the hall extension)? We know that one of the other paintings of the church was commissioned by Sheila Adcock and her husband, Gordon, and the large picture hangs in her dining room. This one is dated 1974.

Ivor Hayes came from a family of talented artists, (Edwin and Claude Hayes), and lived with his wife, Susan, and daughters Philippa and Clare in Greys Park Close, Keston. After retirement he spent a great deal of time painting, especially watercolours, but he also did wood-engraving and experimented with oils, portraiture and sculpture. He had a number of one-man exhibitions and was developing a project involving drawings of 'homes of the famous', including one of Holwood. He hoped to pair these with text but died before he could identify the right

person, or find a publisher.

My memories of Rev'd John Starky are of a colourful and caring Rector, well known in the village for visiting his parishioners, often calling late at night, and always glad to take a glass of his favourite tippie (whisky). I was Guide leader of the 1st Keston Guides at the time, and he never failed to appear at the end of each of our meetings on a Saturday morning, to say a 'closing prayer'.

All these memories have set me thinking and it's a shock to realise that I have known nine Rectors of Keston during my long life and membership of Keston Church! Can anyone remember more than nine? Or perhaps someone owns or knows where Ivor's other pictures of Keston Church are now?

Angela Godfrey, with thanks to Philippa and Clare Hayes and Sheila Adcock



Rev'd John Starky on an early 1960s edition



Ivor Hayes

Snail Mail



Who's been nibbling the church post? Snails, we suspect! Post has to be pushed under the large wooden church doors and before we get there on a Sunday they have had a feast!

We all know it's been a bumper year for slugs and snails. There was even a letter to *The Telegraph* saying that a Royal Mail box in Northumberland has had to be closed because snails are eating the mail! Apparently snails eat paper because most paper contains cellulose from the wood pulp which they can digest, plus they get calcium from paper that they need to build their shells.

So far, at Keston they have shunned the slug pellets, so we will have to think about a new draught excluder and a letter box outside. That would need a church faculty as it's a Grade II* listed building – but who knows if they would still get in the postbox and enjoy a healthy meal?!

Sally Churchus

My Favourite Bible Verse

“Intreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God: Where thou diest, will I die, and there will I be buried: the Lord do so to me, and more also, if ought but death part thee and me.” Ruth 1:16-17.

This is the part where Ruth refuses to leave her widowed mother-in-law and go back to her own family when Naomi returns to her homeland. I felt this was a good reading for a wedding and therefore chose it for my own wedding reading.

I like the whole book of Ruth, and when she later marries Boaz their descendants include King David and ultimately Jesus.

Tonia Crouch



From the Registers

Baptism

21st July Celyah Grey Walling (born 24/7/2022)

Funeral

8th August Trevor Anthony Rowland (aged 72 years)

Burial of Ashes

14th July Jack Springman (aged 59 years)

Church Services



Harvest arrangement in church porch

1st Sunday of each month

8am Holy Communion using
Book of Common Prayer (1662)

10am Celebrational Worship
(non Communion)

All other Sundays

10am Holy Communion

Mondays

7.40am Morning Prayer

8.00am Holy Communion (said)

Harvest Festival

10am Sunday 6th October

Please bring your cash donations for Welcare in Bromley and also food for Bromley Borough Foodbank. Items they are currently short of are: long life desserts, sweets, ladies deodorant, adult toothbrushes and adult toothpaste.

They have plenty pasta, biscuits, cereal and tea. Thank you.

All Saints' Day

7.30pm Friday 1st November

All welcome for Holy Communion.

Service for the Bereaved

3pm Sunday 3rd November

Everyone is invited to a short service of hymns and prayers with the chance to light a candle in memory of loved ones, and a list of their names will be read out. If you would like someone's name added to the list please email Tricia on hallbookings@kestonparishchurch.org.uk After the service tea and cakes will be served in the church hall.

Remembrance

10am Sunday 10th November

There will be an 8am service of Holy Communion using the Book of Common Prayer (1662) then at 10am there will be a short (non Communion) service in Keston parish church before assembling at the Village Sign opposite The Greyhound pub at about 10.30am, to leave at 10.40am walking quietly up to the War Memorial where prayers will be said, the two-minute silence observed and wreaths laid. You would be welcome to the church services or just the walk from the village to the War Memorial and the Act of Remembrance there.

Confirmation Classes

A preparation course will be starting for those who would like to be Confirmed (if you have already been baptised), or Christened and Confirmed. It will cover the basics of Christianity, over sessions totalling about six hours. If you are interested, please contact Rev'd Belinda on rector@kestonparishchurch.org.uk as soon as possible. Thank you.

Keston's Connections with India Part 2



Hollydale House, north side circa 1905

James Kirkpatrick of Hollydale, Croydon Road, Keston

The third family occupants of 'big houses' in Keston is the Kirkpatrick's of Hollydale, on the north side of Croydon Road. Members of this family supplied some of the most colourful characters in the story of the Honourable East India Company (there was stiff competition). James Kirkpatrick, *'the handsome colonel'* was born in Carolina and after returning to England he quickly joined the HEIC eventually retiring to Bromley where he built his new home at Hollydale c.1786.

His three sons followed him to India; his eldest son William (illegitimate) became secretary to Richard Wellesley (Duke of Wellington's brother) and was Company representative in the first European delegation to enter Kathmandu, Nepal. His step brothers George and James Achilles were born at Fort St. George, Madras.

Their mother died at 22 and the boys were sent to England only to return to India in their teenage years. James became fluent in Persian and Hindi,

married Begum Kair un-Nissa, the daughter of a high status family and adopted the Muslim faith. This placed him under suspicion within the Company, with threats to his position and in ill-health he sent his four year old son, Mir Ghulam Ali and his two year old daughter Noor un-Nissa to live with their grandfather in Keston. The 'handsome colonel's' home then housed five grandchildren all born in India, two of whom were Anglo Indian. While on passage to England the children were Christened and given the names George and Katherine (Kitty). George died at 27 while living at Hollydale, his sister died in Torquay in 1889 at 87. Quite what the residents of the hamlet of Keston made of the family is not recorded. Along with many large houses Hollydale was demolished in the 1930s to make way for a new housing estate, however, the Stable block, number 32 Croydon Road had been divided into flats and the gardens with its ponds can be seen in the hidden gem that is Hollydale Recreation Ground.



Hollydale garden circa 1905

The most visible sign of our presence in India is the remarkable quantity of Eastern luxury goods that survives in houses and museums across Britain. When Mr William Dodgson moved to Forest Lodge, Westerham Road, in 1912 he requested a detailed inventory of his possessions for insurance purposes. The list of items is many pages long and reflects how the arts and crafts of the Far East had infiltrated the tastes of English society. The maid's room contained a 'japanned' oval bath, the store room held a four panel Japanese screen, in rooms around the house there



Hollydale garden gate taken to Holy Trinity Church, Bromley Common, when the house was demolished

were oriental ornaments, bowls and vases, Satsuma ware, a pair of 17" Chinese 'kilns', rugs of tiger skin and snow leopard with head and claws attached and a 12' by 9' Indian carpet. There was a Chinese rosewood cabinet in the school room and a pink richly embroidered cashmere piano cover in the drawing room.

Tudor Davies



Hollydale Stable Block 1958



In Half Term

10 am - 12 noon
Tuesday 22nd October
Keston Parish Church Hall
Church Road BR2 6HT

10 am Welcome drinks and snacks
10.15 am Crafts and activities
for all ages and interests
11.30 am Celebration with music
11.45 am Lunch (provided)

Everyone gets to enjoy doing crafts,
learning about the God who loves us,
and share a meal together

Theme: Light

Historic Holwood Walk and Talk

Join us for a walk through the Holwood Estate on Sunday 6th October, starting at 2pm. Learn about the history of the estate from Roman times to the present day. See the Iron Age fort, the site of the medieval tile kiln and discover the connections Holwood has to William Pitt the Younger and William Wilberforce while enjoying the beautiful scenery.

If you are coming by car we suggest parking in the Heathfield Road or Westerham Road car parks and entering the estate through the private gate off the public footpath, which is near the roundabout on Westerham Road and Heathfield Road and runs through Holwood. Someone will be at the footpath gate to let people in and give directions where to go. Otherwise, if arriving on foot enter through the main drive opposite Fishponds Road and follow the signs.

We suggest wearing suitable footwear as we will be walking on rough ground. Sorry but we are unable to accommodate dogs. As numbers are limited, please reserve a place by phoning or texting 07939 122174, thank you.

Save the Planet!

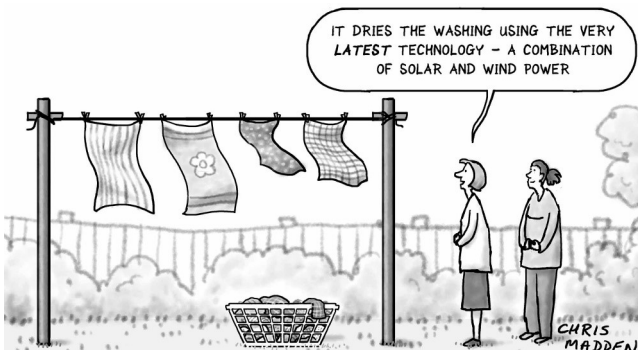
Recycle Week 14-20 October 2024

Three ways you can help:

1. Deliverers please save the elastic bands, (particularly the large ones), from your magazine bundles and return them to Sally Churchus for re-use. Thank you.
2. Recycle used medicine blister packs at Superdrug stores – unfortunately Bromley doesn't offer this service, but Beckenham does.
3. Recycle most plastic bags, (not just carrier bags), at larger supermarkets – there are large containers inside the shops where you can deposit them. Look on the bags, (eg. those containing bread, peas, apples, pasta), for the symbol below. Maybe collect them in an old bread bag for a couple of weeks until it is full and then take them along.



See www.recyclenow.com for a wealth of interesting information.



Catherine Wheels and Saint Catherine of Alexandria

If you've ever had a small firework display in your garden you have probably nailed a Catherine Wheel to a post in the hope that once lit it will rotate and emit starry sparks from a wonderful spiral of light. But they can be a bit temperamental!

The firework is named after St. Catherine of Alexandria, from the 4th century whose feast day is celebrated by most churches on 25th November and who was condemned to death on a wheel.

She was of noble birth and was well educated. Around the age of 14 she converted to Christianity after a vision of the Virgin Mary and infant Jesus, describing her decision as "becoming the bride of Christ". (This term is still used by Christian nuns to denote their status and by the wearing of a wedding ring; as well as the Biblical term for the whole church in the book of Revelation).

Persecutions of Christians began under the emperor Maxentius and Catherine went to him and rebuked him for his cruelty. He summoned 50 of his cleverest philosophers to argue with her but in the end it was the philosophers who converted. (They were immediately executed). He ordered her to be thrown into prison and tortured. However, many people came to visit her and were converted to Christianity. Maxentius then tried to win her over by proposing marriage, which she refused, declaring her spouse was Jesus Christ. He was furious and condemned her to an agonising death on a spiked breaking

wheel, but before the torture could begin the wheel shattered when she touched it. This was generally interpreted as God's intervention. Maxentius finally ordered for her to be beheaded.

Her relics were supposedly found at the foot of Mount Sinai in the year 800 and it became the site of St. Catherine's monastery, a popular medieval pilgrimage site. She was deemed the most important of the virgin martyrs. Much of the story is legendary as the earliest surviving account of Catherine's life comes 600 years after her martyrdom, her symbol being the spiked wheel.

Catherine is considered to be the patron saint of students, unmarried girls and apologists amongst others. Many places have been named after her, including Colleges in Oxford and Cambridge, (the latter was founded on St. Catherine's Day for a small community of scholars who would exclusively study theology and philosophy). In England 62 churches have been dedicated to her, and 170 medieval bells still bear her name. She features in many works of art as well as being remembered during November by the firework named after her.

Sally Churchus



St Catherine of Alexandria by Caravaggio

Obituary

Sam Frost 27/2/1990 - 1/7/2024



On the 29th of July we said goodbye to my brother Sam, my amazing brother Sam. Sam passed away in a tragic motorbike accident, it is understood Sam had some heart complications which resulted in the accident.

Many may know Sam from Jack Frost, the Pet & Country store on Shire Lane or perhaps recall his article in The Keston magazine where he shared 'what he did' as a local business owner. What he didn't mention within that article was his unrivalled warm welcoming character, his incredible talent for storytelling and ability to make anyone laugh. And most of all his huge heart and genuine kindness he showed to all. A much-loved son, a brother, an uncle and a great friend to so many.

Sam was well respected in the local area and by the many customers he had served and offered advice to over nearly 20 years in the business. He supported the community in any way he could. Sam was an avid Scout Leader for many years and a fantastic support and role model to Scouts as well as younger colleagues.

He dedicated his life to the growth and success of our family business. From working with dad as a boy making rabbit hutches and all the very many years tirelessly working away to grow the shop, our range and our offering. We will continue trading and doing all we can to honour Sam's memory.

We are raising money for ME Rebecca's Fight. (Rebecca is Sam's best friend Rob's sister). Over Rebecca's 16 year long battle with ME Sam had taken part in various fundraisers to help raise funds for her. Previous monies raised helped to purchase Becks a specialised wheelchair which means she is able on occasion to get outside. Any money raised will help and go towards ongoing medicine costs and therapies not supplied on the NHS, and further adaptations needed to her wheelchair. If you would like to donate to this much needed cause, please scan the QR code below or alternatively visit www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/MERebecasFight We would love to reach our target of £5,000 to support a cause which Sam was so passionate about and which was so close to his heart.

Sam, we will miss you terribly, we will lead with kindness, laugh often and love greatly.

Katie Frost



The Mayonnaise Jar and two cups of coffee

When things in your life seem almost too much to handle, when 24 hours in a day are not enough, remember the mayonnaise jar... and the two cups of coffee.

A professor stood before his philosophy class and had some items in front of him. When the class began, wordlessly, he picked up a very large and empty mayonnaise jar and proceeded to fill it with golf balls. He asked the students if the jar was full.

They agreed that it was. The professor then picked up a box of pebbles and poured them into the jar. He shook the jar lightly, and the pebbles rolled into the open areas between the golf balls. He then asked the students again if the jar was full; they agreed it was. The professor next picked up a box of sand and poured it into the jar. Of course, the sand filled up everything else. He asked once more if the jar was full. The students responded with a unanimous “yes”.

The professor then produced two cups of coffee from under the table and poured the entire contents into the jar, effectively filling the empty space between the sand. The students laughed. “Now”, said the professor, as the laughter subsided, “I want you to recognise that this jar represents your life. The golf balls are the important things: your family, your children, your health, your friends, and your favourite passions – things that if everything else was lost and only they remained, your life would still be full. The pebbles are

the other things that matter – like your job, your house and your car. The sand is everything else: the small stuff. If you put the sand into the jar first”, he continued, “there is no room for the pebbles or the golf balls. The same goes for life. If you spend all your time and energy on the small stuff, you will never have room for the things that are important to you. Pay attention to the things that are critical to your happiness. Play with your children. Take time to get medical check-ups. Take your partner out to dinner. Play another 18 holes.

There will always be time to clean the house and fix the TV. Take care of the golf balls first, the things that really matter. Set your priorities. The rest is just filler”.

One of the students raised his hand and enquired what the coffee represented. The professor smiled. “I’m glad you asked. It just goes to show you that no matter how full your life may seem, there’s always room for a couple of cups of coffee with a friend”.

The congregation at Keston heard a version of this during Rev’d Belinda’s sermon on Sunday 18th August.



Photo by LinkedIn Sales Solutions on Unsplash

What I Do



I'm a blacksmith/fabricator which is an unusual occupation nowadays. I've been fixing things since a very young age, and restored my first motorcycle aged six. I am the third generation metalworker in my family. My father was an army taught blacksmith and had a workshop in Catford – I worked there and then in various locations until I settled here, at Scrubbs Farm in Lower Gravel Road in 1999. It had been a pig farm until the pigs had to be sold following a law prohibiting them from being fed waste food. I put in for planning permission for a workshop/forge and haven't looked back since.

What do I actually do? I suppose a lot of it is problem solving, using my knowledge to help the customer understand what is possible and I then design and make the item. I mainly work with iron, which once hot moulds like plasticine. The steel is harder to work with and eventually rusts. I also collect old bits of iron that I can then use repairing items with a similar grain. I used to use coal to power the forge, but now use a small amount of gas or occasionally coke. I have previously been Technical advisor on the Cutty Sark and worked on historic structures

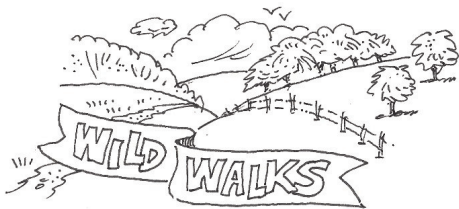
and buildings, including the Horniman museum but the bulk of my work now is handrails, gates, railings, security gates, staircases and general engineering – it is incredibly varied. Surprisingly, I am frequently asked to make swords but the cost of the repeated folding and rolling the steel is prohibitive. I do quite a bit for churches, which has included the handrail at St Peter and St Paul in Bromley and the car park gates at Keston parish church. I do welding, brazing, silver soldering and repair items – mainly for older people aged 60-80+! Nowadays, a lot of products that blacksmiths used to make are mass produced in China at a price I cannot compete with.

The things I enjoy most about my job are making/creating, restoring and repairing things.

In my spare time I am restoring a 126 year old Lady Burrell traction engine which can easily pull 150 tonnes but has no brakes! It was used for threshing for 50 years and during the war to pull down bomb damaged houses. You may find yourself stuck behind me doing 4mph as I take it to exhibitions and events!

Terry Gibbons, The Bromley Blacksmith, as told to Sally Churchus (bromleyblacksmith.com 07958 564775)





‘Chicken of the Woods’* - if you know your fungi you’ll recognise this as a large flat edible fungus which grows on the lower sides of trees. Orangey yellow in colour and about the size of a dinner plate. Is this what I saw when I parked my bicycle in its familiar spot, prior to walking ‘the dog’ over the other side of the airfield a few weeks ago? I’d like to think it could be.

On another day, a little while back, I had a very pleasant surprise as I rounded the path leading from the ‘Gas station’. There, on the corner of the field growing a type of broad bean, was the most exquisite clump of poppies I’d seen for ages. A couple of days earlier there wasn’t even a hint of them, yet here they were in a cute little cluster looking stunning in contrast to the green of the bean foliage.

Talking of the beans, as time went by they gradually turned from green to brown and finally to black. Then one day the sound of the harvester was

heard and as it passed by the end of my garden I saw that out of two huge arms either side it was emitting a sinister looking spray! “I won’t be walking through that for a while”, I thought. Curiously, after a few days, I noticed a general thinning out of the foliage of the plants and the leaves shrivelling, thus revealing the bean pods. Could this have something to do with the forthcoming cropping?

Either way, as I write this, they’ve all gone. The field looks very bare and open as in the last few days the monster machine has returned and with much whirring and grinding and a trail of dust it has reduced the fields to an open and flat plain. As I walked ‘the dog’ early this morning it initially looked puzzled at the large expanse in which it could once again go dashing about. As it’s a Collie cross Husky, believe me, it sure can run! Fortunately I’ve always had the ability to whistle using my fingers and I’m always impressed how

- a) it can hear from half a mile away and
- b) it turns and comes hurtling back.

Aah – what a good dog!

*So called because it tastes like fried chicken. (Sorry to disappoint you, Richard, but apparently it’s Dryad’s Saddle – Ed).

Richard Geiger



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

Walks last up to 2 hours. Well behaved dogs welcome. Good footwear advised.

- **New Keston WI**

2nd Wed 1.30pm-3.30pm

Keston Church Hall

Contact Helen Best on 07715 880889.

- **Mental Wellbeing Coffee Morning**

Sat 5th October 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.

- **Harvest Lunch**

Sun 6th Oct 12.30pm

Keston Church Hall

Tickets, to be bought in advance, are £18 each and include a two course meal with coffee and are available from Chris on 07988 712873. (Please bring your own drinks and glasses).

- **General Knowledge Quiz Night**
Fri 11th Oct 7.15pm for 7.30pm start
Keston Village Large Hall

Maximum of six people per team. Nibbles provided but please bring your own drinks and glasses. Tickets £7 in advance, from 07765 252428 or bbag1976@aol.com. Proceeds to Bromley Bridleways Access Group.

- **Keston CE Primary Open Days**
Thurs 17th Oct and Thurs 7th Nov

For those interested in Reception school places in 2025. To book, please see keston.bromley.sch.uk for details.

- **Book Reading Fellowship**

Mon 11th Nov 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.

Quiz Night

With Fish & Chip Supper



Saturday 2nd November

6.30pm for 7pm

Keston Church Hall

Tickets £16 from Chris

Tel: 07988 712873

(Bring your own drinks & glasses)

Proceeds to Keston Parish Church

Magazine Deadline

Please send photos and articles for the December/January issue of The Keston Magazine to the Editor, Sally Churchus, before Friday 8th November by email: editor@kestonparishchurch.org.uk or contact her to discuss ideas on Tel: 020 8462 8750. Thank you.

Laughlines

☺ Don't mention it!

As part of his annual talk to our local Town Council, our minister told some funny stories. Since he planned to use the same anecdotes at the forthcoming Harvest Dinner at church, he asked the young reporter covering the event not to include them in his report.

Reading the newspaper on the following morning, he noticed that the well-meaning reporter had ended his story on the banquet with the observation "The minister told a number of stories that cannot be published".

☺ Press

For the benefit of those who doubt the power of the press, here is a clip from a newspaper: 'Owing to the overcrowded conditions of our columns, a number of births and deaths are unavoidably postponed this week'.

☺ Sin

A very earnest member of the local church was praising the obvious spiritual gifts of the new vicar, adding, "We never knew anything about sin until he came".

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