

Kingston Parish & Church Magazine



October 2018

Village Diary

Wednesday 3 rd October	Village Coffee/Tea – Village Hall – 10.30am
Saturday 6 th October	Village Pub Night – Village Hall, 6pm-10pm
Tuesdays 2 nd , 9 th , & 30 th October	Core Fitness Class, 10.00am & 7.15pm
Thursday 11 th October	Next Meeting of the Music Club, 8pm
Saturday 13 th October	Harvest Festival Service at 6pm followed by the Harvest Supper in the Village Hall
Saturday 20 th October	Village Work Day

Wheelie bin collection dates

Wednesday 3 rd October	Black bin
Wednesday 10 th October	Blue and Green bins
Wednesday 17 th October	Black bin
Wednesday 24 th October	Blue and Green bins
Wednesday 31 st October	Black bin

Editorial

It looks as though we are in for a very busy month in the village. In addition to the monthly events like the coffee morning and pub night, there are the usual keep fit classes and the second meeting of the Music Club. Saturday the 13th is the date for this year's Harvest Festival with the Thanksgiving Service at 6pm (with the church all decked out in autumnal splendour), followed by the Harvest Supper, an event which looks to be as successful as last year's meal and entertainment. I know that many villagers really look forward to this activity, as it's a chance to share in convivial friendship with our neighbours. Saturday the 20th is the date for the village clean-up day. Volunteers are being sought to help clear up our village. It goes without saying that a clean and tidy village is for us all to enjoy so as many helpers as possible are required to make this clean-up a success. In this month's issue we are also celebrating fellow Kingstonians (past and present) - one abseiler, two cyclists, two tri-athletes and three students.

Peter Holly pjholly45@gmail.com 01223 264 556

Vicar's Letter

Until I joined the Papworth Team I always lived in towns, where the impact of the seasons boiled down to what weather phenomenon was currently affecting the traffic most.

It took a few years here before the rhythm of the seasons soaked into me and I learned to watch with pleasure as fields turn from brown to green to golden and finally back to brown.

It gave me a new appreciation of Jesus' parable of the sower who went out to sow.

In this parable the seed is the word of God, sown in the minds of those who hear it. In some people's lives, the seed grows and bears lots of fruit. In others', for different reasons, it doesn't get the chance to grow, or gets crowded out by other things.

It may seem a waste of seed, but this is how God deals with us. God wants us to hear the good news of the Kingdom of Heaven, and accept it for ourselves, and so casts the seed as wide as possible, knowing that some of it, for different reasons, will not grow to bear fruit. God would rather have that, than take the chance of missing anyone out.

A sower went out to sow, and if he could have reaped the next day, I'm sure he would have been very pleased, but in real life, things take the time that they take.

The seed must be sown in the right season, then germinate, grow and ripen, until it can be harvested. The timescale is not that of hearing a parable, but of the changing seasons

Similarly, God looks at the long haul, the whole of our lives. We need to slow our expectations down to see what God is doing, or might want to do in our lives.

A farmer gets one chance a year to sow, but God is doing it continuously. God isn't put off if the first time he sows a seed in our lives, it gets eaten by birds, or if the tenth time it gets choked by thorns. God is waiting for that season when the seed will find us to be good soil, and we will bear fruit of faith, love, and eternal life.

Harvest time is over for this year, but for God any day can be harvest day, and any day can be the day for sowing.

Why not today?

Rev. Steve Day

Church Services for October

Sunday 7th October	Holy Communion 8.30am
SATURDAY 13th October	HARVEST FESTIVAL 6.00pm
Sunday 21st October	Family Service 10.30am

Church cleaning

1st Sunday	Peter and Suzy Stokes
2nd Sunday	Donal and Monica O'Donnell
3rd Sunday	Peter Reynolds
4th Sunday	Janet Clear
5th Sunday	Linda Rimmer

Church flowers and brasses

7 th October	Miki Ellar
14 th October	Henrietta Burbidge
21 st October	Joan Reynolds
28 th October	Kay Forsythe

Home Communion

If you cannot get out and would like to receive Holy Communion at home, please let the office know and we will arrange for the sacrament to be brought to you on a regular basis. If you are having difficulty getting to church, but a lift would make that possible please contact the team office on 01480 839933 and we will be able to help.

HARVEST FESTIVAL & SUPPER

All are warmly welcome to our Harvest Festival Service on Saturday 13th October at 6.00pm, to be followed by Harvest Supper, 7 for 7.30pm.

Congratulations to school leavers

Congratulations to Harry Metherell, who is going to Durham University.

Exchange and Mart

Two children's booster seats (for dining chairs), one baby bath seat, one baby bath and a step up for the washbasin.

All as new. Available for a donation to church funds.

Contact Linda Rimmer

Celebrate the Harvest!

Saturday – 13 October 2018



This antique Binder is harvesting wheat stalks the old fashioned way. The wheat remains in the ears as the stalks are cut and moved along the conveyer belt into the 'knotter', bound together and pushed out as a sheaf for drying. The wheat is removed later, and the long stalks are used for thatch.



Plan now to join Kingston villagers in the Harvest celebration:

- **Harvest Church Service** - Celebrate our blessings with thankfulness through worship at the church service - 6:00pm Saturday, October 13, at The Church of All Saints and St. Andrew Kingston Parish
- **Harvest Community Supper** - Join together at 7:00 after the Harvest Service in the Village Hall for a hot supper to be served at 7:30 with complimentary beverage, and apple pudding with entertainment to follow. A pay bar will also be available. Tickets are pre-sale only and are £10 for adults and £30 for a family. Tickets are limited - must be purchased by October 7; and are available from Lee Steele (mrssteeleandson@btinternet.com or 01223 264710) and Janet Clear (clearsam@btinternet.com or 01223 263746)
- **The Church of All Saints and St. Andrew Viewing** - The church will be open on Sunday, October 14, for those who would like to view the Harvest decorations and, perhaps, have a moment of quiet reflection on our blessings in this harvest time and our lovely Kingston village.

OPPORTUNITY TO SHARE YOUR PUDDING SKILLS! Anyone wishing to provide an apple pudding (crumble, Charlotte, etc.) would be greatly appreciated. We can provide the apples if needed! Please contact Lee Steele if you can volunteer an apple pudding for our community supper.

Church Flowers and Decorations for Harvest.

The Harvest Thanksgiving service is on Saturday 13th October at 6pm. This is a wonderful opportunity to decorate the church in seasonal glory, perhaps with a theme of "Fruits of the Earth" which was so successful last year.

If anyone is unavailable to do their usual window/stand then could they please let me know as soon as possible. As always, everyone is very welcome to come along - no Constance Spry or Sarah Raven experience necessary!

Thank you very much for your continuing support.

Linda Smith.

C. 264054

Historic Churches' Trust: Ride, Stride, or Cycle, 2018

Our cycle rider this year was John Easy who visited a splendid 13 churches – in the rain! Please support him by giving a lump sum or so much per church. Cash preferred. Thank You.

John will come round in early October to collect your contributions. If we don't find you in please drop off your money to me at "Pincote" or John at High Croft, Crane's Lane. Many Thanks.

We would also like to thank Janet Clear, Miki Ellar, Kay Forsythe, Monica O'Donnell, Donal O'Donnell and Linda Rimmer, who greeted the cyclists who visited our church and gave them refreshments.

Joan Reynolds (Organizer)

Departures and arrivals

The Woolley family left Kingston at the end of August and have moved closer to Cambridge.

We are happy to welcome Rachel Hooper (and her cat, Coco) to Crossways Cottage and are delighted that she joined in village activities within days of her arrival.

The Richmond sisters, Sarah (*left*) and Amanda (*right*) with family friend Lindsay Russell-Smith after completing the 2018 ITU World Triathlon Grand Final on the Australian Gold Coast. Sarah represented Australia in the 1500m swim, 40km bike ride and 10km run, Amanda represented Canada and Lindsay the UK. Sarah was placed 11th in her age group, Lindsay 29th and Amanda 40th, all posted good times and achieved personal bests. Proud parents Charlie and Jane were there to support them and join in the celebrations.



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Parish Council News

Road closure: we have been informed that Church Lane will be closed to traffic between 29 October and 2 November inclusive. The reason is to allow replacement of several electricity poles and will involve work on overhead wires. These are guidance dates and the road may open earlier or later depending on the progress of the work. I have not received any information on the effect on the no. 18 bus, but would expect that during the period of closure, the bus will not pass through Kingston but will stop for passengers to board or alight at the top of Church Lane, as on previous occasions.

Village Workday: We are planning a work day from 10.00 – 12.00 on Saturday 20 October, to do various jobs around the village, including:

- Trim back low trees to allow grass cutting access
- Add play-bark to Jungle Climber at playground
- Treat seats at playground with preservative
- Clear back brambles on VH car park
- Cut back long grass in goals at playground

There has been a poor turnout for recent workdays and it may be that people are just too busy to spare the time. The alternative is that the Parish Council can engage contractors to do this sort of work, obviously at some cost which will find its way into our Council Tax.

I have had a few positive responses but could do with a few more. **Please let me know if you are able (even provisionally!) to commit to a couple of hours on 20 October so that I know if we have enough volunteers.**

Housing development at Bennell Farm, Comberton: outline permission has been granted for up to 90 houses to be built at Bennell Farm in Comberton. There is a mix of housing, and houses will initially be available only to local residents. If you are interested, more information is available at the South Cambs Homelink website: <https://www.home-link.org.uk/EhoWizard/Add>

Local Plan for South Cambridgeshire: this will form the basis for house building in the district over the next 15 years. It was formulated some time ago but it's adoption has been delayed by various niggles from government inspectors, which has meant that with no plan in place, the South Cambs Planning Committee has been obliged to allow a number of speculative and not-always-desirable developments. At last after some revisions to the original, the government inspectors have concluded that the plan is 'sound' subject to some further modifications being made. This means the plan is basically acceptable and therefore

the Planning Committee can now reject planning applications not covered by it. For more information see www.scambs.gov.uk/local-plan-examination.

Mini-roundabout at the crossroads: the Parish Council has submitted its application for funding and awaits the panel's decision. It is unlikely to be a clear green light – if accepted, there will ensue further discussions with the Highways engineers to refine our proposals in line with best practice.

Peter Stokes, Parish Clerk

The Kingston Poor's Land Charity

Some people in the village may be unaware of the Kingston Poor's Land Charity, which exists to help anyone in need in the parish. The charity owns a plot of land next to the parish boundary, within the parish of Bourn. The land is rented out and this is the primary source of income for the charity. The charity's trustees are appointed by the Parish Council and serve for four years. The current trustees are Joan Reynolds and Donal O'Donnell. They receive no fees. The charity is registered with the Charity Commission (241398). (See <http://apps.charitycommission.gov.uk/> where there is a record of our annual returns). The trustees make a report every year at the Annual Parish Meeting.

The origins of the charity are unknown but probably date back to the late C17, and possibly to a bequest in 1652 of John Crane, the Cambridge apothecary, who was Lord of the Manors of Kingston Wood and Kingston St George. By the C18 the Kingston Charity had acquired land in the open fields of Bourn. Following the parliamentary enclosure of Bourn parish in 1809, an allotment was made to the Kingston Poor's Land Charity in 1820: this is the block of land still owned today. A strip of the land was sold for the construction of the Cambridge to Bedford railway line around 1860.

The charity's Record Book for 1933 lists the primary task of the trustees as: 'The charity shall be given away in cash to the poor of Kingston Parish at noon on the 21st of December each year.' Payments of 1 shilling and 11 pence were made to each family for each of their children. The number of such payments made per year ranged from about 80 to over 100.

This continued until 1966 when the Charity Commission ruled 'that money should not be distributed in dribblets (sic) but larger sums should be given in cases of special need.' The charity continued to make the Christmas payments, which were increased to £4, but the average number of recipients reduced to only about 5 people. Over the years since then the value of the individual payments has increased but the number of recipients varies according to need.

In 2000 the remit was reviewed to broaden the scope of the charity. The current remit is: We provide payments to individuals and organisations in the parish for the relief of poverty and for education and training. We provide help especially for children and young people, elderly people and people with disabilities.

From that time, we started making payments – usually book tokens – to school leavers to support their education and training. We still make some Christmas payments and we will make payments, as necessary, to support anyone who needs help as and when it is needed. Payments are at the discretion of the trustees. We will consider making payments to anyone that we hear needs our help. If you know of someone who needs help in the village you may in confidence contact either of the trustees.

Joan Reynolds

Donal O'Donnell

Joan Reynolds congratulates the recent recipients, Lauren Dickerson, who after a year out is doing Retail, and Bea Underwood, who is studying an Art Foundation Course at Cambridge Regional College. We wish them Good Luck, say the Trustees, Joan Reynolds and Donal O'Donnell



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For further information contact

Hannah Hope

hannah@thedoghousecaxton.co.uk

01954 719057 07522 964975

Date	Title	Bourn	Kingston	Caxton	Longstowe
Oct 7	Trinity 19	10.30am FHC	8.30am HC	10.30 W4A	10.30am Harvest
Oct 14	Trinity 20	10.30am W4A	6.00pm SAT 13 th	10.30am MP	
Oct 21	Trinity 21	8.30am HC	10.30am MP		
Oct 28	Bible Sunday	10.30am FW		8.30am HC	10.30am MP
Nov 4	All Saints 4 before Advent	10.30am FHC	8.30am HC	10.30 W4A	
Nov 11	3 before Advent Remembrance	10.30am W4A Remembrance	10.30am Remembrance	10.30am Remembrance	10.30am Remembrance
Nov 18	2 before Advent	8.30am HC	10.30am W4A		
Nov 25	Christ the King	10.30am Joint Deanery Service at Comberton		8.30am HC	8.30am HC

HC = traditional Holy Communion (BCP)

MP= traditional Morning Prayer (BCP)

EP = traditional Evening Prayer (BCP)

FHC= Common Worship/All Age Holy Communion

W4A/FS = Family Service

FW = All Age Worship/Morning Prayer/Prayer & Praise/Morning Worship

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Our MP Heidi Allen's Newsletter

There's been no shortage of sun this Summer so I hope you have been able to spend some time enjoying the glorious weather!

Parliamentary recess allows me to focus on important local issues while I am away from the "hurly burly" of Westminster. As always, my newsletter can only ever be a snapshot of my work but I hope it gives you an overview of what I have been up to!

The major infrastructure improvements needed in South Cambridgeshire remain a priority for me. In July, Highways England announced their plans to start construction work on the expressway between the Black Cat roundabout and Caxton Gibbet in 2021/2. This is later than originally planned and I share residents' concerns about the delays. Highways England told me there are two reasons. The engineering at the A1 end is more complex than originally envisaged and they also want the A14 Cambridge to Huntingdon works to complete before they begin construction work on the A428.

I am meeting with the Chancellor (along with neighbouring MP, Jonathan Djanogly) soon to ensure he fully understands how vital this road improvement scheme is and that nothing can allow it to be delayed further.

Another much-needed improvement to our local infrastructure is the Girton M11/J14 Interchange. If improvements are not made, the benefits of the A428 expressway and the improvements to the A14 simply won't be delivered as we won't have a joined-up network. With the housing growth anticipated across Cambridgeshire and with new jobs being created at the Biomedical Campus, we need to make sure the growth potential of the area has the infrastructure to match the ambition for the area. I have made a bid for funding for the Girton interchange ahead of the Autumn statement and reiterated how vital it is to the Chancellor and Roads Minister.

East West Rail (Oxford to Cambridge) is another project that many constituents have contacted me about and I want to reassure you that NO route has yet been chosen. Personally, I support a route that is closely aligned with the A428 corridor as public transport is almost non-existent in this part of the constituency. It would also support the housing growth planned at Cambourne and Northstowe, so seems obvious to me. I am pushing this route with Rob Brighouse (Chairman of the East West Rail Company) and am pleased to report he has shown interest and we will be meeting again soon. I'll keep you posted, but please be assured I will let you know as soon as any route possibilities emerge.

In my newsletters at the beginning of the year, I urged local residents to contribute to the consultation on the Ministry of Justice's proposed closure of Cambridge Magistrates' Court. Well, you did and they listened! At the end of July, the Ministry confirmed the court will remain open. Thank you to the many local people who contacted me about this – there were a number of concerns about the consultation and I am pleased that the right decision has been made. We made this happen!

Over the summer I've been out on the farm, helping with the harvest in Thriplow and Boxworth. I suspect I may have been more hindrance than help but I was very enthusiastic! A combine harvester may not be everyone's vehicle of choice, but I thoroughly enjoyed it!

Our farmers of course work hard all year round, but there is an undeniable pressure at a harvest time as they work around the clock to bring our food in off the fields. Hats (caps?) off!

In August, I spent a shift with the Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service. I donned my boots, braces and trousers as I got to grips with just some of the work our fire service do for us. As you'd appreciate, they do an amazing job in often very difficult situations, but having participated in a training exercise in a smoke filled building, I cannot commend them highly enough. It never occurred to me that when a building is on fire, they work with no visibility – zero. I couldn't see a thing. Speaking honestly, I was terrified. So I'd just like to put on record my personal thanks.

You will be aware from my previous newsletters of the action I have been taking to hold GTR to account for the debacle following the introduction of their new train timetable in May. Over recent months, I have been arguing that compensation must not apply only to season ticket holders – there are plenty of commuters in South Cambridgeshire who have been affected but who are not season ticket holders.

In the last few days, GTR has announced that the compensation scheme will now also include non-season ticket holders. This is welcome news but GTR still have some way to go to ensure that services are better and I have contacted Chris Grayling again to urge him to delay the proposed rail fare increase until the services have been fully restored AND maintained. My work on behalf of commuters continues and I will be meeting with the new Chief Executive of GTR shortly. I will leave him in no doubt about the strength of feeling of local commuters and will provide an update on this on my dedicated website page – www.heidisouthcambs.co.uk/gtr and in my next newsletter.

Until then, if there is anything you would like to talk to me about, my next no appointment "drop in" surgery will be on Saturday 6 October (10.30am -12.30pm) in Northstowe. If you'd prefer an appointment, I'll be in Bassingbourn on 2 November between 3 and 5pm. You can find more details on my website here:

<https://www.heidisouthcambs.co.uk/residents-drop-surgeries>

If you would like to contact me, please email heidi.allen.mp@parliament.uk or call my office on 01223 830037. See you next month!

Chance to comment on plans for new village at Bourn Airfield

A six-week consultation into Countryside's plans has now begun and runs until Thursday 1 November. To view and comment on the plans, visit <http://plan.scambs.gov.uk/swiftlg/apas/run/wphappcriteria.display> and type the reference number S/3440/18/OL into the box.

Sharp Objects

Several recent movie and TV dramas have been set in the Ozarks, a forested area of lakes and mountains in southern Missouri and northern Arkansas in the USA. The area is known for its comparative poverty, for being off the beaten track, and for its high level of rural criminality. The trend began with the award-winning movie “Winter’s Bone” (based on the book of the same name and starring a very young Jennifer Lawrence), continued with the TV series “Ozark” (starring among others Jason Bateman) and is to be continued when the next series of “True Detective” hits our TV screens. In the meantime, the 8-part series, “Sharp Objects”, has just completed its TV run. Also set in the Ozarks (the location is a small town south of St. Louis), the story line concerns a much-flawed young reporter (she is prone to cutting and self-harming herself and is also an alcoholic) who returns to the much-flawed town where her much-flawed family lives with the purpose of investigating the murders of local girls, including, it turns out, the death of her younger sister over which she still carries a great deal of guilt. This is not a Disneyfied story. As the reporter (played by Amy Adams) gets dragged into the local mire, it becomes increasingly clear that her own mother is unhinged and is responsible for her sister’s death – through the perpetration of Munchausen-by-Proxy, whereby a parent poisons his/her own child in order to be able to care for the boy or girl, gradually increasing the dose thereby further incapacitating the child, thus heightening the importance of the care-giver’s role. This is a dark tale, ironically pin-pointing the same mental disease high-lighted in “The Bridge” mentioned in last month’s magazine.

Also mentioned last month was the extent to which a great theme tune can make a TV series. This time, however, it’s the incredible soundtrack that adds so much value to each episode. Available on Spotify, the 60 or so tracks also stand alone as a veritable musical cornucopia of quirkiness and menace. I bet you never thought you’d be listening to the likes of Engelbert Humperdinck, Nana Mouskouri, Perry Como and Michel Legrand alongside more predictable songs by Bob Dylan, Johnny Cash, Boz Scaggs and Leon Bridges, with a bit of Led Zeppelin thrown in for good measure. While there are well-known stand-out tracks (by the likes of the Everly Brothers, Fairport Convention, Arlo Guthrie, Carole King, Willie Dixon and Patsy Cline), it’s often the not so well-known tracks that catch the ear. The first four tracks sum up the eclectic approach used on this soundtrack. The first song is “Come Down”, a folky, quirky, slow and multi-tracked piece of harmony singing by Sylvan Esso, its haunting quality setting the trend for the whole collection. It’s followed by the electro jungle music of “Tumbling Lights” by The Acid, again an off-kilter and eerie piece. Then follows “Snowfall”/“Snowfall Cha-Cha”, taken from a Christmas album by George Shearing and Billy May, and “I Can’t Quit You Baby”, the first of Led Zeppelin’s contributions. While these disparate tracks mirror the tastes of

the various participants in the dysfunctional drama, what is striking is that it's the whole mixture that works best. As that famous modern-day philosopher, Jose Mourinho, has said (quoting Hegel), "The Truth is in the Whole" and that's exactly how you have to approach this collection. The whole is greater than the parts. Every single track adds synergistically to the general mood and the atmosphere of darkness, alarm and subterranean menace. For once it's not about the standout, individual tracks; it's the whole creation that's all-important, with different genres of music sitting next to one another in blissful co-existence.

And each track has its place in the story. "Small Town Heroes" by Hurray for the Riff Raff (great name for this up and coming band) is an alt-country workout by a folky, female singer who sounds a lot like Iris Dement, herself an old Ozarkian country singer. The words of impending doom perfectly fit the story-line in this haven of rural dysfunctionality. And "Down in the Willow Garden" by the Everly Brothers (taken from their original album "Songs Our Daddy Taught Us") is a haunting lament used brilliantly to end one particularly suspenseful episode.

Watch the TV series at your own risk (it's not easy watching) but do not hesitate to download the soundtrack and be drawn into the intricate subtleties and mini-dramas that characterize this musical smorgasbord.

Peter Holly

Higher Cambs

The Higher Tour is an initiative of The Message Trust, an award-winning charity that has been working with young people for 25 years. We believe that Jesus changes lives, not just for an evening at an action-packed event, but for good.

In partnership with local churches and other youth agencies, the Higher Tour will present the good news of Jesus Christ to thousands of young people and offer them the opportunity to begin a journey of faith and relationship with Jesus alongside a local church. Higher Cambs 2018 will see 4 talented bands deliver lessons, workshops and assemblies in many schools across the region.

More than 30 secondary schools in Cambridgeshire are taking part. Locally, the Higher Tour will be in Cambourne Village College on Mon 8 Oct and Comberton Village College on Tues 9 Oct. There will also be three Gospel concerts: at St Mary's Church, St Neots (5 Oct), Ely Cathedral (6 Oct) and The Junction (12 Oct) Youth workers from local churches will be on hand at all Higher events to offer support and information.

Once the tour has moved on, the local youth workers will continue with a 'Higher' focus in the usual lunchtime discussion groups within the schools and at the monthly youth worship service (Thirst). There will also be two youth cafés during half term. In our area this will be coordinated by WCCYM (West Cambridge Christian Youth Ministries).

David Heath Hits the Welsh Hills

Instead of providing a review of a “Book of the Month”, it occurred to me that some of our today’s cyclists and those who enjoy exploring remote places might be interested in an article I wrote over half a century ago which was published in the C.T.C Gazette which was the national magazine of the CYCLIST’S TOURING CLUB.

In 1964, John Poole, a fellow member and I had just enjoyed a ‘cycle/camping and walking expedition in MID-WALES, particularly the great scenic and remote area known as the Cambrian Hills. The article, a copy of which follows, simply describes just one day’s ride through and around the Towy valley via a ‘rough stuff’ road and track well known at the time to touring cyclists. Incidentally the LLYN BRIANNE RESERVOIR now lines the valley and the through road is no longer “rough stuff”.

The Upper Towy Circular

A tentative peer through the tent flap disclosed the yellow rim of the sun climbing above the dark silhouette of the hills which formed the backcloth to the valley. A trailing wisp of cloud hardly marred a sky which promised a perfect day. Just a few feet behind us the turbulent rush of the River Towy, yesterday a brown flood after heavy rain, had subsided to a more comfortable chatter and gurgle over the stones.

This was the day for our exploration of the Upper Towy and it was but the work of the moment to persuade John to forsake his sleeping bag and set the primus to work in the chill morning air. As the last of the valley mist cleared away we were demolishing large plates of fried bacon and tomatoes with an enthusiasm more pronounced than at home. If you have yet to consume an al fresco breakfast one of the joys of life still awaits you.

With chores completed and food in our saddlebags we were soon pushing up the valley road. By now the sun was striding the sky and the warmth on our backs foretold an early removal of jackets. The scattered hamlet of Rhandir Mwyn and the unpicturesque iron bridge over the river is quickly left behind and the narrow winding lane climbs steadily towards scenic splendour which compares favourably with anywhere in Wales.

The silvery thread of the river below swings away to the left in a graceful curve between steep sided wooded heights. The road cut in the hillside is well surfaced at this stage and the gradient is not severe but we could not resist a few minutes break for some camera work, although no photograph could do justice to the scene.

Ahead were the rocky buttresses of Ystafell which hide the famous cave of Twm Shon Catti, otherwise Thomas Jones, a 16th century bard, genealogist and thief, the Welsh Dick Turpin who ended by marrying a rich widow and becoming a J.P. His

refuge is reached from the point where the lane passes the trim but lonely farm of Ystradffin. A well-marked path to the left winds through boulder strewn woodlands in a hidden coombe. A rather slippery scramble eventually brings the explorer to the great diagonal cleft in the rocks which is the "cave". Hardly a comfortable residence for Thomas, but it commands a fine view and provides an intriguing objective for a pleasant diversion.

A few miles further on we noticed a new Forestry Commission road not yet marked on the latest edition of the Ordinance Survey map. We had read that this was a well-surfaced gated road through fine scenery after crossing to the west bank of the Towy and closed to motor vehicles. However we were intent on following the wheel tracks of Harold Briercliffe who described the old road so graphically in his "Cycling Touring Guides" published twenty years ago. Perhaps the activities of the Forestry Commission have taken the edge off the illusion of exploring the unknown which he experienced but, for the present at least, its efforts have produced a new route which is not plagued by the motor car. A rare situation which should be taken advantage of whilst this happy state of affairs lasts.

Before the forestry road fork our old road swings away from the main valley and dips into a green bowl sheltering the still thriving farm of Bwlch-y-ffi. Here the luxury of a tarmac surface ends abruptly and the steepness of the climb out quickly persuaded us that walking was the easiest mode of travel. The rise conquered, a pause to give our eyes a chance, and back in the saddle for the roughish descent to a minor water-splash which marks the border between Carmarthenshire and Breconshire. A rapidly deteriorating road bears sharply left to the farm of Trawsant, now a crumbling ruin, and takes us on through a small wooded area on the very edge of the Towy gorge. Stunted silver birch form a leafy archway which drops abruptly and darkly to the river itself. The way, hardly a road any more, had become more akin to a boulder strewn stream bed and we were somewhat startled to hear the snarl of a tortured motor cycle engine below. A cheerful soul astride a machine carrying 'L' plates was making heavy weather of the ascent but he happily assured us that it was much worse further back!

We reached the bottom in one piece and were soon negotiating a narrow log bridge, obviously not constructed with cyclists in mind. It spanned a tributary stream which flowed in at a point where the Towy itself widened slightly and where the surrounding high crags retreated a little. The new forestry road is seen briefly on the other side before swinging out of sight again to follow the Camddwr gorge. A rather ugly forestry hut was the only jarring note in this secluded spot and was certainly not here when Harold Briercliffe passed this way. He mentions in his book the anti-climax of washing drying on the line at the lonely farm of Fanog which we reached

after another fascinating mile of alternate plodding and pedalling. Like Trawsnant farm, alas, Fanog is also deserted and mouldering among rapidly encroaching trees and undergrowth. We gave but a few minutes to this gloomy place of the past before moving out into the warm sunshine and the quiet way ahead.

Yet another ford shortly gave us pause but this one was deepish and it was a case of carried footwear and shouldered machines. Very refreshing to the feet if the sharper stones can be avoided! From here the thick foliage of the gorge is left behind while the rocky walls fall away revealing the high green slopes of the moors. Closer at hand there is more evidence of the activities of the Forestry Commission in the regiments of tiny conifers marching up the hillsides which will have transformed the scene in another twenty years. The road is an undulating grassy track hugging the infant Towy and the riding is easy. Occasional rowan bushes ablaze with red berries and clumps of purple heather at its best provide bright contrast to the background green.



Lunchtime, and a perfect spot hove in sight just on cue. The consumption of bread and cheese and a brew of coffee occupied our undivided attention for a blissful interlude. We were certainly ready for it, as John is apt to remark on these occasions. No other traveller disturbed our short siesta and the only sound was that of running water and the distant bleat of mountain sheep. A buzzard did alight within a few feet of us and soar into the blue again, an incident which served only to accentuate the solitude of that remote area.

Just beyond the farm of Nant-yr-hwch we joined the mountain road which links Llanwrtyd Wells and Tregaron. Our way was left across the Towy and a steep climb out of the valley. A splendid panorama of high moorland stretches away to the



horizon on every side. In the centre of this empty expanse, where the forestry road mentioned earlier comes in from the south, stands a bright red telephone box with no other building in sight. A most incongruous focal point but what a welcome link with 'civilization' to a stranded traveller on a winter's night! From the box we

again found ourselves trudging steadily upwards to the 1500 feet contour with a glimpse of Llyn Berwyn to the left. Then, at last, a grand recompense for our efforts in the exhilarating five mile or so down the Berwyn valley. The switchback road snakes ahead towards the chequered meadows of the lowlands framed in striking fashion at the valley's mouth by the enclosing hills.

All was bustle and animation as we hurtled into the tiny market town of Tregaron which was in startling contrast to the country we had left behind. It was market day and the place seemed choked with people, cars and sheep. Although it was mid-afternoon the inns were open to provide a convivial meeting place for the visiting farmers and the babble of Welsh which assailed our ears sounded strange to a pair of foreigners which, of course, we were. It was hot and the sun blazed down. Could we be blamed for following the farmer's example in seeking refreshment before continuing our journey?

Being gluttons for punishment, although we hadn't much choice if we were to get back to our base by nightfall, we took to the hills once more. A level stretch to Llanddewi Brefi and then the mountain road to the oddly named hamlet of Farmers where we had hopes of tea. Another long hard climb but a more gradual descent along a quiet ridge road eventually brought us to our goal. At Farmers, in response to our not very hopeful knock, a lady innkeeper, bless her heart, opened early on our account and bustled round to place before us a quartet of fresh farm eggs, lightly boiled and a gigantic pot of strong tea Ah, how that national brew of ours flowed straight into tired legs and strengthened jaded muscles to ease the evening miles!

"Why on earth do I do it - I must be mad?" I am sure that most of us have asked this rueful question when we find ourselves with the tea place but a distant dream, pushing reluctant pedals with jellied legs while a rain filled southwesterly renders useless our billowing capes. Now and again a cycling day comes along to provide the answer and this was one of them. There was more enchantment to come before the round to our canvas home was completed. The impressive ravine which encloses the river Cothi was still in front and on such a calm sun drenched evening it could hardly fail to provide a fitting conclusion to such a day.--

Nor did it!

David Heath

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Book of the Month

“Band of Brothers” by Stephen Ambrose (Simon and Schuster)

This is not a new book. First published in 1992, this is my second (possibly third) reading of it. Watching the recent re-run of the classic TV series based on the book, I decided to give it another go. Written by the late Stephen Ambrose, it is a war classic and follows the exploits of Easy Company, 506th Regiment, 101st Airborne from their role in the Normandy landings in early June 1944 to their involvement in the destruction of Hitler’s Eagle Nest at the tail-end of the war.

Several things struck me on re-reading this book. When the members of Easy Company were in training prior to coming to Europe, to a man they hated their commanding officer, Herbert Sobel, who put them through their paces, often cruelly and vindictively so. The men even plotted how they could get rid of this malevolent force in their lives. Yet, as they progressed through the war and their various combat situations, many of the men begrudgingly admitted that they owed their lives to his harsh training methods which hardened them up for the travails ahead. Not only did he prepare them for the privations to come but also gelled them as a fighting force. In their mutual opposition to his brand of leadership, they became a band of brothers.

What is also striking is that they suffered so many injuries and deaths in Normandy, Holland (Operation Market Garden) and Bastogne during the Battle of the Bulge (where they were surrounded by enemy forces and prevented a major breakthrough) that by the end of the war they are hardly the same crew. A few of the original troops had been promoted and, as Ambrose comments, it was these NCOs who held the whole thing together. Tragically, many raw replacements had come and gone (the old-timers got to the point where they refused to learn the new recruits’ names as they feared the newcomers wouldn’t be around long) and, by the end, the Company suffered 150 per cent casualties. Of the original 140 men, 48 were killed and more than a 100 were wounded, often several times. One paratrooper earned four purple hearts and several of his comrades returned from injury just to join back up with their friends, more than one going AWOL to do so.

You learn a lot about leadership both good and bad in the book. Sobel wasn’t the only example of bad leadership (interestingly he became useless when in real combat and was quickly replaced), but there is also a great example of fine leadership in the book. Sobel’s departure and a D-Day casualty clear the way for Captain Dick Winters to take over the company – and he exudes true leadership. He proves to be a combat leader *par excellence*, leading from the front, leading by example and showing grit and compassion in equal measure. Several of the survivors interviewed by Ambrose for the book recall Winters on several occasions single-handedly engaging with the enemy. As they attested, led by his example, they would have – and did – run through fire for him. At Bastogne, one of the troops complained of being surrounded and Winters – without any bombast – replied, that’s what being a paratrooper is all about.

It's easy to forget that the men of Easy Company were not professional soldiers. They came from very different backgrounds and different parts of the country. They were farmers and coal-miners, mountain men and sons of the Deep South. All were white (segregation was still practised in the US army), some were desperately poor, still showing the scars of the Depression, and some were from the middle class. One came from Harvard University, one from Yale and two from UCLA. They were all citizen soldiers, drawn to the airborne by a \$50 monthly pay bonus for being prepared to jump out of airplanes into the thick of battle. Yet, according to Ambrose, at its peak, they were as good a rifle company as was in the war. They were constantly given the toughest assignments because they were tough enough to carry them out.

In this famous book you learn a lot about war: its gruesomeness and bloodiness, but also the leadership and brotherhood it engenders. When interviewed by Ambrose one of the brothers said, "Now listen, whatever you do in this book, don't go making me a hero." To which Ambrose replied, "I don't make heroes. I only write about them."

As a footnote it is worth knowing that several of the characters featured in "Band of Brothers" have written their own descriptions of their war experiences. The best of these is "Parachute Infantry" by David Webster, the Harvard man who chose to remain a private and stay on the front line, being injured twice and each time choosing to return to his unit. His is a fascinating description of how a soldier learns to protect himself in battle, stays loyal to his fellow infantrymen, while experiencing several stages of a harrowing psychological journey. Displaying *gung-ho* enthusiasm on D-Day (happy to get into action after the arduous days of training and waiting to be dropped into France), Webster soon realizes that there is no chance of surviving the hostilities and accepts the darkness of meeting certain death. Disillusionment follows and he becomes resigned to the fact that he will soon enter the ranks of the casualty tally, writing home to his parents to expect the worst. Surprisingly, however, despite his injuries, Webster reaches the point where survival becomes a possibility and he spends the rest of his time in Europe doing everything he can to avoid what at one point seemed unavoidable. His is not the story of a hero but that of one soldier doing his duty but avoiding the kind of heroics that could lead to his death. His is everyman's story. Forget the jingoistic side of warfare, this is a very personal story of one man doing all he can to return home, while realizing where he belonged. His ambivalence to being in the Army (he was known as a "goldbricker" who preferred not to volunteer for any risky assignments) while being a loyal member of his platoon and regiment is an interesting side-light. As he concludes,

The marching column was a part of that love...the wonderful sweep of the open country and the long, bobbing line of broad shoulders, olive green helmets, dark-brown rifles, and swinging arms...This was where I belonged. I had come back twice, after minor wounds in Normandy and Holland, and I wanted to stay with it to the end. I did not like the Army and I would never "Sir" anybody again as long as I lived, but as long as I had to be in the Army, I wanted to be in the 506th.

Peter Holly

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Abseiling in Portsmouth

Just over four years ago Peter Stokes did a sponsored parachute jump, together with his friend of more than 40 years, Anthony Houghton-Brown, in aid of Parkinson's UK. Anthony was diagnosed with Parkinson's over 10 years ago. There is no cure for this debilitating disease and Anthony was already suffering from some of the effects of it. Anthony then announced his intention to abseil down the Spinnaker Tower in Portsmouth in support of Parkinson's UK, and Peter again agreed to join him. The Spinnaker Tower at 170m high is 2½ times the height of Nelson's column, and one of the tallest structures in the country outside London.

The event took place at Portsmouth on 4th August. Friends were invited to come and watch Peter plummet to a rather messy demise, or possibly descend sedately to terra much firma, or if this was not to their taste, they were asked to raise money towards this worthwhile charity which funds research into treatment, and support for sufferers.

The abseil was completed successfully (see picture), with all 3 team members (Anthony's sister, Elizabeth, also went along for the ride) reaching the ground safely. Peter is delighted to say that at the current count they have raised the princely sum of £1060. Anthony is a real stalwart – he completed the descent which was

not easy for a fit and healthy person. Peter is now

slightly worried about what his friend's next fund-raising plans are – you may be getting an appeal in another couple of years to support them while they swim with sharks, bungee-jump or wing-walk.

Peter says "many thanks" again for all your support.





Papworth Team Ministry (C of E)

The Papworth Team Ministry Team Office:

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Our Team Administrator, Chris Westgarth, works in the office normally on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday mornings; serving the parishes of Bourn, Boxworth, Caxton, Conington, Croxton, Elsworth, Eltisley, Graveley with Papworth St Agnes, Kingston, Knapwell, Lolworth, Longstowe, Papworth Everard, Toseland and Yelling.

For enquiries about weddings, baptisms, funerals and general parish matters, please contact Chris (as above), visit the website or speak to one of our clergy...

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