

REMENHAM NEWSLETTER



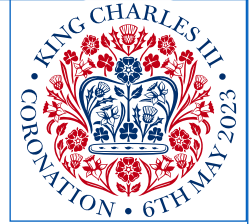
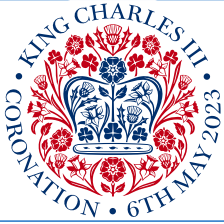
PARISH PICNIC

1.00pm, SUNDAY 7 MAY



Remenham photographer Russell Cleaver

No 292 – May-June 2023



The Remenham Parish Hall Committee is organising a wonderful event to celebrate the coronation of His Majesty King Charles III

PARISH PICNIC

in the Parish Hall Garden

1.00pm SUNDAY 7 MAY

- Bring your own picnic
- Free glass of champagne and coronation cake
- Live music from Adam Isaac
- Coronation mugs and party bags for all children under 16
- Royal theme fancy dress competition for children, prize for the best outfit
- Homemade crown competition for ALL ages, prize for the best crown
- Cash bar, Raffle, Remenham Coronation mugs for sale
- There are some parish gazebos, but not enough, bring one if you can

If you haven't already done so, please let Sue Laing know if you are planning to attend, with names - sue@homefarmemail.co.uk. Please also specify names and ages of children and grandchildren under 16.

Thank you for the offers of help and raffle prizes so far. Further offers please to Sue Laing - sue@homefarmemail.co.uk - for setting up on Saturday 6th (time dependant on Coronation timings) and morning of Sunday 7th, and for further raffle prizes.

PARISH DIARY *(See articles for more information)*

April

29th/30th Henley Arts Trail, Remenham Artists at Pheasants Hill, Mill End
30th 10.00am Annual Parochial Church Meeting, St Nicholas Church

May

1st Last day of Henley Arts Trail
7th 1.00pm Parish Picnic to celebrate the Coronation of HM King Charles III



13th 7.30pm Chiltern Arts Concert, St Mary's
15th 5.30pm Parish Council Meeting followed by
6.30pm Annual Parish Meeting, Parish Hall
18th 12.30pm Remenham WI Coronation BBQ, Parish Hall and Garden



June

12th 2.30pm WI meeting, Parish Hall
12th 6.00pm Parish Council meeting, Parish Hall
27th Henley Royal Regatta begins

Further ahead

July 2nd Last day of Henley Royal Regatta
July 5th-9th Henley Festival
July 17th 7.00pm Parish Hall Committee Meeting
Sunday 3 September Remenham Fayre, 2.00pm, Parish Hall and Garden, 2.00pm
14/15/16 March 2024 Thespians production

FROM THE EDITOR

*The two main things to highlight in this issue are the **Parish Coronation Picnic** on Sunday 7 May (see previous page) and the need for **help with our much-loved Parish Hall** (see page 6). There are some other important dates and events - in particular the Henley Arts Trail next weekend at which some of our very talented Remenham artists are displaying their skills, the Remenham WI Coronation BBQ (both on next page) and last but not least the Annual Parish Meeting on 15 May (page 5) which is your chance to meet (and challenge perhaps!) your Parish Councillors and enjoy a glass of wine. I am also pleased to promote the concert in St Mary's on 13 May (see last page) - the brilliant Chiltern Arts Festival is showcasing some very talented young musicians.*

As I hope some of you will notice I have changed the order of the articles in this issue - for two reasons. First I was keen to promote imminent events in the earlier pages (before you lose interest?) and second I am hoping to jog you into commenting! I get little or no feedback on the newsletter and often wonder if it's what people want (and certainly whether anyone reads my editorial comments!!). Please do let me know what you think - and see you at the Coronation Picnic!

Felicity, newsletter@remenhamparish.org.uk

HENLEY ARTS TRAIL



Remenham Artists are again showing their work at:

*Pheasants, Ferry Road,
Mill End, Hambleden.*

Plenty of parking, delightful Grand Design modern house with a beautiful garden down to the River and somewhere to enjoy a cup of tea and cake.

*Saturday 29 April
Sunday 30 April
Monday 1 May*



REMENHAM W.I.



CORONATION BBQ



on: **Thursday 18th. May,** at: 12.30 p.m.

at : **Remenham Village Hall and Garden (RG9 3DD)**

Come and join us to celebrate this special event a steak and sausage barbecue salads and delicious desserts
..... a Coronation Cocktail and a Prosecco Loyal Toast
and live music with Café Chaos

£7.50 per person. Family and friends welcome.

Tickets available until 12th. May from: Irene Parker on 01189 320977 or at ireneparker65@sky.



REMENHAM PARISH COUNCIL



PO Box 4748, Henley on Thames RG9 3ET

☎ 01491 412908

remenhampc@btinternet.com

REMENHAM ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

Parish Hall

Monday 15 May 2023 6.30pm

(following a Remenham Parish Council meeting at 5.30pm)

All residents are welcome to attend, to speak on any matter followed by a glass of wine and discussion

BUSINESS TO BE TRANSACTED

1. Apologies for absence
2. Signed Notes of the last APM
3. Matters Arising
4. Chairman's Report
5. Financial Report - The Clerk
6. Matters raised from the floor

Signed: Cllr Bill Roland
Chairman

Date: 22 April 2023

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED TO HELP WITH THE PARISH HALL, THE CENTRE OF OUR COMMUNITY



Our much-loved Parish Hall is central to our wonderful community and this is an opportunity to join the team who make it all happen.

After many years of looking after the Hall (where 'looking after' covers an ENORMOUS number of tasks) it is time we gave Pat Sly a rest.

We doubt that many people realise just how many long hours Pat has put into this, taking bookings, with related correspondence, checking the Hall before and after lettings, arranging for cleaning, repairs and maintenance, appliance testing, decorating, liaising with the Treasurer to arrange payment, with the access to keys and supervision all this entails, sorting out lost property - and more.

The Hall is the perfect setting for a wide variety of events - weddings, children's parties, meetings, classes, shows, lunches, suppers, family gatherings, etc, and with scope for more - Pat says she has really enjoyed dealing with everyone concerned and will miss it.

So, we need to 'replace' Pat, and we probably need more than one person to do so!

The variety of jobs could be split, and some of them can be done at home at times to fit in with busy lives.

Can you help? Could you operate the booking system or other tasks from home, are you a Handyman/woman who could do some of the repairs and snagging, or arrange for these to be done/paid for? (*Please see advertisement on page 20*). Do you have some skills and time to contribute in any way at all?

Pat has put together a summary of all she does and she and the Hall Committee would be pleased to discuss what's involved and how you might help. Please contact the Parish Hall Committee in the first instance, via remenhamhall@remenhamparish.org.uk.

The Parish Hall Committee

ARTICLES FOR THE NEWSLETTER AND EDITORIAL POLICY

Please keep sending any interesting/topical items for possible inclusion.

Please also send photos or pictures of anything to do with the parish or which might be suitable for the front covers - **the stock of such things is currently very low!**

Suitable jokes and cartoons are also more than welcome!

The editorial team reserves the right to edit, amend, précis or reject articles. The opinions expressed are those of the authors of the articles and not necessarily those of the editorial team.

Please also send feedback about the newsletter - is it what you want? I get very few comments and would really like to know what you enjoy/don't enjoy/would like to see.

Editor - newsletter@remenhamparish.org.uk

NEWSLETTER DEADLINES

Months

Deadlines for Contributors

Approx. Dates for Distribution

Jan-Feb 2023

Friday 6 January 2023

Friday 13 January 2023

Mar-Apr 2023

Friday 24 February 2023

Friday 3 March 2023

May-Jun 2023

Friday 21 April 2023

Friday 28 April 2023

July-Aug 2023

Friday 23 June 2023

Friday 30 June 2023

Sept-Oct 2023

Friday 18 August 2023

Friday 25 August 2023

Nov-Dec 2023

Friday 27 October 2023

Friday 3 November 2023

Jan-Feb 2024

Friday 5 January 2024

Friday 12 January 2024

A TOUCH OF HUMOUR

Coming soon to a street near you!

Street golf



MORE JOKES PLEASE!!

The supply of jokes and cartoons that became a feature of the lockdown has almost dried up (and the quality has declined, as I'm sure you'll agree!), but even though we are now out of lockdown it would be fun to include some occasionally.

Please keep sending them - to newsletter@remenhamparish.org.uk

THE CHURCH OF ST NICHOLAS

Rector
St Mary's, Henley
St Nicholas, Remenham }

Revd Jeremy Tayler
The Rectory, Hart Street
Henley-on-Thames, Oxon

Churchwardens

Charlotte Every Tel: 07973 798071
churchwarden@remenhamparish.org.uk

John Laing Tel: 07778 464162

Churchwarden emeritus

Mike Dowsett Tel: 01491 575711

Treasurer

Nigel Gray Tel: 01491 572024

Secretary

Mandy Sermon Tel: 01491 412908

Sidesmen

1st Sunday

Antony Duckett

Rosemary Duckett

2nd Sunday

Hugh Whitfield

Penny Whitfield

3rd Sunday

Charlotte Every

4th Sunday

John Laing

Sue Laing

5th Sunday

Glen Palethorpe

Ruth Palethorpe

NORMAL SERVICES

11.15am

Matins (BCP)

First Sunday

11.15am

Holy Communion (BCP)

Second Sunday

11.15am

Matins (BCP)

Third Sunday

11.15am

Holy Communion (BCP)

Fourth Sunday

11.15am

Matins (BCP)

Fifth Sunday

Parish Office: Monday & Tuesday 9.30am-12.30pm, Wednesday & Friday 9.30am-4.30pm

Tel: 01491 577340, email: office.hwr@lineone.net

REMENHAM PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL

The Rector

Revd Jeremy Tayler

Charlotte Every

Churchwarden

John Laing

Churchwarden

Mandy Sermon

Secretary

Nigel Gray

Treasurer

Sue Laing, Paul Sermon, Anthony West, Sarah West, Hugh Whitfield

CHURCH CLEANING

May

Rosemary Duckett

Minnie Wilson

Jenny Morrow

June

CHURCH FLOWERS

May

Mandy Cook

June

Marilyn Dudley

Judy Bate

NEWS FROM ST NICHOLAS



Our Easter services began with said Matins on Good Friday – sadly not many with us due to the tragic events by the river which led to the lane being closed and traffic chaos in Remenham. However, our Easter service of sung Holy Communion was very well attended with a congregation of 70. The church looked lovely with all the beautiful flower arrangements – many thanks to all the flower arrangers for their superb efforts.

Arrangements to mark the Coronation of King Charles III continue – see elsewhere in this Newsletter for details of the lunchtime celebrations in the Parish Hall garden. We will have a service at St Nicholas of sung Matins at 11.15am on Sunday 7 May and there will be a flower festival in church. If you would like to take part in the flower festival and do an arrangement, please let us know.

Did you manage to watch the last episode of Endeavour? The church, Parish Hall and graveyard all had starring roles.

Our Annual Parochial Church Meeting will be held at 10.00am on Sunday 30 April. Anyone on the church electoral role or resident in the parish is most welcome to attend. At the APCM churchwardens, sidesmen and the Parochial Church Council will be elected. I (Charlotte) will be standing down as churchwarden as I no longer live in the Parish – I will continue as a sidesman and member of the PCC. There will be a hiatus between the end of the meeting and the service (Matins) at 11.15am and coffee will be available in the Parish Hall.

With best wishes

Charlotte Every

John Laing

Churchwardens, St Nicholas, Remenham

FROM THE RECTORY

Dear Remenham friends,

Now that we've got to the other side of Holy Week and Easter, the great celebrations of Ascension and Pentecost are around the corner, but the clergy of the Established Church also have to seriously turn their minds towards the Coronation. I hope to see many of you at Matins on Sunday 7th May at 11.15am, and if not there then at the picnic at the Parish Hall afterwards!

I didn't grow up in the Church of England, and my upbringing was to a very large extent republican and socialist; my maternal grandfather in particular represented that strand of the British labour movement that "owed more to Methodism than to Marx". And so although I myself am not a republican, I can't help but feel a little irony in the involvement of this grandson of a republican socialist non-conformist Liverpoolian in coronation celebrations of royalty in the Royal County of Berkshire!

And so naturally enough I was reading the Guardian last week, and I came across a rather ferocious opinion piece pouring scorn on the forthcoming Coronation ceremony in general, and the Church of England's role in it in particular. For me it was rather sad to read, both because of the crudeness of the argument, which seems to increasingly be a feature of politics across the board in these polarised times, but also because the writer really didn't appear to understand anything very much about the Christian faith.

Even if you think about it from the purely secular perspective of the history of ideas, it's not hard to see that the story of Jesus of Nazareth has had an enormous impact on politics and leadership across the western world. Nowadays Christianity is almost exclusively associated in most people's minds with the politics of the right, but liberal and radical politics in the west and I think perhaps especially in the English-speaking world have a substantial debt, these days largely unacknowledged, to the Christian faith.

During Holy Week we celebrated the life of a man who, from a Roman point-of-view, was a trouble-making member of a despised ethno-religious group; and who from the point-of-view of the religious leadership of the time was an upstart working-class northerner. And not only did we celebrate his life, but we also proclaimed his death, asserting that in his being "lifted up" on the cross he revealed his "glory". This broken, beaten man, who died the death of a slave, we proclaim as King of the Universe.

So whilst Karl Marx prophesied the "Dictatorship of the Proletariat", the gospel proclaims something altogether more radical than simply switching the feet in the jackboots from one social group to another: through the cross of Jesus, every idea of kingship, rule, authority and power is turned upside-down.

Jesus described himself as one who came "not to be served but to serve", and as the Good Shepherd who "lays down his life for the sheep". On the eve of his arrest he washed his

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disciples' feet, even the feet of his betrayer. For Christians, this is the true measure of leadership and authority, and this is the one to whom all who hold authority will ultimately be called to account. So my hope and my prayer is that, through the ceremonies of the Coronation, our nation, and especially those who hold positions of responsibility in Church and State, would recognise afresh the radical challenge of Jesus of Nazareth, and that the King and all who serve in public office in this land would be filled with a true spirit of service and sacrifice.

With my prayers,

Fr Jeremy

REMENHAM PARISH HALL COMMITTEE

email address: remenhamhall@remenhamparish.org.uk

Revd Jeremy Tayler, Chairman

Nigel Gray, Treasurer

Charlotte Jefferies, Secretary

Charlotte Every

Allan Henderson

Sue Laing

Felicity Rutland

Pat Sly

Janette Brown

Jacky Ronald

Claire Fletcher

Melissa Davies

Tina Jacobs

Jan Watson

Membership of the Hall Committee will be considered at the PCC Annual meeting (30 April), to bring it into line with the Parish Hall Constitution. After a number of wonderful people came forward after the Jubilee weekend it was realised that the Committee may be larger than it should be.

PARISH MAILING LIST

If you would like to be added to the parish mailing list to receive the Parish Newsletter and other Remenham news, please email charlotteevery@gmail.com.

WHATSAPP LOCAL GROUPS

To add your names to the Remenham group contact Janette Brown on 07768 166764 or janette1brown@yahoo.co.uk and for the Aston one contact Charlotte Every on churchwarden@remenhamparish.org.uk.

NOTES FROM REMENHAM PARISH COUNCIL

April 2023

Well , we are now bounding through Spring towards a hopefully fine Summer in Remenham. It's farewell to the bright daffodils and a warm welcome to the sprouting leaves and buds all around our beautiful Parish.

The longer evenings afford the time to tend to our gardens if we have them or stroll the many paths we have to choose from.

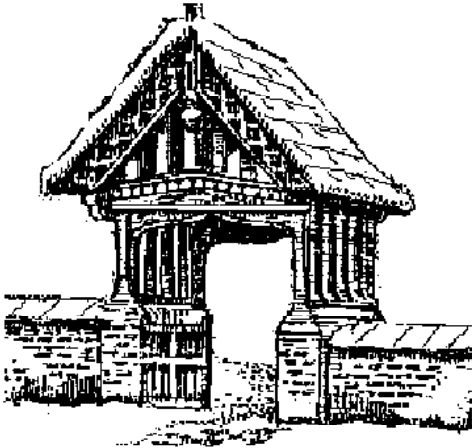
Keeping the Parish looking its best is a key priority for your Remenham Council and I am pleased to report a very successful litter picking event took place on the 25th March. A full complement of councillors ably supported by an energetic group of local residents collected a veritable mountain

of waste from the lanes and paths of the Parish. Staying on top of litter is important and we do employ someone to do a weekly walk to maintain our verges. Cutting out the problem at source is clearly the best solution. Sadly, in this modern world, I am advised that the birch or jail are no longer acceptable deterrents for those caught spoiling our Parish. Perhaps we need to charm them into behaving appropriately?

As I jump off my litter hobby horse let me canter on to more positive updates of initiatives over the past couple of months.

RPC receives funds via Wokingham from the Community Infrastructure levy (CIL) which we are obliged to reinvest for the benefit of the Parish and residents. We have to spend the levy or lose it.

During the past two years we have undertaken a number of initiatives. These include, Oak signs to aid visitors, walkers and cyclists, paving to remove muddy puddles at the Parish Hall entrance, Speed indicator signs on White Hill to help motorists obey the limits, the Wild trail along the Wargrave road, and finally, in case your heart is racing...new defibrillators for the towpath!



Your Parish Hall Committee are doing a great job yet again in planning a Coronation Picnic event on Sunday 7th May. RPC have agreed to fund a supply of souvenir Coronation mugs for all children of the Parish who attend. This should be a fun community event and the more the merrier so please do liaise with Sue Laing and come along to party with your neighbours.

Finally, on the subject of community events....the Annual Parish meeting will take place in the Parish Hall on Monday 15th May (*see page 5*). We plan to have a brief formal update with an open forum for Q&A with your councillors followed by a complimentary glass of wine and a good old gossip. Please do put this in your diary...it's the perfect time to help make sure the Parish Council is focussed on issues that matter to you.

I will leave everyone in peace now but please do get in touch if you have any suggestions for how we can keep delivering on your behalf.

Bill Ronald



REMENHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Bill Ronald (Chair): billronald@aol.com 07850 357 653

John Halsall (Vice Chair): johnashalsall@gmail.com 07939 041 227 or 01491 576190

Paul Sermon (Parish Clerk): clerk4rempc@gmail.com 07425 131 861

Franky Cookson: franky.cookson@btinternet.com 07712 834 151

Polly Hogan: polly@clearlyeducation.com

John Merkel: johnmerkel53@aol.com 07803 790 553

Darrel Poulos: darrel@poulosandpartners.com 07793 389 231

Nigel Williams: nigel@tves.co.uk 07951 994599

Meetings are currently held in the Parish Hall on the second Monday in the month at 6.00pm, except on the evening of the Annual Parish Meeting (usually in May) when it is immediately beforehand. There is normally no meeting in August.

WOKINGHAM BOROUGH COUNCILLORS - REMENHAM, WARGRAVE AND RUSCOMBE

John Halsall: john.halsall@wokingham.gov.uk 07939 041 227 or 01491 576190

Graham Howe: graham.howe@wokingham.gov.uk 07540 193 239



IS THERE A LETTER, A LETTER FOR ME....

Another terrific evening based on Letters written in the past (yes, real ones !) was presented by Ann Burley, Allan Henderson and Felicity Rutland, bringing to life Allan's original idea to recreate Remenham's own Letters Live . Not so much a repeat of the great event of 2019, rather a continuation of the theme - that letters are important, funny, serious and often say so much more than the words as written.

Pru Sly's reading of the letter about her small dog was side-crackingly funny as well as sad. Nigel Gray was another who had the audience laughing with his reading of a letter explaining the detail of his insurance claim (Gerald Hoffnung had nothing on Nigel's letter); Louise Binney's letter to her daughter was poignant to the point that there was many a tear shed quietly during her reading. Too many brilliant letters, too many top notch performers to mention everyone. As one first timer in the audience, having mopped up his wife's tears said "I had no idea that there was so much talent in Remenham". Oh yes there is: a) to devise the evening in the first place (thanks again to the directors as above) and b) to read all the letters so well and with so much meaning (thanks for expert coaching by Penny Collins and Nansi Diamond). Two evenings of pure pleasure and another brilliant showcasing of the talent, enthusiasm and commitment that there is in Remenham.

Bridget Fraser



Ian Fraser complaining to Richard Branson about a recent Virgin flight, with the audience enjoying tapas-style food supplied by The Henley Larder, owned by former mini-Thespian Zoe Ferreira (Cooper) and generously donated by the Remenham Thespians.



Martyn Griffiths and Pru Sly opening the finale, debating the merits of cats vs dogs



Marilyn Dudley reading a remarkable letter from deaf/blind Helen Keller after experiencing a classical concert on the radio



Tony Seaman being a stropgy Egyptian teenager



Penny Collins introducing Angie Emerson reading a letter from Italy in the early days of Covid, telling us what to expect



Ann Burley with Stephen Fry's reply to a fan suffering from depression



Bill Ronald, reading a letter entitled 'To my darling wife'



Katy Binney reading Joan Rivers' daughter's thoughts on having her mother as a lodger, introduced by Bridget Fraser

The Letters Evenings in the Parish Hall on 17th and 18th March were completely sold out. We are delighted to say that over £2,200 was raised towards the King Charles III Coronation Shed at the Hall, to provide storage for equipment for people wishing to hold community events such as parent and baby groups, keep fit etc.

Other letters were read by Gillian Nahum, John Nelson, Anthony West, Neil Brown, Louise Binney, Sally-Anne Plunket, Rosemary Duckett, David Morgan and Peter Wingate-Saul - sorry there is not enough room for photographs of everyone!

REMENHAM W.I.

March

Remenham W.I. welcomed Anita West, their new W.I. Advisor to their meeting in March. Anita brought Remenham up to date with news and events in Berkshire. Plans are now well under way for the Remenham W.I. Coronation BBQ to be held in May, with invitations going out soon to other local W.I. groups. Three members will be attending the Spring Annual Council Meeting in April and also the forthcoming Speakers' Selection Meeting.



The Book Club will be meeting at the end of the month to discuss the popular book, Sunrise, by Victoria Hislop, when the group will also be deciding on their next read.

The March meeting was devoted to Members' Travels and the associated memories, be they good or bad! Judy Palmer started off on a positive note with two ticks against her bucket list; first a climb of the Sydney Harbour Bridge, wearing the outfit of a large "babygrow", the long climb on the steel ladders and the amazing views! This was followed by her dreamed of trip to the Taj Mahal, the huge car park on arrival, the security gate and finally the Palace with the gardens and mosaics.

As a complete contrast, this was followed by a tale from Irene Parker of landing in San Francisco but with an aborted landing, due to an earthquake happening on the ground! At last, a landing but with yet more tremors nowhere to stay! Eventually safety was reached after a five hour drive out of the danger zone!

Tales were told about pilots flying blind due to radio failure and fog. Where was Bournemouth?! There was a return flight in an RAF jet to escape trouble in Greece, the sight of a part of an engine falling off on a flight from Sydney, leading to a very long stop over in Darwin and the problems which can arise from being stung by a hornet!

The afternoon certainly jogged memories and was very entertaining.

The afternoon ended with a delightful tea as the sun streamed through the windows, and the raffle was won by June Shelton.

April

Remenham WI enjoyed "the glory of the garden" when they explored the wonderful gardens of Cornwall with accomplished photographer Jean Sheppard . We saw the mixed herbaceous borders and the colourful planting in the parterres at Lanhydrock and Trelissick. The exploration and development of the Lost Gardens of Heligan have resulted in a marvellously diverse collection of plants to suit every area of the hidden valley. We saw an enormous variety of plants and flowers in the Temperate and Tropical biodomes at the Eden Project as well as all the experimental work going on in the outside areas. It was a fascinating exploration of plants and gardens.

continued

Jean then judged a selection of members' holiday photographs, which was won by Judy Palmer.

Coming up, on 17th April, we will meet at Toad Hall Garden Centre for coffee and cake and much chat. The Book Cub meets on 28th April and at present we are reading "Lessons in Chemistry" by Bonnie Garmus.

The Group Meeting, when we meet up with other local WIs is on 11th May. The speaker will be Bob Sinfield – an actor and writer who has written scripts for Lenny Henry and Rory Bremner to name but a few.

On May 18th we will round off the celebrations with a Coronation Barbecue – steaks, sausages, salads, delicious desserts, cocktails and Prosecco = a great end to all the Coronation festivities.

Our next WI meeting is on 15th May (a week later than usual) when we will hear how the local criminal justice system works.

Judy Palmer

If you would like any information on this group, please contact Daphne on 07919 358979

THE FLOWER POT



As you will know, after 30 years at the helm, Pat and Tony took a well earned retirement last September.

We then closed for an extensive refurbishment resulting in a new restaurant and terrace with two bars, 5 en-suite bedrooms and the garden. We will be fully open in a few weeks but in the meantime we are offering a limited service which will expand as we go.

Our intention throughout has been to maintain the character of the pub whilst undergoing a sensitive modernisation, keeping some of Tony's much loved fish and other Remenham and Aston memorabilia.

As locals ourselves, we felt this was an important consideration to everyone from around the river and it's environs.

Our new team consists of Chris (Ballard), our General Manager Ricardo and myself as the licensee. Johnny and Giles who know so many of our clientele have also remained, which is great for us.

Rod (Bowen)

Note from the Editor: *From personal experience, the food and the warm welcome are absolutely excellent!*



PARISHIONERS OF THE PAST- PART II

As reported in the last issue, Paul Cook has transcribed some reminiscences from the late Rev. Pettit. The first half was published in the last issue and this is the second. Editor

"I have recorded in past Remenham magazines my good fortune in the four churchwardens I had during my long stay in Remenham.

When I came in October 1949, Mr Kingsley Jeakes and Colonel Burnell were the church wardens. Kingsley with his characteristic modesty wanted to resign from the position of Rector's warden on my appointment. I knew a good man when I saw one, and I hastened to point out that he could not possibly leave me in the lurch from October to the next Easter, hoping that by that time he would have liked me sufficiently to continue.

And so it was, and he was my warden right up until 1965 when he really felt it was time for a change. Kingsley had been a most distinguished air pilot in the last part of the 1st world war. Retiring with the title of Squadron Leader, he clearly would have risen to very great heights if he had stayed on in the service. But characteristically, all that time, he mentioned not a word. All I remember of his flying days is of seeing him as a very handsome young man in uniform. Then too he was a talented and gifted artist, but again you were only likely to know by chance or if you had a glimpse of his paintings. But with this modesty there was great service. If anything needed to be done or any cause needed support, Kingsley could always be counted upon.

Colonel Burnell, my people's warden was a man of great note in the county of Berkshire and beyond. He had a commanding presence and a powerful personality. I remember at a Leander Dinner hearing two very distinguished oarsmen indeed talking of the Colonel in his younger days with some awe, tinged with admiration. Yet I often smile to recollect a delicate afternoon I had visiting the colonel. He had for many years read both lessons in church. I wanted to diversify and enrol others to take part so I had to tell him that I wished to take a lesson from him to give to others. He took it so understandingly but greeted Mrs Burnell with the words "I'm sacked!" as she came downstairs to give us tea. But still I have the feeling that as far as reading the lessons were concerned, he was the professional whereas the others newly enrolled were mere amateurs.

We sometimes say of the great ones of the past "There were giants in those days." It was Colonel Burnell who was the giant of our past, and behind this giant was his gentle, lovable yet shrewd wife, Mrs Burnell, one of the nicest persons who ever lived.

And last of all there was Heaven herself living on Green Isle. What a good sport she was – and so talented as an actress. When I first met her I thought that she was not the observant sort of person at all. What a mistake that was. Her one woman show in her younger days when she gave character sketches on the lines of Ruth Draper, displayed her sharp study

of womanhood with a pretty wit to exhibit absurdities and a great sense of humour quite without malice.

Her world came apart when her beloved Maurice died. I do not recall her giving any recitals after that, but yet she put her world back with characteristic courage.

I should like to recall just one personal memory. I was preaching a sermon on the vocation to the priesthood and used a quotation from Jane Austen's Mansfield Park. In this Miss Crawford's made to say, "I am just as surprised now as I was at first that you should intend to take holy orders. You really are fit for something better. Come change your mind. It is not too late, go into Law."

I looked up from the pulpit, and there were Heaven and Maurice (who was a most distinguished lawyer) holding hands and laughing, whilst enjoying the joke together. But Heaven, truly was a good sincere and thoughtful Christian with a kindness which showed itself in her life and personality.

All I have written about, apart from Colonel Burnell, lived in the parish. But beside these there were non-residents on the PCC, all splendid Christians. One was Miss Rowe who lived at Grenville Lodge on the Fairmile, an enthusiastic Christian, who to my regret, left soon after my coming, to live in the Cotswolds.

Also there were two people who were worth their weight in gold. Mr Fred Rogers and Miss Sybil Reeves lived near each other in St Marks Road, Henley. Fred had been organist in Remenham church since he had been a small boy and had grown into a most talented musician and conductor. For about twelve years we had a splendid partnership and this inspired many moving and unforgettable services in our church. He formed of course, the Remenham Singers which though not a choir from the parish, sang all their principal performances in the church. It is a delight to be able to record that in all that time we had not a single cross word nor any radical difference of opinion.

Miss Reeves served as Honorary Secretary to the choir but Sybil was for more than this, ready with efficiency and goodwill to tackle any job that might arise. And as I say, they were a wonderful asset to my church.

Besides all these there was one notable absentee from the PCC and for a good reason. He was Mr John Cridlan of Remenham Farm, and I remember how tremendously impressed I was then, as I still am, to learn he was on the other side of the world (in Australia or Argentina if my memory serves me correctly) as an international judge of Aberdeen Angus cattle.

You may think that I have looked at all these my friends with rose coloured spectacles. I can only reply that I wrote as I saw. "

Rev Pettit

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Remenham Parish Hall Committee - remenhamhall@remenhamparish.org.uk

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