

AUTUMN 2023

# PARISHMATTERS



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# PARISH MATTERS

AUTUMN 2023

Those involved in the recent four day pilgrimage to St Albans reflect in this autumn issue, and we highlight another interesting find by the occasional walking group. We congratulate Merton Park Primary School on its recent gold award establishing an ethos of rights and the well-being of children.

A parishioner is profiled with a long-valued record of service to the church with a professional reach well beyond the parish.

We celebrate books with reviews and a lady who managed the largest bookshop in the world, as the lead article explains, prompted by unusual clues in poetry etched with yellow lichen. A trip to Central America unearths the Mayan cultural celebration at the time of year we celebrate All Souls' Day. This year's Harvest Festival supports the charity Spires, empowering homeless and vulnerably housed people.

A summer concert saw our choristers shine, and this autumn we will host a guitar recital of British music from internationally renowned Michael Butten. We ask you to 'Keep the Date' for the Christmas Market on Saturday 2 December!

Gratefully, the fellowship lunches continue and the monthly film club is to increase its frequency, now part of a weekly Wednesday provision.

John Hayward, Editor

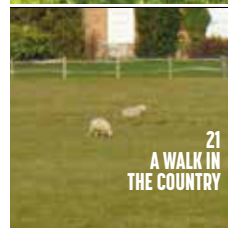
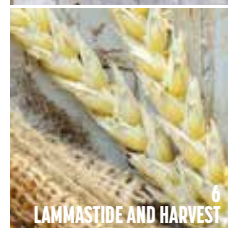
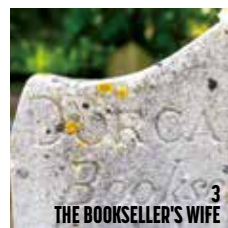
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Local resident and museum consultant Emma Shepley reveals the story behind a gravestone in St Mary's churchyard

# Dorcas Lackington – “The bookseller’s wife”



Standing shoulder high and topped with yellow lichen, Dorcas Lackington's gravestone faces the east end of St Mary's church and reads: Dorcas, wife of J. Lackington / Bookseller, Finsbury Square. Died January 27th 1795 Age 45 years.

Dorcas caught my attention on lockdown walks in 2020. Her unusual name stands out, as does the first verse of her elegy, which directly asks passers-by to stop and think about her:

**Ladies who chance to frisk this way  
With honest hearts and spirits gay  
A serious moment give to one  
Who sleeps beneath this earth & stone**

A quick google reveals that Dorcas' husband 'J. Lackington' was not an obscure Merton tradesman but an 18th-century celebrity entrepreneur. In 1793, James Lackington opened the largest bookshop in the world of his day. His Finsbury Square premises – the Temple of the Muses – was one of the wonders of London and so vast that 'a mail-coach and four were driven round the counters at opening'. The son of a Somerset shoemaker, James rose to wealth in the 1780s using a business model which 'revolutionised the book trade' – selling remaindered books at bargain prices, provoking precisely the wrath generated by Amazon today amongst Lackington's competitors.

We know a great deal about James because he was a brilliant publicist who wrote three books of self-congratulatory memoirs, in which Dorcas herself appears tantalisingly infrequently – submerged in James' showmanship. We do know that Dorcas paid 'a constant and unwearied attendance to bookselling' and probably played a key role in Lackington's success, but what more could be found?

The register of St Luke's Church, Old Street records Dorcas' baptism on 1 April 1750: 'Dorcas, d. of Samuel Turton & Jemima'. Her city childhood was initially shared with siblings Jemima and John, but tragedy is heavily indicated by the family's parish records and Dorcas may have been the Turton's only surviving child. James describes Dorcas' father gambling away a large fortune and being forced into trade as a bridle cutter – a maker of saddles and harnesses – from their home at 46 Chiswell Street. But Samuel's gambling continued, and his 'final ruin' was a stay in debtor's prison before his death.



Aged just 23, Dorcas was now in sole charge of the family business. She 'cheerfully submitted to keep a school' whilst renting the shop to her lodgers, James Lackington and his first wife Nancy. After Nancy's sudden death, James 'wastes no time' in marrying Dorcas at St Luke's Church just months later because: 'so amiable a daughter was very likely to make a good wife. I also knew that she was immoderately fond of books ... I was in raptures with the thought of having a woman to read with'. Dorcas' own feelings are not recorded but James' recollections show a romantic side to her nature: 'This girl had for some years divided her spare hours between devotion and novel reading. On Sundays she would attend the sermons ... and after her return ... the novel was

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resumed, and not quitted until she had seen the hero and heroine happily married, which often kept her out of bed until morning'.

Dorcas proved even more valuable to James during his frequent travels to booksellers across the UK: 'Her extreme love for books made her delight to be in the shop ... she could readily get any article that was asked for. Accordingly, when I was out on business, my shop was well-attended'. Dorcas occasionally accompanied James and they took the waters at Buxton, promenaded with 'their majesties and the four princesses' at Weymouth and visited Stonehenge – an 'amazing pile'.

With their new-found social mobility, the Lackingtons moved to rural Merton, renting Spring House on Kingston Road (now the site of 1930s flats). The couple started horse-riding for exercise on doctor's orders, acquired a pet dog called Argus and provoked speculation from neighbours when they bought a carriage and servants in livery – described by James as 'base envy'.

A less idyllic incident was reported in May 1794: 'On Sunday evening last, as Mr. Lackington was reading to a Lady in an



unfrequented lane, near Merton, they were suddenly addressed from behind a hedge... if they did not lay down their money and watches, he would immediately blow out their brains; at the same time pointing a gun through the hedge ... On this Mr. L threw down half-a-guinea, some silver, and an antique brass coin. The fellow... effected his escape.'

Country living ended abruptly in 1795. Dorcas' cause of death is not known but her obituary in the Gentleman's Magazine notes that she 'bore a complication of disorders with uncommon patience and fortitude'. James wrote the poem on her gravestone and promptly marrying her distant cousin Mary, lived on for a further 20 years.

Although I wish James had written more about Dorcas and less about his own brilliance, he does give us rare glimpses of an 18th century life that deserves a 'serious moment' of our time. Dorcas was a landlady, a schoolteacher, manager of the largest bookshop in the world and a voracious reader who endured illness and pain in the last years of her life. James' final lines of her epitaph read:

**And whether you are maid or wife  
 Go imitate her former life  
 And when to Heaven you yield your breath  
 May you like her have peace in death.** ■





John Hayward, Vicar of St Mary's writes on

# Lammastide and Harvest

Harvest Festival celebrates what food we have and what God has given. If we are fortunate to have had a successful harvest, September is the time of year when we see the first signs that this might be so, whilst still waiting for other plantings to ripen before we can be sure it will be abundant

This 'first fruits' time was known previously as the ancient festival of Lammastide (loaf mass day), one of the festivals lost at the Reformation but which traces its origins back to Old Testament times when the Hebrew people celebrated the heart of the matter, the faithfulness of the God who gives all things, and when they made an offering of the first fruits. Jewish people still celebrate this festival today, alongside the commemoration of Moses receiving the Law on Mount Sinai, and know it by the name of Shavout. In England, the Saxon church adopted Lammastide when traditionally the first new grain was milled and baked

into small loaves of bread, which were offered and consecrated at the altar at holy communion as the worshippers offered themselves and their land, looking forward to the fulness of harvest later in the autumn.

So while we await the harvest and the celebration that 'all is safely gathered in', let us consider the first fruits and more fully appreciate the whole process as we reflect on the natural growing cycle and the links between these festivals of faith and the land on which all our lives depend. Today of course, we depend on the success of harvests across the globe, not just at home, and presently are alarmed at the treacherous and precarious position in Ukraine which supplies so much of the world's grain and other food.

In recent years the Church of England, especially in more rural areas, has breathed new life into old agricultural festivals encouraging everyone to make efforts to

promote understanding of the food chain and the importance of the sustainability of the earth.

At St Mary's each year at harvest time, not only do we give thanks for the bounty of the earth and consider its sustainability but collect food and other essential items for charitable distribution. This year all goods will benefit the Spires Centre, working in south London, empowering homeless and vulnerably housed people to source and maintain secure accommodation whilst tackling the root causes of their homelessness. See pages 10 and 11 for more about their work.

See our list (right) of items needed. If you can contribute, please bring them to the church in the week running up to or on the Harvest Festival Day itself, Sunday 15th October, when we shall celebrate with three services: 8am, **10am** Children First Eucharist and 6.30pm Evensong.

It would be great if this year we can surpass previous years' generosity – thank you.

## Come & Sing Evensong

**St Mary's Merton is hosting a Come and Sing evensong on Sunday 15 October at 6.30pm (rehearsal 4pm) for potential new singers from the area – altos, tenors, and basses of any age and experience are welcome to join our evening rehearsal and service, singing choral classics such as Faure's Cantique de Jean Racine and Stanford's canticles in Bb.**



Please email [info@stmarysmertonchoir.com](mailto:info@stmarysmertonchoir.com) with your details and voice part or scan this QR code and fill out our online form, in order to sign up.

## The following items are much needed

<b>Food &amp; drink</b>	Cup a soup
Coffee	Tinned tomatoes
Tea bags	Baked beans
Sugar	Tinned spaghetti
Cordial	Biscuits
Tuna	Cream crackers
Sardines	Cereal bars (not boxes)
Mackerel	UHT milk
Corned beef	Pot noodles
Tinned ham	Cooking oil
Spam	<b>Toiletries</b>
Luncheon meat	Razors
Meatballs	Shaving foam
Rice	Toothpaste
Pasta	Toothbrushes
Pasta sauce	Shower gel
Tinned fruit	Shampoo
Tinned potatoes	Wet wipes
Hot dogs	Deodorant (male and female)
Tinned soup (not tomato)	

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Parish Matters is distributed to 3250 homes in the parish of St Mary's, Merton. A different member of the editorial team edits each issue. We welcome your feedback.

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All the production and paper elements of this magazine have been carbon balanced

SEPTEMBER  
OCTOBER  
NOVEMBER

WHAT'S ON

AUTUMN 2023

**Regular church services**  
see page 28

**Sunday Club**  
see page 28

**Children First Eucharist**  
see page 28

**Covid arrangements**  
Now the impact of Covid has eased, and after taking medical advice, we have restored the use of the chalice at the reception of holy communion.

**Peal of bells to celebrate St Mary's patronal festival**  
Saturday 9 September between 10am and 1pm

**Big Church Clean**  
Saturday 16 Sept 9am–1pm (even 1 hour much appreciated)

**'Children First' Eucharists** (45 mins)  
Sundays: 17 September, 19 November. 9.30am.  
15 October. 10.00am.

**Sunday Club**  
Meets in Parish Hall 9.30am. Sundays: 1 Oct, 5 Nov, 3 Dec

**John Innes Society coffee morning and cake sale**  
Coach House, Melrose Rd. Sat 21 Sept 10.30am–12.30pm

**Fellowship Lunches**  
Sundays 24 September and 19 November  
12 noon for 12.30pm St Mary's Parish Hall  
For tickets phone 020 8543 3764 or 07960 324 371

**Dedication Eucharist**  
Sunday 1 October 9.30am

**Harvest Festival**  
**10.00am.** Sunday 15 October, with 'Children First' Eucharist and collection for Spires Charity (see page 6)

**Guitar Recital by Michael Butten**  
Thursday 19 Oct 7.30pm. Tickets £10 on the door

**Sung Eucharist All Saints' tide**  
Sunday 5 November 9.30am

**Remembrance Sunday Service** 12 November 10am  
**All Souls' Service** 6.30pm

**Come and Sing Harvest Evensong**  
Sunday 15 October 6.30pm, see page 7 for details

**Christmas Market**  
Saturday 2 December 11am–2pm (See page 28)

**Advent Carol Service**  
Sunday 3 December 6.30pm



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The Spires Centre



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in outreach  
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provision

## Tackling homelessness in South London

**Charles Hibbert explains how Spires, one of St Mary's supported charities, supports local people in crisis.**

For the past 30 years, Spires, based in Streatham, has been a lifeline for people experiencing homelessness and disadvantage in South London. Our services support people in their time of crisis before they become homeless, as well as supporting those experiencing homelessness into securing and maintaining accommodation.

Last year we supported:

- 102 people into housing.
- 67 people to avoid eviction.

Our support involves more than housing. Everyone who comes to the Spires centre is offered a warm welcome and a space to breath and reconnect. We'll be serving 4,000 hot meals this year with our weekday breakfasts often being the first time we meet the people we help.

Our clients are often marginalised and less likely to access the healthcare they need. Health inclusion is therefore a core part of our mission. We work closely with our health partners so clients can attend a weekly drop in with a nurse as well as periodic dentistry, liver screening and TB testing.

Spires Streetlink, our outreach project, works with women engaging in street-based sex work. Our experienced support workers work late nights and early mornings to meet these vulnerable women where they are and build trusting relationships with them, enabling us to provide them with the help they need. Our Streetlink service was recently highly commended by Homeless Link as part of their Excellence Awards.



### Funding need

Homelessness has been on the rise across London. We have seen a 20% increase over the past year of people reaching crisis point and coming to Spires for support. While demand for our services is increasing, we're facing increasing financial pressure relating to the cost-of-living crisis and more competition for our usual sources of income.

To keep the centre open, we need to raise £600,000 in the coming year. To achieve this, we need to raise an additional £20,000 from community donations. We rely entirely on donations from local people, trusts and faith groups including St Mary's Merton. St Mary's Merton have consistently supported Spires which is greatly appreciated.

### To donate

via Just Giving, please scan the bar code.



Alternatively, you can donate through bank transfer. Our bank details:

Account Name: The Spires Centre  
Sort Code: 60-20-39  
Account Number: 34491988

### Get in touch

If you want to play your part in helping the growing number of people at risk of or experiencing homelessness in London, please get in touch.

Phone: 020 8696 0943  
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You can also keep updated with our work and impact we're having on homelessness via email. To receive regular insights from Spires, please email [charles@spires.org.uk](mailto:charles@spires.org.uk)



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**MUSIC MATTERS**

# Choristers Shine in Summer Concert

David Reeves reports on an unforgettable evening of youth music

There may be a new Music Director at the helm, but St Mary's fine choral tradition is clearly in safe hands if this summer's Choristers Concert is anything to go by.

MD Tristan Weymes, himself a chorister here since the age of 12, compiled a wonderful programme of choral works, ranging from Mozart to contemporary composer Joanna L'Estrange. Interspersed were accomplished solo performances from eleven of St Mary's youngsters on a wide range of instruments – organ, cello, french horn, clarinet, trumpet, piano, electric guitar and voice.

Of course, it's unfair to single out any individual, but special mention really must go to Kitty Ajaz, only aged nine who charmed and delighted the packed audience with a lovely rendition of David Popper's cello piece, Hungarian Rhapsody. And 12 year old Daniel Roberts showed his natural showmanship on electric guitar when his performance of Kit Morgan's



From top left clockwise: Junior and senior choristers; Matthew Bisson, Edward Stancombe, Matthew Hopkins and Sebastian Roberts; Matthew Bisson and Tristan Weymes; Daniel Roberts; Chloe Ellam; Miriam Ajaz.

Old Bones Blues was suddenly rudely interrupted by a complete loss of electricity! Daniel simply carried on and completed the number 'unplugged', for which the audience gave an especially raucous round of applause.

Other choral highlights – indeed, numbers not usually heard within the hallowed walls of St Mary's – included a Backstreet Boys song, I Want It That Way, brilliantly performed acapella by our young tenors and basses who renamed themselves the Backrow Boys for the evening! And Tristan himself got into the action by dueting Gilbert and Sullivan's Pirate King alongside Matthew Bisson.

It was a wonderful evening of entertainment which will live long in the memory for all who attended. It also raised more than £500 to support the musical education at St Mary's.

Besides Tristan, whose preparation and hard work paid off so magnificently, thanks also go to accompanist Lydia Newlands, Organ Scholar Edward Stancombe, and Vocal Coach Kate Ashby.

**St Mary's choir is recruiting new singers. Please see page 7 for more about our 'Come and Sing' evensong. Sunday 15th October. 6.30pm**



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# ST ALBANS PILGRIMAGE... REFLECTIONS



Christians of the past did not have modern hiking boots but walked barefoot. They had very little food to eat and relied on the kindness of strangers along the way. The St Mary's pilgrims had both boots and food but still encountered the kindness of strangers. Each day started with a gentle church service, then a walk to their lunchtime rendezvous, then on again to their evening destination, ending with a convivial supper.

“ I enjoyed the opportunity to talk to and listen to people without any time pressures ”



“ A very friendly group of pilgrims ”

“ It was good to begin each day with prayer together in local churches, where we were made very welcome ”



“ Pilgrimage connects us with the natural world, with each and other and with those who have gone before us ”

“ The whole pilgrimage was achieved by the many who took part in various ways, rather like a relay – we did it together ”

“ The countryside was at its springtime best, we visited ancient churches and walked through lovely villages and market towns ”

“ Wonderful service on Sunday in the cathedral, and to have others from the Parish join us followed by lunch together ”

“ We were grateful to enter into only a small part of the pilgrimage experience ”

“ The camaraderie is what I'll remember ”



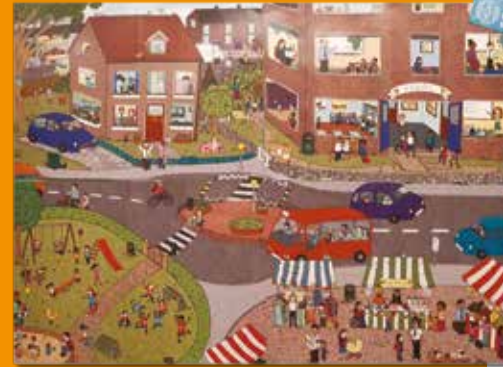
## St Alban

According to Bede, (C8th) Alban, while still a pagan in Roman Britain, sheltered a priest fleeing persecution. Moved by the priest's devotion, Alban converted to Christianity. When soldiers came to arrest the priest, Alban donned the priest's cloak and gave himself up in his stead. Tradition records his consequent execution and martyrdom, on the cathedral hill, c.301 CE, was accompanied by various miracles including the conversion of the soldier executioner. By Bede's time the cult venerating Alban was well established. The C8th Benedictine abbey church, rebuilt by the Normans, is now the cathedral of St Albans diocese and site of the saint's shrine. St Mary's pilgrims are only the latest to join in the centuries-long tradition of devotion to Britain's first recorded Christian martyr.



“ It was very uplifting to approach St Alban's Cathedral on foot, walking with fellow pilgrims from St Mary's, as many had done before over many centuries ”

# Merton Park Primary School and the UNICEF UK Gold Award



Judith Bersweden



Walk into Merton Park Primary School and you soon realise that the rights and well-being of each child are at the top of the agenda.

There are more than 40 examples of rights being realised or denied in this poster. How many can you find?

## What are the rights?

At the start of each school year, the teacher of each class will work with the pupils to agree and establish their Class Charter, which is then displayed attractively in each classroom along with a copy of the Children's Rights, especially those that apply to the children's lives in school – such as:

### I have the right to:

- an education (article no. 28)
- relax and play (no. 31)
- clean water and nutritious food (no. 24).
- privacy (no. 16)
- say what I think should happen when adults are making decisions that affect me (no. 12)

The Class Charter, along with other colourful and informative displays throughout the school, undergirds all the various forms of learning that then take place, and serves as a formative point of reference in classroom teaching, in assemblies (three Rights are given emphasis each school term), in the after-school club and during playground recreation. In addition, the Rights Respecting Schools Award is also a valued and crucial part of the School's governance, and will both shape and undergird the thinking of those who make decisions about the ethos of the school and its daily life as it seeks to support and nurture all those in its care.

In 2022 the School was delighted to gain Gold – the third and highest stage – in the UNICEF Rights Respecting Schools Award. It is awarded to schools that have fully embedded children's rights in the policies, practice and ethos of the school community, and is assessed by a Professional Adviser who looks for evidence that the school has explicitly adopted a child rights approach. This is based on the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, which was adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1989, and is the most widely adopted international human rights treaty in history.

At Merton Park Primary there is a steering group made up of children, parents, governors and staff, and there are regular meetings to discuss how children's rights are implemented in the day-to-day life of the school, with an emphasis on children and adults working to promote and achieve this together.



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**THURSDAY 19 OCTOBER. 7.30PM**

New Elizabethan Award holder

## Michael Butten

Presents a programme of British music for guitar



**March 2024**

Emmanuel Sowicz (UK/Chile)

**June 2024**

Laura Snowden (UK)

**Tickets £10 on the door**

St Mary's Church, Merton,  
Church Path, London SW19 3HJ

# The Day of the Dead in Mayan Culture



Like many people, David Reeves had always assumed that the Day of the Dead celebrations at the end of October in Mexico and other central American countries was the local version of the west's Halloween. However, his holiday to Mexico, Belize and Guatemala earlier this year dispelled this myth.

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Halloween – a derivation of 'All Hallows Eve', the night before (or of) All Saints Day – possibly originates from the old Celtic festival of the Gaels called Samhain, which focused on warding off evil spirits who crept through the world at that time of year. The Gaels sought to protect their harvested crops from being damaged by these spirits. Hence Halloween became a hair-raising and spine-chilling occasion.

But in central America, Día de los Muertos, or the Day of the Dead, is a very different tradition. It dates back as far as 1800 BC, celebrated by the Mayan people who populate parts of what we now know as modern day Yucatan in south-eastern Mexico, Belize and Guatemala. These traditions share many similarities with Día de los Muerto festivities developed by the Aztecs in Mexico.

Originally celebrated by Mayans at the beginning of the summer, with the arrival of the Spanish in the 16th Century, Día de los Muertos was aligned with All Souls and All Saints Day (31 October and 1 November).

Aztecs and Mayans both treat death as the next stage of existence. When a soul leaves the body in death, it goes into another realm, an afterlife which can either mean rebirth, heaven, or the underworld.

Today, for the descendants of the Mayans, Día de los Muertos has evolved into various forms. But the essence of the tradition has remained the same for millennia – to celebrate the second life of the dead. When



Mayans celebrate with painted skull masks  
Celtic Samhain symbolism (left)

this special day comes, it's believed that the souls of the spirit realm can visit the land of the living, not to haunt people, but to lovingly reconnect with their family and friends.

So, the Day of the Dead unfolds into an exciting explosion of colour and life that can last for days. In a stark contrast to the Halloween tradition of driving away spirits, Día de los Muertos invites the souls of deceased family members to come home and eat the food offered by the living.

Traditions vary across the various Mayan cultures, for example in the Guatemalan town of Pamuch, residents carefully clean with small brushes the bones of those who have been dead for three years. They then wrap the bones in hand-woven embroidered linens.

In the towns of Sumpango and Santiago Sacatepequez, the skies are filled with huge kites called barriletes, often measuring 40 feet or more, which represent a line of communication to guide returning spirits to their Guatemalan families. Once the kite festival ends, the kites are burned so that the dead can peacefully rest and return next year.

But probably the biggest symbol for visitors to the region is the proliferation of colourfully painted wooden skulls in local markets and tourist venues, including the many wonderful Mayan historical sites. Skulls can be placed on altars or worn while dancing in memory and honour of relatives who have transcended into the spirit realm.

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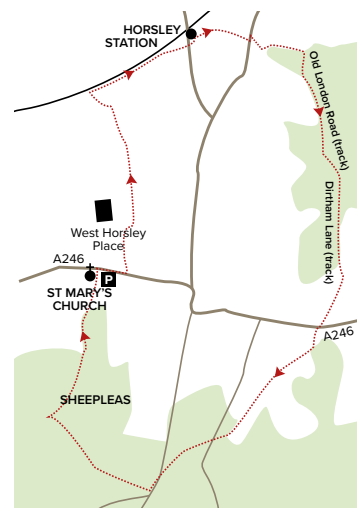
Simon Hillson takes a walk with St Mary's Occasional Walking Group to

## West Horsley Place

West Horsley Place is a timber-framed manor house dating back to the 15th century, but extensively remodelled in the reign of Charles I, with the addition of a strikingly beautiful brick façade. When it was unexpectedly inherited in 2014 by Bamber Gascoigne (of University Challenge fame) it was in a somewhat neglected condition.

Gascoigne, who was already 80, embarked on a major project of restoration and made the property over to an independent charitable trust. It is now a centre for various crafts and the home of Grange Park Opera. The house itself can be visited on occasional open days ([westhorsleyplace.org](http://westhorsleyplace.org)). West Horsley Place (and its pop-up café offering welcome refreshment!) makes a splendid focus for a six mile circular walk from Horsley station (30 minutes by train from Wimbledon) undertaken last year by St Mary's walking group.

An OS map of the route can be found at:  
<https://rb.gy/e5rz7>



Starting at Horsley station, you soon pick up the tracks of Old London Road and Dirtham Lane leading south to the A246. Cross the road and take the bridle path and lane that take you to Green Dene Plantation. This is the beginning of a beautiful area of mixed woodland and open space called Sheepleas, from the highest point of which there is a spectacular view on a clear day of the London skyline lying far to the north. Soon after re-crossing the A246 by St Mary's Church, you will get to West Horsley Place. You then continue to follow a path north until you meet the railway from where there is another path that will take you back to the station.



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## PARISHPEOPLE

# From Crucifer to Livery Master

Richard Price talks to Russell Penny

Russell Penny has been involved with St Mary's for nearly 40 years. He was married in the church and after his eldest son was christened in the mid 1990's, encouraged by the then church warden Jean Neighbour, he took on active roles within the church community. He became an acolyte (carrying lighted candles in church processions) and later a Crucifer (carrying the Cross in processions), a position he has held for over 25 years. One of his proudest memories is of being Crucifer in charge of his two sons who were acolytes.

In recent years Russell has been Chairman of the Building and Works Committee of the Parish Church Council (PCC), overseeing the five-year inspection of the church building by the architect and a recent inspection of the church's electrical works. Perhaps his



most challenging assignment was coping with the church roof leaking above the newly installed organ and preventing what could have been considerable damage to the instrument. Having been a member of the PCC for over 25 years, he is now Vice Chair, a task made less onerous than it might have been as the Vicar is normally present to chair the meetings.

Outside of the church Russell's career has been in the Police and Security services. He spent 31 years in the Metropolitan Police and when he retired from the Police he held a national role as Detective Chief Superintendent in Counter Terrorism. He then moved into the private sector and became Director of International Security Operations for an American energy company and later Head of Global Security for Christies before setting up his own security consultancy.

Russell has also been instrumental in developing one of the City of London's newest livery companies, The Worshipful Company of Security Professionals. He is the current Master and is actively engaged in supporting The Sheriffs' of the City of London's Awards for Bravery.



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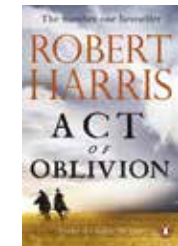
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# A good read...

The editorial team recommends three historical novels...



## Act of Oblivion Robert Harris

Harris's latest historical thriller takes us to 17th century England and America. The Indemnity and Oblivion Act 1660 granted a general pardon for acts committed during the Civil War and Commonwealth, but excluded the men who had signed Charles I's death warrant. Against a background of events national (the Great Plague, the Fire of London) and international (the Dutch wars), the novel – almost all of whose characters were real people – recounts an obsessive manhunt for two of the regicides. Meticulously researched, it vividly conveys a sense of the precariousness of life in the Puritan communities of England and the North American colonies after the Restoration. But more important than anything, like all Harris's novels, it is almost impossible to put down!



## The Romantic William Boyd

Set in the 19th century this beautiful novel follows the life of Cashel Greville Ross. The highs, the lows, the loss, the luck. From his early life as an orphan in Ireland, and subsequent move to Oxford and London, we travel with him as he crosses continents under many guises. He distinguishes himself at Waterloo and goes on to lead a rich and varied life – as prisoner, farmer, writer, lover, adventurer, explorer, diplomat, husband.

His journeys are peppered with fascinating characters and a woman who captures his heart. A life full of romance in every sense of the word.



## The Foundling Stacey Halls

Set in 1754 London, it tells the tale of Bess Bright, forced through poverty to leave her baby daughter at the Foundling Hospital. But when she returns some years later to reclaim the child, she discovers that someone else has already claimed her. So Bess tries to find out who has taken her – and why. The differences in the lives of the city's poor and wealthy in the 18th century are starkly painted, and the writing gathers real pace as the story dramatically unfolds.

## Sudoku

Solutions on page 28

	9	8					4	3
			2					5
1				4				
		5					2	8
			5	9				
7	4					6		
			1					4
9				8				
6	3					2	8	

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Our Care Professionals come in all shapes and sizes - from a retired art teacher, who loves getting crafty with clients, to an enthusiast cook, who enjoys conjuring up a storm in the kitchen.

*Whatever your experience, we would love to hear from you!*

For those of you with elderly loved ones, we also have a range of fun weekly activities, including chair-based exercise class Love to Move at the Wimbledon Library on Mondays and Love to Sing at the Quaker Centre in Kingston on a Friday.

If you would like to find out more about becoming a Care Professional, coming to one of our events or you are interested in receiving care for yourself or a loved on please call **0208 942 4137** or email [clare.jefferies@homeinstead.co.uk](mailto:clare.jefferies@homeinstead.co.uk)

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## PARISH TOGETHER



### Wednesday Club

The Film Group has expanded to become the Wednesday Club, meeting in the parish small hall every Wed 2:30–4:30pm from 6 September.

The monthly programme includes two film sessions, an afternoon tea and conversation, quizzes and lively topic talks.

No entry charge but suggested donation for refreshments of £5 pp, or £8 per couple/pair. For further information contact:

**Barbara Moreland** 020 8542 3427 or [bmoreland43@gmail.com](mailto:bmoreland43@gmail.com) or **Lindsey Jones** 020 87156398 or [lindsey6456@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:lindsey6456@hotmail.co.uk)

In addition to our services in church, St Mary's offers several activities which are open to all in our local community. You are sure to receive a warm welcome. For more details get in touch with the contact person mentioned.



### Pilgrim Group

The Pilgrim Group, which meets on alternate Thursday evenings, offers an opportunity for informal study, prayer and fellowship.

For further information, contact Simon Hillson [simonhillson@me.com](mailto:simonhillson@me.com)

### Fellowship Lunch

Join us for an inexpensive lunch in good company – especially for those who might not cook a Sunday roast for themselves.

To book call Anita Simpson on 020 8543 3764 or 07960 324 371 or email her at [adsimpson68@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:adsimpson68@yahoo.co.uk)

### Walking Group

The Occasional Walking Group meets five or six times a year after the Sunday Parish Eucharist for short walks (maximum six miles), usually in the Surrey countryside.

For further information contact Simon Hillson [simonhillson@me.com](mailto:simonhillson@me.com)



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### Regular Sunday Services

8am Said Eucharist (Book of Common Prayer, fourth Sunday of each month)  
9.30am Sung Eucharist ('Children First Eucharist', third Sunday of each month)  
6.30pm Evensong  
Midweek Said Eucharists 10.30am (30 mins), third Thursday of each month followed  
by refreshments in church  
NB. On some Festivals the main morning service is at 10am

**Sunday Club for children** meets on the 1st Sunday of the month in the church hall at 9.30am,  
before joining the end of the service in church. Parents are asked to stay with under threes.

**Children First Eucharist** a family-friendly service at 9.30am on the 3rd Sunday of the month.  
Please check website for details, or contact [judithbersweden@stmarysmerton.org.uk](mailto:judithbersweden@stmarysmerton.org.uk)



St Mary's Parish Office  
is open four mornings  
each week from 9–11am  
(closed Wednesdays).

[office@stmarysmerton.org.uk](mailto:office@stmarysmerton.org.uk)  
020 8542 1760

### Solution for Sudoku page 11

2	9	8	6	5	1	7	4	3
4	6	7	2	8	3	4	9	5
1	5	3	9	7	4	8	6	2
3	1	5	4	6	7	9	2	8
8	2	6	5	1	9	4	3	7
7	4	9	8	3	2	6	5	1
5	8	2	1	9	6	3	7	4
9	7	4	3	2	8	5	1	6
6	3	1	7	4	5	2	8	9



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