

Winkfield, Cranbourne and Chavey Down Parish Magazine



December 2025

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This magazine is available on the web at www.fosmw.com or <https://www.winkfieldandcranbourne.org.uk> For correspondence with the Editors please write to aeh@xdotd.co.uk or info@fosmw.com including 'parish mag' somewhere in the subject. Some paper copies are available in the three churches on or after the last Sunday of each month.

Reprinted 24-Nov-25

Winkfield, Cranbourne and Chavey Down Parish Magazine – December 2025 6th November – St Nicholas' Day

How Father Christmas got where he is today

One person you are bound to run into this Christmas season is Father Christmas. These days he seems to frequent shopping malls and garden centres. If he looks tired, just remember that he has been around a long time and gone through a lot of transformations.

Father Christmas wasn't always the red-suited, white-bearded star of the retail trade that he is today. He began life as Nicholas, born way back about AD260 in Patara, an important port on the southern coast of what is now Turkey. When his parents died and left him a fortune, Nicholas gave it away to the poor. He became a bishop of the nearby city of Myra, where he almost certainly suffered persecution and imprisonment at the hand of the Roman Emperor Diocletian.

Nicholas was a serious theologian: he was a participant at the First Council of Nicaea, which formulated the Creed which we still say today. He even, reportedly, slapped another bishop in a squabble over the exact nature of the Trinity.

Nicholas died in Myra about AD343, but the stories of his generosity and kindness were just beginning. One enduring tale tells of the three girls whom he rescued from certain prostitution by giving them gold for their dowries. When the father confronted him to thank him, Nicholas said he should thank God alone.

In the UK, Nicholas became the basis for Father Christmas, who emerged in Victorian times as a jolly-faced bearded character. Meanwhile, Dutch and German settlers had taken him to America with them as Sinter Klaas and Sankt Nicklas.

It was in America that Nicholas received his final two great breaks into real stardom. The first was when the Rev Clement C Moore, a New York Episcopal minister, turned from his life-work of writing a Hebrew/English lexicon, to write a fun poem for his children one Christmas. His 'The Visit of St Nicholas' is now universally known by its first line: 'Twas the Night Before Christmas'.

From Clement Moore we discovered that St Nicholas is round and pink-cheeked and white-bearded, and that he travels at night with

sleigh, reindeer and a sack of toys on his back. It was Clement Moore who also revealed that St Nicholas enters houses down chimneys and fills children's stockings with toys and sweets.

So how did we find out that Father Christmas wears red? That was the US Coca-Cola advertising campaign of 1931, which finally released the latest, up-to-date pictures of Father Christmas: wearing a bright red, fur-trimmed coat and a large belt.

These days, it is good that Father Christmas uses reindeer and doesn't have to pay for petrol. In order to get round all the children in the world on Christmas Eve, he will have to travel 221 million miles at an average speed of 1279 miles a second, 6,395 times the speed of sound. For all those of us who are already exhausted just rushing around getting ready for Christmas, that is a sobering thought.

From the parish registers for October 2025

Baptisms

Robin and Reuben Godding were baptised at St Mary's Church on Sunday 5th October.

No Confirmations, Funerals etc. or Weddings & Blessings have been reported.

Notices

A message from Andrea Stephens, PCC Lay Chair

As the Parish Magazine goes for web publication this weekend, we have no news as to whether we have any applicants for the post of Interim Minister after publication of the Parish Profile. We are not allowed to contact or ask the Archdeacon whether there have been enquiries until after the closing date for applications for this post.

If there are several applications, there will a shortlisting process, but if there is only one applicant we may be advised to advertise again. We pray that there will be some good news.

Hilary Atkinson is stepping down as a member of the PCC as she and Nigel are moving away to a new home and area. We thank her for all her hard work on the PCC, and we send them both our very best wishes for their move and future.

We also thank Anthony Hodson for all his hard work in managing the Music & Merriment community concerts over many years on behalf of

the Friends of St Mary's Winkfield. These concerts have celebrated local singers and musicians, and have introduced some amazing young talent, some becoming BBC Young Musician finalists. This is his last concert as manager, and we hope that it will be a great success.

On behalf of the PCC, I wish you all a joyous Christmas and blessed new year and we thank everyone for their support during the Vacancy and for all those who have worked so hard to keep our Parish and churches going. We hope your Christmases are full of laughter, good food, family, friends, music and, above all, love and a thank you to God for all that He has given us at Christmas and throughout 2025.

Church Office

Office hours are Monday-Friday 9:30am-12noon. The Church Office is open to visitors on Tuesdays & Fridays.

Contact info: Church Office: c/o St Martin's Church, Church Road, Chavey Down, SL5 8RR, phone: 01344 882933 or email admin@winkfieldandcranbourne.org.uk

Website: <https://www.winkfieldandcranbourne.org.uk> Note. This link will not work without including the www part of the URL.

If you are arranging an event, please contact Stephanie in the Church Office at the email address above, so that it can be noted in the Church diary and recorded on the website. Don't forget to use our fundraising links: <https://www.winkfieldandcranbourne.org.uk/donate.htm>

Safeguarding in the Parish

The Parish safeguarding details are at:

<https://www.winkfieldandcranbourne.org.uk/asafeguarding.htm>

Safeguarding is part of our core faith and is an integral feature of Christian life. Please be alert to the fact that Safeguarding concerns arise in many different guises. So, we should always have faith to question, especially when something does not feel right.

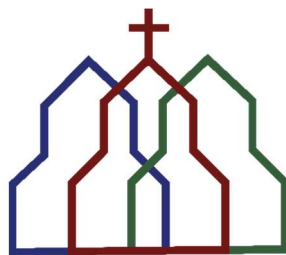
Should you have any Safeguarding concerns, please contact the Church Office at safeguarding@winkfieldandcranbourne.org.uk (please begin the message with 'SAFEGUARDING'), or on 01344 882933.

St. Martins Church Hall

St Martin's Church Hall is available for Hire
Weekday Evenings & Weekends

£17.50 per hour (community/charity rate also
available. Sorry - no 'bouncy castles'.

For enquiries, please contact Amanda Carter at
churchhallstmartins@gmail.com



The Parish of
Winkfield Cranbourne & Chavey Down

Local events and reports

Ascot Horticultural society

Ascot Horticultural society will be holding their Christmas show on
Wednesday the 10 December in King Edwards church hall. Entries can
be shown between 8pm and 8:15pm. Judging will commence at 8:15pm.
Further information can be obtained from Wendy Sivyer at
wendysivyer@aol.com.

See flyer on next page.

St Mary's Choir

The choir has continued to sing at Family Communion, Holy
Communion and Morning prayer services. On Remembrance Sunday,
the Junior Choir joined with the adult choir for the service. Hanna,
Family Matins Crucifer, led the choir to the War Memorial for the
beginning of the service. Several of our extra singers join us for most of
our services and we are very grateful to them. Alan Rapley was organist
on Remembrance Sunday.

Remembrance Sunday

The Remembrance service was led by John Kimbell. Members of the
Royal British Legion attended the service and laid their wreaths. A
Guild member and a member of the 9:39am congregation also laid
wreaths.

St Mary's Women's Guild

There was no speaker at the November meeting, but the arrangements
were made for several meetings in 2026. Two dates have now been
agreed for members to visit Joan Doughty. The December meeting will
be held at the home of one of our members and the meeting will be
followed by a short service. Members agreed to provide the mince pies
for the M&M concert. Members also agreed to assist at the Christmas

Ascot Horticultural Society

Christmas Show

&

Social Evening

Exhibits

Floral Art

Flowers

Vegetables

Cookery

Handicrafts

Photography



Also, Raffle

& Refreshments



King Edward's Hall, Ascot, SL5 8PD

Wednesday 10th December 2025

Staging of exhibits from 7.45pm – 8.15pm

Meeting begins at 8.15pm

Viewing of exhibits 9.00pm

For more information on entering please contact Wendy Sivyer
on 07999513263 or wendysivyer@aol.com

Entrance: Members £1.00, Visitors £3.00, Including refreshments

www.ascothorticulturalsociety.co.uk

facebook.com/groups/276880418187911

Tree Festival. The Christmas lunch is now to be a New Year lunch and date agreed at the White Hart.

Family Praise, Crafty Church and Family Matins

Family Matins in November was on Remembrance Sunday. Several of the children read at the service and the poppies they had made at a previous Crafty Church were displayed on the Memorial table. Family Praise in November was the story of Moses and the 10 Commandments with the children reading the prayers and bible passages. November Crafty Church was making Christmas tree decorations with the children taking part as usual.

Friends of St Mary's Winkfield

Preparations for the Friends' great Music and Merriment concert are proceeding well, with a full programme of 17 items, including our very special young soloists: Sarah on the violin, and Sergey on the piano.

The Senior Choir had their first rehearsal on Thursday 21/11/25, at which made a great job of learning Anthony Hodson's lyrical new Christmas Anthem, which sets Robert Louis Stevenson's 'A prayer for Christmas day' (the words are published later in the magazine) as well as more familiar carols that they will perform as their own special contributions to the Concert. Tickets available on the web or at the door!

Bell Ringers – October 2025

We enjoyed taking part in the striking competition - we were up against some very accomplished ringers so, although we didn't win, we rang well and certainly did not disgrace ourselves.

The annual 'bangers and bangers' event was the usual success, with mountains of sausages and a huge variety of fireworks! We were lucky with the weather, and the bonfire burned well, warming cold hands. Thanks to Tony and Sue for hosting.

Remembrance Sunday was a solemn and thought-provoking service. You may have noticed that the tower bells sounded different as we rang half muffled which adds to the occasion. Speak to any of the tower ringers if you would like to know more about this.

During the service the hand bells rang 'Meditation on O Valiant Hearts', which is a really lovely piece of music. Again, the weather was kind and the sun shone brightly while we stood around the memorial for the start of the service and laid the poppy wreaths.

The hand bells will be playing again during the 5th Sunday service at the end of November – do come along and listen to our chosen piece.

As always you would be most welcome if you fancy trying out either the tower or the hand bells - contact Tony for tower bells or me for hand bells.



Remember to make a note in your diaries of our very popular quiz night on February 21 next year. But see you before that at the Music and Merriment concert on 6 December – we look forward to performing!

Take care, Jill Glennerster 07821131303

'GREAT COMMUNITY FUND RAISING EVENT' **THE VERDICT ON** **WINDSOR LIONS** **SWIMATHON**

Local Community Services club, Windsor Lions, was delighted with outcome of their recent Swimathon. The event took place on 19 October at the beautiful pool facilities offered by St Georges School, Ascot. 57 teams took part – a record



number of participating teams in the 28th year of this event. To date over £20,000 – another record at this stage of the event – has been raised, with the likelihood of more to come.

The event offers local charities and groups the opportunity to swim in relay for 55 minutes to raise money for their own cause or one close to their hearts. Over the years that the Windsor lions have staged the event they have raised almost £300,000.

Speaking of the event, organiser Mike Sells was enthusiastic about the great variety of participants: “The event attracts swimmers from all sorts of groups and organisations – some more obvious like clubs Ascot Royals Windsor – to local businesses such as Savills Estate Agents in Windsor, Merlewood Care Home in Virginia continued on page 12

Music & Merriment Christmas Concert

7:30 pm Saturday 6th December 2025

St Mary's Church, Winkfield SL4 4SF

**A unique community concert
celebrating local talent**

Tickets £14

Concessions £7

Buy tickets by QR

Or at www.fosmw.com



Services in the Parish - December 2025

ST MARTIN'S CHURCH

Common Worship Services

Date	Day	Time	Service
7	2 nd Sunday of Advent	9.30am	Family Praise with Readings & Carols <i>led by John Kimbell</i>
		4pm	♫ Christingle
13	Saturday	4pm	Chavey Down Village Carol Service <i>led by John Kimbell</i>
14	3 rd Sunday of Advent	9.30am	✚ Crib & Gift Service
21	4 th Sunday of Advent	10am	Community Coffee Morning <i>in the Church Hall</i>
24	Christmas Eve	5pm	Christmas Eve Celebration Service
25	Christmas Day	<i>No service see alternative services below</i>	
28	First Sunday of Christmas	<i>No service in the Parish</i>	

ST MARY'S CHURCH

Book of Common Prayer Services

Date	Day	Time	Service
7	2 nd Sunday of Advent	10am	Advent Family Communion <i>led by Rev Alan Dibden</i>
14	3 rd Sunday of Advent	10am	✚ Family Matins, Nativity & Crib Service
21	4 th Sunday of Advent	9.30am	Family Praise with Christingle
		11am	Nine Lessons & Carols <i>followed by</i> Said Communion <i>led by Canon Dagnell</i>
24	Christmas Eve	2pm	♫ Carols & Candlelight
		3.30pm	♫ Carols & Candlelight

Date	Day	Time	Service
25	Christmas Day	11am	Christmas Matins <i>followed by</i> Family Communion by Extension <i>led by John Kimbell</i>
28	First Sunday of Christmas	<i>No service in the Parish</i>	

ST PETER'S CHURCH

Common Worship Services

Date	Day	Time	Service
7	2 nd Sunday of Advent	11am	✠ Family Communion & Gift Service <i>led by Rev Terry Ward-Hall</i>
14	3 rd Sunday of Advent	11am	Christmas Readings & Carols
21	4 th Sunday of Advent	11am	Holy Communion <i>led by Rev Roy Burgess</i>
24	Christmas Eve	4pm	🎵 Carols & Candlelight
		8pm	Communion by Candlelight <i>led by Rev Roy Burgess</i>
25	Christmas Day	10.30am	Christmas Family Praise
28	First Sunday of Christmas	<i>No service in the Parish</i>	

NB. All content in these lists may be subject to change

Key



Gift Service will collect the following new and sealed items for distribution locally;

A new toy for a child

Toiletries for an adult

Christmas biscuits or sweets for the Foodbank



Christingle Service collection is shared between the Church and the Children's Society



Nativity Play



Carols & Candlelight entry by reservation only

Group booking no larger than 10

Reservations open from noon on 15th November (*no early reservations will be accepted*)

St Mary's reservations please contact Lesley Philpot

lesleyphilpot50@gmail.com / 01344 427561

St Peter's reservations: www.winkfieldandcranbourne.org.uk

WINDSOR LIONS SWIMATHON (continued)

Water, many Scouts, Guides and Brownie groups, Horse Rangers, plus many local Schools and charities like Thames Valley Heartbeat.

“It is this great mix that makes the event such an enjoyable day for volunteers and swimmers alike. I’d also like to take this opportunity to thank St George’s School in Ascot for allowing us to use their wonderful facilities and the staff of Frogs and Friends for their lifeguarding support on the day.”

Such was the success of the event, another for 18 October 2026 is already in the planning by all parties.!

Windsor Lions

Windsor Lions Club is part of Lions International, the largest community service organisation in the world. Worldwide there are about 43,000 Lions Clubs in over 180 countries, and there are more than 1.4 million members. Windsor like all other Lions Club, has the motto “we serve”, with a committed membership, Windsor Lions holds several major fund-raising events each year, and provision of service within the local community.

Windsor Lions was established in 1961 and have raised funds of over £2million organising events and corporate sponsorship, these include: Golf days, Quiz Nights, Race/Casino evenings, Obstacle Horse Ride, Marathon Row on the Thames, Santa Sleigh and Swimathons.

We serve the community by supporting local people via our Prostate Cancer Awareness Event, Senior Citizens Spring Tea Party, Driving for Mencap, and many other events: these are some of the ways in which The Lions Club of Windsor offer our support.

Lion Diane Purchase: 07973 884648 email: dianepurchase@aol.com

Thoughts of all sorts

A prayer for Christmas Day

By Robert Louis Stevenson

Loving Father, help us to remember the birth of Jesus, that we may share in the song of the angels, the gladness of the shepherds, and the worship of the wise men.

Close the door of hate and open the door of love all over the world. Let kindness come with every gift and good desires with every greeting.

Deliver us from evil by the blessing which Christ brings, and teach us to be merry with open hearts.

May the Christmas morning make us happy to be thy children, and Christmas evening bring us to our beds with grateful thoughts, forgiving and forgiven, for Jesus' sake. Amen.

This prayer is the inspirational text for Anthony Hodson's latest choral anthem of the same name, which is to be sung by Music and Merriment's Senior Choir at the concert on 6/12/35 (see flyer on page 9). The anthem is due to have its premiere in the Mercers' Hall on 25/11/25.

I heard the Bells on Christmas Day

I heard the bells on Christmas day
Their old familiar carols play,
And wild and sweet the words repeat
Of peace on earth, good will to men.
And in despair I bowed my head:
'There is no peace on earth, 'I said
'For hate is strong, and mocks the song
Of peace on earth, good will to men.'
Then pealed the bells more loud and deep:
'God is not dead, nor doth He sleep;
The wrong shall fail, the right prevail,
With peace on earth, good will to men.'
Till, ringing, singing on its way,
The world revolved from night to day
A voice, a chime, a chant sublime,
Of peace on earth, good will to men.

By Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow (1807-1882) spent most of his life as an academic and educator, becoming a professor at Harvard, but he is most celebrated as a poet. One of the best-known poems is the 'Song of Hiawatha' (1855), which derived from his friendship with a chief of the Ojibwe tribe who he came to know in his Harvard years. In his day, he was one of the best-known poets in and from the USA, but was later overshadowed by more avant garde poets like Walt Whitman, who accused him of borrowing ideas from Europe, particularly Alfred Lord Tennyson. In 1842, he wrote a book of poetry called Poems on Slavery, precursors to the social move against slavery in the Northern states that

eventually led to the American Civil War of 1861-1865 between these states and slave-owning southern states.

Despite his Longfellow surname, Henry Longfellow has no known American-Indian ancestry as the name seems to suggest. The webpage www.houseofnames.com suggests the name is of Old English origin, and is first encountered in 12th century Huntingdonshire.

There is a bust of Henry Longfellow in Poet's Corner in Westminster Abbey.

Episode 58– Teenage family

Anthony Hodson continues his serial memoirs.

By 1981, our children were now both teenagers, with the complexities of life for child and parent. In retrospect, it worked out more-or-less 'OK'.

In 1980, we were setting into our fifth year in Spring Lanes House, and the family was growing up. James was now 17 and approaching his last year at Eton. He was not an academic boy and the approach of A-levels was not a comfortable thought, but he was a popular boy in his house, with a charm and quirky sense of humour, often self-deprecatory, and had made many friends.

His most memorable activity, looking back all those years was his passion for radio-controlled model aeroplanes, and many spare hours at Eton were spent zooming his latest model about the sky above 'Agar's Plough', the name of the extensive playing fields of Eton College that stretched almost as far as Datchet.

His skills were impressive, and outshone by miles anything that I had attempted as a similar age - my greatest achievement having been 'control-line' 'planes - you were connected to your model by a pair of wires with which you could make it rise and fall as the 'plane zoomed around you driven by a miniature diesel engine. I had experimented with radio control, making my own transmitter and receiver (they used 'thermionic valves', as transistors were still in the future) but I never achieved radio controlled flight.

James' generation had the advantage of commercially available miniature radio-control systems using transistors (but not yet microcomputers); creating a radio-controllable model was far easier than in my own model-making times. In those days, this entailed cutting and putting together sheets and strips of balsa wood to form a fragile structure glued together with balsa cement. You had to avoid

sniffing this too much (today people of young age are forbidden to buy the stuff).

So for James it was a shorter route to radio controlled flight than in my day, and James took all the opportunities (we must have given him an adequate supply of pocket money) and became very skilful.

Model aeroplanes remained a hobby for many years, and we still have the components of a model stored away in the back of a cupboard; In later life James gained a Pilot's License, and had various flying adventures, some avoiding catastrophe by a whisker. Other hobbies included photography, including chemical processing of negatives in a corner of the attic, where bottles of chemicals lurked for about 30 years before being tidied out of the house.

James was also an excellent horseman. Margaret-Anne's Riding for the Disabled work had by that time led us to have horses that were kept in the unused Orchard House field that belonged to a much smaller Lambrook School. It was good because it had an old but adequate stable shelter. Margaret-Anne had Caroline, the old family Welsh pony that her family had learned on she died in about 1979 aged nearly 30), and had also acquired Declan (known as 'Dickie', or sometimes 'Hairy') - a keen Connemara dun pony, who (despite having been neglected by a former owner) was up to show-jumping and cross-country eventing, while at the same time showing an amazing gentleness and empathy with the disabled children of Margaret-Anne's RDA rides.

At that time Margaret-Anne's parents Gerald and Hazel had retired to live in South Africa, living in a beautiful bungalow, Tintagel, with paddocks and a swimming-pool in Nottingham Road, a village not far from Pietermaritzburg. There, Hazel set up a small stud breeding Welsh ponies. This was a successful venture and became quite well known for its excellent ponies. The stud's stallion was Calisto, the son of Caroline by a thoroughbred stallion, and he had been brought out to South Africa as part of Gerald and Hazel's retirement plans. In those days, South Africa was beautiful and stable, although deep down simmering as a result of the oppressive Apartheid regime. I never felt quite comfortable when we visited, and, when that regime ended, it was a disaster for Margaret-Anne's parents.

Gerald and Hazel were the best examples of old-fashioned paternalism; they treated their African staff kindly and with love and respect, and were loved in their turn. Margaret-Anne's younger siblings were with

them: Moya in final educational years and Jonathan, a 'late arrival' for the Gerald and Hazel who was less than a year older than our son James, his nephew. Jonathan went to Michael House, a local boarding school with a good reputation, but which was not the right sort of school for him, and he did not do well in his schooling.

Family visits by us and other family members were always welcome, and Margaret-Anne had made a visit with James and Lucy in about 1979. During this visit, James surprised the stable-staff by wanting to compete on Calisto in a Pietermaritzburg horse show. Knowing the friskiness of stallions; they were pleased that he could ride with necessary capability, rather than having to be led on a potentially dangerous creature. He won several rosettes in the show. Lucy meanwhile rode Ling, who won the Welsh Pony championship.

Lucy, nearly four years younger than James, also became an accomplished horsewoman. She was an academic all-rounder child, and was musically talented from a young age, playing the piano as well as singing and dancing. In early 1980, she was finishing her time in the Marist Junior School in Sunninghill, and went on into to the Marist Senior School. She was a good pianist for her age, and needed better tuition than the school provided, so she learned piano with an excellent local pianist, Juliet Bruce, who gave her a good foundation in technique.

Lucy had a great memory for music, and preferred playing by heart. She played in a Marist music competition, and was the obvious winner, according to the school's woodwind teacher at the time, but the nuns disqualified her because she played her piece from memory -not the standard ordinary way to play, for the nuns who ran the school at the time?

I also started taking adult lessons with Juliet. at first in a group that Juliet ran in South Hill Park, the local Arts Centre, and subsequently as a private pupil. Juliet introduced Lucy (and therefore me, too) to the Woodley Festival, a festival of music and drama that was an inspiration and challenge for many young (and old) musicians to perform pieces to a sympathetic audience.

One year, Lucy and I decided to go in together for the piano-duet class, and prepared the piece from Fauré's Dolly Suite that was familiar to the 1970s world as the theme tune for the Radio Series 'Listen with Mother'. She was full of confidence, but performing competitively on the piano was a new experience for *me*, and when I sat down on my end of the

double stool to play the duet's lower part, I looked at the piano and could not perceive the difference between the black and the white keys, in some inner panicky psychological transformation. I had to rely on finger-memory. We got through the piece but I did not play well.

Despite all that, I fancied that I had good technique (and I worked quite hard at it). I learned the requisite Grade 8 pieces, and tried for Grade 8 Piano - and failed, by two points. A few months later, I decided to try again - and failed again, by three points this time. I haven't tried since.

Lucy, however, had the qualities to become a professional musician. In about 1982, she decided that she needed to take on another instrument to focus on, and I suggested one of three: Clarinet, Cello or French Horn, and it was the third that she selected.

We knew Derek Halstead, the Brass Teacher at Lambrook School, where James had been a pupil. He agreed to teach Lucy; from his background as a professional army musician; he had good double-Horn to sell that was an excellent instrument for a beginner and amateur French Horn player. We acquired the instrument before Christmas, and lessons were planned for the New Year.

Flanders and Swann were key entertainers in the 1960s and 1970s and one of their great numbers was called 'Ill Wind': hilarious words set to the last movement of Mozart's 4th Horn Concerto. (You can listen to a 1960s recording at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VjA6bAiqtfQ>)

This was a family favourite, and in those weeks over Christmas, Lucy had picked up the tune by ear, and was beginning to play it well on her new horn before having a single professional lesson. I was able to help her with the technicalities of brass instruments having been a tuba player myself, years previously (viz Episodes 25 and 30).

In January, she started lessons with Derek; three months later, she entered in a class for instrumental beginners with less than a year's tuition at the Woodley festival, and won it. It was clear that she was a 'natural' at the instrument.

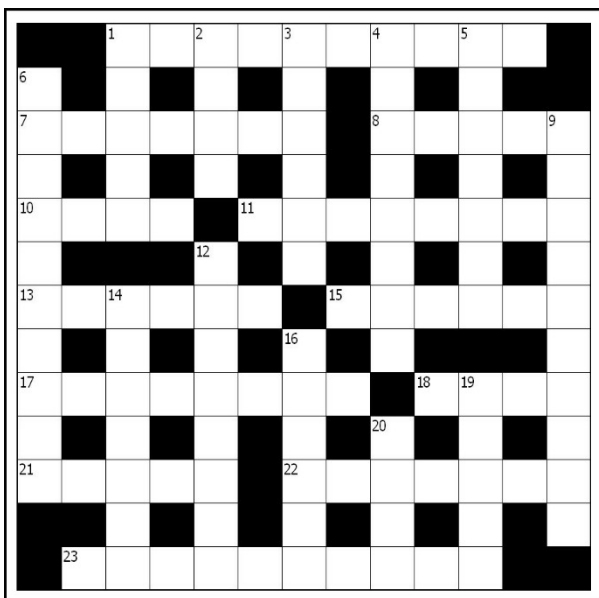
The French Horn is a difficult instrument, and, like any other instrument, developing technical skills, backed by musicianship, takes a lot of hard work, backed by skilled tuition and encouragement. After Grade 5, Derek handed her over to a new teacher (who was the French Horn teacher at Eton College); he did not really believe in girls playing the horn; soon she moved on to lessons with Chris Mahy, then Director of Berkshire Young Musician's Trust, who took her up to Grade 8 and

beyond. At 15 (after not much more than a year's tuition) she was accepted as a horn-player with the excellent Reading Youth Orchestra (then run by Robert Roscoe, now Director of the Crowthorne Symphony Orchestra, of which Lucy is now First Horn).

The Marist School were uninterested in Lucy's musical abilities, disapproving of what she was doing because it was of necessity outside the modest musical life of the school, and didn't approve of girls playing brass instruments. As parents, Margaret-Anne and I had to do something positive, so we took out a bank loan for £6000 (a lot of money in 1984) so that she could have a 6th Form year at the excellent Purcell School of Music, a selective specialist music school at which she had been offered a place.

This was a life-transforming experience for her, sharing her life with other young people of great musical ability, and paved the way to music college and a career as a performing and teaching musician.

Lucy says that she "loved every moment of year at Purcell."



Crossword Clues

Across

- 1 Provisional meeting place of God and the Jews (Exodus 25:9) (10)
- 7 David's third son, killed when his head got caught in a tree during a battle with his father (2 Samuel 18:14,15) (7)
- 8 They ruled much of the west coast of South America in the 15th and early 16th centuries (5)
- 10 Small deer of European and Asian extraction (4)
- 11 Seized control of (Numbers 21:25) (8)

13 Terror (Luke 24:5) (6)

15 First World War heroine shot by the Germans in Brussels, Nurse Edith (6)

17 Stormy (8)

18 A bitter variety of this, together with lamb and unleavened bread, was the Passover menu for anyone unclean (Numbers 9:11) (4)

21 Arson (anag.) (5)

22 How John Newton described God's grace in his well-known hymn (7)

23 Habitation (Isaiah 27:10) (10)

Down

1 and see that the Lord is good (Psalm 34:8) (5)

2 The wicked man flees though no one pursues, but the righteous are as ... as a lion (Proverbs 28:1) (4)

3 One of the exiles, a descendant of Parosh, who married a foreign woman (Ezra 10:25) (6)

4 He escaped from Nob when Saul killed the rest of his family and joined David (1 Samuel 22:19,20) (8)

5 City and lake in Central Switzerland (7)

6 Offer your bodies as living, holy and pleasing to God (Romans 12:1) (10)

9 Pouches carried by horses (Genesis 49:14) (10)

12 One who accepts government by God (8)

14 Aromatic substance commonly used in Jewish ritual (Exodus 30:1) (7)

16 He asked Jesus, 'What is truth?' (John 18:38) (6)

19 Are (Romans 13:1) (5)

20 You are to give him the name Jesus, because he will ... his people from their sins (Matthew 1:21) (4)

ACROSS: 1, Tabernacle, 7, Absalom, 8, Incas, 10, Roes, 11, Captured, 13, Fright, 15, Cavell, 17, Cyclopic, 18, Herb, 21, Sonar, 22, Amazing, 23, Settlement
DOWN: 1, Taste, 2, Bold, 3, Ramiah, 4, Abialhar, 5, Lucerne, 6, Sacrifices, 9, Saddlebags, 12, Theocral, 14, Incense, 16, Pilate, 19, Exist, 20, Save.

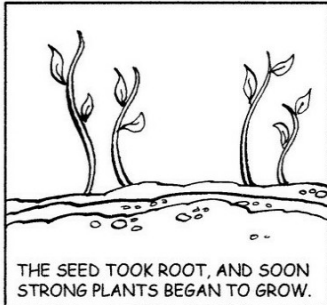
Children's Corner

The tale of
the
Wheat
and the
Weeds

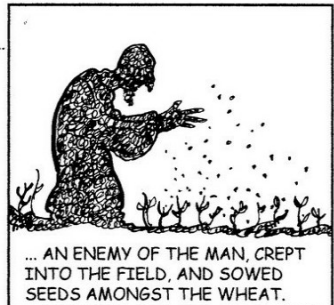
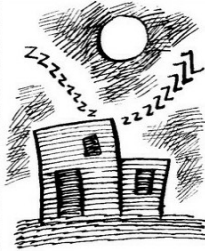
JESUS OFTEN TOLD STORIES WITH HIDDEN MEANINGS



ONE WAS ABOUT A MAN WHO
SOWED SEED IN HIS FIELD.

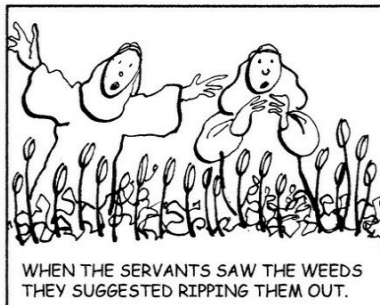
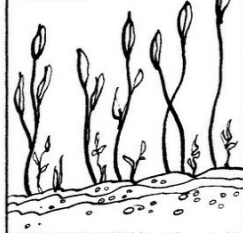


BUT ONE NIGHT, WHEN
EVERYONE WAS ASLEEP...



... AN ENEMY OF THE MAN, CREPT
INTO THE FIELD, AND SOWED
SEEDS AMONGST THE WHEAT.

AS THE WHEAT BEGAN
TO GROW, SO DID THE
WEEDS.



WHEN THE SERVANTS SAW THE WEEDS
THEY SUGGESTED RIPPING THEM OUT.

NO, LET'S LEAVE THEM
UNTIL HARVEST TIME!



IF YOU PULL THEM UP NOW,
YOU MIGHT KILL THE WHEAT
TOO. WE'LL SORT THEM OUT AT
HARVEST.



WHEN THE WHEAT WAS
READY, IT WAS HARVESTED
INTO HUGE BUNDLES.

BUT THE WEEDS WERE
BURNED IN A LARGE FIRE.



THE PARABLE TELLS US THAT
ALTHOUGH WE LIVE
ALONGSIDE BADNESS, WE
CAN KEEP SEPARATE FROM IT.

Annex

Mrs Wenceslas was not pleased

A short story by Anthony Hodson

Mrs Wenceslas was not pleased.

She was not pleased at all. She wrote to her sister on St Stephen's day, the day after Christmas Day, and this is what she wrote:

Dearest Trudi,

I do hope that your Christmas festivities have been less chaotic than ours. Well, it was all right until it started to snow hard. We were quite ready for the evening: the turkey and all the trimmings were nearly ready; the Christmas pudding was simmering away. We had a wood-store full of pine-logs. We were just about to start our feast when Wenceslas looked out of the window.



You know how he is about these things – he cannot resist a picturesque scene. If cameras had been invented, he'd be out photographing it, but they haven't, so he was just out. Men – once they get in the snow, they are like little boys, kicking it, throwing snowballs, and having fun with the dogs; and you know that when they all come in again, that wet-fur smell will be everywhere.

Wenceslas' teenage nephew George is staying with us, and there the two of them were, playing like children. Or at least they were, until they came to the edge of the wood. There they found a hut that an old tramp had made as a shelter, and he was in it, looking more like a snowman than a human being.

Well, you know Wenceslas. He has a kind heart, and he felt he had to do something. So he called everybody out, and started organising them all to take logs to the old man's hut, and when they had done that, they were to bring our Christmas dinner out too, complete with our best champagne.

This was too much. I put my foot down at that – in the cold, the champagne would turn to sorbet before you could drink it. Bring it all back, I said, food, wine, wood and all. And bring that old man in too. How can you dream of leaving him out there?

So they brought the old man in, and we put him by the fire, and we warmed him up, and when he felt a bit better, I arranged for him to have a

bath and a shave and a haircut, and I gave him some of Wenceslas' clothes to wear, and he really looked like a human being again.

Then we all had a wonderful dinner together. After dinner, the old man, whose name was Kristof, said: "Thank you, you have all been so kind, and please may I repay you by singing a little song?" So he started, singing very sweetly, and he was obviously making it up as he went along. It started "Good King Wenceslas looked out, on the feast of Stephen," – he had to say 'Stephen' to make it rhyme with 'deep and crisp and even', even though it was really Christmas day – and then it went on about George and Wenceslas arranging a feast for him out in the snow, with a bonfire blazing, except that he referred to George as our page. Of course, we don't run to such things in the economic downturn.

He even made up a bit about George's feet being warmed by walking in Wenceslas' footsteps, but I think it was as much a tipple or two of my home-made apricot brandy that they had taken in their hip-flasks.

Well, I suppose men will do anything for a good barbie, even in the middle of winter. But, of course, it wasn't like that at all, and there wasn't a word about me and Cook slaving away, baking that turkey, peeling brussels sprouts, making mince pies, and all the rest of it, even though between them they ate the whole lot. Men!

One thing was a little strange. The Christmas pudding tasted somehow special, and we all glowed with happiness when we were eating it together. I suppose that is what made the old man sing so well.

Then we all went to bed – I made up the old man a cot near the fire, and we left all the mess to clear up in the morning.

Next morning, guess what. I woke up, and Wenceslas was already up, but last night's chaos was still there. I looked out of the window, and there he was with George, the old man Kristof, and the dogs, all happy as Larry, playing in the snowy sunshine like little boys, tobogganing, throwing snowballs at each other, and making snowmen.

It took me all morning to clear up last night's mess, and I wasn't pleased. That's not quite right, really: I was pleased because we gave life back to that old man, and I hope that he will stay with us for a time. It's just that:

Men!!

Must finish now – Cook and I have a big lunch to prepare, and they'll all come in ravenous ...

Lots of love

Natasha

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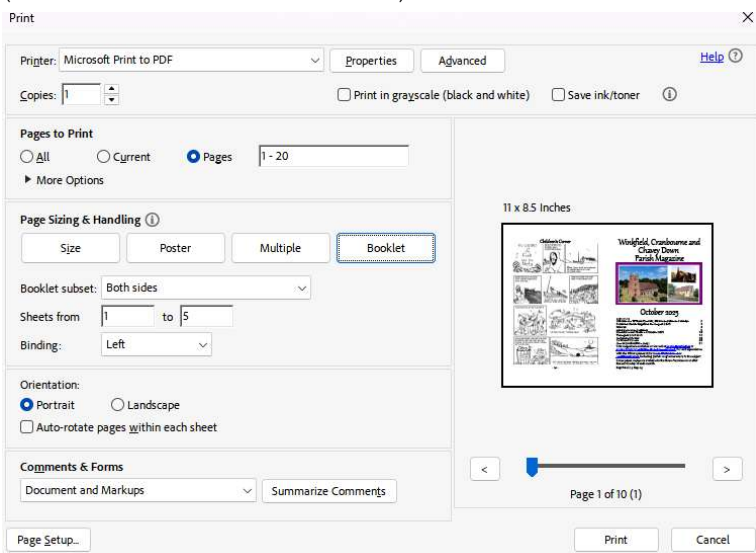
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