



Notes from the Riverbank

The newsletter for St Thomas of Canterbury Church in Goring,
St Mary's Church in Streatley and St Andrew's Church in South Stoke

June 2015 – 19th edition

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Price per printed copy

● Welcome to the nineteenth edition of "Notes from the Riverbank."

All contributions should be sent to Toria, the editor, by the 17th of each month at the usual email address webcontent.thomandmary@gmail.com. The on-line versions of the calendars are maintained by Glenn Cooke using the same email address. Bookings for the church or Canterbury Room should be made by contacting the UB Parish Secretary Jenny Hall at jandjh2@btinternet.com. We aim to produce the on-line and printed versions of each issue by the 25th of each month.

● Pastoral letter: The ball is in our court



We have just voted in the recent General Election and now come all the postmortems. When I say that we have just voted, I failed to say that somewhere near 35% of people did not exercise their right to vote. When percentages and totals are thrown about by the SNP and UKIP who polled 1.5 million and 3.9 million respectively they pale into insignificance compared with the absent voters. Many attempts have been made to induce people to vote by extending the voting time, voting in supermarkets and by post, but to no avail. To overcome this problem in Australia, voting is compulsory as it is in North Korea, but one can vote "None of the above," whereas in North Korea it is fear of the rifle which leads people to vote. This poses great problems for the democracies where the privilege of voting or not voting is taken for granted. These privileges were hard-won, and in this country, at great cost. Many of the reformers and those agitating for universal suffrage were Christian men and women, giving time, facing imprisonment, transportation and in some cases death. We as a society need to be careful that we do not barter away the privileges which many millions Worldwide would love to possess. All it takes for these privileges to be lost is for good men and women to do nothing. To say I have no interest in politics and state affairs is to run contrary to the Bible.

When Jesus was cornered by the Jewish leaders and asked whether it was right to pay taxes to Caesar or not, he replied: *Give to Caesar what is Caesar's, and to God what is God's.* (Mark 12, v17.) Paul writing to Christians in Rome, Caesar's seat, says: *Rulers hold no terrors for those who do right, but for those who do wrong. Do you want to be free from fear of the one in authority? Then do what is right and he will commend you.* (Romans 13, v3-4.) There are of course cases where the rulers are so offensive and anti-Christ that they forfeit respect. However, we have the privilege of holding ourselves to account, of contacting and writing to MPs, of joining petitions and movements that challenge government. We also have the responsibility to pray for our leaders whether they acknowledge God or not. Pray also for Christian men and women from all parties, many of whom are members of the Parliamentary Christian Fellowship who can and do work together to challenge the influence of radical secularism. Germany was lost to National Socialism because many of the churches did not speak out and Christians were not sufficiently vigilant. As they say: *the ball is in our court; do not let us drop it.*



Peter Downham (Transcribed by Toria, who hopes she has correctly read Peter's writing.)

● St Andrew's Coffee Mornings

 For the last six years Jean Dixon and her daughter Claire have facilitated St. Andrew's monthly coffee mornings. They have prepared the social space, made the delicious cakes, served the coffee and cleared up afterwards. It has been a real labour of love and Christian hospitality, which has given pleasure to many people coming together in a relaxed and happy place to enjoy each other's company. Recently Claire and her family moved away from South Stoke, leaving Jean without support and the coffee mornings in jeopardy.

The time has come therefore to give Jean a hand by forming a rota of those who would be prepared to help by making a cake, serving the coffee, or washing-up! If you think you could help keep these monthly coffee mornings going please contact Jean Dixon or Liz Dowding and we will work out the best way forward.

My last words must those of thanks to Jean and to Claire for all the organising they have undertaken, the vast number of wonderful cakes they have made and the dozens and dozens of cups they have washed up! Also to offer Claire our best wishes in her new home.

 Liz Dowding 873140

● Ride and Stride



When the accounts were closed on 5th April the total amount raised by the 2014 Ride and Stride for Oxford Historic Churches Trust was nearly £137,000 including a £19,000 Gift Aid tax rebate. This is more than £8,000 over our previous best result so an amazing achievement! Thank you so much to everyone who took part and to all the sponsors.

- Ride and Stride 2015 will take place on Saturday 12th September.

 Brenda Kerr Muir

● Come and Sing Evensong: Sunday 7th June

 Please join us for a full choral "Come and Sing" Evensong Service at 4pm on Sunday 7th June in St Thomas' Church, Goring when we will be singing Sumsion's *Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis in G*, Sanders responses and Charles Wood's wonderful anthem *O Thou the Central Orb*. Michael Howell will be our Musical Director and Bryan Almond our organist.

If you wish to sing with the choir there will be a practice starting at 2pm on the day (arrive at 1.45pm latest to sort out music etc). After the practice, there will just be time for a cup of tea before the Evensong Service at 4pm. There will also be earlier, optional choir practices from 7pm to 8pm on Friday 29th May, and from 7pm to 8.30pm on Friday 5th June.

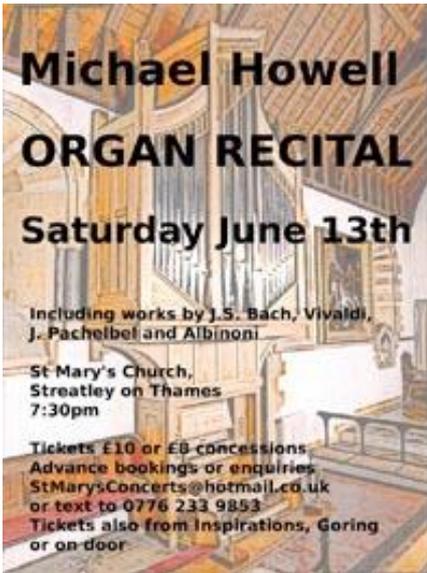
 Elizabeth Parkinson 872020 or parkinsonfamily1@btinternet.com

● St Mary's Spring/Summer Church Clean

 This year's spring/summer clean of St Mary's Church will be at 10am on Saturday 27th June. Dusters and polish will be provided; so too will coffee and biscuits. Everyone welcome!

 Diana Fenton

● Michael Howell Organ Recital



Michael Howell, the Musical Director for both St Mary's and St Thomas', will be giving an organ recital at 7:30pm on Saturday 13th June in St Mary's, Streatley in aid of church funds.

The programme will include JS Bach's *Prelude and Fugue in B Minor*, *Toccata in F Major* and *Gigue Fugue*, Vivaldi's *Concerto in A minor*, J Pachelbel's *Five fugues on the Magnificat* and Albinoni's *Adagio in G Minor*.

Tickets £10 or £8 concessions from Inspirations in Goring, or on the door. For advance bookings or enquiries contact StMarysConcerts@hotmail.co.uk or text 0776 233 9853.



Stella

● East meets West at Douai Abbey



The 100th anniversary of the disastrous landings at Gallipoli was remembered on April 25th by the Goring Chamber Choir under the baton of its conductor, Frances Brewitt-Taylor, in the lovely acoustics of Douai Abbey with a concert entitled *East Meets West*, a cleverly constructed programme that brought together religious music from both sides.

To represent the West, the concert opened with a requiem by the prominent Canadian composer, Eleanor Daley, in which the choir gave a competent performance of what is not an easy composition with some faultless solos from amongst its own members. This was followed by a truly wonderful performance of Ave Maria by Ilia Gudushauri-Shiolashvilli (Ilia the Second, the Catholicos Patriarch of All Georgia) which set the heart pounding and nerves tingling by its thoughtful rendition. Having lived and worked in the orthodox world of Russia and Georgia, this piece was particularly special to me.



The second half of the concert was equally special with performances of Orthodox music by composers such as Tchaikovsky, Rakhmaninov, Grechaninov and others including the late English composer, John Tavener who converted to the Orthodox Church in 1977. Sung in Russian and unaccompanied, the fact that the choir maintained pitch and timing is a testament to the low key but excellent direction it received from its conductor. Perhaps

slightly lacking in the sonorous depth achieved by Russian singers, Goring Chamber Choir provided an evening of beautiful music with excellent performances which has left a lasting impression. It should perhaps have been witnessed by more than the 150 or so people present and I can but recommend readers to seek out future performances of this choir – you will not be disappointed!

 Christopher Smith

● Friends of Music at Goring: Piano recital by James Sherlock

 Friends of Music at Goring are pleased to announce the second of their 2015 season of Lunchtime Recitals to be held at 1pm on Wednesday 1st July 2015 in St Thomas' Church, Goring – a piano recital given by James Sherlock.



Those who attended the song recital last September by Raphaela Papadakis will remember James' wonderful playing of Schubert and Schumann. His programme will include Bach's French Suite in G major, Liszt's Three Petrarch Sonnets, music by Chopin and Schumann, ending with the great Busoni adaptation for piano of Bach's violin Chaconne.

Admission will be £12 at the door or £10 if purchased in advance from Inspiration in Goring, or by contacting Nigel Fountain, 873341.

● Collection for WaterAid

 WaterAid's target is to fight poverty by providing the basics of clean water and safe toilets for everyone in the world by 2030. Emergency work to try to prevent the spread of cholera and other waterborne diseases in Nepal after the earthquakes is currently depleting their funds. If you can, please contribute to the collection for WaterAid at St Thomas' on 14th June.

 Patsy Calder

● Baptisms

I am delighted to announce the following forthcoming Baptisms in June:

- George Draycott at St. Andrew's Church, South Stoke
- Adam Dixon at St. Andrew's Church, South Stoke
- Stanley Taylor at St. Thomas' Church, Goring

Please pray for George, Adam and Stanley, their families and Godparents at this special time.

 The Rev Paul Boughton

● 7 events for 700 years at Aldworth



St Mary's Church Aldworth (home of the Aldworth Giants) is celebrating its 700th Anniversary on 2nd August and we have a whole range of events – concerts, history talks and a flower festival – to which all are invited. For details see <http://www.aldworthvillage.org/>

 The Rev Paul Boughton on behalf of the Rev Will Watts