



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

October 2017 – 42nd edition

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● Welcome to the forty-second 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.



Life in Goring Church Choir

My name's Eve and I'm 14 years old. I've been a treble in Goring Church Choir since I was 10, and so I have lots of experience singing here and studying various kinds of music. I really enjoy singing with everyone and helping the younger trebles to learn the music and improve their singing, and I'd like to think I've improved as well. I want to tell you a little bit about what it's like being a member of our choir.



This is us a couple of years ago.

Our choir is made up of four sections: sopranos, altos, tenors and basses. The trebles are a subset of the sopranos who are kids. We haven't decided at what age people should go from being trebles to ordinary members of the choir as I'm the oldest treble and don't want to join them just yet. I think about a third to a half of

our choir is trebles, then we have a lot of sopranos, a few altos, and one or two tenors and basses. (We aren't very well balanced at the moment!) Hopefully when some of the boy trebles get older they'll be able to join the men on the lower parts. You can become a treble when you're 8, and we usually take a group of Year 3 and 4 students for our Christmas Carol Service. If they enjoy this they can become full-fledged trebles. We wear red robes with high white collars. Unlike most choirs, we don't wear circlets which some of my friends in other choirs find a little weird.

We rehearse every Friday. The trebles spend half an hour practicing alone and then we are joined by the adults for a second half hour. Then the trebles go home, leaving the adults to rehearse other music for services the trebles aren't singing at. This is because the trebles only sing at the larger services once or twice a month. Sometimes we leave the main church building during the sermon, and sometimes the trebles in secondary school stay to listen. In addition to this, we sometimes sing at weddings, for which we get paid £6. It's a fun way of earning money, but unfortunately it doesn't happen very often. Another way of earning money is through sticker charts. If we show up to a rehearsal, we get three stickers. We get more if we're well behaved and less if we're badly behaved. When we complete a chart, we get a coin of one value or another, and a random prize. This isn't a system I particularly care about, but a lot of the younger trebles really enjoy it.

We have done some amazing things in my time at choir. One of the highlights was a couple of years ago when we sang as part of Prom Praise in the Royal Albert Hall. I was still 11 and it was one of the most amazing experiences I've ever had. I really hope we can go again so the newer trebles can experience it too. Another thing I really enjoyed was the local three-day courses I have been on. Every year a few of us go to a chapel somewhere in Oxfordshire for three days of rehearsal and Evensong. This is a course I would majorly recommend to any of the younger trebles. We've also sung at other events and places, such as St Paul's Cathedral. We are very lucky to do so many amazing things with our choir!

Our choir sings a large range of music which is often very challenging. We don't always stick to what we know! In addition, the trebles do Royal School of Church Music (RSCM) awards; some of us have been examined for our Bronze, and a couple of us are planning to take our Silver in March. These are great because we can use our singing skills to get actual qualifications.

I really enjoy being part of Goring Church Choir and I hope that a lot more people will be members in the future.



Eve; photo by Robin Middleton



Pastoral Letter

September, month of mellow fruitfulness is past and we can go on to sing "All is safely gathered in ere the winter storms begin." Our forefathers sang that with great gusto because it often meant the narrow divide between feast and famine had been passed. They were so much more engaged with seasons that we are because of the reliability of worldwide supply. For instance, it was not so long ago that tangerines

only appeared in the shops at Christmas, but now they and similar types of orange fruit are available all year round. Of course this is also true of lots of other produce.

Harvest Thanksgiving is a time to pause, reflect and to give thanks for the ample supplies available to us, to remember those who produce them and to respond to the needs of those without food, shelter or clothing. Tear Fund and Christian Aid in particular are engaged in worldwide responses to the many needs that constantly arise. It is good that they and other agencies are on the ground; they need our thoughtful and generous response. You will find details of our Harvest Thanksgiving Services elsewhere in the Newsletter, and a warm invitation to the Harvest Breakfast before the Family Service at St Thomas' and the Harvest Lunch at St Mary's. Tinned food gifts will all go to the Wallingford Food Bank.

When Israel entered the Promised Land, a land flowing with milk and honey, they were challenged by the words recorded in Deuteronomy, Chapter 8, Verse 3: "Man shall not live by bread alone but by every word that comes from the mouth of the Lord." Living in a secular world there is a clear and present danger, full stomachs but empty and starved souls. We need more than bread for a truly fulfilled life. Jesus, in whose name so much worldwide aid is activated and distributed said very poignantly "I am the bread of life, those who come to me will not hunger and those who believe in me will not thirst." His invitation still stands and millions worldwide have found in coming to Him that He keeps his promise. As we were reminded by Wendy last month: "God keeps His promises all the time."



Peter Downham



Update on work to St Thomas' Tower

The re-roofing of the Tower is now complete and the engineer has designed the new fixing for the flagpole. There is also a splendid new hatch. Stonework repairs are progressing steadily, along with the repairs and conservation works at the higher levels.

As a result of two new generous donations from church members we plan to make the most of the scaffolding and undertake all the recommended conservation work, both the priority works to the whole tower and the re-pointing and stonework repairs to Level 3 and above. Hopefully we will then have a few decades ahead before having to erect such complex scaffolding again.

At some point, we will need to address the lower priority conservation works Level 2 and below which may be reached by ladder or scaffold tower. The additional works do mean having the scaffolding for longer as well as more fees for the architect for which we need to find more funds. Currently, it looks as if the works will be completed by 17th November.



Brenda Kerr Muir and David Beddall, Churchwardens



Harvest Festival at St Thomas'

As you will have seen in last month's Notes from the Riverbank, our Harvest Festival celebrations are on Sunday 1st October when Bishop Colin will be joining us for our Family Service at 9.30am. There will be breakfast before the service for all the church family from 8.45am in the Canterbury Room.

Thank you to everyone who has been supporting the Wallingford foodbank each week by leaving gifts in the box in the porch. Our harvest gifts on 1st October will also be going to the foodbank so please bring non-perishable items; they have particularly requested:

- Long life semi-skimmed milk
- Long life fruit juice
- Tinned or boxed custard or the instant powdered sort
- Tinned spaghetti
- Tinned corned beef and ham
- Tinned fruit
- Instant coffee
- Drinking chocolate

They already have plenty of tins of baked beans, tins of tomatoes and packets of pasta! Thank you very much for your generosity.



Wendy Middleton



Come and Sing Evensong in St Thomas' Church

All singers are welcome to join us for a "Come and Sing" Evensong Service on Sunday 1st October. There will be a practice starting at 2pm (arrive by 1.45pm to sort out music etc). After the practice, there will just be time for tea and cake before the Evensong Service at 4pm. You are also welcome to join the choir for additional practices from 7pm to 7.45pm on Friday 22nd September and Friday 29th September.

We will be singing *Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis in G* by Sumsion, Sander's Responses, *Panis Angelicus* by Franck, and SS Wesley's *Blessed be the God and Father*. For more details, contact 872020 or parkinsonfamily1@btinternet.com



Elizabeth Parkinson



Harvest lunch on Sunday 8th October

Our Harvest lunch will take place on Sunday 8th October in the Morrell Room, following the 11.15am Service. Tickets will be £7.50; under 10s are free. Please bring your own wine. Sign-up sheets will be placed in each Church, and everyone is most welcome. Offers of help and food would be gratefully received; please contact Marigold Jamieson (telephone 872229).



John Rogers



Concert by Watership Cantabile, Newbury and St Thomas' choirs

Newbury Choir, Watership Cantabile, and St Thomas' Church Choir are combining for a fundraising concert at St Thomas' Church at 3pm on Sunday 8th October. They will be singing many favourite anthems including Fauré's *Cantique de Jean Racine*, *Panis Angelicus* by Franck and Rutter's *All things bright and beautiful*. Entry is free, but donations to our organ fund would be welcomed. The recital will be followed by tea and cake in The Canterbury Room.



Elizabeth Parkinson



August Bank Holiday Teas at St Mary's

On the warmest August Bank Holiday since it was moved from the first to the last Sunday in the month in 1965, the traditional St Mary's teas, outside the Church, attracted a steady stream of visitors. Congregational members and those from across the Village were supplemented by people visiting the Art Show in the Morrell Room, from the many walkers on the Thames Path, and curious tourists. It was a happy communal occasion, and raised a respectable sum of money too.



The highlight of the afternoon was Joan Fountain's playing of the new piano, which attracted many of the visitors to sit in the Church to listen. Thank you, Joan, for entertaining us, and putting the finishing touch to the proceedings.

The event was summed up by a lady from Kentucky, on a walking holiday, who was enchanted by the traditional spectacle. "I've been an extra on a film in the States, featuring an English Summer tea-party, but never thought I'd be at one for real. It does actually happen. What a great way to get together!"

Our grateful thanks to everyone who made the afternoon such a success, whether making cakes, sandwiches, biscuits, serving teas, clearing up, or getting everything ready.



John Rogers



Behind the scenes at St Andrew's

A few weeks ago I met a German couple, Klaus and Brigitta Tewes from Hamlin (of Pied Piper fame). They were staying at The Swan, exploring the area, and visiting some of the local churches including St Andrew's.



George and Klaus discuss clock-winding.

Klaus and Brigitta were intrigued to meet the Clock Winder, George Druce, who winds the weights by precisely 87 turns every week. Not for much longer however – the parish is currently raising funds to replace this manual system with an electric motor.



Original contribution and photo from Adrian Turner

RIDE+ STRIDES Ride and Stride 2017

Whilst sat in church a few weeks ago, surrounded by scaffolding and hearing that the Oxfordshire Historic Churches Trust had given St Thomas' money towards the tower repairs, it seemed appropriate to me to support the OHCT in their annual fund raising by taking part in their Ride and Stride.

On the 9th September, about 1000 people from Oxfordshire took part in the event fund-raising by visiting a planned route of churches either on foot or bike. All the generously donated money I raised goes to OHCT who then send 50% to St Thomas'. OHCT use their share to award grants to churches across the county towards the cost of fabric repairs and re-orderings. I chose to ride my bike, which for those who don't know, is battery assisted (no refunds!) and was accompanied by my son, Steve, which was an added bonus.

The weather was fairly kind to us and our route took us through South and North Stoke, on to Wallingford, followed by Cholsey and Moulsoford before arriving back at Streatley and Goring. We covered a total of 18 Churches and a distance of 20 miles in about four hours. I was surprised to discover that in Wallingford it is possible to visit eight Churches within about a mile of each other and we came across some that I didn't know existed and I would recommend are worth visiting if you are ever at a loose end there. The biggest challenge of the event however was that we were required to eat our body weight of cakes and biscuits as we were generously welcomed from Church to Church!



Chris and Steve Tassell.

Thanks to the support of St Thomas' Congregation, friends and family I raised a total of £535 plus gift aid, much appreciated and made what was a very enjoyable day even more worthwhile. In addition to the efforts by bike of Chris Tassell and his son, Steve, David Beddall raised another £300 on foot. Well done! And many thanks to all those who welcomed Riders and Striders on the day.

 Brenda Kerr Muir

United Benefice of
Goring & Streatley
with South Stoke



Benefice Calendar - October 2017

		<u>Goring</u>	<u>Streatley</u>	<u>South Stoke</u>
Su. 1st	Trinity 16 Holy Communion (Harvest Service @ 11.15)	8.00	11.15	
	Family Service breakfast (Canterbury Room)	8.45		
	Harvest Family Service	9.30		11.15
	Come and Sing Evensong	16.00		
Tu. 3rd	Goring Primary Harvest service (KS1)	9.00		
	Goring Primary Harvest service (KS2)	14.15		
	South Stoke Prayer meeting @ Crossways			14.30
We. 4th	Midweek Holy Communion and coffee	10.30		
	Concert by Anna Szalucka (piano)	13.00		
	Streatley PCC - 8pm @ Gatehampton Manor			
Fr. 6th	Streatley Primary Harvest service		14.15	
Su. 8th	Trinity 17 Holy Communion	9.30	8.00 & 11.15	11.15
	Benefice Harvest lunch in Morrell Room Please sign up beforehand. Tickets £7.50 each.		12.30	
	Concert by Watership Cantabile, Newbury & St Thomas' choirs followed by tea and cake in the Canterbury Room	15.00		
	Discoverers	17.00		
	Stillness on Sunday – BCP Evening Prayer		17.30	
We. 11th	Midweek Holy Communion	10.30		
	South Stoke PCC - 8pm @ Crossways			
Su. 15th	Trinity 18 Holy Communion	8.00 & 9.30	11.15	
	Mattins			11.15
We. 18th	Midweek Holy Communion	10.30		
	South Stoke Coffee Morning			10.30
	Goring PCC - 8pm in the Canterbury room			
Th. 19th	Pick-a-Flick & Lunch - 'Jackie'	10.30		
Su. 22nd	Trinity 19 Holy Communion	9.30	8.00	11.15
	Sung Mattins		11.15	
	Organ recital by Michael Howell followed by tea in the Morrell Room		16.00	
	Discoverers	17.00		
We. 25th	Midweek Holy Communion	10.30		
Fr. 27th	Come on Board Scrabble (Canterbury Room)	15.00		
Sa. 28th	Coffee & Cake (Canterbury Room)	10.30		
Su. 29th	Last after Trinity Holy Communion	8.00		10.30
	Evening Service with Fauré's Requiem	16.00		

For more details: call the Vicarage (875651) or look at the Website www.thomandmary.org.uk