

Services at St John the Baptist Halling & the Jubilee Hall Upper Halling			
2 nd August Trinity 9	8.00 Holy Communion Jubilee Hall	Job 28 vv 1-28 p529 Luke 12 vv 13-21 p1045	
	11.00 Holy Communion	Exodus 16 vv 1-15 p73 Ephesians 4 vv 1-16 p1175 John 6 vv 24-35 p1070	
9 th August Trinity 10	11.00 Holy Communion	I Kings 19 vv 1-18 p361 Ephesians 4 v25 – 5 v2 p1176 John 6 vv 35-51 p1070	
	5.30 Evening Prayer Jubilee Hall	Job 39 v 1 – 40 v4 p539 Hebrews 12 vv 1-17 p1210	
16 th August Trinity 11	11.00 Stop! Look! Listen! & Holy Communion	Proverbs 9 vv 1-6 p642 Ephesians 5 vv 15-21 p1176 John 6 vv 51-58 p1071	
23 rd August Trinity 12	11.00 Holy Communion & Holy Baptism	Joshua 24 vv 1-18 p240 Joshua 24 vv 19-27 p 240 Ephesians 6 vv 20-20 p1177 John 6 vv 56-69 p1071	
30 th August Trinity 13	11.00 Holy Communion, Holy Baptism & Marriage Blessing	Deuteronomy 4 vv 1-9 p182 James 1 vv 17-27 p1213 Mark 7 vv 1-23 p1010	
Services at St Michael & All Angels Cuxton			
2 nd August Trinity 9	9.30 Family Communion	Exodus 16 vv 1-15 p73 Ephesians 4 vv 1-16 p1175 John 6 vv 24-35 p1070	
9 th August Trinity 10	9.30 Holy Communion	I Kings 19 vv 1-18 p361 Ephesians 4 v25 – 5 v2 p1176 John 6 vv 35-51 p1070	
16 th August Trinity 11	8.00 Holy Communion	Epistle & Gospel BCP	
	9.30 Holy Communion	Proverbs 9 vv 1-6 p642 Ephesians 5 vv 15-21 p1176 John 6 vv 51-58 p1071	
23 rd August Trinity 12	9.30 Holy Communion	Joshua 24 vv 1-18 p240 Joshua 24 vv 19-27 p 240 Ephesians 6 vv 20-20 p1177 John 6 vv 56-69 p1071	
30 th August Trinity 13	9.30 Holy Communion	Deuteronomy 4 vv 1-9 p182 James 1 vv 17-27 p1213 Mark 7 vv 1-23 p1010	
Holy Communion 9.30 am Wednesdays at Cuxton		Holy Communion 9.30 am Thursdays Halling	
5 th August	Numbers 13 vv 1-35 Matthew 15 vv 21-28	6 th August The Transfiguration	II Peter 1 vv 16-19 Luke 9 vv 28-36
12 th August	Deuteronomy 34 vv 1-12 Matthew 18 vv 15-20	13 th August	Joshua 3 vv 7-17 Matthew 18 v21 – 19 v1
19 th August	Judges 9 vv 6-15 Matthew 20 vv 1-16	20 th August	Judges 11 vv 29-40 Matthew 22 vv 1-14
26 th August	I Thessalonians 2 vv 9-13 Matthew 23 vv 27-32	27 th August	I Thessalonians 3 vv 7-13 Matthew 24 vv 42-51

15th August is the Feast of the Blessed Virgin Mary: HC @ Cuxton @ 8.00 am

SHORNE CHURCH OPEN DAY

Monuments, brasses, old furnishings and medieval architecture are what most visitors are looking for in country churches. St Peter and St Paul at Shorne has all of these. The building has examples of all periods of architecture from Anglo-Saxon to Perpendicular in the 15th century. Unfortunately, like many churches in this area, it is locked when it is not in use. On Saturday 12th September it will be open from 10 am to 6 pm for anyone to visit and see what it has to offer. In the morning you can guide yourself round using a free leaflet. In the afternoon there will be guided tours at 2, 3 and 4 pm. These are free and there is no need to book. Afternoon teas will be served from 2.30 to 5 pm. This coincides with the national Heritage Open Days and the Friends of Kent Churches 'Ride & Stride'. You can get further information from Andrew Moffat 01474 822280 or aimoffat@btinternet.com or from our web site www.shorneparishchurch.co.uk.



Tommy's Talking Points

What a weekend we've just had! Saturday was the Christian Aid sponsored walk – my first group walk. There were two other dogs this year and it took a moment and a certain amount of growling to decide that we were all friends really. The day began with Master and me being taken by car to Aylesford Station. He must be getting old if he's accepting lifts now. There we met the rest of the party and set off along the riverside path for the village. I was let off my lead on the assumption that, being on unfamiliar territory, I would lack the confidence to run off. Master's confidence in me was not entirely justified and I managed to get wet from too close an encounter with the river!

We did have a marvellous time, however and I did a lot of running through open fields and woodland. I caught up with a young couple jogging with their dog and poor old Master, now past jogging, had a job to catch up with me, while I was enjoying all the fuss the joggers were making of me. We then set off up Bluebell Hill, which the humans in the party seemed to find a bit of a slog. I did quite a lot of running off into fields and up and down steep banks, while they plodded slowly up behind me. Being led by someone who knew where he was going, we discovered that it was only about 300 yards between the bridge over Bluebell Hill and the Viewpoint – a distance which Master and Max had taken about three quarters of an hour to cover a year or two ago with Master's friend because neither of them had spotted the sign! We reached the summit and dropped down to St Alban's Church where we were made extremely welcome with tea, coffee and doughnuts (for the humans) to supplement our picnic. When they went out for these trips, Max used to have to wait for his dinner till they got home. With me being a puppy, Master thought he had better bring my dinner along. I ate it and, with all the excitement, was promptly sick! Home, by another route. Going down is even easier than going up (unless your knees hurt)! At Kit's Coty we met a group of scouts on their way to Buckmore Park. Hugs all round (for me, not Master) and a photographic session, which he'll show you if you ask him. Back through a lovely park in Aylesford, which had once been a zoo. We saw the elephant house, but no elephants. There were, however, plenty of dogs. Then back by road to the station and home by car. A lovely day out. Dogs like me should spend every day running round woods and fields. Please make Master understand that.

Sunday I had my second Jubilee Hall tea. This meant another nice walk through the woods to Upper Halling and down Chapel Lane. Tea for me was prawn sandwiches, ham and egg sandwiches, sausage rolls and cheese scones – which proved far more digestible than dog food. There was also a healthy option – a cherry tomato, which I found was as good as a ball to play with, rolling it, chasing it, turning on my back and juggling it with my paws. Having a spaniel's soft mouth, I could do all that without spilling a drop of tomato juice. I slept during the first part of the service, but Master was less pleased with me when I woke up later on and attempted to befriend members of the congregation. Well, he shouldn't have gone on so long, trying to answer a question which he himself said was unanswerable. How can we be both entirely dependent on God's grace for what we are and also personally responsible for our actions?

Then Monday! Max and Master's friend had been walking the North Downs Way with Master in sections. They had reached Canterbury last year. We should have done the next section a few weeks ago, but it rained and we went to London instead. So, yesterday, we set off on the train for Rochester and joined the one Master's friend had boarded in London. We got off at Canterbury where we had a nasty experience. A cyclist travelling far too fast through the underpass collided with Master's friend and then blamed him for being in the way! After that, we headed out of the city, doubling back where Master had been over-confident and his friend more perspicacious. Then out into the country proper. Again, the Kent countryside is incredibly beautiful. I enjoyed a lot of freedom until I got so excited and so determined to catch up with the walkers in front of us that I ran on so far ahead as to worry him. Then I was put on my lead! The route was fairly easy to follow and there were lots of things for them to see and me to smell. There was Higham Park – a stately home which had had a number of illustrious visitors. There were ancient agricultural villages and the communities established to service the Kent coalfield. It was, however, a dry run. They usually like to stop at a pub or possibly a coffee bar, but there were neither, not even in Womenswold, which Master says

some readers may remember from a youth weekend we once held there. The two human beings were reduced to sharing the water Master had brought for me. They didn't however, share my dinner. I ate that and, what with the running around and the excitement, was promptly sick. Master says that in future I shall eat when we get home from these jaunts! Finally we came to Shepherdswell – a bit far for them, but the first really logical stopping point. They asked and obtained directions to the pub, but were told that it was closed! They were very relieved to discover that this was a mistake. A group of characters was drinking outside and (as it turned out) inside. They all loved dogs, especially springer spaniels, it seemed. They all apparently knew one another and everybody else in the village. They were all comedians and they made all three of us very welcome and included us in. The pub didn't do food, but they suggested that, if Master bought some in the Co-op next door, they could eat it outside the pub with their beer. The only fly in the ointment was that Master hadn't got his dividend card with him. And so, home by train. When we got to Rochester, it would have been nearly half an hour to wait for a Strood train. So we walked to Strood – only to find it was another half hour wait there. Impatient Master said, that if he had known that, we would have walked all the way. Nevertheless we got home to a nice tea and a pleasant evening watching TV and sitting in the garden.

Before I sign off, I just want to tell you that we discovered that St Theresa had a spaniel named Tom and we have seen his photograph. So I am in good company. Tommy, the Rectory Spaniel.



Friends of Kent Churches Ride and Stride

This will be on September 12th. The proceeds are divided equally between our parish and Friends of Kent Churches who help all the churches in Kent. The idea is to visit as many churches as you can – walking or cycling, though it has been done on a moped! If you can't take part, please sponsor someone who can. Sponsor forms and further information from the Rector.

An Odd Accident

A man was run over by a steam roller and it crushed his entire left side. He's all right now!



Teddy Bears' Picnic

This will take place at Cuxton Rectory on 12th August at 2.00 pm (church hall if wet). All young children are invited to join us with their adult carers and teddies. The picnic will be provided and there is plenty of room in the garden to run around and play. No charge.

Forthcoming Attractions

- 12th August: 2.00 pm Teddy Bears' Picnic in the Rectory Grounds.
- 19th August: Mothers' Union Seaside Outing and Fish & Chips. All welcome. Ask MU member for details.
- September 19th: 7.30 pm Christian Aid Quiz in Cuxton Church Hall.
- September 27th: Michaelmas Tea with Tideway in Church Hall
- September 29th: 7.30 pm Patronal Festival Eucharist at St Michael's, preacher the Archdeacon.
- October 4th: Harvest Festival. Harvest Supper to follow evening service at venue to be announced.
- December 12th: 10.00 Christmas Coffee Morning in Church Hall.
- December 16th: 12.00 Christmas Parish Lunch in Church Hall.

Halling Bellringers

Ringers from Ashford District rang a quarter peal on our bells on February 19th. Cuxton ringers are also regularly conducting practices at Halling. Halling ringers who went on the Outring to Essex on 13th would like to thank those who organised it. Also thanks to those who rang for the Confirmation on 24th June. P Silver & R Knight.

Flower Arrangers, Cleaners, Maintenance Men, Musicians & Choristers

Mention of the Confirmation gives us another opportunity to thank all those who keep our buildings and their surroundings so beautifully and provide our music. Roger.

From the Registers

Baptisms:

21st June

28th June

5th July

5th July

Thomas John Collin Griffiths

George Anthony Mabb

Casey Hudson Hamilton

Felicity Lily Andre

Bush Road

Thomas Harris Close

Valley Drive

Black Boy Cottages

Confirmations:

24th June

Andrew Glen Gates

Callum James MacDonald

Rebecca Laura MacDonald

Amelia May Pease

Kathryn Beatrice Fenton-Scott

Ceri-Anne Mary Silverthorn

Charles Drive

Pilgrims Road

Pilgrims Road

Bush Road

Essex Road

Bush Road

Wedding Blessing:

Scott and Anne Wilson

Cuxton

Funerals:

22nd June

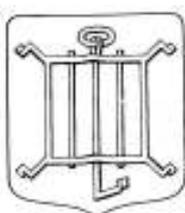
25th June

Anne Valerie Bentley (81)

Patricia Ellen Chalker (71)

Wouldham

Nine Acres Road



From the Rector

I was very impressed to discover the new Strood Library. Discover is the right word. At first I couldn't find it and had to go to Rochester instead! It is located at Strood Community Hub in the High Street, south side, between Commercial Road opposite Strood Church, and Catt Alley! It is an attractive, modern building, with a good selection of books, many of which appeared to me to be new. I was very impressed that the money had been found for all this investment at a time of austerity and cuts. Then I began to have my doubts. It is obvious that a reference library should be provided and factual books to lend out to help Medway people to obtain an education and to find out how to do things, but what is the justification for spending taxpayers' money on adult fiction? Why should taxpayers subsidise my enjoyment? (The same could be said of sports centres, swimming pools and perhaps art galleries, museums and concerts.) I am very grateful for the library service. I have been a member of local libraries since I was a child, before I could even read very well. You only want to read most fiction books once. Supposing I could even afford

to do so, if I bought all the books I read for relaxation (more than one per week), what would I do with them all? I could open my own library!

Reading is, however, a good thing in itself. Whatever you read, the very act of reading broadens your vocabulary, improves your speech and writing styles and introduces you to new ideas you might not otherwise have thought of. Possibly this is too true for me. I was once accused of talking like a book! Nevertheless, the very act of reading is good for you and practice makes perfect. If we can't read, we miss out not only on books, but on the use of onscreen material, warning and direction signs, and a whole lot of other things without which our lives are impoverished. Reading is the key to most other kinds of knowledge and, the better you can read, the better fitted you are to be a well-informed and intelligent member of society. My parents were right to enrol me in the library as soon as I started to learn to read and all children should be encouraged to read.

Reading fiction is good practice in the art of reading. Incidentally, you may learn a lot about the world by reading even fiction. Well-written

fiction broadens your mind. Just like you may play sport or go swimming for fun and, as a by-product of that enjoyment, get fit, just as you may only have gone into the museum or gallery to get out of the rain, but you still learned something, just as you may go to the concert just to enjoy yourself, but be really moved by the music, so reading fiction for fun, brings many other benefits. In fact I feel sorry for people who exercise grimly for no other reason than to develop a six-pack or to protect their cardiovascular systems, and for those who go to galleries and museums and concerts to obtain an education, but without any apparent enjoyment.

So, three cheers for our libraries! Even as more and more material is available on screen, I think books still have a great future. (I might be wrong if the online reading experience improves with technology, but you'll still be reading it even if it is off some electronic device.) At present, I find reading off a paper page a much more pleasant experience than reading off a screen. Books are low tech. They don't need batteries. They don't go wrong. Maybe I'm paranoid, but there is also the point that it is much easier for the government and major corporations to monitor what we read online and to control what we have access to than it is for them when we produce and look at printed or even hand-written material. There is some justification for paranoia about this. Liverpool City Council tried to stop people seeing old films in which the principal characters smoke cigarettes and the BBC edited out politically incorrect material when it made *Only Fools and Horses* available on DVD. If they can check up on people looking at ISIL propaganda on their computers, they can also check up on people who show an online interest in UKIP or the Green Party or anything else that officials or politicians might disapprove of. [The seemingly unlikely can happen. When, a few years ago, a local authority adopted a strategy to make builders keep their shirts on when the sun shines, it seemed incredible that they could do this in a free country, but that is just what has now happened on many sites and just think how many other freedoms which we used to take for granted have now been taken away from us on the grounds of health and safety, political correctness or the terrorist threat.]

A few weeks ago, I was asked to locate a quotation. It took me less than a minute to find online. It would have taken me hours in a very well stocked library to have found it on paper. If, however, I had not committed it to memory in the first place, I should have had no idea what I was looking for and it would have been exceedingly unlikely that I would find it.

The Christian Church has always promoted literacy. Some countries had no written form of their own languages at all until they were converted to Christianity and needed service books and bibles. The Cyrillic script in which Russian is written goes back to St Cyril who was one of the apostles to the Slavs. The English Bible and the Book of Common Prayer have had a huge influence on the development of our own language. Even today, there are probably more households in England with a copy of the Bible than there are of any other book. Judaism, Christianity and Islam have been described as religions of the book. God speaks to us. He reveals His Law to us in words. The Ten Commandments are sometimes known as the Ten Words. The work of a prophet is not primarily to foretell the future. He or she may or may not do that, but the real task of the prophet is to be a messenger, to proclaim the Word of God. *By the Word of the LORD were the heavens made.* Words are fundamental and this is, in part, the reason why the Church has always been at the forefront of education. It is in words that God communicates Himself to us. It is in words that we relate to one another. Which brings me to my final thought. *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him, and without him was not anything made that was made. In him was life, and the life was the light of men.* Jesus is the Word of God. In Jesus, God makes Himself known to us. In Jesus, our words ascend to the Throne of Grace. In biblical thought, there is no distinction between word and action. What God says, He enacts. To hear is to obey. If we are people of the Word of God, we proclaim God's Word by what we say, by what we do and, above all by what we are. We are an open book, open to God, open to the Church and open to the world – just like Jesus. I don't mind talking like a book, if that book is the Bible. Roger.

Please Be Aware

We've had a group of children hanging about around St Michael's Church and hall, the Rectory garden and Woodhurst Close. They run off and hide if approached. So they are up to no good! They are certainly trespassing on my and other people's property and leaving litter. The numbers have been increasing and the fear is that the situation will escalate to include vandalism and other crime. There is also a child safety issue. There are steep banks and wooded areas and they are jumping over walls onto sloping surfaces. If you see anything, please call the police on 101. If you see anything more serious, dial 999. If you can identify them, please give their names to me or to the police. It's not just for the sakes of local residents. If youngsters get used to the idea that they can get away with breaking the law, they tend to go on to worse things, sometimes with serious consequences for themselves in the long run.

It reminds me of how, over the years, I've had to put up with trespassers in my garden. There was the man who regularly helped himself to my rhubarb. (He could have asked. I'm quite happy to give away my rhubarb, apples and blackberries, which produce more than I can eat.) There was the woman who got rid of the snails from her garden by dumping them in mine. Because Max couldn't be trusted not to run off, I used to have a rope in the garden with which he could be tied up. Very often, I would come down in the morning to find that it had been cut with a knife. The vessel of water I put out for the birds and wild animals I often find tipped out and thrown away. I've had things (fruit and snowballs) thrown at my windows and, once, a window kicked it. I was given a nice garden ornament for Christmas. When it had been broken up two nights running, I decided to keep it indoors! I still think, however, that the worst case of trespass was when council tree officers came into my garden unlawfully and senior council officers made untrue statements in an effort to cover things up. If the people who are supposed to enforce the law can get away with breaking the law, I think our country is in a sorry state. Roger.

A Creepy Tale

A man was walking one night in a lonely place. Silently, a dark coloured car pulled up alongside him. Thinking he was being offered a lift, he got in. The car started off again, moving slowly down the street. Turning to thank his benefactor, the man saw that there was no driver. Silently the car continued, only to stop at the cemetery gates. Now there was a sound of heavy breathing and nervously the man got out, only to see another man walking towards the driver's door. "I wouldn't get in," he said; "there's something badly the matter with this car." "I know," replied the stranger; "I've been pushing it for the last two miles!"

Two Churchyards, One Church Burial Ground and a Church Hall

For centuries, in this country, the Church was responsible for nearly all burials. English people were at least nominally Christian and it seemed to make sense to be buried in consecrated ground around the building in which they had enjoyed Christian fellowship in worship during their mortal lifespan, in which they had heard the Word of God proclaimed, with its promise of eternal life to all believers, and had shared in the Holy Communion, remembering that Christ died so that we might live, experiencing His Presence with us here and now, and receiving His pledge of the good things which God has laid up for those who love Him.

In Victorian times, however, the population grew tremendously and people became more reluctant to be buried in land in which people had already been buried for centuries. Churchyards quickly filled up in many parts of the country. In some places, like Halling, the Church acquired additional land for burials. In other places, like Snodland, local authorities acquired land for cemeteries. In Cuxton, we acquired land for a possible churchyard extension, but Kent County Council registered it as common land and Cuxton Parish Council registered it as belonging to them. So we have lost that, at least for the time being. Cremation was also facilitated and encouraged. Most people are now cremated.

St John's churchyard is full up (except for the burial of ashes), which means that we were able to have it closed by Order of the Privy Council and Medway Council have to maintain it, although it still remains benefice property. Medway do this quite well, with the odd nudge when they let things slide. We'd like to thin out the trees, but we'd need the permission both of Medway tree officers because we're in a

conservation area, and of the church authorities, because it is consecrated ground. The paperwork would take longer than the axe work!

Sometimes I wish that, like Snodland Church obviously did, we had left it to the local authority to provide extra land for burials at Halling back in C19. Then they would be looking after the Burial Ground now in the same way that Snodland Town Council cares so well for Snodland Cemetery. But our Victorian forebears thought it would be better for the parish Church to provide Halling with an additional Burial Ground and it remains our responsibility. To be honest, it is more than we can manage (and possibly always has been, judging by old parish magazines). You can't expect the congregation to cut the grass and brambles. I can't do it all myself, though I've helped others in the past and wouldn't mind doing so again. We can't afford to pay professionals. Last year, the Probation Service did a brilliant job. Unfortunately, the Probation Service was then privatised and reorganised and it took a long time before they were able to resume cutting. So Halling Burial Ground got horribly out of hand and I should like to say that I am sorry that it did. We still have to provide machinery and fuel. So we are still looking for donations towards Halling Burial Ground and we are hoping that Halling Parish Council will resume giving us an annual grant, as they did for many years until quite recently. I am sorry things got so bad, but the Probation Service now have it in hand.

The Probation Service also took on St Michael's churchyard and have done a good job. Again, there was a slow start because of the reorganisation, but generous donations enabled us to pay a gentleman to do several cuts earlier in the year. So things did not get quite so badly out of hand at Cuxton. We still need to pay for machinery and fuel and we are grateful for the grant from Cuxton Parish Council and for the donations received from private individuals. A setback is that the mowers have just been stolen. So watch this space.

The Probation Service also carried out the internal redecoration of the church hall and did a brilliant job!

Thank you all for your support, Roger.

We Will Remember Them

Last year, when we commemorated the hundredth anniversary of the outbreak of the Great War, we asked for personal stories about the people commemorated on our war memorials. We realised that it would have been better to have undertaken this project earlier. So we are asking now for stories about the people commemorated on our Second World War memorials. If you are prepared to share any information, we shall publish it in this magazine. If there is enough, there might be a separately printed booklet.

Halling War Memorial

James Angus
Bertram Ashby
Gordon Bowles
Ernest Castle
Frank Chapman

Ernest Harris
Gordon Holmes
Jack Homewood
George Kitney
Eric Martin

Arthur Osborne
Marjorie Startup
William Wretham
Frank Wright

Cuxton War Memorial

James Alderson
Francis Bethel

Percy Squires
Stanley Austin

Brian Wilde

This notice appeared first in last month's magazine and I am grateful for this response from Mrs Kathleen Garratt. "George Kitney was my father. He was always called John, as my grandfather called him John Bull. I don't know why. John was in the 1st Battalion Irish Guards. It was while he was on embarkation leave in January 1943 his son, also John, was born. We were always pleased he saw him. On 30th April 1943 John was killed in North Africa and is buried in Massicault War Cemetery, Tunisia." Has anyone else any memories kindly to share, please?

St John's Draw: £5 each to Mr Head (2), Mrs Burr (12), Miss Mitchell (73) & Mr Tower – drawn by Peter Silver.
St Michael's Draw: 1st Martin Hills £20, 2nd. Valerie Cosford £10, 3rd. David Joyce £5.

Lose Our Firework Display?

I was horrified to read in the Cuxton Noticeboard that we might lose our annual firework display in the recreation ground because of “over the top” “health and safety”. I at once e mailed Cuxton Parish Council and I hope you will do the same, if you feel the same way as I do. This was my e mail.

I was dismayed to see that the Wheel of Cuxton may no longer be allowed to put on our annual firework display because of the Parish Council's new "health and safety" policy. This event has given a great deal of pleasure to many thousands of people over very many years. It may well have saved lives and prevented injuries by providing a properly organised display in the village instead of people putting on their own amateur displays in their own back gardens.

It is a great shame when traditional community events are cancelled on spurious "health and safety" grounds and a disservice to genuine health and safety issues. The HSE website now has a section highlighting health and safety myths because some people have ceased to take genuine health and safety seriously in the light of some of the sillier prohibitions it has been used to justify.

The fact that this display has taken place for so many years without serious accident should be prima facie evidence that there are no health and safety grounds for banning it. I suggest that the Parish Council examine what the legislation actually says. In my experience, we are often told that we cannot do this or we must do that for "health and safety" reasons, but, if we look at the material the Health and Safety Executive publish, we find that it is not true at all or that we can proceed with what we propose with proper common sense precautions.

Roger Knight,
Rector of Cuxton and Halling.



Mothers@ Union

Branch Leader's Report for Year 2014-2015 at Mothers' Union AGM on
June 17th 2015.

It seems unbelievable to me that another year has gone by, but then the saying goes that “Time passes more quickly when you are enjoying yourself” and enjoy ourselves is what we have been doing; at least I think so and I hope you can all agree. Since following the idea that each member should have a turn of running a meeting, we have had a good variety of subjects. For example, a Teddy Bears' Picnic in the rectory garden, a Bible quiz (with prizes), a day out to Herne Bay for a fish and chip lunch and then onto Birchington for a quick swim in the sea for those who wished to! At a talk about the poppies displayed at the Tower of London, we were able to examine one at close quarters and we heard as well about the history of how the poppies became a symbol of Remembrance. We also had inspiring and thought provoking talks from our Rector, Elizabeth Summers and Peter Joyce, a study of Mothers' Union activities taken from the MU website and then, of course, our Christmas visit to Chris Beaney's bakery and tea shop for a light lunch followed by fun in the bakery making chocolate logs, complete with decorations and a presentation box to carry them home in. Great fun! To complete our year, we have yet to hear from Dawn about the history and use of recorders next month.

We have managed to help in the Epiphany brunch followed by a film show, the Christmas coffee morning, the Passover supper and the coffee morning and afternoon tea in Christian Aid Week. Again, we attended a service at the cathedral on Mary Sumner Day on 9th August. This year, this falls on a Sunday when we are invited for Evensong at 3.15. Our Chaplain, Ken Clarke, will be preaching and we may be allowed to picnic in the Bishop's garden.

Thank you for all your support and interest, especially from our regular visitors. Next year will be our 115th Anniversary. So maybe we can make it a special year and it will also be the 140th Anniversary of the start of Mothers' Union. So we have quite a lot to look forward to and to plan for. Thank you for being you.

Shirley Crundwell.



Cuxton WI

We have had a lot of activity over the past two months and holidays etc

have

interrupted the reporting. In May we held our AGM which was well attended by 31 members - nothing to do with the cheese and wine I assure you! We are very fortunate in that there are enough ladies who will give freely of their time to help in the committee work and so we were able to have a full new committee for the year. Pat was press ganged into another year as Chairman and Maureen as Treasurer - a job that no one ever volunteers for.

In June we celebrated our 70th birthday by meeting for an evening meal at the White Hart. Both Pat and I were away on holiday but everyone has told us what a successful evening it was with delicious food, drink and fellowship. I think there is a rumour going around that this could become an annual event at the pub.

And so to July in the middle of the heat wave. Our meeting began with entertainment by the local firemen as someone had reported a fire in the nearby woods. Young virile firemen are not the usual guests on a WI night although I think they looked a bit overwhelmed with 30 older ladies cheering them on! When all was settled we were given an interesting talk about *Strood in past times. This brought back memories for most local members. It was surprising how much had changed in more recent times as Strood had

*See the excellent photographs in the "White Hart" of old Strood, Cuxton & Chatham.

NATURE NOTES : JUNE 2015

"Spells" James Reeves

I dance and sing without any feet
This is the spell for the ripening wheat.
With never a tongue a tale to tell
This is the meadow grasses spell
I give health without any fee
This is the spell of the apple tree.
I rhyme and riddle without any book
This is the spell of the bubbling brook
Without any legs I run for ever
This is the spell of the mighty river
I fall for ever and not at all

Another month arrives. Dark and rather ominous clouds gather as I walk round the lake at Bluewater

begun with about 300 residents in the 1300s. The cement industries using chalk and the advent of the railways had caused the town to grow rapidly in the 19/20 centuries.

There had been lots going on with members in the past month. Two ladies had been invited to Buckingham Palace for a garden party to celebrate the 100th birthday of the WI movement. 14 of us had gone to London for a cruise up and down the Thames with lunch included. This was on a beautiful June day and everyone enjoyed themselves. There was a scarecrow festival at Lullingstone Castle, unfortunately on the hottest day of the year but none the less enjoyed by all who went. Several members had manned the tea/cake stall at the village big lunch. This was a sell out and next year we have put in a plea for more homemade cakes as we ran out quite quickly this year. The "walkers" had a really lovely day walking along the Leas on the Isle of Sheppey which is farther than we usually travel but well worth it as Sheppey is a clean and pretty island to visit. So, a busy three months and lots more to look forward to with theatre visits and a produce show coming up.

We still have room for more members. So if you ever want to join us you are most welcome. We meet on the 1st Thursday of each month at 7.30pm in the Church Hall. Next meeting is on Thursday 6th August and will be a talk and demonstration on Dogs and Medical Detection. Sheila.

This is the spell of the waterfall
Without a voice I roar aloud
This is the spell of the thunder cloud
No button or seam has my white coat
This is the spell of the leaping goat
I can cheat strangers with never a word
This is the spell of the cuckoo bird
We have tongues in plenty but speak no names
This is the spell of the fiery flames
The creaking door has a spell to riddle
I play a tune without any fiddle.

with Murphy before rain starts to fall. The verges are aglow with beautiful ox eye daisies and they also

adorn the lakeside banks. Westerly winds blow and the afternoon remains sunny. The 2nd is a blustery day with westerly winds driving billowing clouds across the sky. The following day is warm and sunny and at the lake, I see vetch, lucerne, buttercups, sanfoin, oxeye daisies and clover. In the afternoon, a young rabbit comes into the garden and I watch it feeding on the grass. It is oblivious of my presence. The rabbit pays us another visit the next day which is warm and sunny. I see a wider variety of flowers by the lake, including St John's wort, birdsfoot trefoil, broom, goats rue, field campion and white campion. On 6th, I visited Aylesford Priory with a friend for a church Quiet Day. The grounds were beautiful, in their late spring greens. The skies were a deep blue with just a few wispy clouds. At home, in the evening, I listened to the melodic song of a blackbird. As I walk to church the next day, I see beautiful mauve mallow flowers along the verges. Elder flowers are now blooming; I love the bittersweet perfume of the flowers. The air feels quite cold on 8th for a northeast wind is blowing. This continues for the following two days. On 9th, a crow, then a jay, visit the garden. For the next few days, temperatures are cool but by 15th there is more warmth for westerly winds blow. On 19th, early morning sunshine gives way to overcast skies but a certain brightness remains. Later in the morning, I walk up the overgrown path by the church to the fields, where long grasses sway in the breeze and where beautiful pink and white dog roses bloom. Elder flowers their creamy blooms and mauve mallow

flowers nestle beneath the hawthorn bushes. Cow parsley has gone to seed. A speckled wood butterfly hovers over grass blades. Hogweed stands tall in the adjacent field. I listen to the call of the chiff chaff when, later in the afternoon I sit in the garden. Ladybirds settle on the nettles which grow by the fence. These are for the butterflies. On 20th, I see orchids blooming in the tall grasses at Bluewater. On 21st, the longest day, I listen to rooks as they perch in the trees by the river. The evening air is still. The sunny day's continue. On 26th I walk across the fields of long grasses and burdock bushes. Elder flower blooms emitting its bitter sweet perfume. Mallow and hogweed bloom in the fields. I also see herb robert, bryony, red and white clover, dog roses, hedge woundwort, white campion, hedge bedstraw, common centaury, poppy, buttercup, St John's wort and black medick. I walk different paths then find my way blocked by overgrown areas. Eventually, I make my way home after having a rest on a wooden seat overlooking Bush Road at the bottom of the hill. I must say I felt a little weary after a long trek. The next day at Bluewater I see a burnet moth perched on an orchid. Billowing white clouds adorn the blue of the afternoon sky. The 29th is the beginning of a heat wave. I keep out of the sun's heat whilst listening to a chiff chaff's song. The 30th is another very hot day. The sun shines brightly well into the evening which becomes cooler. Another month closes.
Elizabeth Summers.

Halling Historical Society

The next meeting will be held on Thursday August 20th at 7.30 pm in the Jubilee Hall, Upper Halling. The speaker will be Penny Harris and the subject A Wealden Woman's War. Visitors and new members are always welcome.

First Halling Brownies 70th Anniversary

This was celebrated in fine style at the Jubilee Hall on 4th July. There was a very generous spread for tea and a beautiful cake. The girls performed some traditional Brownie songs. Maybe the one about the meatball goes back to wartime rationing! They were founded in 1945, the year the war ended. The girls also spoke about what they enjoy about being Brownies. Guests received a party bag containing coasters with pictures of guides in days gone by – possibly the grandmothers of the women who founded our pack in 1945 – and a beautiful blazer badge designed by one of the girls. Guests included members of the parish council, local ministers, family and friends of the girls, and the mother of one of the first Halling Brownies. Originally, they met in the church room located next to the old Halling Vicarage – now a bungalow. This was convenient for the Vicarage, for the school field for games, and for the open countryside for nature walks. Your correspondent only entered the building once, to assist with clearing it out before it was sold to help pay for the restoration of St John's. It was very small and, later on, Guides and Brownies met in the old Halling School and now they meet in the Jubilee Hall.

Christian Aid Walk & Quiz

Mary Pitt, Tommy and the Rector made £200 towards the deanery total for the Christian Aid walk. (See Tommy's account above.) Don't forget the quiz in the church hall 19th September.

News from Cuxton Infant and Junior School

Dear Friends of Cuxton Schools,

As the academic year draws to a close, it is amazing how the time has flown by and how much the Cuxton Schools have achieved this year. We are delighted to have our best academic results for the last four years. This is due to the hard work of all the children and staff. Our drive as always has been to raise standards, particularly in light of the weaker results in the past in Key Stage 2. This year our results are at National and above in Key stage 2 and we celebrate some excellent results in key Stage 1 and EYFS.

Academic achievement is clearly of great importance but our children have also taken part in mini youth games against many schools in Medway, winning some matches and sadly losing others but we are proud to have been awarded the Fair Play Trophy, coming third out of all Medway Schools. Well done to Cuxton! It is important that the children develop socially, morally and physically also and there have been many school trips during the year, workshops and fund raising charity events to ensure the wider curriculum is covered at all times. The school council children recently raised over £300 for Demelza House and have also petitioned for safer road crossing in Bush Road.

You may have seen the building plans and signage for a development on the school site. I wrote about this some time ago. I am pleased to tell you that building work is due to start in October, with a completion time of July 2016. This project will take place in four phases: the middle build to join both school buildings, and with this the creation of a new main entrance and office areas. The building and development of two extra teaching spaces- a large EYFS area and year 1 class and then a new ICT learning space and community area, coupled with Home School Support offices. It is all extremely exciting for us all. We realise this will all come with some logistical nightmares but ultimately our aim that it is all as seamless as possible for the children so their learning can continue without disruption.

Over the last few weeks in school we have welcomed the new entrants on their three visits prior to starting school in September. The remainder of the school have also visited their new classes and the year 6 children have had some familiarisation sessions with the secondary schools.

The Summer Fete, Sports day, year 6 leavers assembly and prom are all occurring over the last two weeks of term. Parents will also be receiving their child's end of year academic report and with that their targets for the next year.

Many parents say what lovely long holidays we have as staff in schools and yes they are correct, but we do need them! Teaching is not a nine until 5 job and actually staff come into work regularly over the holidays in preparation for the new year. I am proud of the staff and children at Cuxton. Thank you also to the community for the support of our school. Sandra Jones, Headteacher.

A Celebration of Church Music

On Sunday 5th July we had a service of Evening Praise at St Michael's with the theme "Joy in the Lord Shall Be Your Strength". We sang about half the hymns John Bogg has written up for this magazine, which immediately suggests the need for a repeat performance! We marked John's 25 years as organist and choirmaster at Cuxton, Mary Morren's 25 years in the choir, Di Maxwell's 35 years and Dave Maxwell's 40 years. Remarkable performances. We spoke about the importance of music in worship and it was an opportunity to say how much we appreciate having John at Cuxton and Gillian Feraday and Dorothy Smitherman at Halling. In these decadent times, some churches are reduced to singing along to recorded music. This is a sad reflection on the unwillingness of people to commit and to exercise their talents to the glory of God and for the benefit of others. It is unsatisfactory because a recording does not adapt to the needs of the congregation as a live accompanist does. Most importantly, the people who play instruments and sing in choirs are not merely providing accompaniment to the congregation's worship. They are not primarily entertaining or even educating us. Playing an organ, piano or other instrument in church, or singing in the choir, is in itself an act of worship. They are not merely accompanying us. They are worshipping with us. A congregation is not an audience!

It Is Very **Meat**, Right and our Bounden Duty,

We had some fun with puns and wordplay, a linguistic safari if you like, at St Michael's on Whitsunday (Pentecost). Unwanted e mails are classed as spam. Before e mail, the only kind of spam I knew was pink. It's something you put in sandwiches or make into fritters and fry. Tommy and I often share a tin of spam for tea. It's chopped ham and pork. If you have a clever computer or ISP, it sorts out the spam e mails from the rest for you, so that you aren't troubled by them. Unfortunately, however, they're not always that clever and sometimes e mails you actually want to receive are classified as spam and disappear into the aether (or onto the hard disc, maybe). Emails you want which are wrongly classified as spam are known as ham. (Maybe they take the pork out of them!) If you get in touch with the relevant ISP, you can get them to stop classifying the e mails you want as spam by submitting a ham report. If you use e mails at work, you may need to do this in order to bring home the bacon.

We got onto a much wider discussion about all forms of communication – the spoken word, letters, texts, social media and the telephone. They all have their good points and bad points. You can't always get to see the people you want to talk to. Writing a letter and posting it takes time and the price of stamps is extortionate. Social media can be overwhelming and are sometimes used for bullying. Texts are very short. It's too easy to be rude by e mail. The telephone can be a nuisance if people ring up at awkward times. Having said all that, communication is a good thing. Indeed it is essential to all human relationships and we should welcome opportunities to be in touch with other people and to share. There is a lot to be said for eating together and for prayer and for Holy Communion.

Then we started thinking about what other kinds of cold meat there are and if they have any relation to communication. For example, cold cuts are very nice on the sideboard when you are having high tea, but cold calls are an odious intrusion at any meal time. We went through brawn, salami and chorizo. I had a momentary longing for a saveloy which I don't think I've had since I was a child at my aunt's house at Bromley. None of these was very promising in respect of communication. But then we came to tongue – basic to human speech. On the day of Pentecost, *there appeared unto them cloven tongues, like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them: and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.* God Himself speaks to us by His Word Jesus, the Word made flesh, and through the Bible, which He caused to be written for our learning. With our tongues, like the apostles, we proclaim the Word of God as the Spirit gives us utterance.

We sing God's praises with our tongues. We may, by God's grace, speak words of wisdom to others or words of consolation. St James warns us of the power of our tongues to do evil as well as to do good. *Therewith bless we God, even the Father; and therewith curse we men, which are made after the similitude of God. Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not to be so.* On the contrary, if we are filled with the Holy Spirit, our words will be words of blessing, blessing the Name of God and a blessing to the people we speak to (or write to, or ring up, or text or e mail or whatever you call it when you post a message on your message board.)

*It is very **meet**, right, and our bounden duty, that we should at all times, and in all places, give thanks unto thee, O Lord, Holy Father, Almighty, Everlasting God. Therefore with Angels and Archangels, and with all the company of heaven, we laud and magnify thy glorious Name; evermore praising thee, and saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of hosts, heaven and earth are full of thy glory: Glory be to thee, O Lord most High. Amen.*