



# Parish News

St Michael, St Albans with St Mary, Childwick Green

November 2017

*1867 – 2017: celebrating 150 years of St Mary's Childwick*

## LETTER FROM THE VICARAGE

November is the last month in the Church calendar. It is a time for looking backwards and considering the year that has passed. As we do this it is natural to peer back further, beyond 2017.

- 1 November is All Saints Day, the annual reminder of our union in faith with Christian heroes and heroines who have gone before us. All Saints Sunday will be celebrated on 5 November, during the regular 8.00 a.m., 9.30 a.m. and 6.00 p.m. services.
- Our union in faith with the saints includes our own departed loved-ones. And so, in common with many churches at this time of year, we will be holding a service of commemoration and thanksgiving for the departed. This will be in St Michael's at 6.30 p.m. on 5 November. If you wish a name to be read at the service please email it to Georgie Ray. You may also like to bring a flower to the service (single stem please!) to lay at the altar during the first hymn.
- The theme of reflection continues as November heads through Armistice Day and Remembrance Sunday. A minute's silence will be kept, and the familiar words of Laurence Binyon and the Kohima Epitaph will be read during the 9.30 a.m. and 6.00 p.m. services on 12 November.



This brings me neatly to this month's local notable. Virtually no parish was unscarred by the First and Second World Wars. Ours was no exception. The First World War memorials in St Michael's (and recently rediscovered at the Memorial Hall – see September's *Parish News*) list 65 names of parishioners who died during the Great War. I look forward to the construction in 2018 of an additional plaque for St Michael's Church in honour of the five local victims whose names were omitted from these boards; legal eagles will have spotted the faculty application for this work on the Parish Centre noticeboard.

A stand-out figure among St Michael's war dead is Rifleman Frank Giddings. He was killed in action near Festubert on 22 May 1915, aged just 22. Historian Ann Dean writes of Frank:

Since boyhood, Frank Giddings had been a consistent and conscientious worker in St Michael's parish, as a Sunday School teacher, a member of the Church of England Men's Society, secretary of St Michael's Guild for Lads, and a church chorister. With a considerable musical talent, he studied the organ at the Guildhall School of Music, and had occasionally officiated as assistant to Mr Sait in the duties of organist at St Michael's Church. His elder brother, Harold, was organist at Childwick.

He was a young man possessed with a strong missionary spirit, and went to St Augustine's College, Canterbury, to see if he would be accepted as a missionary student. However, the matter was postponed, as war was declared and he enlisted on 5 September 1914 in the 6th City of London Regiment.

Before sailing for the Front, he left his will with his parents. In it he set aside a certain sum from his savings to be given to the Church Missionary Society. He concluded, 'And now I leave you in true and certain hope of meeting you all again and of seeing Him face to face, feeling I have done my duty for my King and Country with the Grace of God only'.

Stories of sacrifice by countless men and women like Frank Giddings remind us why remembrance is both a cornerstone of British culture as well as a Christian duty.

As ever,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Kenneth'.

# MICHAEL ICON

St Michael's Day (29 September) was a particular cause of celebration this year. After many weeks walking along the pilgrimage route to Santiago in north-west Spain, John Hayton finally reached his destination. The account of John's pilgrimage is his own to tell and I'm sure he'll do this in due course [editors' note: see the first instalment of John's account on p.11]. I was delighting in the coincident timing of John's success when another email pinged into my inbox: notification that the icon of St Michael, which had been commissioned for the Lady Chapel months ago, had arrived safe and sound. It was perfectly timed for us to dedicate the following Sunday, when we kept our patronal festival. As a church, we owe many thanks to the painter, to Geoff Warwick for mounting it, and especially to the generous donor who has given it.



Icons are an unfamiliar sight in many western churches. And yet they are a prerequisite in eastern Orthodoxy, where they play a crucial role in worship. The Orthodox take literally the second commandment not to make graven images (i.e. three-dimensional statues). However, after extensive debate in the eighth and ninth centuries between iconodules (those who honour images) and iconoclasts (literally, those who smash them), the former camp won out, and two-dimensional icons have had a revered place in Orthodox spirituality ever since.

The Orthodox regard icons as windows onto heaven. When praying before an icon, we are meant to be drawn through the image and into the realm of saints and angels. Icons make present that which they represent. As such, we are meant to gaze on them as we would a friend, with openness and affection, and in anticipation that our loving gaze will be returned. Former archbishop, Rowan Williams, writes that

An icon is a surface: you can't walk round it but only look at it, and, hopefully, through it. It insists that you don't treat it as an object with which you share a bit of space. In the icon, what you see is human beings and situations as they are in the light of God's action ... It doesn't seek for photographic realism; like the lines of a diagram, the lines of an icon tell you what it is in the subject matter that is significant, that conveys God's working. And you need to look and pray with that in mind, to look patiently and not analytically, and allow yourself to be 'worked on' – perhaps we should say, allow yourself to be looked at by God, rather than just looking at something yourself. That's why the use of icons is not some kind of image worship. Certainly icons are treated with reverence – people bow to them, kiss them, light candles in front of them and so on. Some people may approach this in a superstitious spirit,



as with any practice performed in church. But the reverence – as any Eastern Christian will tell you – is not because the icons are seen as magical objects but because in their presence you become aware that you are present to God and that God is working on you by his grace, as he does in the lives and words of holy people, supremely in the words of Scripture and the person of Jesus<sup>1</sup>.

The viewer can tell that the subject of our icon is an angel – because it has wings! – and the abbreviated Byzantine script at the top reads ‘The Archangel Michael’. Our icon is a fairly standard iconographical representation of the Archangel. The staff in his right hand hints at his role as a warrior for the truth (rather more subtle than the hulking broadswords with which Michael is sometimes depicted) and his role as a dispenser of divine justice is indicated by the orb. I love the way the orb is translucent: it is an icon within an icon, drawing us through the physical realm and into the deeper reality of God’s loving presence.

**Kenneth**

<sup>1</sup>Williams, Rowan, *The Dwelling of the Light: Praying with Icons of Christ* (Norwich: Canterbury Press, 2003), xviii - xix

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# HARVEST FESTIVAL

The second weekend in October saw Harvest Festival at St Michael's and St Mary's. Our 9.30 a.m. service was full to the brim with families and food, the latter being collected – as it is every week – for the FEED foodbank in St Albans, which is organised by the Vineyard Church. Our church looked wonderful during the festival. We are very blessed with our team here, which is committed to decorating not only for such occasions but for every week. The atmosphere it creates for worship can't be underestimated.

Kenneth read a story for the children about being aware of need all around us, as well as the need of people far away. He drew their attention to the dual areas of collection this year: for both our local foodbank as well as for the Bishop's Harvest Appeal, which will benefit farmers in the Philippines. The Seekers Sunday School group were on duty during and after the service, performing the serving, readings, stewarding, coffee and prayers. They were an extremely game bunch on the day and discharged their duties beautifully. I always think it bodes well for the next generation of St Michael's congregants, getting ready to take on the mantle of service from their parents and grandparents. Many thanks – as always – to Jo and Pauline for organising the children who love to help and be useful (as we all do). Heartfelt thanks to everyone who contributed to the day, in the preparation, execution and in delivering our donations. Your work has given us a special opportunity to help people in our town and further afield.

I am always touched by the sight of everyone bringing the food and donations during Harvest Festival, and it reminds me that the need doesn't stop when the festival ends. We collect for the foodbank every week, in a box next to the font. Perhaps, as we move towards Advent, when we put items in our trolley to save for that time of year, we may consider treating all festivals as an opportunity to pile donations high for the people in our town who really need them.

Kerry Wells



Image: Sandie North



Image: Sandie North

# ST MICHAEL'S SCHOOL HARVEST FESTIVAL SERVICE 2017

The Harvest Festival Service at St Michael's is such an earthy and wholesome celebration in the church calendar, and this year was no exception. On Wednesday I entered an attractively-decorated church, filled with flowers and bursting with produce. In front of the altar, food donated by the school families was tastefully arranged on a covered table. Although this is now my third School-Harvest service, I still feel so excited by the carnival energy that resonates throughout the church when I hear the opening song 'Harvest Samba'.

In these recent troubled times, it was heartening to hear the students cheerfully celebrating the theme of 'Our Wonderful World'. Prayers about Harvest were read by the Year 4s, followed by a song from the Ants and Bees students, who were adorable as they performed 'The Sun Came Shining Down'. The set ended with the Cats, Dolphins and Eagles classes joyously singing 'Everywhere Around Me'.

The Harvest Festival spirit creates a wonderful opportunity for the children to say thank you and be grateful to God. We all sang 'Thank You Lord', for the delicious array of foods that we eat every day, the marvellous weather we experience and the clothes we wear. Simple but important concepts that often get lost in our fast-paced, consumer-oriented lives. The Bible reading of 'The Ten Lepers' by Mrs Rafferty and the Year 6s reinforced this message, by discussing how easy it is to be thoughtless and forget to weave gratitude to others and to God into our daily lives. A special thank you to Miss McCann and the choir, who sang such a lovely rendition of 'All Things Bright and Beautiful'. It warmly captured the celebrational message of the festival.

The service concluded with the Year 5 students focusing on the most important aspect of Harvest: sharing. To finish, the whole congregation sang 'Let There be Love Shared Among Us'. It was a very moving moment, as the truth and sincerity of the words washed over us all and filled the church with hope and love. A big thank you to all the staff and students of St Michael's School who helped to create this meaningful service.

Linda Withington



Image: Linda Withington

## DIARY FOR OCTOBER 2017

- 29 TWENTIETH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY  
8.00 a.m. Holy Communion (St Michael's)  
9.30 a.m. Parish Communion (St Michael's)  
6.00 p.m. Evensong (St Mary's)  
31 9.45 a.m. Tiny Tots (Parish Centre)

## DIARY FOR NOVEMBER 2017

- 1 9.00 a.m. Opening of St Michael's Primary School lower-school extension by the Bishop of St Albans
- 4 9.30 a.m. – 12.30 p.m.  
Churchyard Working Party (St Michael's)  
4.00 p.m. Bonfire Party  
(Paddock – access through St Michael's churchyard; see October's *Parish News* for details about tickets)
- 5 ALL SAINTS SUNDAY  
8.00 a.m. Holy Communion (St Michael's)  
9.30 a.m. Parish Communion (St Michael's)  
6.00 p.m. Holy Communion (St Mary's)  
6.30 p.m. Service of Commemoration of the Departed (St Michael's)  
If you wish anyone to be remembered by name, please email Georgie Ray on [admin.stmichaels@btconnect.com](mailto:admin.stmichaels@btconnect.com)
- 6 8.00–9.30 p.m.  
Burning Questions 1/3: 'Why is the Bible so Hard to Understand?', Kenneth Padley. First of three evenings of talks and debate in response to last May's survey of parishioners' burning questions (Parish Centre)
- 7 9.45 a.m. Tiny Tots (Parish Centre)
- 8 8.00 p.m. Parochial Church Council (Parish Centre)
- 9 8.30 p.m. onwards  
Men's Night (Lower Red Lion)
- 12 REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY  
8.00 a.m. Holy Communion (St Michael's)  
9.30 a.m. All Age Communion (St Michael's)  
6.00 p.m. Evensong (St Mary's)
- 13 8.00–9.30 p.m.  
Burning Questions 2/3: 'Issues in Modern Medicine', Dr Jules Summerfield (Parish Centre)



- 14 9.45 a.m. Tiny Tots (Parish Centre)  
Lunch Club Trip to Burston's (NB no 11.30 a.m. Holy Communion)
- 15 7.30 p.m. Society of St Michael & Kingsbury AGM and address (Parish Centre)
- 16 7.00 p.m. onwards  
Ladies' Night (Portland Arms)
- 19 TWENTY-THIRD SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY  
8.00 a.m. Holy Communion (St Michael's)  
9.30 a.m. Parish Communion (St Michael's)  
6.00 p.m. Evensong (St Mary's)
- 20 8.00–9.30 p.m.  
Burning Questions 3/3: 'Religion and World Conflict'. An evening with Bishop Stephen Venner. Stephen was bishop to HM Forces (Parish Centre)
- 21 9.45 a.m. Tiny Tots (Parish Centre)
- 26 CHRIST THE KING  
8.00 a.m. Holy Communion (St Michael's)  
9.30 a.m. Parish Communion (St Michael's)  
6.00 p.m. Evensong (St Mary's)  
NB no fourth Sunday evensong at St Michael's – there are lots of choral services coming up in the following weeks!
- 28 9.45 a.m. Tiny Tots (Parish Centre)

## DIARY FOR DECEMBER 2017

- 3 ADVENT SUNDAY  
8.00 a.m. Holy Communion (St Michael's)  
9.30 a.m. Parish Communion (St Michael's)  
6.00 p.m. Holy Communion (St Mary's)  
6.30 p.m. Advent Carols (St Michael's)

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# THE CAMINO DE SANTIAGO

Many but not all readers will be aware that I recently returned from walking the pilgrimage route known as the Camino Frances. I walked from Pamplona to Santiago de Compostela. It is a distance of 719 km (447 miles), although the starting point of the Camino Frances is 70 km or so further east, high in the Pyrenees in St-Jean-Pied-de-Port, 800 km from Santiago. The Camino Frances is not unique: several different pilgrim-routes converge on Santiago, but it is the principal and most popular one. Since people walk from all over Europe there is no official starting point. In France alone, there are four towns that historically marked the start of routes to Santiago: Arles, Le Puy, Vézelay and Tours. Many people simply start walking south towards the Pyrenees from wherever they live. I met someone who had walked from Istanbul (a 25-year-old Englishman), and saw an Italian in his 60s who had walked from Milan, dragging a case behind him. On the Spanish border, the various starting points converge into two entry points in the Pyrenees: the Somport Pass for the Camino Aragones and the Roncesvalles Pass for the Camino Frances.

## What is the Camino?

Santiago de Compostela is located in north-western Spain, in the province of Galicia. In the High Middle Ages it was the third of the main holy cities of Christendom, along with Jerusalem (too dangerous for most) and Rome (too political). Santiago was, therefore, attractive to pilgrims as it was neutral, safe(-ish) ground. Today the Camino is still being travelled by many thousands of people of all nationalities. One is rarely alone; last year, 278,000 people walked all or part of the way. Why do they do it?

Reasons vary and it's not really done to enquire about motives. For some, it's simply a cheap holiday in beautiful surroundings with interesting company. For others, it's a 'manhood' thing. Many young people do it for the experience – and to put it on their CV, I was told. I was also informed that it is fashionable for young Germans to make the journey. Some want to lose weight (I lost seven pounds), or they travel because of the history, art and architecture found on the pilgrim road. Others have a spiritual or religious reason of some sort, not necessarily related to orthodox Christianity. The Camino Frances follows the Milky Way and is considered by some to be a ley line. But it cannot be denied that many pilgrims are Christian. Finally, there are many who walk the Camino for purely personal reasons, to reflect on their life, marriage, death of a loved one, change of job or life circumstance. A month or so of walking in the Spanish countryside, disconnected from the rest of humanity, can be a good opportunity to sort things out. The possibility of combining all of the above into one trip is what makes the Camino an unusual experience.

## Why Santiago? It's all about a legend

Iago means James. Santiago is St James – the apostle, one of the twelve, brother of John and son of the fisherman Zebedee. He was one of the impetuous brothers, called by Jesus 'Boanerges' – the 'sons of thunder'. We learn from the Acts of the Apostles that James was the first apostle to be martyred. He was executed by Herod Agrippa I in approximately 44 AD. According to a tradition dating to the seventh century, James preached the gospel in Spain, more precisely in

the area now known as Galicia. He only made nine converts (according to the same tradition), returned to Palestine and was killed, as above. His disciples then brought his body back to Galicia in a miraculous boat without sails, in nine days (it ought to have taken about a month).

His grave was forgotten for about eight hundred years, until – during the reign of Alfonso II (789–842 AD) – a hermit named Pelagius received a vision in which the burial place of St James was revealed to him. The place of the grave was surrounded by a miraculous light. The bishop of Iria Flavia, Theodomir (d. 847) proceeded to investigate and declared it to be the grave of St James.

The bones of the apostle were an immediate PR success. Alfonso II built a church on the site and soon James received veneration as the divine protector of Spain, although doubts as to authenticity have always been present. A much later legend has it that ‘Compostela’ is derived from *Campus Stellae* or ‘star field’, after the miraculous star-light that illuminated the place of the grave. It is more likely that the name derives from the Latin word *compostum*, meaning burial place, referring to the Roman necropolis located on the site.

The discovery in the eighth century couldn’t have been better timed. The Arabs (the Moors) had invaded Spain in 711 and conquered most of it as far as Asturias in the north of the country, where a few mountain kingdoms held out to resist the onslaught of Arab civilisation. In such dire times, divine aid was needed. It arrived in the shape of Santiago or St James, who made an appearance as a heavenly warrior in the Battle of Clavijo (834) when Ramiro I of Leon defeated the army of Abd ar-Rahman II. ‘Santiago!’ remained for centuries the battle cry of Spanish warriors and conquistadors, conquering new lands for their king.

The monks of the influential French monastery at Cluny cunningly saw, in promoting the Compostela cult, a way of strengthening Christian resistance to Arab dominance on the Iberian peninsula. They encouraged pilgrimage by arranging complete absolution for those who reached the grave. Hospitals, bridges and hostels were built along the route to ease the difficult and dangerous journey. Like the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem, the grave of St James became a symbol of crusader ideology.

In the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, changes in motivation arose. New types of pilgrims appeared: adventurers; penitents; criminals for punishment; and aristocrats and merchants seeking business opportunities. By 1492 the Moors had been ejected from Iberia, and the cult lost part of its prestige and *raison d’être*. It was followed by the Protestant Reformation, the French Civil War (which lasted 40 years), and – let’s not forget – the Inquisition. So its popularity waxed and waned. There was a revival in the late seventeenth century, and a decline following the Industrial Revolution and the rise of the Enlightenment. The French Revolution and the Napoleonic Wars finally put an end to large-scale pilgrimage.

Then came change. In 1879, the long-lost bones that had been hidden in 1518 were rediscovered in excavations. A papal bull of 1884 confirmed their authenticity. The year 1885 was proclaimed a Holy Year of St James. Pilgrims from all over Europe once more made their way to Santiago. In 1937 St James was officially restored as the patron saint of Spain, and the cult acquired new ideological significance during the four decades of Franco’s dictatorship.

Since then, there has been a major renaissance in interest. In 1987 the Council of Europe



issued the Santiago Declaration, calling on European states to join together to revitalise the route. Facilities have been greatly improved, especially since 1992, when Pope John Paul II visited Santiago de Compostela. My own experience on my most recent pilgrimage will be the subject of my next instalment. To be continued ...

John Hayton

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# RINGING FOR THE ST ALBANS INTERNATIONAL ORGAN FESTIVAL

The St Albans International Organ Festival has been running since 1963, annually for the first three years and every two years thereafter. My understanding is that it was unusual when it was launched, in that it combined organ competitions with concerts featuring different instruments and other kinds of music.

This year, one of the events that did not involve organ playing was a lecture on 'The Bell Tower and its Inhabitants in the Medieval Imagination', given in St Michael's Church by Professor Christopher Page, an academic at the University of Cambridge. Our Director of Music, Colin Hamling, who is also a director of the Organ Festival, asked if it would be possible for there to be ringing before the lecture. As it was a Friday afternoon, we were only able to field two ringers so I had to enlist the help of members of other local bands, and we rang for about half an hour ahead of the talk.



*The ringers, left to right: Janet Penney, David Hodgskin, Alison Evans, Ann Evans, Hilary Heine. Missing: Neil Evans. Photo by Steve Hamill*

Professor Page was an entertaining speaker and regaled us with a host of facts and observations. Perhaps the most obvious was that the technology of bells is ancient, involving the traditional materials of wood, metal, ropes and wheels, all made to work together by human effort. When you compare it with cathedral building or shipbuilding, in which such components have largely been superseded as a result of technological advances, it is remarkable that it is still in use today. Furthermore, some of our oldest musical instruments are bells, such as those of St Bartholomew's in London's Smithfield, which date back to before the Reformation. The nursery rhyme 'Oranges and Lemons' first appeared in print in 1744 but may be much older, as most of the London rings of bells it mentions are medieval in origin.

The professor noted that bells have been used for centuries to attract attention or as warnings. For example, in the Middle Ages, lepers used to ring handbells when begging, while the Bayeux Tapestry shows handbells being rung as Edward the Confessor's funeral procession wound its way to Westminster Abbey.



Image: Ulrich Harsh

In fact, life then was governed by bells, especially for members of religious institutions who would be called to various offices during the day, but even those outside would have been used to hearing bells as there were so many churches. For travellers in those times, when towns and villages were fewer and farther between, the sound of bells could often be the first indication that they were approaching a settlement. This was the case not just in England but throughout Western Europe, as bells were not adopted in eastern churches until the later Middle Ages, probably under the influence of the Crusaders. Thus, as you travelled further east, bell towers gave way to minarets, and the change in soundscape signified that you were leaving Christendom.

Although we know bells to be inanimate objects, to the medieval mind they were like people, reflected in the fact that parts of the bell were named for parts of the human body: lip, mouth, tongue, waist and shoulder. The bells themselves were also given names. Before being put to use, they were anointed – much as a baby was baptised or a priest ordained. The blessing and anointing of new rings-bells is still carried out today. It seems strange to us now, but they were considered capable of committing wrongdoing, and the writings of an English scholar in 1217 record that if by any chance a bell should fall and kill a man, it would be filled with thorns as a kind of penance and not used for ringing for seven years. In exceptional circumstances, bells were even said to ring themselves.

As a result of the belief that bells possessed such characteristics, there were restrictions on who could own one. Several examples were quoted, including one dating back to 1293, in which lepers in Dunstable acquired a larger bell than they were entitled to. The local prior confiscated it, and only gave it back when they agreed to limitations on its use.

All too soon the talk was over. It was entertaining and thought-provoking – if you weren't there you missed a treat!

**Alison Evans, Tower Captain**



## **M.E, Chronic Fatigue Syndrome, Fibromyalgia or Similar conditions?**

We are a local community group run by volunteers providing a self help, support and social group for people with M.E, Chronic Fatigue Syndrome, Fibromyalgia and similar conditions. Helping people in St Albans district and surrounding areas



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**Website: [stalbansmegroup.org.uk](http://stalbansmegroup.org.uk)**



# VISIT TO ETAPLES

At the end of November 2016, Richard and I spent a weekend in Montreuil-sur-Mer and paid a visit to Etaples cemetery. It was a bright sunny day and the white stones shone in the sunlight. Whilst we were looking at the graves, we started talking to a couple who had come to pay their respects to an uncle who had died exactly 100 years ago, and they told us about their ambition to come to Etaples for the 100th anniversary. It was very moving to speak to the relatives and listen to their story about 'Uncle Jack'. The grave next door had a black and white picture of the soldier who had died; it was slightly faded but very meaningful. Walking around the cemetery, we were struck so many times by the age of the young soldiers who lost their lives – all in their prime and with their future ahead of them.

During the First World War, the area around Etaples was the scene of large concentrations of Commonwealth reinforcement camps and hospitals. It was remote from attack – except from aircraft – and accessible by railway from both the northern and the southern battlefields. In 1917, 100,000 troops were camped among the sand dunes, and the hospitals could deal with 22,000 wounded or sick. In September 1919, 10 months after the Armistice, three hospitals and the QMAAC (Queen Mary's Army Auxiliary Corps) convalescent depot remained. The cemetery contains 10,771 Commonwealth burials of the First World War, the earliest dating from May 1915. 35 of these burials are unidentified.

Hospitals were stationed at Etaples again during the Second World War, and the cemetery was used for burials from January 1940 until the evacuation at the end of May that year. After the war, a number of graves were brought into the cemetery from other French burial grounds. Of the 119 Second World War burials, 38 are unidentified. Etaples' military cemetery also contains 662 non-Commonwealth burials – mainly German – including six that are unidentified. There are also now five non-World War service burials here. The cemetery, the largest Commonwealth War Graves Commission cemetery in France, was designed by Sir Edwin Lutyens.

**Sandie and Richard North**



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# THE ISLE OF WIGHT

This summer my family took a long-overdue holiday to the Isle of Wight. It must be 20 years since I was last on this lovely little island, on another family holiday when, as a teenager, I must confess I found it all a little ho-hum. But after some passionate recommendations, I thought we might give it a try with my little ones and their grandparents in tow.

So, in the last week of July, we all decamped to a small town outside Cowes called Gurnard. We rented a lovely house, a short walk to the stony beach near the small parade of shops, through the centre of the little village. The high street of this adorable place was almost entirely covered in knitting! Every available post, tree and bench was covered in delightfully knitted paraphernalia. There is a name for this charming phenomenon: Knit Bombing. Other names include Guerrilla Knitting or Graffiti Knitting, and its purpose is purely to entertain and spread joy, which it certainly did every time we drove or walked through it.

Anyone who has been to the Isle of Wight will know exactly what I'm going to say about the island as a holiday destination. We had a beach holiday in mind when we booked –being a family that is happy on the beach in any weather – but even for us it was a very wet week. However, the island's coastline was glorious in both rain and sunshine, not least because there was so much to do around it. Fossil hunting became our number-one activity and, as we were accompanied by a geologist (my father), the children became obsessed with rocks and stones.

Even with our diehard weather-beaten attitude to the outdoors, we were regularly defeated and had to take cover indoors. But the island didn't let us down even then, providing plenty to do for families. Highlights include a dinosaur museum that my son loved and a museum of poo (that's right), which my children are still talking about now. If we had spent the whole summer on the island we still wouldn't have explored all that it had to offer, and it certainly won't be another 20 years before we brave the British weather there again.

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Sandie North

## Articles for the Parish News

If you have an article or notice for the *Parish News*, the deadline for production for our December/January edition is **11th November 2017**

Please send contributions to the magazine's editors

Sandie North – [sandrich2@btinternet.com](mailto:sandrich2@btinternet.com)

Linda Withington – [lmwithington@gmail.com](mailto:lmwithington@gmail.com)

with a copy to

Katherine Crowdell – [parishnewscopy17@gmail.com](mailto:parishnewscopy17@gmail.com).

Or leave them for our attention at the Parish Office.

If you or anyone you know would like to advertise in the *Parish News*, please contact Linda Withington on [lmwithington@gmail.com](mailto:lmwithington@gmail.com)

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