

NOVEMBER 2012

VILLAGE DIARY

Nov

- 4 **FOOTPATH GROUP** - Meet at Wateringbury Village Hall car park at 2.00 pm sharp..
- 6 **POLICE SURGERY** - Village Hall – Noon – 1.00 pm
- 6 **PARISH COUNCIL MEETING** - 7.30 pm followed immediately by a meeting of the Planning Committee – Village Hall
- 13 **QUEEN ELIZABETH 11 FIELDS CELEBRATIONS 2ND JUNE 2013** – Follow up meeting – 7.30 pm
- 17 **CHRISTMAS CRAFT BAZAAR** - Church – 11.0 am – 3.00 pm
- 17 **RACE NIGHT** - Wateringbury Working Men's Club – 8.00 pm
- 21 **HISTORY SOCIETY** - Hops and Hop Picking – Richard Filmer – Village Hall 7.40 pm
- 24 **CHRISTMAS FAYRE** - School Come at 11.45 to see Santa Arrive Fayre Noon-3pm

Dec

- 2 **FOOTPATH GROUP** - meet at Wateringbury Village Hall Car Park at 2.00 pm sharp
- 4 **PARISH COUNCIL MEETING** – 7.30 pm followed immediately by a meeting of the Planning Committee – Village Hall
- 6 **POLICE SURGERY** – Village Hall – Noon – 1.00 pm
- 6,7,8 **DICKENSIAN EVENING AT CHRISTMAS** – Wateringbury Players – Church – 7.30 pm – doors open 7.00 pm
- 19 **HISTORY SOCIETY** – Members Social Evening – 7.40 pm

Jan

- 8 **PARISH COUNCIL MEETING** - 7.30 pm followed immediately by a meeting of the Planning Committee. Please note meeting is 2nd Tuesday of the month due to Bank holiday

PUBLIC MEETING - If anyone who wanted to attend the meeting on the 16th October was unable to make it they can contact the Clerk for further information and pass on any comments they may have.

email: susan_jc@btinternet.com or telephone 01622 817068

OCTOBER PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

Borough Councillor Simon Jessel was at the meeting and gave details of local interest to the council.

Celebration plans following the general meeting held in September councillors discussed further details of the village celebrations planned for 2 June 2013 to mark the granting of QE2 status to the Playing Fields.

Children's play area – councillors voted to accept a quote to repair the fencing round the play area.

Crime in September There were 2 crimes – theft of wheel trims from a car parked in Bow Road and theft of outboard motors from boats in the dry dock at a local marina.

Kent Community Rail Partnership - Councillors Talbert and Cayzer had attended the celebration ceremony at the station to mark the installation on No 2 Platform (towards Paddock Wood) of the mural designed by children from the School and the installation of planters on the platforms.

Parish Partnership Panel – Councillor Cayzer reported on the meeting he had attended including the various options which T & M borough council are considering to manage the cuts in government grants.

Playing Fields – Mike Witts gave details to the council of the phase 2 renovations planned for the fields this autumn. An area of 3000 sq metres will be stripped, levelled and reseeded. This area will

be cordoned off for a few weeks while the grass grows. Other areas will be rejuvenated with the application of fertilizer. Volunteers will help with the work.

Planning The parish council had no objection to the following application:

Demolition of single storey extensions to east and south elevation, single storey side extension to north elevation, single storey extension to south elevation, relocation of entrance and general refurbishment at Milford, 5 Love Lane.

Teston Shop Closure Councillor Cayzer informed the meeting that the Teston Stores and Post Office will close shortly.

The Council meet in the village hall meeting room on at 7.30pm on **Tuesday 6 November**. Local residents are welcome to attend and are given the opportunity to raise matters of local interest.

FRIENDS OF WATERINGBURY PRIMARY SCHOOL (FOWPS)

www.fowps.org.uk

EVERYONE is invited to our Christmas Fayre on Saturday 24 November.

Arrive early at 11.45am to see Santa's special arrival and then meet him in our outdoor Christmas grotto, enjoy hot Christmas rolls in our Christmas Café, wrap some gifts for mum and dad, try your hand in our Yucky Dip (if you dare), make your own decorations and buy some fabulous Christmas gifts. As well as stalls and crafts we also have a tuck shop, children's tombola and a Christmas Draw with big cash prizes, hampers and lots of other treats. If you are not at the school but would like to buy or sell some Christmas Draw tickets (50p each) please email chairman@fowps.org.uk

A big thank you to Wateringbury Working Men's Club (Tel 01622 812167 for sponsoring our Christmas Draw ticket printing costs and to Brookside Garden Centre at East Peckham for sponsoring our Santa's Grotto. The ongoing support of local businesses helps us to keep our costs as low as possible, enabling us to plough more of the money we raise into new resources and equipment for the school.

We are currently fundraising for new playground markings and a new PA system for the school so please support us if you can.

Gail Isted, FOWPS Chairman

Tel 01622 813716

Friends of Wateringbury Primary School

CHRISTMAS FAYRE

At Wateringbury Primary School

Saturday 24 November 2012

Arrive early to see Santa arrive at 11.45

12 noon - 3pm

Come at 11.45 to see Santa Arrive

Santa's Grotto. Christmas Café. Secret Wrapping.

NEXT ISSUE

Contributors please note that our next issue will cover two months December 2012 and January 2013. The copy deadline is midnight on Saturday 17 November.

RENEWAL OF ROSTRUM ADVERTS

We are in the process of contacting all our existing advertisers inviting them to renew their advertising support of Rostrum for 2012. Any new advertisers who are interested in advertising in Rostrum,

which is delivered free to 900 homes in the village 10 times a year, should contact us at rostrum2@hotmail.com for details of availability and costs.

VILLAGE PEOPLE Please let us have your news and tributes for the December/January issue by 17 November. There is no charge for entries.

THE WATERINGBURY 75TH BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS.

On Saturday 16 February 2013 The Wateringbury will be celebrating 75 years on its present site. It started life as The Kings Head pub and the current manager, Stephen, hopes that people who worked at the pub in these early days will be able to go along and join in the festivities and share memories of those times. So if you can help him in his search for those with early memories of the pub please get in touch with him on 01622 812632. Copies of early photographs would also be appreciated

THE WATERINGBURY PLAYERS DICKENSIAN EVENING

Rehearsals continue for our exciting new production of a Dickensian evening at Christmas and given the interest expressed an additional performance will take place on **Thursday 6 December** as well as on **Friday 7 and Saturday 8 December at 7.30pm (Doors open at 7pm) at St John the Baptist church** The evening will include excerpts from some of Dickens stories that have links with Kent as well as some historical background and interesting anecdotes about Charles Dickens. The script has been researched and written locally by members of the Players: Celia Pocock, Barry Fisher, Jonathan Overell and Anne Rex. There will also be a Christmas theme with readings from A Christmas Carol and festive refreshments available.

We hope you will be able to come along and join in with the festivities. Tickets will be on sale from Monday 5 November at the Post Office and The Handy Stores.
Celia Pocock Wateringbury Players wateringburyplayers@hotmail.com

NETTLESTEAD AND WATERINGBURY PRE-SCHOOL AND OUT OF SCHOOLS CLUB (charity No. 1144343)

Thank you very much to everyone who supported the brilliant Elvis night in Nettlestead Village Hall on 22 September is was truly a night to remember and I think everyone enjoyed themselves – including Penny from the Post Office, thanks for sharing your birthday with us. The pre-school raised over £1000 which will go toward redecorating the interior of the building.

Please remember to support our next fundraiser, a fashion show for all ages and sizes, being held at Wateringbury School on Friday 9 November at 7pm tickets are available from nettlesteadandwateringbury@yahoo.com or ring 01622 813120 .This is a brilliant opportunity to buy Christmas gifts and enjoy yourself at the same time.

We are certainly ahead of the game this year as our Xmas cards have already been sent off for printing if only we were as organised with the Christmas shopping!

Our Harvest gathering was lovely this year with a visit from Anthony Carr and Sue Morrell the Rector and Curate of St Mary the Virgin, Nettlestead. The sun was shining and all the children joined in with presenting the harvest gifts and singing lots of songs.

If you are interested in joining our happy band for breakfast club, pre-school or after school clubs then please get in quick as spaces are limited. You are welcome to come and visit us anytime you like, or for more information give us a call on 01622 813120 or email; nettlesteadandwateringbury@yahoo.com or visit us at nawps.org

FOOTPATHS GROUP

Sunday 4th November

Meet at Wateringbury Village Hall car park at 2.00 pm sharp.

Sunday 1st December

To start at Wateringbury Village Hall car park at 2.00 pm sharp.

J5 SLIPS AND ITS IMPACT ON WATERINGBURY

Many residents of Wateringbury may not be familiar with the acronym **J5Slips** but they will be aware of the high volume of traffic regularly passing through the village and the impact this has on safety to pedestrians and road users alike and the major but unseen problem of air quality particularly in the vicinity of the traffic lights at the centre of the village. These issues are inextricably linked but sadly are shared by many other West Kent towns and villages.

J5Slips is an independent lobbying group ably led by Tim Shaw of Borough Green Parish Council the objective of which is to achieve a significant improvement in the environmental conditions for the community in terms of health and safety and in particular air quality by, inter alia, building slip roads on the M25 at Junction 5. In essence the Group wishes to bring cleaner air to West Kent through growth but without gridlock and thereby enhance the quality of life in the surrounding areas which includes Wateringbury.

About twenty five years ago when the M26 was built it was assumed, but as it turned out, quite wrongly that all its traffic would be able to exit at junction 5 to pick up the A21 and vice versa. The appropriate slip roads were not included and the problems this omission created have worsened considerably. Currently all areas along the A25, A227, A26 and A228 suffer from ever increasing volumes of traffic due to the fact that vehicles are unable to exit onto the A21 at Junction 5 where the M26 meets the M25. Freight and other vehicular traffic wishing to join the A21 invariably leave the M20 early and travel through local villages to reach their destination. The only alternative available to them is to stay on the motorway and exit at Junction 6. They are therefore "forced" to short-cut through populated areas past schools, shops and not least dwellings situated at the side of roads which are often narrow and inherently dangerous.

Air pollution, particularly from diesel-powered vehicles is a serious health issue and many areas in West Kent including Wateringbury have air quality levels which exceed both UK and EU safety targets. This problem could be ameliorated by building the slip roads at Junction 5 as these would attract traffic away from the villages and at the same time make the roads just that little bit safer. There are obvious dangers when juggernauts pass through our village inches away from narrow pavements and inevitably damage is or will be caused to our historic buildings and the infrastructure generally. The recent opening of the new hospital at Pembury has generated an increase in the level of emergency vehicles passing through Wateringbury and other villages on their way to or from Maidstone Hospital: a development which highlights the need for a first class road infrastructure to which the J5 Slip roads would form an integral part.

The **J5Slips** Group is endeavouring to persuade Government to contract the Highways Agency to carry out a detailed traffic survey of West Kent and, as mentioned, to construct the "missing" slip roads to facilitate full connectivity of the M26 and the A21 at Junction 5 of the M25. It is a very laudable objective that merits our unconditional support. The **J5Slips** Group is a participating member of the Joint Parish Councils Traffic Consultative Group (Parishes within the Borough of Tonbridge and Malling) of which the Wateringbury Parish Council is an active member. It therefore has a voice and will give unequivocal support to this venture. Charles Stroud

HISTORY SOCIETY

Our speaker in November is Richard Filmer whose subject is Hops and Hop Picking. Richard's talk will cover the cultivation of the Hop from its onset during the 16th century through to the present day, and the effect it had on local communities and the brewing industry.

John Vigar came along in September to give us a talk entitled 'Britain with Betjeman'. He started by reminding us that John Betjeman was not only known as the 20th century's most popular Poet Laureate, but was also famous for his love of old buildings, particularly of the Victorian age, and was a great champion in revealing their beauty to the public at large. In the early days these were not fashionable or popular ideas. We were given a fascinating insight into the personality of the man, who had as a young child been taken on family holidays to both Norfolk and Cornwall, travelling by train, during which his life-long interest in buildings had begun, especially churches. As he studied them with his childhood curiosity he realised that these buildings told a story not only of their use and of the period in which they were built, but also their history was recorded by subsequent alterations and repairs made throughout the period of their existence.

His love of railways also started at this time. As a teenager and while still at school, John told us that he was inspired after seeing a television series made by John Betjeman about churches, and wrote a letter to him which resulted in him being invited to tea and to meet with him. John Betjeman campaigned to save many beautiful historic buildings from demolition, perhaps most famously the façade at St Pancras railway station, where a statue of him now stands.

Visit the History Society site on

<https://sites.google.com/site/wateringburylocalhistory/>, for further information

TESTON & WATERINGBURY NURSERY GROUP

(Registered charity 1044257) www.testonandwateringburynursery.co.uk

Admissions and all enquiries: Amanda Vidler 07805 796353

We'd firstly like to express our sadness at seeing the Teston Stores & Post Office close. We have had immense support from the staff over many years and would like to say thank you. We know John's loss will be felt by the whole village and our thoughts are with his family and friends.

Another successful AGM under our belts (maybe we should tighten them!) & whilst it's always hard to say farewell to committee members, it's made easier by welcoming new ones. The children have been testing new toys for Dillon's Toybox – life can be tough sometimes, but they soldiered on and actually enjoyed it, oddly. We collected for Harvest & presented Rev Jim Brown with a box of goodies and ended last term in the 'Pink', by joining the rest of the country in wearing said colour to raise money for the Breast Cancer Campaign. Thank you to all those that donated but we're a little disappointed that no panthers were seen... Term 2 already & we start by posing for the camera for our annual photos, but luckily we've had plenty of practice posing for our Christmas card photos, and quite frankly, we're all photo'd out now. Don't forget our fabulous Shopping Evening on 3rd December; tickets are available now so call Amanda on the number above. There'll be so much choice you won't know where to start, but don't worry, there'll be mulled wine and mince pies to help you through – we've thought of everything! We'll end this term with our Christmas Concert on 21st December.

Ann Stevens from Wateringbury is the proud winner of our latest 100 Club draw – woohoo!

MAIDSTONE MENCAP CHRISTMAS BAZAAR

Saturday 24th November

Cobtree Hall, Mote Park

(School Lane entrance off Willington Street)

2.00 – 4.30 pm

Entry 30p

Santa and his elves, Cards, Bumper Christmas Raffle

Tombola, Cakes, Refreshments

And lots more Christmas fun

THE FRIENDS OF WATERINGBURY CHURCH

Annual General Meeting – 24 Nov 2012

The Friends of Wateringbury Church Annual General Meeting (AGM) will be held on Saturday 24 November at 10.30am at St John the Baptist Church. Members and public are all welcome. The AGM will review the audited accounts up to 31 March 2012 and elect/re-elect Trustees to the board. If you are interested in becoming a Trustee, please submit your name to the Secretary with a proposer and seconder by midnight 16 Friday November. At the AGM, only members of FOWC will be eligible to vote, so please bring along your membership card or identification. As the AGM is the FOWC's formal annual public meeting, the Chairman will discuss and answer questions at the meeting that have been submitted to the Secretary by midnight Friday 16 November.

FOWC members and public will wish to know that for tax purposes, FOWC is designated charitable by HMR&C from 03 March 2012, meaning that donations to the Friends from that date are eligible for the collection of Gift Aid. Frances English – Secretary - 01622 812471 friends@fowc.org.uk
www.friends@fowc.org.uk

WATERINGBURY BABY & TODDLER GROUP

Remember, remember the 5th of November! We finished last half term by making fireworks which was great fun. Then to mark the occasion of the clocks changing, we've started this half term by making our own clock faces – now we just need to learn to tell the time! After all, we are only toddlers! And especially for Remembrance Sunday we'll be making poppies. Our own little tribute to those who gave so much.

Well I mentioned it once last month and I think I got away with it! Yes, Christmas is coming so put the date in your diary – the toddler group Christmas party will be on Friday 14th December. Tickets will go on sale later this month and are strictly limited so come along to one of our group sessions or phone Linda on the number below and grab yours quickly. As usual, there will be entertainment, party food and, if you've been good girls and boys, a surprise visitor! We'll be writing our letters to Santa at the end of this month in preparation so make sure you know what to put on your list!

Our sessions are held during term time on Wednesday and Friday mornings from 10am to 12 noon at Wateringbury Village Hall. There is a small charge of £2 for the first child and £1 each for subsequent children over 12 months old. We also hire out our children's tables/chairs and toys in the hall; for further details please contact Linda on 01732 522437 or try our mobile - 07506 735137.

WATERINGBURY WOMENS INSTITUTE - The WI - Inspiring Women

October has been another busy month! At our Club meeting, Janet Bedford from Kent County Council gave a very interesting illustrated description of the new Maidstone Library and its the move to its current premises, bringing together libraries and archives from six sites. Janet included historical

documents. Did you know that the updated archive facilities include a room dedicated to removing bugs and infestations from new acquisitions? We enjoyed a walk, also lunch and a social and Scrabble afternoon, both at the Wateringbury Hotel.

We'll be holding the District Games evening at the end of the month. It promises to be a light-hearted event, enabling Members from local WIs to meet and take part in friendly competition. All tickets now sold.

Our WI welcomes women from Wateringbury and surrounding villages. We meet on the second Thursday of the month at 2.30 in Wateringbury Village Hall.

Next Club meeting: Thursday November 8th when George Harris will be speaking on 'Fashions in Painting'. Why not come as a visitor and see if you would like to join us? For details please call Elizabeth on 01622812018.

elizabethastrid@aol.com

MAIDSTONE SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA, Registered Charity No. 287986"

The next concert is on **Saturday 1 December 2012** commencing 7.30 pm at Mote Hall, Maidstone Leisure Centre, Mote Park, Maidstone. The programme consists of two works – Dvorak : Cello Concerto. Brahms – Symphony No. 1.

An outstanding young cellist, Jamie Walton, joins the orchestra for Dvorak's well-loved concerto. His recent recordings of Elgar and Shostakovich with the Philharmonia Orchestra have received critical acclaim. Brahms powerful 1st Symphony provides a perfect musical partner.

Concert tickets £10, £20, and £25, seats for students with a student card £5, Tickets for all Children up to and including 18 years of age FREE. Available from Membership Secretaries on 01622 735830, or from Maidstone Leisure Centre Mote Hall Box office on 0845 1552277 when payment can be made by credit card, a booking fee applies. Bookings can be taken on www.mso.org.uk using the booking form.

A STEP BACK IN TIME

(FROM THE PARISH MAGAZINE OF DEC 1888)

Extract from an item about past vicars of Wateringbury

George Charlton died December 27 1734 aged 39

He re-built the Vicarage House, Stable, &c., at ye expence of about £400, and having by ye favour of ye Bishop, Chancellor, and Archdeacon, obtained £100 of Sir William Langhorne's Legacy, and Fifteen Guineas from ye Dean and Chapter of Rochester, he added ye residue to make it up to £200, and thereby intituled this Vicarage to Queen Anne's Bounty of £200 to augment it for ever.

(The vicarage was at the cross roads on the Tonbridge Road and is now known as the White House, the land included the site of the village hall, the village car park and the adjoining property)

Queen Anne's Bounty was a fund established in 1704 to augment the incomes of the poorer clergy of the Church of England. The bounty was funded by the tax (annates) on the incomes of all Church of England clergy, which was paid to the Pope until the Reformation, and thereafter to the Crown. In 1890, the total amount distributed was £176,896. On 2 April 1947, by the Church Commissioners Measure 1947, the functions and assets of Queen Anne's Bounty were merged with the Ecclesiastical Commissioners to form the Church Commissioners.

From the Parish News October 1915

It was with great grief that we learned, some days ago, of the sad death of Lieut. Henry Francis Bingham-Stevens, who was killed in action in France, on September 17th. He is the sixth Wateringbury man who has laid down his life for the sacred cause of freedom in the present war. First, in September of last year, Bert Potter, the son-in-law of Mr. Woolgar, perished in H.M.S.



Aboukir, when that ship, with its sister vessels the Cressy and the Hogue, was sunk by a German submarine in the North Sea. Then, on November 1st, L.-Cpl. Robert Arthur Head, of the 6th Dragoon Guards was killed while gallantly fighting at Messines with a portion of his regiment against an overwhelmingly more numerous enemy. The sadness of his death was accentuated by the fact that for weeks he was reported "missing." In May of this year we sustained three losses—Sergt. Richard Heath of the Royal Marines, a member of an old Watringbury family, was killed in action at the Dardanelles, Pte. Ernest John Sales, 4th Batt. Worcestershire

Regiment, was killed in action on May 10th in the Mediterranean, and George Hearne, son-in-law of Mr. Spain, perished in the terrible disaster to H.M.S. Princess Irene, which was blown up off Port Victoria on May 21st.

WATERINGBURY FLOWER CLUB

Open Evening - 18th October - Tan Strong - Trading Places

Well what an evening! An amazing turnout of visitors from lots of clubs around Kent. We welcomed as our special guests the worshipful the Mayor and Mayoress of Maidstone Councillor and Mrs Nelson-Gracie, also the Kent Area Chairman, Vice Chairman and our local area representative.

Tan Strong is a marvellous National and International demonstrator, Teacher, Speaker and Judge, famous for teaching Kirsty Alsop in Handmade Britain last Summer, also a Chelsea Gold, Silver Gilt and Bronze medalist, a very versatile lady!, Tan travelled tonight to us from the Chiltern Hills to wow us with all her beautiful designs, inspired by her travels all over the world, colour played a big part in her modern and classical designs, I have never seen such a rush on raffle tickets, for £1 the chance to win one of the fabulous designs to take home, we also did a raffle for the Mayors chosen charity which raised as yet an undisclosed amount, but thank you to all who took part in making our evening such a wonderful success, especially our Caretaker Paul who helped with all the tables and chairs. Our stalls set up, we had handbags, jewellery, plants, alternative flowers, cards and homemade jams, chutneys and cakes, also flower arranging sundries with Christmas in mind, a big thank you to the smallholders who came along and supported us.

Apart from this years Jubilee Lunch and the Elvis Night, I have never seen the hall so full of people, and we just managed to fit everyone in, vote of thanks given to our demonstrator and thanks to all our honoured guests, raffles drawn, and floral gifts given to our guests, the evening closed at 10pm.

On another note, last week we had the Kent Area of Nafas Flower Show - Marvellous, Blooming Marvellous, Watringbury entered the club class and won 2nd place with a design carried out by Jean Schofield and Susan Gransden, well done, also Anne Davies entered the imposed class, but was unplaced, a great design though, maybe next time.

Our Christmas demonstration is on Thursday the 15th November with Penny Stone her title Christmas at home, members and guests please note that for this club meeting we will be the guests of St John the Baptist Church in Watringbury as the local elections have seconded the village hall, so please make a note of this if you intend to come, or consult our website, all usual info on there.

www.watringburyflowerclub.co.uk

Until next time. Jean Schofield Chairman - Watringbury Flower Club

**Christmas Craft Bazaar
on Saturday 17 November from 11 to 3
at Watringbury Church**

An eclectic mix of Local Crafts including
Stained Glass, Jewellery, Pottery,
Plants, Gifts and Accessories

Cakes, Raffle and Tombola plus Festive Refreshments
and a visit by Father Christmas.

A chance for you to choose totally unique gifts Entry Free
Details from 01622 814324

CHRISTMAS GIFT OPPORTUNITIES

Teston Church are holding their Christmas Fayre on Saturday 17 November at 2.30pm in Teston Village Hall and East Malling are holding their Christmas Market in East Malling Village Hall on Saturday 24 November from 1.45pm to 4pm. The School's Christmas Fayre is in the School also on 24 November.

BENEFICE MOTHERS' UNION

On Thursday 8 November the meeting will be held at 1pm in East Malling Church for a DVD and bible study with Rev Jim. All welcome.

COFFEE BREAK

On the fourth Wednesday morning (10.30-12.30) of each month the Church will be open for biscuits, tea and coffee. A chance to meet friends old and new in a tranquil setting. Local transport available - please phone 01622 814673 to arrange a lift. So put the date in your diary **28 November** and come along and enjoy a chat and delicious refreshments. Some of those coming have decided to knit squares to make a blanket; if you can't knit and would like to learn, tuition available.

FROM THE REGISTERS

Holy Baptism 15 July – Eliza Mary Meheux
Luka John and Izaak Andrew Wilson-Green
26 August – Jude Keeling
Holy Matrimony – 28 September – Michaela Faye Ladbrooke and
Ian William Fisher
Funeral – 24 August – Terence Peter Dickeson

THOUGHTS FROM THE VICARAGE

2 The Grange, East Malling ME19 6AH

e-mail jamesbrown.brown21@gmail.com - Benefice office ☎ 01732 843282

A Time to Reflect

I suspect that many of us reach points in our life when we reflect on all that has taken place in the past. It could be at a time of illness or stress, perhaps a trauma or a bereavement. But it doesn't have to be a time of difficulty it could be that you reflect at moments of celebration and joy. For me it is one such moment. I have reached a particular stage in my life when I am able to look back and celebrate all that has taken place over the years. This particular year, apart from celebrating a special birthday, has been quite amazing for me. Marking 10 years of ministry amongst you all has been a highlight, major events of celebration in the church (The Revd Pam Rink's ordination, Becky Bowie's licensing as our Pastoral Assistant and Confirmations are such events). I am conscious that losing my Dad earlier this year has caused me to think things through in my life rather differently too. One of my daughters has recently married. All of this adds up to an amazing year and a time of reflection for me.

So what do I discover when I reflect on my life? I discover that I have so much to be thankful for. If I begin at the beginning I can't ignore the fact that it is good fortune, God's providence, that I am here in the first instance following a remarkable birth story. If I hadn't been born at a particular time in a particular place then I would certainly not have survived because I was a Rhesus baby (it's a long story, for another day!). I had great parents and family, a good education, full employment in a job I simply loved, a wonderful loving wife and children. I am fit and healthy, despite getting older. Can it ever get any better? Well it does. I have been called by God to serve him as a priest in his church. What a most fantastic privilege! I was ordained 16 years ago and for the past 10 years I have been your Vicar. When I think of everything in this context then I certainly appreciate what it is to be happy and I know that not everyone can say that. I am so grateful to God for his many blessings. I should like to take this opportunity of thanking you all. People of this Parish have been so wonderful and I have enjoyed your friendship, thank you all so much for being my friends.

I've had a great life but that is not to say that everything has been perfect bliss. I have had to face challenging events in my life. I've faced potentially fatal incidents, the loss of friends and colleagues, witnessed some awful scenes, suffered illness, stressful work and so on (I may even write a book one day). But, overall, I can't complain. Why? Because I have a faith and there is simply nothing to complain about. My faith has been at the very centre of my life, not just in recent years but throughout. I was conscious of how God and Jesus were central to my very being even when I was a very young lad.

I make no apologies for being so sentimental in this article, I guess it does us all no harm at times. I can recommend it to you all because if you too reflect on your life you may well find that its not that bad after all? If you can reflect on your life too, who knows, you may even discover something of God and happiness. That is my prayer for you all.

God Bless Revd Jim Brown

CHURCH AND CHURCHYARD AUTUMN CLEAN

Saturday 3 November 9.30am – Noon

Volunteers are much needed, and will be much appreciated, to go along to the church on Saturday 3 November to prepare the church and churchyard for the annual parish Act of Remembrance on Sunday 11 November. Please go along to the church any time between 9.30am and noon and take 'tools' suitable for the job which you would like to do. Tea and coffee will be provided.

POSADA

From Advent Sunday 2 December until Christmas Eve the wooden figures of Mary and Joseph will travel to homes in the village to stay for a night. Posada is the Spanish word for Inn and encourages households to give a home to the Mary and Joseph figures from the Posada crib which will be in the church from Christmas Eve. If you would like the figures to visit your home please phone Gillian on 01622 813076. Children who go to Monday Toddler Praise in the Scout and Guide HQ will be given the opportunity to have a cuddly lamb and donkey to visit their homes.

HELP THE HOMELESS THIS CHRISTMAS

Maidstone Christian Care Centre for the Homeless, a very deserving charity is not only in need of tins and non-perishable goods but is also in need of any warm clothing, socks, gloves and hats, wet-weather gear, fleeces and sleeping bags. Anything to help homeless people survive the winter weather. A box for donations will be available in the Church porch from mid November until 16 December when they will be delivered to the Centre in time for Christmas. Thank you for your help and support

FUN WITH FAITH

The club is for children of Primary School age and usually meets in the village hall on the 3rd Saturday on each month. There will be changes for the November and December meetings. On **Saturday 17 November** the children are invited to help with the Craft Corner which the group will be running in the vestry at the Church Craft Fayre. These activities will include making bracelets, decorating your own tee shirt and a Christmas shop and sweet stall. On **Saturday 15 December** the meeting will be held in the church for the final rehearsals for the Nativity Play which will form part of the Family Service in Church at 10am on 16 December. To learn more phone Sally on 01622 817098.

BENEFICE CHURCH SERVICES

Visit our website for full details www.wateringburychurch.org.uk

<p>Sunday 4 November – All Saints</p> <p>8am Holy Communion – Teston</p> <p>9.45am Family Service – East Malling</p> <p>9.45am Gift & Toy Service – Teston</p> <p>10am Matins – Wateringbury</p> <p>4pm Thanksgiving & Remembrance - Wateringbury</p>	<p>Sunday 11 November Remembrance</p> <p>8am Holy Communion – East Malling</p> <p>10am Parish Act of Remembrance Wateringbury</p> <p>10am Remembrance Service – E Malling</p> <p>10.50am Remembrance - Teston</p>
<p>Sunday 18 November</p> <p>8am Holy Communion – Wateringbury</p> <p>9.45am Eucharist – East Malling</p> <p>10 am Family Toy Service – Wateringbury</p> <p>6.30pm Eucharist - Teston</p>	<p>Sunday 25 November</p> <p>8am Holy Communion – East Malling</p> <p>9.45am Eucharist – East Malling</p> <p>10am Holy Communion – Wateringbury -</p> <p>6.30pm Holy Communion - Teston</p>
<p>Every Monday – 2-3pm – Scout & Guide HQ, Glebe Meadow – Toddler Praise</p>	
<p>Tuesdays (not 1st in month) – 7.30pm in Wateringbury Church – Holy Communion</p>	
<p>Every Thursday - 9am in East Malling Church – Holy Communion</p>	
<p>For Baptisms, Weddings and other arrangements with the vicar please attend the Parish Office at the Vicarage on Wednesdays between 6.30-7.15pm</p>	

Special Services

Annual Parish Act of Remembrance – 11 November - Church 10am and then to the War Memorial in the churchyard for the laying of wreaths and the 2 minutes silence at 11am

Thanksgiving and Remembrance - There will be special services in all 3 churches to enable everyone to pray and give thanks for those we love but who have departed this life,

Wateringbury – Sunday 4 November at 4pm

East Malling – Sunday 18 November 2pm and 4pm

Teston – Sunday 25 November at 6.30pm

Annual Toy Service – 18 November – 10am - Please help children and mothers who will be spending time at local Women's Refuges enjoy the Christmas festivities by donating nearly new toys and gift vouchers for the children. The mothers really do appreciate the shoe boxes which have been donated in recent years. Suggested items for the boxes are toiletry items and other small bits and pieces which a mother who has left most of her possessions to flee a violent situation would appreciate.

Quiet Hour Wednesday 14 November 8-9pm- come and go as you please a opportunity for personal prayer and meditation

Service of Healing and Wholeness – 8pm. The next services will be a Eucharist in **Wateringbury Church** on **6 November** and a Praise Service in **East Malling** on **4 December** .

Annual Christingle Service in Wateringbury Church – 10am Sunday 2 December