

"Some sort of periodical is an essential life-line in a village such as ours"

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WHAT PRICE FREEDOM?

During our holiday in Wales, I purchased Terry Waite's book "Taken on Trust". It is the story of his kidnapping in Beirut and his long ordeal of 1,763 days in captivity. It is, of course, more than that. Between the covers of this book can be discovered the story of one man's pilgrimage, from being born the son of a Cheshire policeman to his role as an international globe trotter, negotiating with leading politicians and churchmen, sometimes in some very unusual and dangerous circumstances.

The book itself was written in Terry Waite's head, long before it was set down on paper, as he lay chained in a darkened room. He says that these long and lonely reflections kept him sane. He recounts how his faith was tested many times and how he longed to set eyes on a book - almost any book. And the great joy and surprise he experienced when one of his guards handed him a Bible.

After reading such a book I could only reflect on the freedom that most of us enjoy in this country. Most of the time we take our liberty for granted, as we take so many blessings for granted. Like the air we breathe it is a precious gift beyond price.

Yours in faith,

Denys

Rev'd Denys Gower 0622 812494.

Ton-Up Club

August

£10 Paul Martin
£5 Brian Roberts
£5 Stephen Back

September

£10 Joyce Beaney
£5 Sue Day
£5 Jackie Hyde

CHRISTMAS IS COMING

It may be a little early but the church Christmas Fair will soon be upon us. It is due on Saturday, 19th November at the Good Intent, 10.30 to Noon.

On offer will be seasonal gifts, toys, wrapping paper, bring & buy, a raffle, coffee and biscuits, crafts. In the latter context, please bring along for sale any hand crafted goodies you have produced - knitted things, cuddly toys, needle-craft, wooden things. And don't forget your excellent home-made jams, cakes and pickles, also tins of fruit and other things if you would like to bring them along. Raffle prizes are wanted and, before the day, fir cones - to be left in the church porch.

THE TEA PARTY at the cricket pavilion on 4 September was an attractive, social event. The weather was kind and, having finished their tea, a lot of people drifted along to the church to learn a little about its history. They were not disappointed. There is enough to talk about in that ancient pile to keep an experienced guide busy talking for hours and the afternoon's effort brought in £200 towards its upkeep. Many thanks to Margaret Frazer and all her team of helpers for this noble effort.

THAT BRIDGE

An unprecedented number (14 to wit) of residents turned up at the Parish Council meeting on 5 September when the proposed closing of the Barming wooden bridge was discussed. Letters had also been received on the subject. Curiously, those present were strongly in favour of closing the bridge to motors while those who had written letters were all against.

The "close it" school were mainly St Helen's Lane residents who were influenced by the excessive and dangerous speed of vehicles along St Helen's Lane on the approach to the bridge. The "keep it open" school had in mind the problems which would be caused by a closure.

Letters received after the meeting continued to express conflicting views. Such a sharp divergence of opinion can hardly be said to give a clear mandate to the Parish Council to make a decision one way or the other. Our Parish Clerk, David Swan, had the delicate task of explaining this to Kent Highways who had asked for views. It was clear, though, that closure would mean a new crossing or improving existing ones.

One pictures a worried highways official spending sleepless nights pacing the floor, pounding his forehead and saying, "Oh my God! What are we going to do about Barming Bridge?"

Approving remarks were made about the tar spraying and re-gritting which had been done in Lower Road. Also looked upon with favour was the Medway River Project which was doing good works on our long river frontage. They were, among other things, putting up nesting boxes on poles in the hope of attracting barn owls which are becoming more and more rare. The Council were so impressed that they voted the Project £50 to help in the good work.

Another institution to benefit from the Council's generosity was Life-Line which finished the evening £100 better off. Your editor was grateful and flattered to be told that the grant was made to Life-Line "in recognition of its value to the village community".

A meeting was planned with County Council officials with a view to improving Vicarage Corner and making it less hazardous; the path between Kettle and Charlton Lanes is a step or two nearer being legalised; the long waits so often experienced at the Teston level crossing are being taken up with the railway people.

Altogether it was a useful meeting.

CHURCH PLANNING

There are plans afoot to create a pleasant room on the ground floor of the church tower which can be used as a play room for small children during services. At present the room is a dressing room for the choir but with a little imagination it could be converted into a nursery-like room for our smaller friends.

A lady who advises parishes in this sort of thing, Mrs Sue Haydock, came along with an architect to have a look and agreed the plan in outline. It is now up to those with ideas to produce a detailed set of proposals for the conversion. It will not be easy because, for one thing, any paint used on the walls will have to be the sort which allows the stone to breathe, and that comes expensive. The floor also has a breathing problem so rush matting will have to be used rather than proper carpet. A further complication for the floor is that it has several memorial stones in it, one believed to cover the resting place of Oliver North whose name is remembered in the retirement flats in Charlton Lane.

Another problem wrestled with by Mrs Haydock was what to do with the wooden cover for the font when not in use. The font cover is believed to be 400 years old and is very heavy and there is nowhere to put it when it is not on the font. The suggestion is to make an iron cradle for it and suspend it by rope and pulley from one of the enormously high roof timbers. Has anyone any better ideas?

SKIPS

There will be a skip on the Green for bulky rubbish on 9 November and again on 22 December.

EVERGREENS

Tuesday, 11 October, at Appledore, Charlton Lane, by kind permission

West Farleigh

Oct	2	0800	BCP HC
		0930	JJJ
		1500	Memorial Service for Adam Potts Rev D Bish
	9	1045	Coffee in church
		1115	Harvest Thanksgvg Family Service
	16	0930	ASB HC
	23	1115	BCP MP Rev J Caley
	30	0800	ASB HC with hymns for All Saints Day
		0930	JJJ
		1800	Benefice Youth Soc

Teston

Oct	2	0945	Harvest Thanksgvg Family Service
		1830	BCP EP
	4	0930	ASB HC
	9	0800	BCP HC
		0945	Children's church
		1830	BCP EP
	11	0930	ASB HC
	16	0945	Children's church
		1830	ASB HC
	18	0930	BCP HC
	23	0800	BCP HC
		0945	Children's church
		1530	BCP EP
	25	0930	ASB HC
	30	0945	Children's church
		1530	Songs of Praise

Wateringbury

Oct	2	0930	BCP MP
	6	0800	Service of Prayer for healing
	9	0930	ASB HC
	16	0800	BCP HC
		1115	Harvest Thanksgvg Family Service
	23	0930	ASB HC
		1830	BCP EP
	30	0930	BCP HC

Key: BCP = Book of Common Prayer
ASB = Alternative See Book
HC = Holy Communion
MP = Morning Prayer
EP = Evening Prayer
JJJ = Children's Sunday Club

MP Tuesday to Friday 0830
4 - 7 Oct Wateringbury
11 - 14 Oct Teston
18 - 21 Oct West Farleigh
25 - 28 Wateringbury

Again, I ask if you know of anyone who would like to receive Holy Communion at home because they cannot get to church, please contact me or a Churchwarden.

Monday is my day off which I like to devote to my family.

Yours in faith

Danya Gosar 0622 812 190