



Withington Parish Magazine

September - October 2015

Issue 6

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Introduction

At the time of writing I am wondering if our summer will really happen this year. Yes, we have had a couple of really hot days but other than that the weather has been mediocre; have you noticed that there has been a constant wind this year? Our seasons are definitely changing!

The children will soon be going back to school and with the excitement of the Autumn term it's time to remind them of the dangers of fireworks and Halloween. As you are probably know, there was much publicity last year with regard to Halloween fancy dress clothes so please make your children aware of the potential hazards around naked lights when wearing such clothing.

Enjoy the forthcoming season when nature decides to paint the countryside with spectacular hues of colour.

Best wishes,

Margaret

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St. Peter's Church News

Mind the Gap – Between Us and God

A three-day Diocesan Gathering at Harper Adams University in Shropshire for both clergy and laity

What a wonderful three days this was – inspirational, challenging, joyful, full of friendship, and much laughter.

The event was supported by parishes throughout the Diocese of Hereford as well as representatives from our link Dioceses in Tanzania and Nuremberg, and we must have numbered about 250. From our Benefice came Jane, Paul Roberts (our new curate), Anne Bayley and Ruth & Kevin Hewison.

Our venue suited the purpose very well, providing excellent facilities and meals. On our second and final evening we were served a Gathering Dinner, and entertained by our after-dinner speaker, the Right Revd Gordon Mursell, who had us in stitches.

Our day sessions included keynote speakers, Bible study, worship and workshop sessions. (There were up to 10 choices of workshop in each session) .

Our 2 keynote speakers, both very interesting, were totally different in style and approach, and gave us much to think about towards the development of our church. Gordon Mursell led three sessions of Bible study, and we were all bowled over by the way his learned delivery was tempered by lightness of touch and sparkling wit. Worship was an important part of the Gathering and was joyful and moving. The singing, accompanied by keyboard and other instruments, and joined in by over 200 congregation needed to be heard to be believed!

All in all this was a very enjoyable and uplifting experience and we would recommend this conference to others – unfortunately it only occurs every three years, so you will have to wait!

At the end of the Gathering we were introduced to the new Diocesan initiative of 'FOLLOW! Join the conversation, share the journey....' .

Starting in September.

In Withington we will be hosting an All-Age Tea Party at the Village Hall, organised by the FOLLOW! Team on behalf of Bishops Richard and Alistair. See advertisement.

Ruth and Kevin Hewison

St. Peter's Church News

Fundraising Programme for Charities and Church 2015

Two New Concert Events Listed!

We aim to raise money for various Charities as well as for St Peter's Church, which needs money for both routine maintenance and to update its facilities.

Ride & Stride (sponsored cycling or walking).....Sat 12 September

Macmillan Coffee Morning.....Fri 25 September

Harvest Lunch after the Festival Service.....Sun 18 October

Concert..... Moonfleet Ensemble.....Sat 31 October

Quiz Night.....Sat in November

ConcertHereford Rail Male Voice Choir.....December

For further details, please contact Ruth 01432 850074, or Margaret 01432 850448

**Join the Ride and Stride this year
to help fund repairs badly needed in many of
Herefordshire's churches**

RIDE + STRIDE

IN AID OF HISTORIC CHURCHES & CHAPELS

This national event takes place on Saturday, September 12th 2015.

Cycle or walk between the churches in your area.

**Half of the sponsorship you raise goes to the
Herefordshire Historic Churches Trust, half to the church of your choice.**

To find out more go to www.herefordhistoricchurchestrust.org.uk/ride

To participate call your local organiser

KEVIN HEWISON 01432 850074

St. Peter's Church News

HARVEST in Withington and Westhide



Sunday 27th September
Whitestone Chapel, Withington
11.00
Harvest Celebration

Thursday 15th October
3.30 pm - 5.30 pm
'Messy Harvest'
Withington Village Hall

Friday 16th October
2.00 pm
Withington Primary School
Harvest Celebration
St Peter's Church, Withington

Sunday 18th October
11.00
Harvest Festival
St Peter's Church, Withington
Followed by
Harvest Lunch
Withington Village Hall

Sunday 25th October
11.00
Harvest Festival
St Bartholomew's Church, Westhide
Followed by
Harvest Lunch in church

Dear Friends

Our new bishop, Richard, is very keen to be the kind of bishop who gets out and about taking every opportunity to meet people rather than be tied to his desk.

To that end he and the Bishop of Ludlow, Alastair, have planned a series of events around the diocese during September called 'Follow' to give people the opportunity to 'explore with them what it means for us to be followers of Jesus today as Christians, as churches, as a diocese ...'

They range from pop-up cafés and all-age teas to a 'Pints of View' with music, chips and a quiz.

We are hosting an all-age tea at Withington Village Hall on Saturday 26th September at 3.30 pm with 'themed all-age activities, fun, worship, chat and CAKE'. Please do come along and join us.

The other activities in our area are -

9th September 7.30 pm Evening Meeting
Hereford Cathedral

10th September 7.30 pm Pints of View
The Welsh Club, Hereford

23rd September 7.15 pm Pop-up Café
Allensmore village Hall

Best wishes
Jane

Annual Memorial Service 1st November

This will take place at 4 pm at St Peter's Church Withington. At this service we shall be remembering everyone from our parishes who has died this year. People can also request the name of a loved one to be remembered, this can be done by adding their name to one of the lists that will be in our churches during October or by contacting the Rector. Everyone is welcome to the service.

St. Peter's Church News

Bartestree Cross Churches Service Rota Sept/Oct 2015

	Dormington	Lugwardine	Westhide	Weston Beggard	Withington
Sunday 6 th September	6.00 pm Evensong	9.30 am Holy Communion		11.00 Holy Communion	9.30 am Morning Prayer
Sunday 13 th		9.30 am Family Service	11.00 am Morning Prayer		8.30 am Holy Communion
Sunday 20 th	11.00 am Holy Communion	9.30 am Holy Communion		6.00 pm Evensong	9.30 am Holy Communion
Sunday 27 th		9.30 am Morning Prayer	11.00 pm Morning Prayer		9.30 am Holy Communion
Sunday 4 th October	6.00 pm Evensong	9.30 am Holy Communion		11.00 Harvest Festival	9.30 am Morning Prayer
Sunday 11 th		9.30 am Family Harvest	11.00 am Family Communion		8.30 am Holy Communion
Sunday 18 th	11.00 am Harvest Festival	9.30 am Holy Communion		3.30 pm Evensong	11.00 am Harvest Festival
Sunday 25 th		9.30 am Morning Prayer	11.00 am Harvest Festival		9.30 am Holy Communion
Sunday November 1st	6.00 pm Evensong	9.30 am Holy Communion		11.00 Holy Communion	9.30 am Morning Prayer 4.00 pm Annual Memorial Service

Midweek communion every Wednesday at 10.00 am at The vicarage, Lugwardine followed by coffee.

St. Peter's Church - contact details

Rector Rev. Preb Jane Davies 01432 850244

Curate Rev. Paul Roberts 01432 850474

Parish email bartestreecross@btinternet

Website: www.bartestreecross.org

St. Peter's Church News



MoonFleet Ensemble

Early Music Quartet

Present a programme of music including

Handel, Corelli, CPE Bach, Purcell and Le Clair.

Saturday 31st October

In St Peter's Church Withington

A concert in aid of the organ restoration fund.

We will be applying for grants towards the organ restoration costs, and also raising funds within the community. We thank Christina and her family for helping us by offering this concert. See poster adverts for more information.

In Memory of Bob Wanklyn

It was with great sadness that we heard of the death of Bob Wanklyn at the Hereford County hospital on Thursday, 30th. July.

Bob had lived in the village for most of his life. No one could have played a greater part in village life than Bob (and Gwen his wife) did. He and Gwen were churchwardens for Saint Peter's church for very many years.

I recall well the concerts we had at the old village hall, the bingos he ran and the scores of other events over the years he helped to organise. He was also chairman of the Elizabeth Byworth Educational Trust since its inception.

My fondest memories of him are seeing him at harvest time in the fields behind my house looking brown as a berry or sitting in his tractor with his faithful collie behind him.

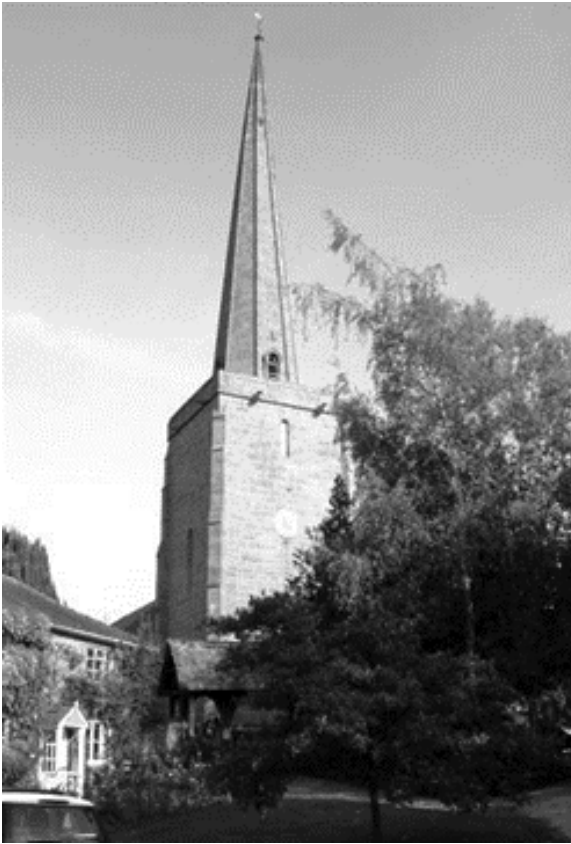
We as a village have suffered a great loss and we owe him an enormous debt of gratitude. To me he was 'Mr. Withington'. No one could have been of greater service to the community in which he lived.

His lifetime work now over, may Bob rest in peace and I'm sure I speak for all when I express our condolences to Gwen, Paul, Mark, Andrew and the whole family.

Bryan Davies

A History of St Peter's Church, Withington

By The late Reverend J C Williams



Withington and its manors are mentioned in the Domesday Book (1085 – 1087), the name being spelt “Withingtune”, and there was almost certainly a Saxon church on the site.

The Nave and Chancel were built in the late 12th century, the evidence being the thickness of the walls and the 12th century doorways (the north one is now blocked). The Tower and graceful Spire were added in the 14th century.

The windows date from the 13th century onwards, whilst the Chancel Screen is of the 15th century. In the south wall of the nave is a Piscina of the late 13th century (used for cleansing the sacred vessels after Communion) and nearby an unusual recess of the same date.

In the Chancel there is a brass tablet to William Saxeye (1612), a Chief Justice in Ireland under Queen Elizabeth 1. There are also chairs dating from 1626 onwards. The Communion Table is mid-17th century.

The steps and base of the churchyard Cross are of the 14th or 15th century, and the Lych gate (which has been restored) probably dates from the 16th century.

John Phillips (1676 – 1709) author of “Cyder and other verse, lived at Withington Court and has a monument in Poet’s Corner in Westminster Abbey. The grave of his friend and contemporary, William Broome, was recently discovered east of the Chancel. He lived at Eau Withington.

A Processional Cross in wrought iron with silver inserts representing the crucifixion nails was in recent years placed in the Chancel in memory of the Reverend J C Williams.

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St. Peter's Church News

To All our Friends at Messy Church and to all others who would like to join in.....

Follow!



Saturday 26 September
3.30-5pm
Withington Village Hall

And other venues on 19th and 20th

Following Jesus!

Bishop Richard and Bishop Alistair
invite you, and your family/friends to an

ALL-AGE TEA

all-age activities, fun, worship, friends, cake
a chance to chat, think and pray together



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Come and join us in the Autumn

Messy Church is for children up to top Juniors who are accompanied by their adults. ***We encourage all adults to take part in the activities alongside their children.***

We hold it in the Village Hall as it has the necessary facilities. Hopefully we will one day have the proper facilities in church!

Dates for the year

Thursday 15th October
Thursday 3rd
December
Thursday 11th February
Thursday 17th March
Thursday 26th May
Thursday 7th July

Our visit to Clearwell Caves (Forest of Dean) in July was great! Enjoyed by Mums, Dads and kids alike.

After a guided tour through the caves, we all sat outside for our picnic tea and the children also had a good time in the playground.

There is always plenty to do at Messy Church..... all sorts of crafts as well as story time and singing, and we always finish with food for all.

Hope to see all our old friends, and some new faces on

Thursday 15th Oct, 3.30 – 5.30, when we will be doing **Messy Harvest!**

Elizabeth Byworth Charity

At the end of the school year the Trustees had pleasure in presenting Withington School with an Awards Board in memory of Dr. Christopher Roberts who had served as a Trustee from 1988 until his death in 2013. The Award is to be made annually to the pupil who has made the greatest contribution to the life of the school during that year.

Mrs. Judy Roberts and the Trustees attended school on the afternoon of the 10th July and Mrs. Roberts presented the Board to the School and a prize of a wrist watch to Charlie Price. The Board will be placed in a prominent position and have the pupil's name inscribed on it.

Sarah Houchen, Head of Primary Learning, thanked the Trustees on behalf of staff, children and parents and said how excited and privileged they were to have such an Awards Board.

As usual, at the Assembly on the last day of term, the Trustees presented the termly Eckley Memorial Book Prizes. One each per year group. The winners were as follows:-

Reception	-	Ethen Toney.
Year 1	-	Jamie Lloyd.
Year 2	-	Neilas Zaksas.
Year 3	-	Qier Acedo.
Year 4	-	Abdul Qureshi.
Year 5	-	Jess Bow
Year 6	-	Amy Wareham.

Congratulations to all the winners.

The next Meeting of the Byworth Trustees will be on December 2nd. If you are under 25 and live in the village please send your requests in writing to Margaret Soutar, 3 Duke Street, Withington, HR1 3QD. Grants can be given for educational requirements e.g Books, Equipment, Trips, Uniform etc.

Finally, the Trustees would like to convey their love and condolences to Gwen and family at the sad loss of Bob at the end of July. Bob Wanklyn was the Chairman of the Trustees and had been a member since 1984 when the existing Trust was set up. As with everything he did for the village, Bob took great interest in the children and all activities at the school. He was everybody's friend.

Margaret Soutar
Clerk

Withington Village Hall

WITHINGTON VILLAGE HALL

Summer update

210 Club. July winners

145 John Baker

146 Maddy Harrington

11 Tom Nellist

15 Bob Wanklyn

COMMITTEE

We are still without a Secretary. Rob Soutar, who was co-opted onto the committee, has agreed to act as minutes secretary. Thank you.

If you would like to be involved in the running of the Village Hall please contact one of the names below.

The day-to-day running of the hall is being shared between:

Chairman, Kevin Hewison (850074)

Booking Secretary , Kathy Fields (851001)

Treasurer , Paula Highley (851570).



**Come for Coffee and
Cake**

**At Withington Village Hall
Friday 25th September
10.30 - 12.00**

**In aid of MacMillan Cancer Support
Come and Join us - everyone is welcome.**

Withington Gardening Club

WITHINGTON GARDENING CLUB RESULTS FUN FLOWER SHOW/BARBECUE IN MAY 2015

Entries – 69

Competitors - 13

1st Overall Winner – Kathy Fields (23 points)

2nd Nicole Warner/Paula Highley (19 points)

Best in Show – ‘ Handmade Card’ cup won by Paula Highley

Seems a long time ago but a big thank you to everyone who entered (it's no show without entries) and all helpers and to our last minute judges who did a fantastic job. We were very lucky too with the weather, unlike now!

Programme for the coming months

October 21st Shayne Powell – Talking on ‘Pots for Winter’ 7.30pm

November 18th Yvonne Merry – Demonstration Flower arranging

December 16th Xmas Meal – details to follow in November issue

Anyone interested in joining us please either contact: Debbie Barber (Chairman) 01432 853086 or Diane Barber Secretary (01432 850371)



Westhide

By the time this reaches you the summer holidays will be drawing to a close and we will be getting back to our normal routines once again.

On August 23rd we will be celebrating St Bartholomew's Day with a special morning service in our Church - St Bartholomew's. In the afternoon there will be a barbecue, fun and games across the road in the garden of The Old Vicarage (by kind permission of Mike and Gill Rowlatt). We hope to have a good crowd as it promises to be a fun afternoon for all ages.

We will be thinking of Geoff and Abi and the girls on August 31st when they celebrate their wedding in Westhide. We wish them all the very best.

H Art week will take place from September 12th. Four local artists will be exhibiting their work in the Church. It will include hand- painted ceramics, oil paintings, watercolours and glass engraving. By popular request there will also be a Silent Auction - Robin would welcome any offers of promises.

Ride and Stride Sponsored Bike Ride takes place on September 12th. This is a National Bike Ride (though you can walk, ride a horse, paddle a canoe or even go by car) The money raised by sponsorship is divided equally between your own Church and H.H.C.T. (Herefordshire Historic Churches Trust) The Trust gives grants to Churches or Chapels needing financial help for the upkeep of their buildings.

There will be a concert in the Church on the 19th September. Well known local duo Nicky and Tom Jaques will bring us Folk and Jazz on saxophone and guitar. And Paul and Rosie Roberts will sing a wide selection of songs accompanied by keyboard.

Harvest Festival will be celebrated on October 25th. Please come and help decorate our beautiful Church any time on Sat 24th. There will be lunch in the Church following the service.

Last but not least we would like to welcome Paul and Rosie, our new Curate and his wife, and their little son Jack into our midst.. We hope they will enjoy their time with us and be very happy in their Withington home. We send them all our very best wishes.

Sheila

A profile of : Henry Percival Bulmer



1867 - 1919

Henry Percival Bulmer (Percy) suffered from asthma as a child and was unable to attend full time education. Due to his lack of qualifications he decided to start a business and his mother suggested that he should do something with food or drink 'as they never go out of fashion'.

In 1887 Percy started to make cider on a commercial basis using the apples from his father's orchard at Credenhill. His brother, Edward Frederick (Fred) joined the company a year later (Fred declined the post of working as Tutor to the children of the King of Siam in favour of helping his brother).

Percy exhibited a flair for manufacturing cider and studied the science of fermentation. He learnt how to speak French and German and visited France to study the techniques of making Champagne. He also visited factories in Prussia to view manufacturing processes and as a result of his travels introduced new ways of washing apples, drying the skins and bottling the cider.

Percy was described as shy and retiring and he worked actively for the benefit of the parish of St. Nicholas in Hereford. He also devoted himself to the welfare of the employees and was Chairman of the Hereford Advisory Committee for recruitment during the First World War.

In 1894 Percy married Mildred Ball and together they had five children. Percy died in 1919, aged 52.

Bulmer's cider became the largest cider making company in the world, testament to the vision and hard work of two local brothers.

CIDER MAKING FESTIVAL

The Annual Cider Making Festival takes place on 17th and 18th October 2015 at the Cider Museum in Hereford, the original building where Henry Percival Bulmer started making Cider.

Activities include demonstrations of traditional Cider making, Blacksmithing, Green wood Turning and Bee Keeping. Adults can participate in Tutored Cider tastings and there will be a range of activities to keep the children entertained.



DISCOUNTED ADMISSION TICKET

CIDER MAKING FESTIVAL, HEREFORD

2 FOR THE PRICE OF 1

CHILDREN GO FREE

(Present Voucher Upon Entry)

Preston Wynne

Hello Everyone,

We do hope that by the time you read this we are all enjoying an Indian Summer. On Sunday 26th July Preston Wynne was the venue for a brilliant family dog show despite the awful "Summer" weather. During the setting up in the morning it was raining cats and dogs, however by the scheduled time for the start at 2.30 pm it had eased off and it was just raining dogs. The event was great fun and hugely enjoyed by all, proceeds are to be shared between the North Hereford Hunt and Preston Wynne Hall funds. It was such an enjoyable and successful event hopefully it will be an annual one. Thanks to all who helped with the day, very well done indeed!

Church News

Services

13th September	Holy Communion at 8.00 am
27th "	Family Service 9.30 am
11th October	HARVEST FESTIVAL at 3.00p.m.
25th "	Family Service at 9.30 am

A SKITTLES EVENING was held at the Cross keys on 27th June by kind permission of Sandra and Chris Corbin in aid of church funds. This was well-attended and enjoyed by all ages who tucked into hot pork rolls and hot dogs.

THE CHURCH FETE ON 21ST JUNE in aid of both Felton and Preston Wynne churches was held in the Village Hall due to inclement weather conditions. Gazebos were in great danger of being blown straight off the cricket field over to Withington so discretion being the better part of valour we set up in the Hall, brass band and all, and raised over £300 for each Church, grateful thanks to all concerned.

WHIST DRIVES are held on the 4th Monday of every month at Burley Gate Hall for church funds. All very welcome, lovely refreshments and good prizes.

Preston Wynne

HALL NEWS

The BBB Evening (bar/bbq/bowls) held in the Hall was a great evening. Many thanks to Janet and Simon Crowther who run the pub nights of which this was one, they work tirelessly setting up, serving drinks and clearing away afterwards all for Hall funds. The recent acquisition of a “proper” indoor bowling mat and sets of bowls which have been kindly donated was used for the first time and much appreciated. There were two teams of all ages and abilities and guess what! It was a draw – amazing!

CRAFT AND PRODUCE SHOW held in the Hall on September 5th Entries in from 9.30 am for judging at 11.30 am. Auction at 3 pm

W.I NEWS

The July meeting was held at the home of Debbie and Ralph Barber. Thank you Debbie for hosting this and your beautiful garden was a real pleasure to visit.

Finally, two very special events in the Church, the first being the Baptism of Bobby, Grandson of Martin Cooke on the 26th July and the second the forthcoming wedding of Ben Simpkin to Anna on September 18th. Lovely to have these celebrations in our Church!

See you next edition (November/December – wowsers)

Love Hilary and Tricia

KIDDIE'S

Halloween

Evolving from the ancient Celtic holiday of Samhain, modern Halloween has become less about literal ghosts and ghouls and more about costumes and candy. The Celts used the day to mark the end of the harvest season and the beginning of winter, and also believed that this transition between the seasons was a bridge to the world of the dead. Over the millennia the holiday transitioned from a sombre pagan ritual to a day of merriment, costumes, parades and sweet treats for children and adults.

- Growers from the United States of America produce over 1.5 billion pounds of Pumpkins a year, more than twice the weight of the Empire State Building
- Q. Why didn't the skeleton dance at the party?
A. He had no body to dance with.
- Who was the most famous skeleton detective?
A. Sherlock Bones.

Which is Faster, Heat or
Cold?

Heat, because you can
catch a Cold!

....

What do you get if you
cross an Artist and a
Policeman?
A Brush With The Law!

The Average Pencil can draw a
line nearly 35 Miles long!

...

Barbara Millicent Roberts is
Barbie's Full Name!

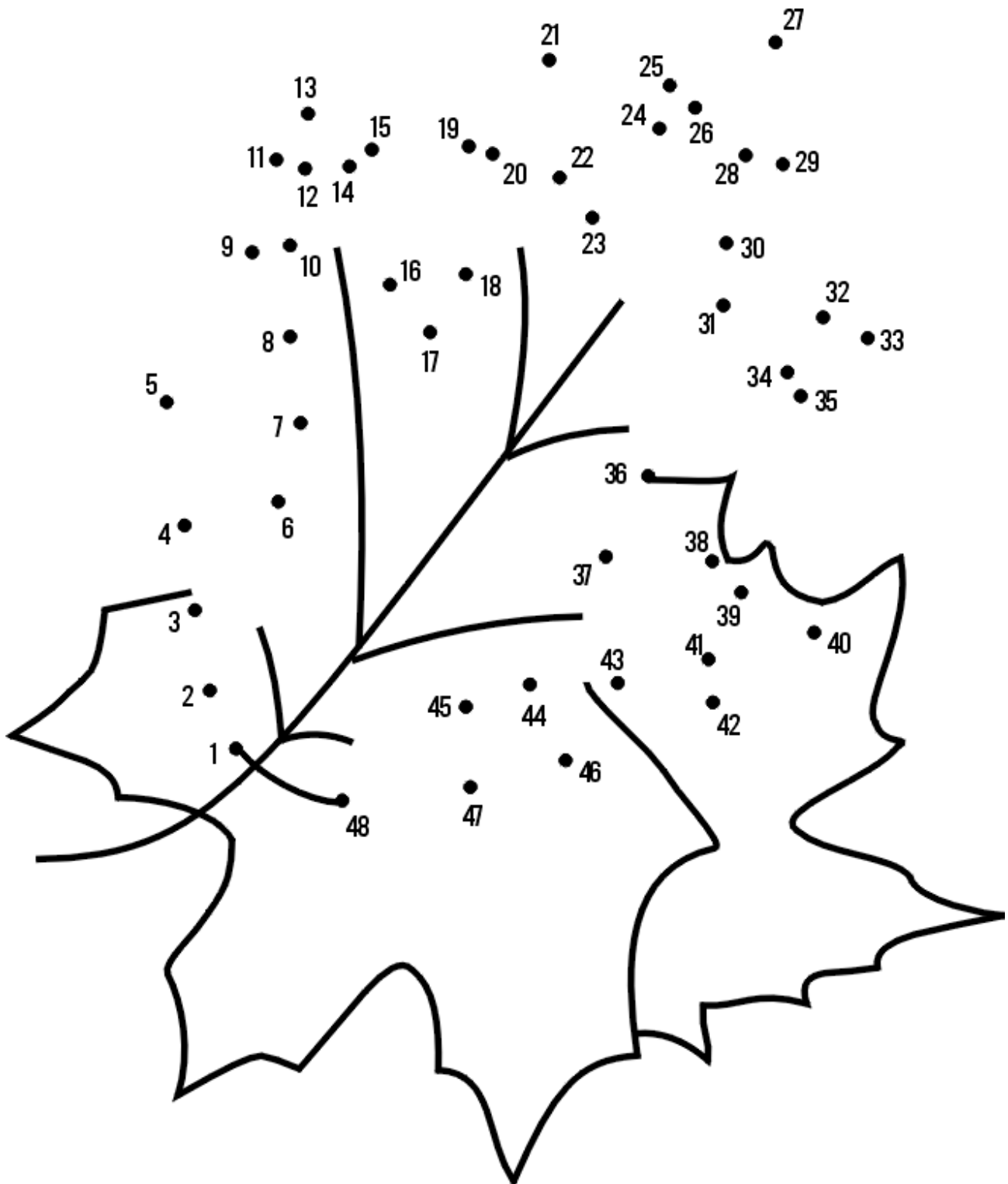
...

Walt Disney, Creator
of Mickey Mouse,
was afraid of Mice!

...

CORNER

DOT-TO-DOT



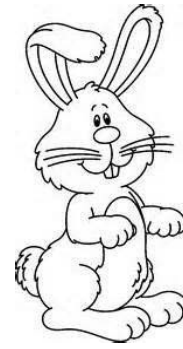
Ode To Autumn

By John Keats

Season of mists and mellow fruitfulness!
Close bosom-friend of the maturing sun;
Conspiring with him how to load and bless
With fruit the vines that round the thatch-eaves run;
To bend with apples the mossed cottage-trees,
And fill all fruit with ripeness to the core;
To swell the gourd, and plump the hazel shells
With a sweet kernel; to set budding more,
And still more, later flowers for the bees,
Until they think warm days will never cease,
For Summer has o'er brimmed their clammy cells.

Who hath not seen thee oft amid thy store?
Sometimes whoever seeks abroad may find
Thee sitting careless on a granary floor,
Thy hair soft-lifted by the winnowing wind;
Or on a half-reaped furrow sound asleep,
Drowsed with the fume of poppies, while thy hook
Spare the next swath and all its twined flowers;
And sometimes like a gleaner thou dost keep
Steady thy laden head across a brook;
Or by a cider-press, with patient look,
Thou watchest the last oozings, hours by hours.

Where are the songs of Spring? Ay, where are they?
Think not of them, thou hast thy music too, -
While barred clouds bloom the soft-dying day
And touch the stubble-plains with rosy hue;
Then in a wailful choir the small gnats mourn
Among the river shallows, borne aloft
Or sinking as the light wind lives or dies;
And full-grown lambs loud bleat from hilly bourn;
Hedge-cricket sing, and now with treble soft
The redbreast whistles from a garden-croft;
And gathering swallows twitter in the skies.



**Rabbits hop and they live for 8 years,
dogs run and they live for 15 years and
tortoise do nothing and they live for
150 years. Lesson learnt.**

.....

**Cricketer: I wondered why the ball
was getting bigger! Then it hit me.**

.....

**If Apple made a car, would it have
Windows?**

....

**Why are iPhone chargers not called
Apple Juice?**

....

**A man drove his expensive car into a
tree and found out how a Mercedes
bends**

....

**I couldn't work out how to fasten my
seatbelt. Then it clicked.**

Contact Names and Telephone Numbers

Byworth Trust Clerk	Margaret Soutar	850448
Cross Keys	Chris Corbin	820616
Gateway Bridge Club	Adrian Lunt	359463
Music Tots	Gemma Griffiths	07890 1780 99

Police

Community Support	Dean Wall/Elena Ekanite	101
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Royal British Legion

Brian Reader	851842
--------------	--------

St. Peters Church

Rector	Jane Davies	850244
Church Warden	Kevin Hewison	850074
	Brian Reader	851842
PCC Secretary	Marcia Hopkins	850933
Bell Ringing	Kevin Hewison	850074

Village Hall

Chairman	Kevin Hewison	850074
Booking Secretary	Kathy Fields	851001

WG Parish Council

Clerk		
Chairman	Paul Bainbridge	850655
Vice-Chairman	Ralph Barber	853068

Whitestone Chapel

Ian Porter	01981 540388
------------	--------------

Withington Football Club

Chairman	Steve Caine	851857
Secretary	Ray Rice	850669

Withington Post Office		850356
Withington Primary School		850289
Withington Parish Magazine	Margaret Thompson	850182
Withington Village Store		851777

Memories by Bryan Davies

Yesteryear continued...

LIFEBOATS

For as long as I can remember lifeboats have played a major part in my life, or they certainly did until I left home. My village on the west coast of Wales has had a lifeboat since 1864 and a magnificent lifeboat house to keep it in. Today, they have two lifeboats, a high powered rubberised inflated, “D” class boat for inshore work as well as a large all weather boat for work further out at sea or when it is impracticable to use the smaller one.

The earliest boat I can remember was a lifeboat called the William Cantrell Ashley – 1907 to 1948 a sail and oar driven boat. If the wind was blowing then the dark red sails she carried on two masts were hoisted to aid the twelve men who rowed the boat. It must have been really tough on the crew in very bad weather. At one time my brother who knew some of the twelve man rowing crew would relate some of their experiences. He once told me that the coxswain would entice them into rowing harder, not by shouting at them or bullying them, but by offering them a reward of ten shillings if they pulled hard enough to break an oar. Whether this was ever achieved I don’t know.

I myself can remember many different lifeboats as I was growing up, each with its own peculiar name, usually named after their benefactor, e.g., Saint Albans was named after donations by the people of St. Albans near London who paid for the cost of building the boat; Birds Eye after the vegetable company Birds Eye Foods; then there was the Frank and Marion. Today’s lifeboat is named Frank and Lena Clifford of Stourbridge, a beautifully sleek, all weather, Mersey Class, modern, powerful boat so suitable for work in the 21st. Century.

Every lifeboat (or lifeboat station) has two crews. One crew mans the boat at sea, the other crew is the launching crew who launch the boat on call out and who then stay ashore ensuring that all is ready for the return of the boat to the lifeboat house when the emergency is over.

Most of the pre-selected boat crew remain the same, with the engineer and coxswain being permanent members of the crew. The engineer is the only fully paid crewman, all the others being volunteers. The launching crew however could change with each call out, depending on who turned up. I myself was a member of the launching crew for a few years before I left home to work elsewhere. Members of the launching crew turned up on a call out hoping he would be selected for the job, so the earlier you arrived at the boat station, the better your chances were of making a few shillings, hence the speed with which we all ran to the boat station when the maroons were fired, plus of course the fact that all calls for help were very urgent. I know that the lads involved would happily do the job for nothing as they sometimes did. The launch crew would then launch the boat into the sea and afterwards would just wait around, perhaps for several hours until the boat returned.



Present Day lifeboat team

Memories by Brian Davies

When something quite serious has occurred at sea, the secretary of the local branch of the R.N.L.I. takes the phone call and then informs a crewman who then races to the boat house to set off the two maroons, the noise of which could be deafening and very frightening especially in the middle of the night. They would wake most of the village. Many a time was I awoken in the early hours, jumping out of bed and racing downstairs despite the plaintive call from my mother not to go. Then a quick sprint (still dressing myself) to reach the boathouse, often in heavy rain and strong winds, to try to get on the team for that night.

If the tide was in, then the launch would be comparatively straight forward. The boat with the crew on board, would slowly inch its way out of the boathouse for a few yards and would then be released to slide rapidly down the slipway with engines already running, into the comparative calm of the sheltered harbour. Then as it rounded the end of the pier it ploughed itself into the full storm. I would often stand there watching and wondering what dangers the crew would face, not just from the stormy sea, but also from the rescue mission itself. On the other hand, if the tide was out, then the lifeboat tractor had to be used linking itself to the rear of the boat and its carriage. It would then push it out across the beach and into the water. Once the boat was afloat and away, the tractor had to extricate itself and the lifeboat carriage from the sea, as most of it would be under water (including the tractor). Back up on to the beach the launching crew waited for the return of the lifeboat. This could be as long as twelve to eighteen hours, or perhaps as short as a couple of hours, depending on the distance, the severity of the situation and how long the rescue took.

The return of the lifeboat from a rescue was always anticipated with some anxiety. Sometimes the boat would return towing a yacht or a fishing boat having rescued the crew, other times perhaps carrying the bodies of some who had either drowned or fallen off cliffs. Whichever way it was, all concerned in the rescue behaved with a quiet dignity and in the case of injury or death, with great compassion.

I have seen our village lifeboat put to sea in appalling conditions which makes one fear for the safety of the crew. So, why do they do it? Young men (and today young women also) volunteering to carry out a task so dangerous. It's certainly not for the money. They do it because as human beings there is in most of us a basic instinct of wishing to help anyone in trouble. Lifeboat crews all over the country commit themselves to highly dangerous rescue work as do all other rescue services. The R.N.L.I. (Royal National Lifeboat Institution) relies totally on donations and the generosity of all of us, whether or not we use the sea for work or for leisure or even not at all.



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November 5th - Bonfire Night

Remember, remember the fifth of November
Gunpowder, treason and plot.

I see no reason, why gunpowder treason
Should ever be forgot.

Guy Fawkes, guy, t'was his intent
To blow up king and parliament.
Three score barrels were laid below
To prove old England's overthrow.

By God's mercy he was catch'd
With a darkened lantern and burning match.
So, holler boys, holler boys, Let the bells ring.
Holler boys, holler boys, God save the king.

And what shall we do with him? Burn him!



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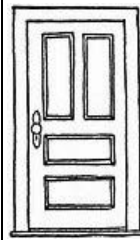
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