

## Guides set for foreign adventure



Two members of 2nd Shortlands Guides, Young Leader Eleanor Thompson and Guide Harriet Adam have been selected to represent Girlguiding UK on trips abroad this summer.

Commenting on their selection, Eleanor said: 'I have been selected to represent Girlguiding for London and South East Region in South Africa. This summer I will be spending three weeks in Johannesburg and Durban. In the first week there we will meet South African Guides and do mainly sight-seeing. In the last two weeks I will be working in a Christian orphanage, God's Golden Acre, for children who have lost their parents to the Aids/HIV pandemic. For this trip I have to raise £2,000. I am extremely excited and really looking forward to my trip.'

Harriet who is due to go to Austria commented: 'I have been selected to represent Girlguiding GLK (Greater London Kent) in Austria. I will be spending nearly two weeks at a jamboree on a campsite in Berg. I will be participating in many water activities, including well-digging. I will also be meeting many new people from other countries, and learning about Austrian customs. For this I have to raise £500, and I am really looking forward to this wonderful opportunity!'

A cake sale was held following the Mothering Sunday service at St. Mary's Church, at which the magnificent sum of £605 was raised towards their trips.

## Shortlands Safer Neighbourhood Team

### Welcome to the Shortlands Safer Neighbourhood Team.

There have been some changes to the Team recently and we are delighted to introduce the new Team to the Shortlands Community.

We are delighted at the way we are being 'looked after' and it's good that we can be partners together for the wellbeing of our Community.

Some of the Team recently joined the congregation at St. Mary's at the end of the service to 'meet and mingle'.

Left to right (back row) PCSO Debra Peirce, Special Constable Emma Sayers, Special Constable Helen Mckeer, PC Micheal Burgess, PCSO Christian Bundock, and (front row) PC Katy Porter, Sgt David Harvey.





## From the Registers

### At Rest

We extend our sympathy to those who loved:

27 Feb Stella Phelps, aged 84

27 Feb Monty Watson, aged 87



## Remembering

### Stella Phelps

Stella was born in South London and grew up in Herne Hill. She joined the Army at the age of 15. After the war she worked as a seamstress. She married Bob and they emigrated to what was then Rhodesia, before returning to England and to Brabourne Rise and then Kingswood Avenue. In 1992 she moved to Merlin Court.

Stella was a regular worshipper at St. Mary's, Shortlands. She was a founder member of the 2WW's group, and a regular participant in the Parish Weekend. She was on the Church cleaning rota.

A Service of Thanksgiving, conducted by Canon Paul Miller, took place at St. Mary's, Shortlands prior to committal at Beckenham Crematorium. A congregation of residents of Merlin Court and members of St. Mary's joined with Roy, her son, and other members of the family.

## SPAN THANKS

We record our thanks for donations during the month of February of £9.00

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## Monty Watson

Monty died on 9 February, aged 87. He was born in Huntingdon and signed up, aged 17, to join the R.A.F. He took part in more than 50 sorties over Germany during the war and was once shot down, breaking his back. He received the Distinguished Flying Medal for his gallantry. After the war he made over 90 sorties during the Berlin airlift.

He later began a new career in Fleet Street, eventually becoming the Circulation Manager for the Daily Mail. In 1944 he married Pat and enjoyed 21 happy years with her until she died. He married Doris in 1969 and they were happily married for 25 years until she died. Audrey has been his partner for the past 14 years.

It was said that Monty had a super sense of fun and lived life to the full. He also had many interests and enjoyed sports having been a keen footballer in his earlier years. More recently his great interest has been bowls at the Bromley Town Bowls Club. He was also a member of Probus.

A great many friends and colleagues joined his step daughters Janet and Barbara, Audrey, his brother Vic and the five grandchildren at a Service of Thanksgiving for a life well lived, at Beckenham Crematorium on 27 February.

## St Mary's Shortlands Holiday Club 2008

### Champions' Challenge

will run from  
Monday 18 August to  
Friday 22 August  
10.00am - 3.00pm

for all primary school children

Booking starts 1 March,  
closing date 13 July 2008

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We are a source of support, helping with all things that people affected by cancer want and need. It's not only patients who live with cancer, so we also help carers, families and communities. We guide people through the system, supporting them every step of the way. We fund nurses and other specialist health care professionals and build cancer care centres. But we give so much more than medical help.

People need practical support at home, so we provide anything from some precious time off for a carer, to a lift to hospital. People need emotional support, so we listen, advise and share information through our CancerLine, website, support groups and trained professionals.

People need financial help to cope with the extra costs cancer can bring, so we give benefits advice, and grants for anything from heating bills to travel costs. Together we listen, we learn, we act to help people live with cancer.

### We are a force for change

We are a force for change, listening to people affected by cancer and working together to improve cancer care. People who live with cancer are experts by experience. Together we use this knowledge to make a positive difference to the lives of people affected by cancer. This could be anything from getting a coffee machine installed in a waiting room, to bringing about changes in the law.

We fight discrimination - from challenging unfair travel costs and insurance policies to improving the national benefits system. Together we challenge the status quo, we push for change, we lead the way.

### We are Macmillan

We believe we can all help. We can raise money - through marathons, coffee mornings, street collections, sponsored events. We can give time - at cancer care centres, events, fundraising groups. We can share experiences - online, in the media, with each other. We are Macmillan.

**Please support Macmillan, the Mission of the Month for April at St. Mary's.**

# Wanted

We need volunteers to help with the distribution of SPAN for the following roads:

### Beckenham Grove

Odd 1-9, total 36, some stairs.

### Mays Hill Road

Colebrooke Rise (3 blocks of flats), total 30, stairs.

### Park Hill Road

Escote Court, total 17, exterior and interior stairs.

### Tootswood Road (odd side only) & Romanhurst Avenue

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# Parish Weekend a real success



Although only 26 people could make the Parish Weekend this year, it was a resounding success.

Hosted by the Beach Hotel, a weekend of laughter, good food and fellowship was enjoyed by all. The weekend included a trip to Arundel where Canon Paul Miller took a break by the river with Peggy Smith (left) and Frances Beckman (right), and a Quiz which taught participants that Sarah was the most mentioned woman's name in the Bible!

Glorious weather and a super seaside location helped to make the weekend one of the best yet!

**Highfield Infants' School** needs to appoint a Partnership Governor. If you would like the opportunity to become involved in the further development of this highly successful local school – recently judged by Ofsted as “outstanding” – then please speak to the Chair of Governors, Carol Collins (07845 705855) or the Vice Chair, Tony Chase (020 8464 6188) who will be happy to explain what is involved.

## Special Church Services for April and May

### Sunday 20 April

6.30pm - Café Worship in the Hall  
Come and taste a new form of worship, titled 'Bodybuilding'

### Sunday 27 April

6.30pm - Choral Evensong  
Responses: Reading, Canticles: Brewer in D,  
Anthem: Blessed be the God and Father (Wesley)

### Thursday 1 May

#### Ascension Day

8.00pm - Holy Communion with hymns  
followed by drinks at the Vicarage and  
the lighting of the Ascension Day Rocket

### Sunday 11 May

#### Pentecost - The Birthday of the Church

10.30am - All Age Family Eucharist  
with the release of Pentecost Balloons

### Sunday 18 May

6.30pm - Three Choirs Festival Choral Evensong  
The Choirs of St. Mary, Shortlands, St. Peter & St. Paul, Bromley and  
St. Mark, Bromley join together for the Annual Three Choirs Festival.  
Preacher: The Very Rev'd. John Simpson, O.B.E., M.A., D.D  
Dean Emeritus of Canterbury

## Residents' Association AGM

The AGM of the Shortlands Residents' Association takes place on Wednesday, 23 April at 8.00 pm in St. Mary's Church Hall. The guest speaker will be Chief Superintendent Charles Griggs, Bromley Borough Commander of the Metropolitan Police who will talk about crime and security issues in the Borough. The AGM is your opportunity to hear about the Association's activities and progress, and to elect the committee for the coming year. We would also like to hear local residents' ideas and suggestions for how we can celebrate our 75th anniversary in 2009. And we are also seeking volunteers to complete our essential network of liaison officers to make sure that each street and road in the patch is properly covered.

# Archbishops' response to Government consultation on blasphemy

As the Government publishes its amendment to the Criminal Justice Bill to abolish the blasphemy laws, the Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr Rowan Williams, and the Archbishop of York, Dr John Sentamu, have made public their response to the Government's consultation. In their response the Archbishops make clear their affirmation of the central place of Christianity in British public life and call on the government to explain precisely what the removal of the blasphemy laws does and does not mean for those living out their religious faith in society.

The Archbishops, following consultation with a number of other Christian leaders in England and Wales, restate the Church of England's longstanding position on the blasphemy laws in their joint letter to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government: “Having signalled for more than 20 years that the blasphemy laws could, in the right context, be abolished, the Church is not going to oppose abolition now, provided we can be

assured that provisions are in place to afford the necessary protection to individuals and to society”. They also register ‘reservations’ about the method and timing of such a change and call on the Government to be clear as to precisely why the offences are being abolished.

The Archbishops point to four issues that highlight the need for caution before abolishing blasphemy laws. Firstly, it is still too early to be sure how the new offence of incitement to religious hatred will operate in practice. Secondly, the increased significance of issues touching on religious identity has underlined the importance of not lightly changing laws that carry a significant symbolic charge.

Thirdly, as recently as 5th December the High Court underlined the very high threshold that has to be passed for a prosecution to be brought. Fourthly, a number of those calling for the repeal of the offences misunderstand both what the existing law is intended to achieve, as clarified in the High Court decision as

the preservation of society from civil strife, and the extent to which, in doing so, it protects particular religious beliefs.

In the letter, the Archbishops emphasise that: “Against that background we in the Church of England have serious reservations about the wisdom of legislating at this moment, and especially as part of a Bill introduced to deal with quite different matters, themselves of significant importance. In the light of the recent High Court decision, which should make it a good deal harder for prosecutions to be brought in all but the most compelling circumstances, it is not clear that there is a pressing need for repeal until there has been more time to assess the impact of the offence of incitement to religious hatred.”

They call on the Government to be clear as to precisely why the offences are being abolished and what the implications are for the position of the Christian religion - in relation to both the State and society more generally. “At a time of

continuing debate about the nature of our society and its values, this change needs to be seen for what it is, namely the removal of what has long been recognised as unsatisfactory and not very workable offences in circumstances in which scurrilous attacks on the Christian religion no longer threaten the fabric of society. It should not be capable of interpretation as a secularising move, or as a general licence to attack or insult religious beliefs and believers.

“The place of Christianity in the constitutional framework of our country, governed as it is by the Queen, in Parliament, under God, is not in question in the current debate. The relationship between Church and State, reaffirmed by the Government last July in The Governance of Britain, will continue to provide a context in which people of all faiths and none can live together in mutual respect in this part of the Realm,” the Archbishops say.

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**WORSHIP**

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- 08.00 Holy Communion
- 10.30 Family Communion, except the first Sunday in the month in term time. During term time there are separate groups in the Church Hall for children aged 4-14.
- 10.30 All Age Eucharist or Parade Service (1st Sunday in the month, term time).
- 18.30 Evening Service

**Every Monday**

- 17.00 Evening Prayers

**Every Wednesday**

- 10.00 Holy Communion

Further information about all services can be obtained from the Parish Office.

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