

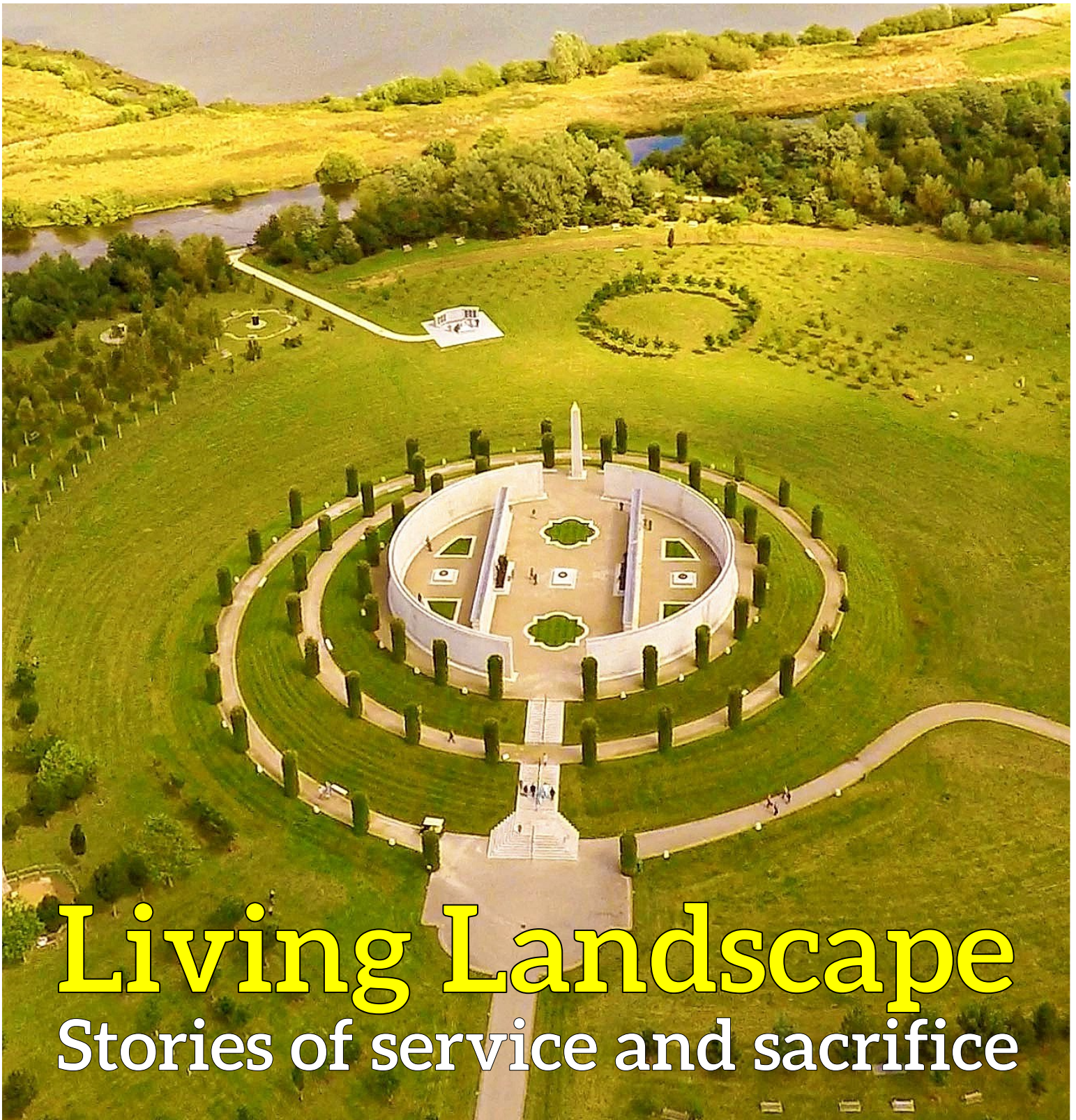
NOVEMBER 2024 REMEMBRANCE

# SPIRE



HAMPTON HILL'S PARISH MAGAZINE

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# Living Landscape

Stories of service and sacrifice

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**Meet the clergy**



**VICAR Rev Derek Winterburn**  
Derek was born in Orpington, Kent, and ordained in 1986. He served in several diverse London parishes before becoming vicar here in 2016. He is married to Sandra, a teacher, and has two children. A keen photographer, he posts a picture online every day, combining it with a daily walk or cycle ride. He can be contacted at any time other than on Mondays (his day off).  
Tel: 020 8241 5904  
Email: vicar@stjames-hamptonhill.org.uk

**ASSOCIATE PRIEST Rev Jacky Cammidge**

Jacky was born in Abertillery, South Wales, and ordained in 2015. She is a self-supporting minister, married to Alan, and has three children. During term-time she runs Hampton Hill Nursery School, based in the church hall, with her family.  
Tel: 079 5012 2294  
Email: jackycammidge@stjames-hamptonhill.org.uk



**Supported by**

**ASSISTANT PRIEST Rev Canon Tim Marwood**

Tim taught in London primary schools for 36 years. He was ordained priest in 1996 and was parish priest at Petersham for 13 years, retiring in 2021. He is now a part-time Chaplain at Kingston Hospital. Tim is married to Jane, a former headteacher. He supports Harlequins RFC, England cricket and walks his brown labrador, Ruby.  
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**ASSISTANT PRIEST Rev Canon Julian Reindorp**

Julian was born in Durban, South Africa, and ordained in 1969. He has worked in parishes in East London, Chatham and Milton Keynes, and was Team Rector in Richmond until retirement in 2009. He continues to lead a busy life, is married to Louise and has four children, three stepchildren, and nine grandchildren.  
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**FROM THE EDITOR**

**N**ovember is always a reflective month with All Souls, All Saints and Remembrance Sunday. This year, with no real summer and lots of rain, we are thankful for any bright days to cheer us up!

The cover and centres pages feature the National Memorial Arboretum, which I have now visited twice. It is hard to put into words my feelings about the centre. It is clear to see how much it means to people, particularly those who have lost loved ones during war. The peace and tranquillity of the green oasis is tangible.

This month we also remember Alan Taylor – a faithful member of our church for many years – who has died. Although Helen and Alan moved over 30 years ago, many from our church attended his service.

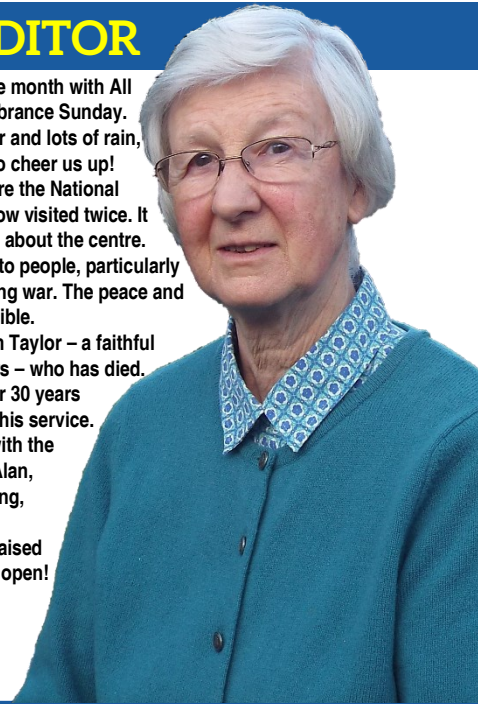
Derek writes about our problems with the heating and roof. At times like this, Alan, along with his late friend Jack Gostling, would have been there to help us.

I'm delighted to say we have now raised £2000 from our appeal – and it's still open!

Best Wishes

*Janet*

Editor



Cover photo: The central monument at the National Memorial Arboretum in Staffordshire

**SPIRE** The Spire is published nine times a year for the Parochial Church Council of St James. We don't charge for this magazine but, if you enjoy regularly reading it, we hope that you will contribute towards printing costs. Bank transfers to: 40-52-40, 00032595, Use Ref SPIRE. Cheques payable to the PCC of St James's Church, Hampton Hill, and sent to the Spire Appeal c/o the Church Office (see below).

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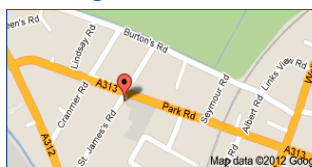
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The church is on the corner of St James's Road and Park Road. The hall is between the church and vicarage. There is ample unrestricted parking. Buses stopping nearby include the R68, R70 and 285.

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**Clerical Capers**



...with proper ceremony, they laid it to rest with its ancestors

# DEREK WINTERBURN



Timon Studler | Unsplash



**T**he world is far from being a peaceful place. Wikipedia has an actively maintained page that lists 56 active armed conflicts. Six conflicts caused at least 10,000 deaths each over the past 24 months.

I would expect most people could guess the Ukraine /Russia war, the 'Arab/Israel' conflict and probably the Sudanese civil war. But how many remember the Myanmar conflict (12,000 this year), the Maghreb insurgency (11,000) or the Mexican drug war (6,000)? Then of course numbers of deaths are only half the story, when we consider how many are maimed or become refugees.

## War doesn't end wars

The phrase 'The war to end all wars' comes from the title of a book by HG Wells that was written in 1914 to bolster support for the First World War effort. It quickly began to sound hollow, and became widely regarded as evidence that the war effort had misfired. Walter Lippman who coined the phrase 'Cold War' wrote: 'The delusion is that whatever war we are fighting is the war to end war.'

Clearly the 1914-1918 war was not the end of wars. It is widely understood that the settlement after that war sowed the seeds of the Second World War. And the terrible suffering of the Jews in the concentration camps and gas chambers led to the establishment of the state of Israel and so to the Arab/Israeli conflict. And on it goes.

It is now Remembrance Tide. In the UK we use this time to think about war and peace.

In 2024 we commemorated the Normandy landings on D-Day. Surely, the landing of 24,000 troops on the beaches was both courageous and a tremendous military achievement, in the face of heavy opposition from the German occupying forces. That seaborne invasion, the largest in history, was decisive, as the allies advanced towards the ultimate victory on VE Day.

## Some wars are necessary

There is no doubt in my mind that the war against tyranny in the Second World was a war that needed to be fought. The Allies were not altogether beyond criticism, but on

the whole the war was fought honourably — by individuals and by the nations. One of the most remarkable things about the outcome was the desire to avoid the mistake of 1918 and rebuild Europe

both Israelis and Palestinians - I grieve for the terrible, terrible suffering that has erupted (again) in the last 12 months on each people. Both sides feel that they are victims. Awful things have been done on

## From a Christian point of view, we should be wary of assuming that all the conflicts we have been involved in have been morally straightforward.

(including Germany) largely through the Marshall Plan and provide similar support in Japan. The coming of the Iron Curtain was perhaps less desirable, which presaged the isolation of Russia today.

But from a Christian point of view, we should be wary of assuming that all the conflicts we have been involved in are quite so morally straightforward. Jesus spoke about missing the 'log in your eye' but being concerned about the 'speck in another's eye'.

## Destroy or be destroyed?

In no way do I sympathise with President Putin's seizing of Ukrainian land, or bombing of civilians, but when I read Wells writing about German Imperialism - change 'Germany' to 'Russia' and it could be written today: 'We cannot simply put the Germans back over the Belgian border and tell them not to do it again... We have now either to destroy or be destroyed.' And, I wonder, how easily do we believe that we are so in the right?

Sometimes we want to break down a conflict to 'good' and 'bad', but that model does not work. I have 'broken bread' with

# WAR AND PEACE



## Sundays

Holy Communion (said) 8am

Parish Communion 9:30am

Livestreamed on Facebook

Together 3:30pm

Our shorter, all-age service, making way for Messy Church once a month

Messy Church 3:30pm **10 Nov**

## Tue-Fri (not Wed)

Morning Prayer 9am

## Wednesday

Midweek Communion 9:30am

## Mondays

Ark Playgroup 10am-12pm

£3 for the first child, £1 for any others.

NHS Hearing Aid Clinic 1-3pm

Free servicing for NHS aids while you wait at drop-in service on **4, 18 Nov (not 2 Dec)**

## Tuesdays (not 26 Nov, 3 Dec)

Connections Café 10:30am-12:30pm

Join us for coffee, cake and conversation.

## Charity Quiz Night

Saturday 2 November 7pm



A fun evening in aid of the London Churches Refugee Fund and our link parish in Mercuburi. Tickets £15 include a two-course meal. Book at: <https://bit.ly/StJQuiz24>

## In Loving Memory

Sunday 3 November 3:30pm

An All Souls' Day service. Remember loved ones, give thanks for their lives, light a candle.

Followed by refreshments.

## Remembrance Sunday

Sunday 10 November 9:30am & 11am



Our service for Remembrance Sunday starts in church before we make our way outside to the War Memorial, where we observe a two-minute silence at 11am for all those affected by war and conflict.

## Ceilidh Dance

Saturday 30 November 7:30pm

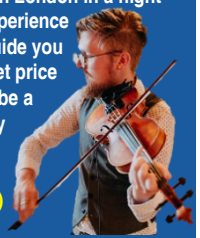
Three hours of the best fun in London in a night like no other! No dancing experience required. Ceilidh Tree will guide you through the steps. Your ticket price includes food and there will be a well-stocked bar. Bring family and friends.

Tickets

£35 (£20 u16s)

Book at:

<https://bit.ly/StJCeilidh24> (see p7)



## Christingle

Sunday 1 December 10am

An All Age service raising money and awareness for The Children's Society (see page 7)

Stijn Swinnen | Unsplash

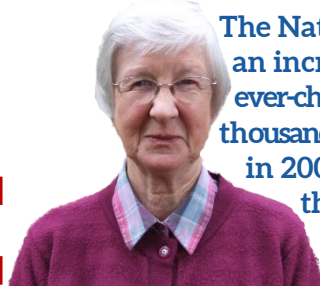




**Remember** The Royal British Legion's Never Forget Tribute Garden and, right, the Chapel



# SERVICE & SACRIFICE



The National Memorial Arboretum is an incredibly special place – a living, ever-changing landscape, dedicated to thousands of stories of sacrifice. Opened in 2001, and spread across 150 acres, the 400-plus memorials draw more than 300,000 visitors a year, including **Janet Nunn**

**T**en years ago, I paid a brief visit by chance to the National Memorial Arboretum on my way to a holiday in Derbyshire. I had always wanted to return, and did so last year to find that it had been considerably expanded. The Arboretum is at Alrewas, five miles north of Lichfield, just off the A38. There are now over 400 separate memorials (300 ten years ago). It is an incredibly moving place; strangely not sad, but full of memories.

### Humble origins

Thirty years ago the site was a huge gravel pit on the edge of the National Forest in Staffordshire. It was chosen because of its central location and is part of the Royal British Legion family of charities. The idea for the Arboretum came from Commander David Charles CBE in 1988. He wanted to create a national centre to remember those who had sacrificed their lives for their country.

A meeting was held with Group Captain Leonard Cheshire VC and an appeal was launched by Sir John Major in 1994. It was hoped that the Arboretum would be a living tribute to servicemen and women for future generations to reflect and enjoy while walking through the beautiful green scenery.

There were three proposals put forward. Firstly, the location of the

Arboretum, secondly the Ministry of Defence would pay a signature grant-in-aid to allow free entry to it, and thirdly the Royal British Legion would accept the gift of the site as the focus for year-round remembrance. The National Lottery Millennium Commission covered 40% of the cost, matched by thousands of donations from a variety of organisations and individuals.

The site is 150 acres, has 25,000 trees (mostly British species), gardens and tranquil spaces to commemorate those who gave their lives. Each organisation has their own dedicated space with their badge and motto and perhaps a small garden with seats so people can reflect and remember loved ones.

### Annually 300,000 visit

It was officially opened by HRH The Duchess of Kent in 2001 and is a unique experience, remembering those who died for their country up to the present day.

The site welcomes more than 300,000 visitors a year and there is an army of staff and volunteers (nearly 300) who help to keep it looking at its best. Just cutting the grass takes a week!

The site is so vast now that a land train goes slowly round the site with a volunteer explaining to visitors what can be seen. It can help visitors decide what to go back to and look at in more detail. I would thoroughly recommend this tour. There are also various walking routes.

The memorials not only represent the

considerable number of military services, but also other connected organisations such as the police, fire and rescue, and RNLI. Remembered too are the Land Army and Women's Timber Corp, and there is a section to represent the children who were evacuated during the Second World War.

The Arboretum includes those of all faiths and none. It covers all aspects of war and terrorism – there is a memorial for the twin towers tragedy in America. Some memorials are made of bronze, glass or steel, but the majority are carved in stone.

### Central memorial

The central feature – the Armed Forces Memorial – was designed by Liam O'Connor. The objective was to honour the fallen and recognise their service and sacrifice. There is a gap on the southern wall to enable a shaft of light to shine directly onto the central bronze wreath at the 11th hour, of the 11th day of the 11th month, highlighting the importance of Armistice Day.

The memorial is made of Portland stone and the walls are engraved with the names of more than 16,000 personnel who have given their lives in service since the end of the Second World War, including the Falklands War and the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.



**Veterans** gathering to remember



# Around the Spire

## ALAN TAYLOR A FAITHFUL SUPPORTER



THESE few words are barely enough to pay tribute to Alan Taylor, who died on 17 August, aged 85, in Suffolk.

Even though Alan and his wife Helen left Hampton Hill 28 years ago for Norton, near Bury St Edmonds, their good works live on within our church community and buildings today.

As a young man, Alan moved south from Kingstanding, Birmingham, to study Quantity Surveying and joined St Mary's, Acton, where Helen worshipped. A meeting with her there developed into a loving relationship, marriage, and them moving to Hampton Hill.

Alan was a consummate 'Bummie', delighting in upending dubious statements made by others with his dry wit!

He had been in the construction industry for most of his life, elevating to being MD of a well-known regional house builder. A good house is built on solid foundations and he knew how important they were when bringing up their four children, and in what he gave to so many members of the St. James's church youth group, the Young People's Fellowship (YPF) in the 1960s.

Because of his own background, and experiences of surviving the Blitz in 1940s Birmingham and being part of a big family, he appreciated what young people needed and constantly encouraged YPF members.

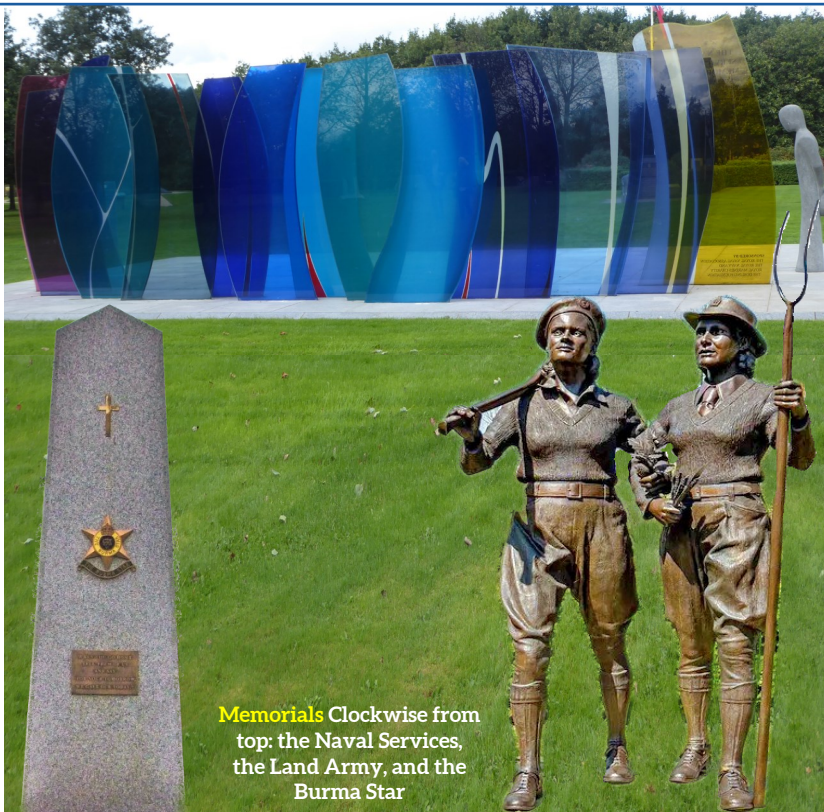
Alan led and organised the annual YPF Easter holidays to the Peak District, Wales, Scotland, Yorkshire and the Lake District, where youngsters would walk many miles in the day, do chores together, followed by an evening's Bible study — all of which became a firm foundation in their formative years.

Alan took early retirement and became a Lay Reader at St James's, frequently standing in for clergy, or just helping — as he always did.

The 'shape' of St James's today has been influenced by his contribution to the PCC and Properties Committee, particularly when it came to liaising with architects and builders when the new hall was built. Alan had a generosity of spirit, a curious mind, and was an encouragement to so many others throughout his life.

All the while this was underpinned by a deep faith that he shared with others throughout his life and many of us are forever thankful to him and for him.

*Richard Melville  
Annie Douglas (née Stuart)*



Memorials Clockwise from top: the Naval Services, the Land Army, and the Burma Star

The memorial was dedicated in October 2007 by the Archbishop of Canterbury in the presence of Queen Elizabeth II. In 2017 there was a large-scale regeneration project to build a Remembrance Centre, which was opened by the Duke of Cambridge.

### Vera Lynn Memorial

In April 2023 an appeal was launched to raise £1.5m for a memorial at the Arboretum to Dame Vera Lynn and all the entertainers who risked their lives to entertain and lift spirits and morale in times of conflict. Created by artist Paul Day, the completed statue will feature a 3m bronze disc featuring entertainers performing for the Armed Forces — with Dame Vera at its centre.

Another innovation is that one of the paths has been renamed Captain Sir Tom Moore Way. The length of the path and a connecting path leading to the Burma Star Memorial is 250 metres — the distance walked by Sir Tom every day during his fundraising challenge. He was awarded the Burma Star for his service in the Second World War.

There is a Millenium Chapel of Peace and Forgiveness near the Reception Centre where, at 11am each day, an act of remembrance takes place. Following the two minutes' silence, the Last Post and Reveille, there is an introductory talk about the Arboretum. A commemoration was held this year in the grounds to remember D Day and 21 veterans attended.

### Worth a visit

With so much to see and do, including river walks and nature trails and daily talks, the Arboretum it is well worth a visit. It is a very welcoming and inclusive environment.

The focus of the Arboretum is also looking to the future and making sure that they provide a comprehensive learning facility for the next generation. Mark Ellis, the Arboretum Lead, said: 'By preserving stories we are ensuring that we pass the baton of Remembrance to future generations.'

School visits play an important part in this, with programmes for teachers as well as children and young people. And with new ideas and memorials being added, this is a living and changing landscape.

■ The centre is open 10am-5pm every day apart from Christmas Day, with an excellent visitor centre, café and shop. Entry is free, but booking will guarantee entry and save on car parking. To book, go to: [thenma.org.uk](http://thenma.org.uk) or call 01283 245 100.



**They shall not grow old, as we that are left grow old: Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn. At the going down of the sun and in the morning, we will remember them.**



Train A great way to get your bearings

## MAJOR ROOF WORK BEGINS

TWO significant projects are underway on the church building.

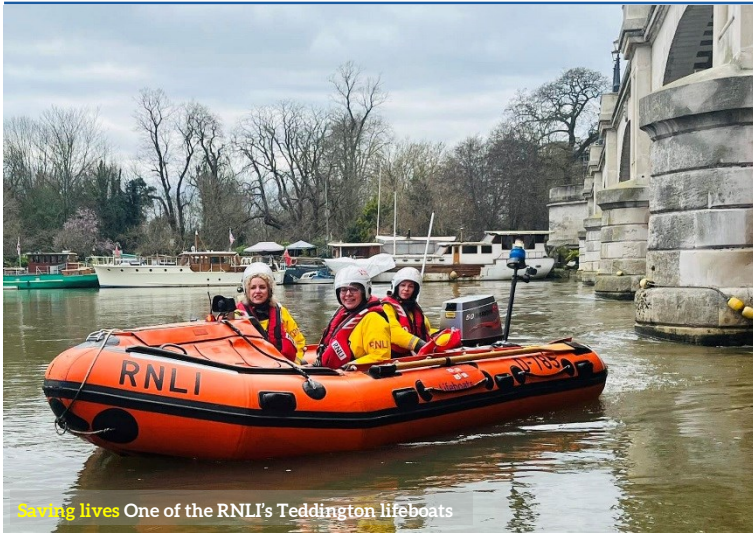
First, there is work to the roof on the north aisle (Park Road side of the church). The copper layer had to be renewed and fixed more securely to ensure everything was watertight in the most torrential of storms! To no-one's surprise, once the metal was off, the underlying beams were found to be rotten and needed to be replaced.

We are also replacing our old gas boiler (that broke down) in two phases. This year, we have been allowed to install a replacement boiler with the expectation that next year, in Phase Two, we will be supplementing that with a sustainable heating system, (probably an air source heat pump and/or infrared heating).

As readers might imagine, neither of these projects is cheap. Donations towards the work are very welcome, perhaps join our fundraising by becoming a Friend of St James's, or buying a ticket to the ceilidh (see page seven).



**CARBON NEUTRAL**  
Installing an air source heat pump is one option being considered.



**Saving lives** One of the RNLI's Teddington lifeboats



**Church Lads' Club** Formed by the Anglican Church in 1891

# PERIL ON THE SEAS



**Tim Marwood** says a rich maritime history and acts of bravery have made this hymn a favourite on Remembrance Day

**T**he words of *Eternal Father, strong to save*, were written by William Whiting (1825-78) when he was a teacher at Winchester College. It is said that he wrote the hymn for a former pupil about to sail for America.

In 1861 Whiting was successful in having his hymn selected for inclusion in the first edition of *Hymns Ancient and Modern*. The imagery used by the author includes some taken from the poem *Paradise Lost* by John Milton (1608-1674).

*Melita*, the name of the tune associated with this hymn, was composed by Rev John Bacchus Dykes (1823-76), Precentor of Durham Cathedral. Dykes called it *Melita* after the name of the island of Malta at the time of St Paul's shipwreck, described in Acts Chapter 28.

**Maritime services**

Often called *The Sailor's*, or *The Navy Hymn*, it has become a standard feature of many maritime services, Royal Navy occasions and Remembrance services. It has become closely linked with the Naval ceremony *Sunset*, performed by the band of the HM Royal Marines at the end of the day.

Britain is often described as a maritime nation because of the importance of the transport of goods by sea to and from these islands. There is also the long history of the defence of our country by the Royal Navy.

Perhaps this is why it is one of that select group of hymns which have endured in the public consciousness, because we continue to hold in high regard the commitment of our seafarers in the face of the dangers experienced at sea.

As Remembrance-tide approaches we prepare to honour the lives of those who served in the Royal Navy and Merchant

Navy in wars past and this hymn will feature in those commemorations.

**Those who protect us**

We remember too those who, every day on our behalf, 'go down to the sea in ships and occupy their business in great waters' (verse 23 Psalm 107). Currently the Royal Navy ship *HMS Richmond* is on patrol in the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden, protecting shipping from pirates and terrorists. May all aboard return safely from their mission. We should also remember the brave people who volunteer at the RNLI's Teddington lifeboat station to save 'those in peril'.

*Eternal Father, strong to save,  
Whose arm doth bind the restless wave,  
Who bidd'st the mighty ocean deep  
Its own appointed limits keep;  
O hear us when we cry to thee  
For those in peril on the sea.*

*O Saviour, whose almighty word  
The winds and waves submissive heard,  
Who walkedst on the foaming deep,  
And calm amid its rage didst sleep:  
O hear us when we cry to thee  
For those in peril on the sea.*

*O sacred Spirit, who didst brood  
Upon the chaos dark and rude,  
Who bad'st its angry tumult cease,  
And gavest light and life and peace:  
O hear us when we cry to thee  
For those in peril on the sea.*

*O Trinity of love and power,  
Our brethren shield in danger's hour;  
From rock and tempest, fire and foe,  
Protect them whereso'er they go:  
And ever let there rise to thee  
Glad hymns of praise from land and sea.*

# THE LADS PIPE UP



**Church life rumbles on,** but **Richard Melville** finds change is afoot as a new Drum Major joins the Lads' Club

**T**he comings and goings of church life are recounted in November's parish news. It records that £14 8s 5d was collected during the Harvest services, equivalent to about £720 today. The vicar, Rev Frederick Harvey, who served St James's for 27 years, from 1923-1950, writes in the parish magazine:

**Week of Prayer**  
*My Dear People,*

The Annual Sale of Work for the Church Overseas attracted its usual patrons. Madam Mottu [editor: she ran a school in Teddington that housed pupils from **Vicar Rev Harvey** LEH before they opened in Hanworth Road] who kindly opened the Sale of Work for us, emphasised the importance of helping forward this side of the church's work. The result of our effort will be made known next month.

Instead of having an anthem during evensong, there will be a short recital of music after the blessing.

Looking back over the Week of Prayer one finds much that was encouraging. Our Day of Intercession was particularly well observed. I had hoped, however, that many more would have made an effort to attend the other services during the week. The results of such Intercession will be largely manifested in the Diocese as a whole, although they will certainly be apparent in the various parishes.

I remain your faithful friend, and Vicar,  
*Frederick Harvey*

**Clergy improvements**

Rev B Kitchin had taken up residence and would share services and organisations. The arrangement would 'assure better work in the parish than had previously been possible'. Rev F J Laughton, who had been assisting the vicar, planned to remain a worshipper at St James's after stepping down.

**Church Lads' Brigade**

There was a strong focus on the Church Lads' Brigade. Mr Basey had resigned from

the position of Captain of the Hampton Hill Company. He was given the honorary rank of Lieutenant Colonel in gratitude.

A Lads' Club was opening on 5 November. It would be grateful for gifts of games. Lads who had left school were eligible to join. The subscription was a penny a week.

Under a new leadership team an excellent company of lads and boys would be brought together, and 60 were already in training. The vicar would take Bible classes, and there would be monthly church parades. An ex-Army Drum Major had been found and it was hoped to add a Drum and Fife Band to the Buglers. [*The organisation still exists nationally.*]

**In the news 100 years ago...**

**2 November**

The first crossword puzzle to appear in a British newspaper was in the *Sunday Express*. The puzzle was an adaptation of one created by Arthur Wynne for the New York World, but a word in the US one was spelled differently to the British English spelling so the whole puzzle had to be changed. Readers needed instructions!

**30 November** First photo facsimile sent from New York to London by radio in 1924 by Richard Ranger was of a picture of President Calvin Coolidge.



**8 November** The Fortune Theatre opens in Russell Street, London, the first London theatre to be built after World War I. *The Woman in Black* ran there for 33 years, with 13,232 performances.

**CROSS-WORD PUZZLE COMPETITION.**

SOMETHING NEW IN PROBLEMS.

TEN PRIZES FOR CORRECT SOLUTIONS.

**CROSS-WORD FEELERS:** Here is a puzzle which is sure to be popular with all who like to test their wits. The puzzle will be the first of a series of puzzles which will be published in the magazine. It is a puzzle which may be solved by the aid of the hints given in the hints column. The hints are given in the hints column. The hints are given in the hints column. The hints are given in the hints column.

**ANSWERS TO CROSS-WORD PUZZLE - No. 1.**

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# REGISTERS

**SEPTEMBER**

**BAPTISMS**  
15 Maximilian Stephen Terry, Shepperton  
15 Lara May Turner, Twickenham



**FUNERAL**  
27 Alastair James Lynn, 33, Wimbledon

# OPINION

Canon Julian Reindorp

## First three months

Many of us looked forward to a change of Government. But Labour's start has been mixed. Positively, the doctors strike and the train drivers strike have been ended. Resident (Junior) doctors' starting pay is now £36,600 a year. The cost of the deal £600m, the cost of the strikes about £3bn and the cancellation of 1.5m appointments and operations. The cutting of the winter fuel payments may well have had justification for many of us (over 65s have more than half the nation's wealth), but about 700,000 of the poorest in our country who could be claiming benefits are not doing so. Then there are the freebies. I don't begrudge the Prime Minister supporting Arsenal, but frocks and glasses? NO!



## Foodbanks and benefits

The Trussell Trust, the major foodbank provider said: 'We can end the need for foodbanks, but we can't do it alone.' Everyday costs for one person to live are about £125 a week according to the Rowntree Trust. Universal Credit is £91 a week, but in practice people often receive less. Waiting five weeks for their first payment often puts struggling families further into debt as they take a government loan. More than half the people receiving it are referred to foodbanks, yet face debt reductions, losing up to a quarter of their benefits. Reducing this five-week wait would be a major improvement. When Universal Credit was set up in 2012 research showed that two-thirds of the recipients would be on weekly wages, and they then set up a monthly system with a six-week wait. Cruel.



## UK less segregated

Despite the assumption that rising migration has led to more segregation, the reverse is true in our cities and in our schools. Since 2001 segregation has fallen among all ethnic groups. Recent census data suggests that where white people are in a minority, no one group predominates. But London's rich mix of people, speaking over 300 languages, may hide how threatened some in our country feel.

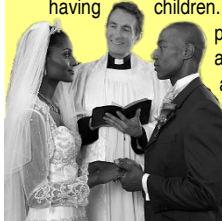


## Another Gaza?

Israeli bulldozers damaged a church and convent in the West Bank city of Jenin in September. A church official said: 'Just as we were paying off the damages from last year's incursion...' Is this part of turning the West Bank into another Gaza? Since October more than 700 Palestinians have been killed there. Now, Lebanon threatens to be far worse. The world seems powerless to prevent another catastrophe that will affect the Middle East and our world for generations. Praying for the Holy Land can seem almost hopeless.

## Marriage and divorce

New figures suggest that people are staying married for longer. In Victorian times marriage lasted about 14 years before one partner died. The major change is that couples used to get married before having children. In 1971, 8% of births were to unmarried parents. By 2022 it was over half. A decade ago, most divorces were initiated by women after their partner's late nights out but, according to one expert, husbands are now unlikely to irritate their wives to the point of no return! One of the best things I was involved in was wedding preparation, always working with a woman partner.



# HAPPY, NOT SO HAPPY



The Children's Society's annual survey shows a decade of decline in young people's satisfaction. **David Hetling** reports on how the charity is fighting for them – but they need our help.

St James's support for The Children's Society has remained strong through our committed network of regular donors and our annual Christmas celebration in Advent. Support like ours enables The Children's Society to provide practical help to young people as they face some of the most serious life challenges. The charity works with those who have suffered abuse, who have run away from home, or who are struggling with mental health issues, as well as offering support for often-neglected groups like young carers and youth refugees.

this on their wellbeing than families which identified other societal issues. Comparisons with the most recent European data from the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development revealed that the UK has the lowest average overall life satisfaction among 15-year-olds across 27 European nations. The UK performed particularly badly around food deprivation and in critical educational areas like school safety (especially bullying) and long-term absences.

### Dissatisfaction

It also enables The Children's Society to act as a voice for young people at local and national levels, lobbying government to ensure that the needs of vulnerable youngsters are kept high on the policy-making agenda. One of the most important vehicles for this lobbying activity is measurement of youth wellbeing through the charity's annual household survey. This year's report revealed that financial concerns are a major driver of low life satisfaction for young people. Children and parents from households under financial strain were twice as likely to identify the impact of



### Demands for strategy

The Children's Society is using the report to promote the urgent need for a long-term strategy for young people and wants the new government to make it a national mission to reverse the decline in children's wellbeing. You can read more this at: [childrenssociety.org.uk/good-childhood](https://childrenssociety.org.uk/good-childhood). If you would like to find out more about The Children's Society, or become a regular donor in support of their mission, please email Nicky or David Hetling: [dhetling@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:dhetling@yahoo.co.uk)

**Wellbeing is how we're doing as individuals, communities and as a nation, and how sustainable that is for the future**

## FRIENDS OF ST JAMES'S WITH CHRISTOPHER CARSON



WE'RE very excited to say that the Friends of St James's website has gone live! All of our events can be booked through this

site and regular communications will be sent to Friends, keeping them abreast of what is happening at St James's.

[www.friendsofstjames.org.uk](http://www.friendsofstjames.org.uk)

On Wednesday 22 January 2025 we will be holding our first Friends meeting at 7.30pm, at which we will:

- Meet our Friends and get to know each other
- Find out what Friends want from St James's and the best way for us to reach out to our neighbours and the community at large
- Build an inclusive movement that cares for the community and our historic building
- Share the first events for 2025 and hopefully add some new ideas to the list, and
- Grow our family and aim to be an even more appealing group, caring for each other and the wellbeing of Hampton Hill and surrounding area.

### Celebrate St Andrew's Day at our ceilidh!

The next big Friends' event is a Ceilidh on Saturday 30 November at 7:30pm in the church. If you have any Scottish friends this is the perfect excuse to invite them to dance the night away inside a stunning church!

This promises to be a fun evening and don't worry if you are a novice – you'll be in very good company! Ceilidh Tree, a very talented band of musicians who perform across Europe, will make this a wonderful curtain raiser to the Christmas season.



Tickets are £35 for adults (£20 for under 16s) and include hot food. There will also be a well-stocked licensed bar. Book at: <https://bit.ly/StJCeilidh24>

### Christmas cards

Next month we will unveil details of beautiful charity Christmas cards you can buy – so don't stock up until you've seen them. See you at the ceilidh!



# SIMPLE PLEASURES

The things we do when we take time out

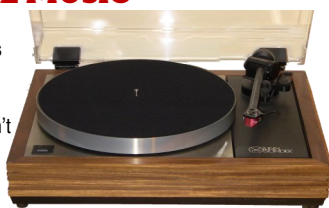
## CYCLING



Liz: Do you remember mastering how to ride a bike all on your own and that amazing sense of freedom? I still feel that way! I took up cycling regularly when I retired and persuaded Ria Beaumont to join me. We started by going around the perimeter of Bushy Park, about six miles, returning home to collapse! But we got better, were joined by three others, and began averaging 30 miles each week through Bushy and Richmond Parks — stopping for coffee and cake! We have done various charity rides, including, in December, the Santa Cycle for Shooting Star Children's Hospices, not a long ride but a worthwhile one.

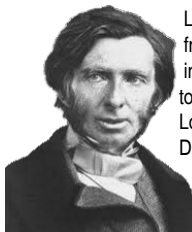
## CLASSICAL MUSIC

Dennis: One of my greatest pleasures is listening to classical music on my Hi-Fi system, a ritual I don't have much time for these days. I say ritual because this involves closing the door, cranking up the vinyl deck, and listening to the work from start to finish without interruption.



I equate this to a visit to the London Symphony Orchestra, which we manage a few times a year, although the Hi-Fi does a poor job of recreating the ambience. My favourite composers are Russian: Rachmaninoff, Prokofiev, Shostakovich, Tchaikovsky, and Sibelius from Finland (not quite Russian).

## ART GALLERIES

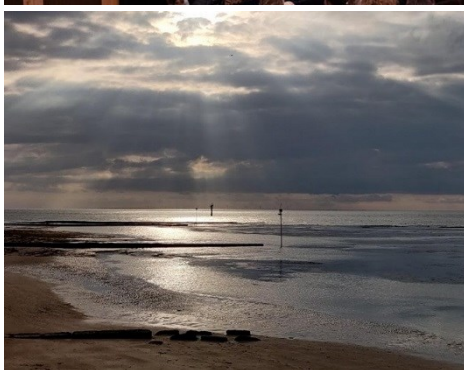


Liz: I love visiting art galleries. Apart from special exhibitions, most galleries in the UK are free and we are so lucky to be spoiled for choice especially in London. A few of my favourites are the Dulwich Picture Gallery, The Courtauld Gallery, the National Portrait Gallery, and the Watts Gallery in Compton, Guildford. I volunteer at Turner's

House in Twickenham and Dennis and I spent a couple of days in Margate where Turner used to spend his holidays. He remarked to John Ruskin that 'the skies over Thanet are the loveliest in all Europe' and I think maybe he was right! I enjoy visiting Tate Britain to study his work and find out more about the man who is perhaps Britain's most celebrated artist.

## UP THE GUNNERS!

Dennis: I call myself an Arsenal supporter, but that started when I supported my son in his fanatical endeavours. These days there is a ballot system for tickets and our luck means we attend only about four games a year. Supporters pay a fortune to watch matches live on TV, but there is nothing like being there. Once we watched Arsenal score the winning goal against arch-rivals Spurs in the final two minutes of added time. The atmosphere was truly amazing.



Clockwise from top: The LSO at the Barbican, dancing in the kitchen, and Margate's skies

# ACTIVE LIVES



Liz and Dennis Wilmot have varied pastimes. One likes to cycle, walk and dance, the other listens to music, watches Arsenal play, goes to the pub and drinks wine! Guess which is which!

## DANCING IN THE KITCHEN

Liz: I can neither sing nor dance well, but the kitchen is my private dance hall! I enjoy cooking and will shut myself in the kitchen and play my favourite music far too loudly and sing and dance along! Years ago my sons gave me a 'music centre' which was in a kitchen cupboard with a rack of CDs to pick and choose from. Now we have Sonos speakers and Spotify, which strangely I don't like as much as it takes more time to find what I want! Sometimes I catch a reflection of myself cavorting in the glass oven door and see how ridiculous I look but who cares? I'm having fun!

## WINE

Dennis: My favourite tippie is red wine. This might be because I grew up in Australia, but I am often the only one drinking wine whilst everyone else drinks beer. My favourites come from California, but Cabernet Sauvignon from the Napa Valley, can be expensive. The 1976 'Judgment of Paris' found Californian wine beating the best from France and many in the industry still talk about it. My favourite everyday wine is Shiraz (Oz) or Malbec (Argentina), and many from Italy. They are typically full-flavoured, rich and complex. However the trend is towards wines from Cool Climate regions, typically Pinot Noir. London is the wine capital of the world – a good place to be.



## WALKING

Liz: When we had our beloved Golden Retriever, Alfie, I walked almost daily come rain or shine, whether I wanted to or not! Now I am able to walk when I want to; on my own; with friends or family; guided walks in London; and also with church family. I have walked the final 100km of the Camino de Santiago de Compostela twice with friends, on the French and the Portuguese Ways. There are plenty of markers to guide you, so you can enjoy the scenery and conversation. Next year I hope to walk another section with each of my three sons individually.



## THE ROEBUCK

Dennis: This is a local's pub, and I've seen many of the congregation there, along with some of the clergy — preparing Bible study, you understand! A gang of us meet on Fridays. What makes this pub unique is the paraphernalia adorning every surface. Drop in for a gander, and a fruit juice.

