

ST. HELEN'S

Berrick Salome

The Newsletter of Your Village Church

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In this Edition

In case you have not yet heard them, the church bells are back after their massive overhaul - and sounding great. So this edition focuses unashamedly on the wonderful achievement of the Great Bells Restoration Project. The sheer amount of work and dogged determination needed to see it all through from beginning to end has been mind-boggling. Now that they are all safely back, we hope you will be able to come to the Rededication Service (see below) and celebrate their return to the belfry.



Tennis Champions!



Jean Gladstone with winners Jess Kilduff and James Burn

HARVEST: 4th Oct.

Please join us for the
**BRING-AND-SHARE
HARVEST LUNCH**
following the 11.00am
Family Service.

Call Jane Franklin 01865
891208 if you can contribute
towards lunch. *Gifts of dry or
tinned food will be taken to
The Steppin' Stones Centre for
the homeless in Oxford.*

Come and help us celebrate the return of the bells

at a joyful Service of Rededication at St. Helen's, with The Cathedral Singers of Christ Church and the Sub-Dean of the Cathedral, followed by refreshments. All welcome!

3pm on Sunday 13th September

The Bells are back - overhauled and sounding terrific!



The bureaucracy may have been (well, WAS!) very trying, but what a joyful and rewarding outcome! Getting the bells out - and then back in again, was truly a village event. Whites, the bell-hangers, were wonderful, with generations of experience, from grand cathedrals to small village churches, but in Berrick we also relied on local voluntary expertise.



The belfry is normally crowded with wheels and bells, so while it was empty we were able to have the first proper spring-clean for 107 years. Andrew and Paul from Chalgrove excavated over a century's worth of archaeological detritus, and then set about denying access to the pigeons. Bells are not the lightest objects to move about, so Nigel Hicks kindly came to our assistance with his fork-lift-tractor.



Whites offered us a fascinating visit to their workshop in Appleton, where we were able to inspect our bells with their smart new headstocks, and see how the surprisingly large wheels turn the bells during ringing.

We learnt much about bell-science - and the visit gave Ian the opportunity to check out the re-tuned bells with his stick!



Carefully lowered by Nigel, a bell is positioned on the trolley by Andrew ready for its journey into the tower.

The ringing chamber has also been given a make-over, with red floor paint, new blue seating cushions and fresh white walls all echoing the bright colour scheme of the new sallies (ropes), seen here on practice night. The 'new' bells were rung for the first time on 25th June, when ringers were relieved and delighted that they sounded so good!



Paul captured the last-ever 'belfry-pigeon' in Berrick, and Andrew then renewed the bird-proof wire mesh.

Hearty congratulations to Wendy Simon, Andrew Davis and the whole 'bells team' for steering the project through the minefield of permissions, grants, appeals and a myriad of practicalities. We were hugely relieved that the church architect pronounced the roof timbers of the belfry to be sound. Being their first inspection for more than a century, this had always been a nervous 'unknown' in the budget-planning.

The response from donors has been tremendous, and the project has been completed not only on time but within budget - eat-your-heart-out, Whitehall.... So a massive **THANK YOU** to all who contributed to this success!



Amid much hoisting and coffee-drinking, the bells were re-hung by the experts, with volunteer help.

Bell-ringing : trials of a novice (aka Salli Pelling)

A couple of years ago, a good friend said she was about to teach several people to ring the bells, as there was no team in Berrick. I went along too – although I suspect the 'teachers' may have preferred that I had stayed at home!

I love it, but never realised how much there was to learn: controlling the bell, pulling in an even pace while using enough energy to keep the bell from 'coming down', being in time with the bell to your right, so that the bell to your left would also keep the right time, understanding the instructions barked at me: "look to", "two over four", "rounds", "stand", "pull harder on the Sally", (hold on - I **am** Salli.....).

Ringling is very rewarding, and you get to meet some lovely people, so if you are interested in learning, contact Wendy Simon on 01865 891304 - we practise in Berrick tower on Tuesday evenings. Oh - and did I mention that we get chocolate half way through the evening?





Midsummer Weekend

There's more to Midsomer than Murder in this part of Oxfordshire, as our village weekend of art, horticulture, cream teas, music and history proved. A number of public-spirited owners opened their gardens for viewing, and were kind enough to be on hand to explain their knotty challenges to the many interested visitors. Their answers were more relevant than Gardeners' Question Time (mind you, I still have no idea how to conquer mares-tail....). Delicious cream teas enhanced the afternoon, and we came away from the plant stall with pots of new garden additions. Our thanks to Jane Franklin, Sarah Russell and the Berrick gardeners. Next time we may see some Roke/marsh gardens, too - who knows?

The concert the previous evening was an informal romp through 1000 years of history, with lovely music performed by Roger & Alice Derbyshire and Andrew Jarvis to celebrate each significant anniversary. This was in the historic setting of St. Helen's Church, which brought national events closer to home. The whole weekend was greatly enhanced by the stunning display of exhibits by the Chalgrove Art Group in the church, thanks to Jim Robinson and the artists. A terrific midsummer weekend - and not a 'Midsomer' body in sight anywhere!



RIDE AND STRIDE - 12th September

This is the annual fund-raising sponsored event, where half the money raised is returned to our church, and half goes to the Oxfordshire Historic Churches Trust, a charity which is close to our hearts at the moment, as it has contributed significantly to the restoration of our bells!

Can you join us? Contact Ian Kirkwood: 01865 400513.

FATHER CHRISTMAS WAS SO POPULAR LAST YEAR...

....that he's coming to Berrick again to our CHRISTMAS FAIR on 28th Nov.

11.00 - 14.00 at the Village Hall. Coffee, delicious lunches, mulled wine, mince pies, gifts - and children can visit Father Christmas and enjoy other amusements.

SERVICES AT ST. HELEN'S

We hold alternative forms of services on different Sundays - a service to suit everyone's preference:

1st Sunday in each month: Family All-Age Service: *A short informal service designed for villagers of all ages. It includes singing and a lively talk/activity spot, and is followed by refreshments and chat in the Church.*

2nd Sunday in each month: Holy Communion: *A "spoken" service which follows the Communion Service in the Book of Common Prayer. (The Remembrance Sunday service is held in Chalgrove)*

3rd, 4th (& 5th) Sundays in each month: Parish Communion: *A Communion Service which follows the "Common Worship" pattern, and includes several hymns.*

While Chalgrove Church is closed for restoration, we have a spoken Communion Service at St. Helen's at 10am every Wednesday followed by coffee.

Candle-lit Carol Service, 6.30 pm 24th Dec.get there early!

Families with children are welcome at all services. All Sunday services start at 11.00 a.m.

We welcome feedback. If you have any comments, you can contact us via the website:

www.berricksalomechurch.org.uk.