



Registered Charity No. 1160314

The Friends of St Peter's Newsletter

Number 19 – Autumn 2022

Queen Elizabeth II 1926 – 2022 Rest In Peace

Introduction by the Chairman of the Trustees

Our main event of the year, The Inaugural David Pearce Memorial Lecture, will be held on Saturday 8th October 2022. This is a fundraising event for the repair of the roof of St Peter's and I urge you to buy tickets if you have not already done so. Full details, including how to buy tickets, are on this page to the right of this Introduction. I am happy to tell you that our new Patron, The Venerable Dr Jane Mainwaring, Archdeacon of St Albans, will be at the event, and it will give us the opportunity to welcome her to the Friends of St Peter's.

This event is part of the programme to celebrate the 800th anniversary of St Peter's and I commend to you the article on pages 2 and 3 of this Newsletter by Pru Murray and Stephen Lally on the events which have already taken place and on those which are to be held later in 2022. I draw your attention to the section on the St Peter's 800th Heritage Fund.

My congratulations to the Rectory Lane Cemetery team on their second Green Flag Community Award. Rectory Lane Cemetery News on page 4 includes a fascinating article on the work of our stonemason, Will Yendell, particularly in relation to the restoration of the memorial of Sister Hannah Cottingham.

Finally, I very much look forward to seeing as many of our members and supporters as possible at the Lecture on 8th October. As always, we welcome ideas and suggestions from our members, and indeed other readers, as to what you would like to see the Friends doing for you and for the whole Berkhamsted community. Please do get in touch – my email address is below.

Peter Williamson

Trustees

Patron:

The Venerable Dr Jane Mainwaring, Archdeacon of St Albans

Trustees:

Chairman: Peter Williamson (peter.williamson47@btinternet.com)

Secretary: Cathy Imber (cathy.imber@btopenworld.com)

Treasurer: Steve Elliff (selliff@berkhamstedschool.org)

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David Pearce Memorial Lecture

The Trustees are delighted to announce that the inaugural David Pearce Memorial Lecture, which had to be postponed in the spring of 2020 because of the Covid pandemic, has now been rearranged. As originally planned, the lecture will be given by Sir Robin Knox-Johnston CBE who is an Old Berkhamstedian and who was the first person to sail single-handed and non-stop around the world in 1968/9.

This event will be held on Saturday 8th October 2022 at 7.00pm for 7.30pm in Berkhamsted School's Centenary Theatre, Kings Campus, Kings Road, Berkhamsted HP4 3BG. It will again be a joint Friends of St Peter's and Berkhamsted Society event and it will be part of the programme to celebrate the 800th Anniversary of St Peter's.

The Friends of St Peter's David Pearce Memorial Lecture

BERKHAMSTED SOCIETY

This Inaugural Lecture is a fundraising event, held in partnership with the Berkhamsted Society, for the repair of the roof of St Peter's.

An audience with...
Sir Robin Knox-Johnston

An Old Berkhamstedian and sailor who in 1969 completed the first solo non-stop circumnavigation of the world

Saturday 8 October 19:30

£20 Complimentary drink on arrival, from 19:00
(£5 under 18 or in full time education)
All ticket holders who are not already members of The Friends of St Peter's will be entitled to one year's free membership

tickets.berkhamsted.com @BerkoSoc berkhamsted.com/society
Centenary Theatre, Kings Campus, Kings Road, Berkhamsted HP4 3BG

David Pearce, was, for 33 years, one of Berkhamsted School's most popular teachers this lecture has been arranged in his memory. Tickets will be priced at £20 (Children under 18 £5). Funds raised will go towards the repair of the church roof of St Peter's church.

Tickets are available from **tickets.berkhamsted.com**. Complimentary drinks will be available before the lecture.

The 800th Anniversary of St Peter's

In 2022, St Peter's Church has been celebrating its long life, history and centrality to the life of the town and its residents.

A significant number of events has been held in and around the church following a similar format to the 750th celebrations in 1972. Two of St Peter's long-standing residents and churchgoers, Alan and Barbara Conway - who have worshipped at St Peter's for over 55 years - remember there were many events around church and town involving local organisations and businesses.



Barbara and Alan Conway who remember the 750th celebrations

This included a festival of flowers, a Grand Ball - at £4 a ticket, Pram Grand Prix, 750 years of Choral Music Concert, Grand Angling competition, festival cricket match, tennis festival, It's a Knockout competition and much more!

In 2022, there has, once again, been something for everyone from historical lectures, a festival afternoon, walking events, film screenings and music concerts with more to come before the end of the year.

Let's whizz through what's happened so far and what's to come before the end of the year:

Berkhamsted and St Peter's History and Future Bought Alive

The celebrations started in earnest in May with four distinguished speakers reminding us of our past and looking to our future. Julian Hunt, President of the Buckinghamshire Archaeological Society, gave a potted history of our town claiming that Berkhamsted has always been a 'place where you want to be seen' judging by the accumulated wealth of some of the residents of the town and the fact that it already had a vineyard, 64 oxen grazing and two mills when it was recorded as a Borough in the Domesday Book 1086!

During the next talk, we heard from long-standing church member and historian, Dr Christopher Green who took us on a tour through St Peter's history. We learnt that in 1880, £800 was needed for external repairs (£53,000 in today's money) and only £22 was raised in the first six months of the fundraising campaign!

Christopher told us about a blocked off door near the choir stalls which led to a second storey (look



Dr Christopher Green with ex-rector, now Dean of Ely, the Very Rev Mark Bonney

Our final talk featured Peter Matthews and ex-Berkhamsted resident and professional astrophysicist Dr Suzie Imber who took us into the future using their expertise in long term business forecasting and space exploration, giving us an insight into what life might be like here in 100 years' time. From solar farms in space, astronauts on Mars by 2050, smart offices that remember your preferences, robots creating robots creating robots, automation in so many more jobs and space stations on the moon, life will be very different. We're looking forward to the journey!

For those who missed the talks, a free 800th historical display created by Berkhamsted Local History and Museum Society will remain in church until the autumn. This features a short video on a loop and display panels charting the history of the town and can be visited daily when the church is open.

800th Festival

An 800th Festival Day was celebrated on Sunday 26th June. The sun shone, the church was bedecked in flowers and the day started with a special Patronal Festival service (celebrating St Peter's Day) welcoming back previous rector the Very Reverend Mark Bonney, Dean of Ely (who was rector at the church between 1996 and 2004). This was followed by a Fair in the afternoon (reminiscent of Petertide Fairs of old) on the church lawns which was well supported by the town's residents.

Children delighted in train rides, a magician, games and face painting whilst adults tried their hand at the bottle tombola, raffle and enjoyed the refreshments plus entertainment from ukulele band BURP and U3A folk singers.



out for it by the first of the south pews), the town's fire engine being kept in the West End in the 19th century and there being 114 examples of Mason's marks representing ten different masons who worked on erecting the building in the thirteenth century.

Even the dogs of Berkhamsted came out in force for the dog show with prizes in five categories including best biscuit catcher and dog that looks most like its owner!

Beating the Bounds



A group of intrepid walkers participated in a walk following the tradition of Beating of the Bounds where church members would walk the geographical boundary of the parish. St Peter's 800th walk took in Ashridge to the north of the town and Haresfoot to the south, with pauses to pray and ending with a celebratory tea in the Court House.

This was followed by a further pilgrimage to Little Gaddesden church, a member of St Peter's team church, in August.

Music in the Church

The church welcomed talented young cellist, Willard Carter in March whilst in June there was a wonderful concert by the Bridgewater Sinfonia, Chiltern Chamber Choir and St Peter's church choir with music from the last 800 years including Parry, Britten and Saint-Saens whilst in July all were welcome at a special choral evensong and foot-tapping Hertswing Jazz Concert.

LOOKING TO THE AUTUMN

St Peter's birthday celebrations continue until the end of the year with the following activities (all at St Peter's church on the High Street unless otherwise stated). Further details at:

www.stpetersberkhamsted.org.uk/800 or by following @StPetersBerkhamsted on social media

Town-wide Photography Competition

Sponsored by [EIC Insurance Services](#) with the theme of either 'Berkhamsted' and/or 'Celebration', anyone can enter this fantastic photo competition, with three categories, each with £100 prize money. One for Infants and Juniors, one for Secondary schools and an Open competition for people living in an HP4 postcode. All entries should be submitted electronically to berkphotocomp@gmail.com with 'Photography Competition' in the subject field. The filename for each image must indicate whether it is on the theme of 'Berkhamsted' or 'Celebration' and include the photographer's name. All entries must be received by Friday 28th October.

SEPTEMBER

Thursday 8th September – GRAFITTI AND HERALDRY TALKS 7 and 8pm.

Free talks on Medieval and later inscriptions and graffiti around the church followed by an introduction to Heraldry with examples of coats of arms and tablets linked to local Berkhamsted families.

Sunday 11th September 3pm TOUR OF ST PETER'S AND COURT HOUSE ([Part of Heritage Open Days](#))

Join a tour around St Peter's, the second largest church in the county, in its 800th year. View many interesting tombs, memorials and stained glass and see the Tudor Court House.

Saturday 10th September SPONSORED BIKE AND HIKE AROUND LOCAL CHURCHES

If you are a keen cyclist, why not join us on a day walking and cycling between local country churches in Hertfordshire, raising funds to support St Peter's 800th fund?

Saturday 10th/ Sunday 11th OKTOBERFEST CELEBRATIONS

Celebrating Germanic culture as part of the 800th celebrations, on the Saturday evening there will be a Mass celebrated in German by Fr Peter Anthony, vicar of All Saints Margaret Street in London, followed by Austrian cheese and wine at 7:30pm in the Court House. This will be followed by an outdoors Bavarian breakfast with sausage and beer after the 09:30 Mass on Sunday. All Welcome.

OCTOBER AND NOVEMBER

Friday 28th October 7pm – 800th Parish Dinner
Sunday 30th October 9:30am Celebration of All Saints Day and visit by Alan, Bishop of St Albans for the 9:30 service.

Saturday 26 November – Strathspey Reels and Whisky Tasting

An evening of Scottish country dancing and whisky tasting.

Sunday 27 November – Festival of Light and Advent Carol Service from 4pm
See St Peter's church lit up by thousands of candles followed by a traditional Advent Carol Service at 7pm sung by the choir.

THE 800TH HERITAGE FUND

Money raised at all events this year are going towards the **St Peter's 800th Heritage Fund** to preserve the church building for future generations to enjoy alongside supporting the Mayor of Dacorum and Bishop of St Albans annual appeals.



St Peter's at Night.

The church would be delighted to accept contributions (coins/gifts and legacy donations) to maintain the upkeep of the church (which costs £700 a day to run) so that generations in 100, 200, 800 years will be able to enjoy the building. [Donate via our website or in church.](#)

By Pru Murray and Stephen Lally

Rectory Lane Cemetery News

Award

The Rectory Lane Cemetery project team have again been successful in gaining a Green Flag Community Award. The award is the international quality mark for parks and green spaces. The news that Rectory Lane Cemetery has achieved the Green Flag Award again is testament to the hard work and dedication of the team that make it a great place that everyone can enjoy.

The Stonemason's Work

It is easy to spot the work of our stonemason, Will Yendell, where he has been commissioned to restore a damaged memorial. What is harder is to believe that it is the original stone, cleaned up or sand-blasted, rather than a completely new stone.

A good example is that of a hospital matron, **Sister Hannah Cottingham**, whose original memorial was paid for by the Officers of the Inns of Court in recognition of her work tending the wounded and sick in the VAD hospital, The Beeches. Over the decades the memorial deteriorated, but her story is an important one and we were delighted when the Old Berkhamstedians offered to fundraise for a 'war memorial'. An old acacia tree which had been growing in the school quad for many years had been felled, and the wood was used to create hand-turned bowls which were sold to raise the funds needed. Since the restoration, which also replaced the damaged solid base with a space for a garden, the grave has been adopted and sensitively planted up with plants. A lovely combination of professional restoration, community support and volunteer effort.



Sister Cottingham's memorial before and after restoration

Recent Visitors:

At the **BerkoFest Children's Book Festival** children met and were entertained by a great group of really engaging authors.

The Cemetery was the location for the **Hospice of St Francis Volunteer event** - with volunteers being taken on a tour of the Cemetery.

Ten members of **Berkhamsted Art Society** spent an evening in the relaxing environment of the Cemetery, drawing and painting.

1st Berkhamsted Brownies with their leaders spent an evening session in the cemetery as they had been learning about bees and wanted to do something to help wild bees in the Cemetery.

Become a Friend

To join the Friends please use this application form (or a photocopy of it). Alternatively, you can download an application form from the Friends website:

www.stpetersberkhamstedfriends.org.uk

Personal Details:

Title:
Full Name:
Address:
Postcode:
Telephone:
Email:

Subscriptions

Individual	£12
Family	£20
Corporate	£50

Gift Aid

My subscription payments **should/should not** be treated as Gift Aid donations (delete as appropriate)

Bankers Standing Order

Bank Name:
Bank Address:
Postcode:

Please pay The Friends of St Peter's Church
Great Berkhamsted, A/c No. 64109216, NatWest
Bank (60-02-21) the sum of:

£	Amount in words
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Beginning on :

Date:

and annually thereafter until further notice,
charging my account:

Account Name:
Sort Code:
Account Number:

Date:

Signature:

Please return this form to: Paul Crosland,
11 Upper Hall Park, Berkhamsted, HP4 2NW