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PARISH NEWS - EDITORIAL DEADLINE

The deadline for contributions for each issue is the 1st Sunday of the previous month. Hence, the deadline for the **May** issue is **Sunday 6th April 2025.**

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PARISH NEWS IS A FREE PUBLICATION and can also be viewed (in full colour) online on our parish website:

www.stmaryssaffronwalden.org/parishnews

Cover photograph by Gilly Hayes
The photograph on the cover of last month's magazine was
incorrectly attributed, and should have been credited to
Simon Ross. The error is regretted. Ed

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The Rector's Letter

From The Rev'd Jeremy Trew Jeremy writes...

This year Easter is late, which means a long spring term for the schools, followed by a slightly-shorter-but-still-oh-so-long summer term. Will teachers and children survive these lengthy stretches? The date of Easter varies so much because it is tied to a lunar calendar which functions quite differently from the solar one we are more used to. Sorry if this variable date for Easter causes you problems. Sadly this is not



something we can blame on people half way around the world, as the current way of calculating the date of Easter was settled at no less an august place as Whitby, North Yorkshire, in the late seventh century. The arguments thrown about at the time as to when this holiest of festivals should be celebrated had little to do with piety and humble religion, and a great deal to do with politics. Mind you, the very first Easter had more to do with politics than religion. The people who campaigned for the death of Jesus did so, not because they had tested his claims against the teachings of their faith and found him wanting, but because they feared the political fallout if he turned out to be who he claimed to be.

"When people tell me that Christianity is not political, I ask them which version of the Bible they have been reading," said Archbishop Desmond Tutu. Christianity has been politically active for all its two thousand years; whether that has been as a political movement, campaigning for the abolition of slavery and the relief of the poor; or, as a tool of the power brokers in the campaigns of the crusading popes and kings and in examples such as Northern Ireland, Israel/Palestine and Ukraine today. To say that religion and politics do not mix is to say that either politics is not concerned with the fundamental needs of people, or that religion is other worldly, and only that. Jesus demonstrated that God was willing to get into his world and get his hands dirty. He was not afraid to be bloodied in order to make a point and broker a solution concerning the greatest of human problems — our guilt and loneliness.

Christian churches light a new candle each Easter because it reminds us that God's light shone through our darkest act – the murder of an innocent man. The difference that event makes is far from other worldly. And so is Christianity.

Best wishes Jeremy

The Mystery of John: Reflections on the Fourth Gospel

Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene came to the tomb... (John 20:1)

Those of you who have heard me preach will know my deep love for St John's wonderful, profound Gospel. Longstanding members of St Mary's congregation may recall that some years ago I wrote a short paper on my reflections, leading to a presentation with some lively and enjoyable discussion in the Parish Rooms.

When I retired in 2021, I felt there was more to add to this and have spent time expanding these reflections into a book. Who was St John the Evangelist? Why is his Gospel so different from the other three? What is his special message, and what does he tell us about Jesus? And how does his Gospel relate to our own lives?

I'm delighted to say that the book will be published by Instant Apostle in June (paperback £13.99, or e-book 6.99). Please look out for the June edition of Parish News for full details of the publication date and events to launch the book.

As with my poetry book This is the Only Moment, all my personal proceeds will be given to the churches of the Team Ministry.

Paula Griffiths

APCM and New Electoral Roll

A new electoral roll has to be prepared at least 15 days before the Saffron Walden Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM) on Sunday 11th May 2025. Inclusion in the roll enables you to attend and vote at the APCM, and to stand for election to the PCC or be appointed as a Sidesman. Everyone wishing to be on the new electoral roll must reapply, even if they are on the existing roll. Application forms are available in church, or may be downloaded from the church website (stmaryssaffronwalden.org). It is requested that completed forms be returned by 6th April, to allow time for the production of the new electoral roll.

6 Parish News: April 2025

Summary of items from the PCC Meeting on 22nd January

- 1. The PCC were reminded of the need to appoint a new **Electoral Roll Officer**.
- 2. Steve Hasler and Paula Griffiths had made written representations to Lisa Nandy (Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport) and Kemi Badenoch MP about proposed restrictions to the **Listed Places of Worship Grant Scheme**, which now limits recovery of VAT on repairs and improvements on the church to a maximum of £25,000 p.a., which would result in an increased cost of the lighting scheme.
- 3. The PCC resolved to make an application to repair cracks in the lead in the **south aisle roof** at a cost of up to £1,050 plus VAT.
- 4. The **Organ** Subcommittee has revised the statement of needs, which is only slightly changed except some parts are withdrawn and some of the listening exercise conclusions incorporated. It was suggested that we might approach three organ builder companies to visit and submit a proposal. Oli King suggested a new project leader be appointed.
- 5. **Music** is going well: ten or so children attend Joyful Noise, and there are ten choral scholars. Now, over 50% of the choir are 18 years old or younger.
- 6. **The youth worker vacancy** will be advertised soon. There will possibly be two posts involved: one for work with children of primary school age and one for children of secondary school age. Meanwhile youth work is co-ordinated with the community church and Gill Caswell is helping with the younger children on Sunday mornings.
- 7. **Open the Book Project:** The Deanery will be training people to tell bible stories in schools using a prescribed script that the schools can see in advance.
- 8. Lighting Project: A faculty was submitted on 5th November and was recommended for approval on 12th December. Other approvals have been received or are expected. Changes in the Listed Places of Worship Scheme regarding reclaiming VAT will add to our project costs. Grant applications will need adjusting, which will be difficult at this stage. It is proposed to interview the two lowest bidders to select a preferred contractor. The work cannot be started until the beginning of September because of bats. The Project hoped to bring a clear proposal to the March PCC meeting. This means that it may not be possible to install it this year. Faculty will last for at least 12 months and this time is relatively easily extendable. Installation beyond end March 2026 will require a new bat survey but should not need a new faculty application. We have finally received the report from our Energy Audit for the church building, paid for by the CoE centrally. This confirms that the highest priority project should be to address the lighting.
- 9. Cracked 7th Bell a faculty for its repair has been granted.

- 10. **2024 budget:** The major swing from the surpluses that we enjoyed up to 2019 to the deficits now occurring in most years is due to the large drop in Stewardship income from £199k in 2019 to £149k in 2023. However, Stewardship income picked up in 2024 to around £159k. As a result the year-end forecast for 2024 is likely to show a surplus of around £7,967, aided by Gift Aid recovery, high collections at two Carol services, and not having a youth worker in the last quarter.
- 11. **2025 Budget**: The PCC approved a budget for 2025 which will result in a deficit. The Parish share has risen by about £1,000 (to £130,700) and wages (Payroll £69,000) have risen by about £2,000. The Treasurer recommended a Stewardship Appeal early in the year and that PCC's decisions regarding outward giving should be communicated to recipients in good time. The PCC approved a Schedule of Fees for 2025.
- 12. **Safeguarding Officer's Report:** The DBSs for the PCC are up to date. There will be an audit this year or next, it is important that all leaders keep up to date with online courses. Nathan Colley wants to ensure that if something does happen people know what to do, and there are copies of the handbook as a quick guide available in church and in the office. Judith Hasler said that we have to adopt the national document and it will be on our record each year and roll it out so that people can understand it. The Parish Office staff would also be trained. A small team will plan how training and implementation of the new system can be rolled out.
- 13. **Updated Health and Safety Policy:** Early health and safety training for some services has already been done, but training has not yet begun for others. Fire evacuation training is done without warning and must include evacuating the church while it is in use. The PCC approved and adopted the updated Health and Safety Policy, with exceptions.
- 14. **Daughter churches**: St John's, Little Walden have been managing without heating for several months but will soon have some. Some fire bricks will need replacement for a cost of about £5,000. Brick sponsorship has raised £700 so far. St John's and St James' have had good attendance over Christmas.

The next PCC Meeting is on Wednesday 19th March at 7.30pm, and the APCM will be in church on 11th May at approximately 11.30am

Extracted from draft PCC minutes by Clifford Want and Martin Hugall



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Toilet Twinning

How many of you have used the toilet in church and noticed the sign inside saying this toilet is twinned with Lusaka, Gambia. Do you know what this means? This is a Tearfund project which has been running since 2010. There are still 1.5 billion people (almost 1 in 5)[WHO/ UNICEF 2023] who have no access to any toilet facilities.

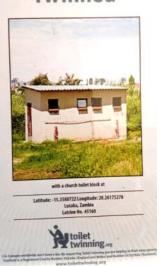
This leads to several health problems and safety issues for woman and children as they try to find somewhere private to relieve themselves.

Toilet Twinning not only helps villages to build their own toilets by sourcing local materials but also helps with hygiene education through community led workshops.

It costs £60 to twin your home toilet. (The equivalent of 18 cups of coffee). A certificate is supplied that you can display in your own facility.

For further information go to toilettwinning.org/twin Gill Caswell

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On the second Saturday in September each year, 30 counties across the UK 'Ride and Stride' to raise money to help preserve and improve our historic church buildings

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- www.friendsofessexchurches.org.uk/ri de-stride for further information or scan the QR code below







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- Explore villages and parish churches by bike or on foot
- Enjoy the exercise, meet new people and raise much needed funds for your church
- Please join us!

Radwinter Road Cemetery, Saffron Walden, CB11 3HU

Are you looking for a final resting place for a loved one? The Cemetery at Radwinter Road is an oasis in the town which is open 24/7 and there is tranquillity within.

Further information on burials is available from The Cemetery Officer at Saffron Walden Town Council, Saffron Walden, CB10 1HR Telephone: 01799 516501 or email enquiries@saffronwalden.gov.uk

Our local Cemetery is a peaceful space which offers a natural environment for all types of wildlife and as a result is an important nature conservation resource in the town. Daily maintenance and gardening are carried out which ensures the space is both clean and tidy, where residents and visitors can visit for peace and reflection.



The Cemetery is divided into different areas; Lawn cemetery, Traditional area, Garden of Remembrance, scattered ashes, and areas for children and young people. There is also a separate section for War graves which is cared for by The Commonwealth War Graves Commission. A small well-appointed Chapel is available to hire.

https://saffronwalden.gov.uk/services/cemetery/



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Pastoral Care Course Presentation Service



Congratulations to Vivian Falk, Claire Dunn and Kathy Rands on being awarded their Certificates following successful completion of the Diocesan Pastoral Care Course. These were awarded by the Bishop of Barking, Lynne Cullens, on Saturday 8th February at Chelmsford Cathedral where presentations were made to students from across the Diocese. The students in these groups have felt a call from God to a specific, pastoral ministry within their communities and have been dedicated to train and equip themselves to better serve their brothers and sisters as disciples of Christ.

The local group met at St Pauls Mission Hall in Wimbish for 6 weeks in the Autumn and were drawn from across the Deanery. In addition to the three members of St Mary's, Ned Tozer of the Icknield Way Parish and Pete Gray from Wimbish also took part. The photo shows the participants with Bishop Lynne, Archdeacon Jonathan, Canon Caroline Harding LLM and our own Tracey Nicholls who co-led the course with Judith Hasler. Claire and Judith were unable to attend the service.

At St Mary's our Pastoral team undertakes regular visits to the housebound, some of whom also receive Holy Communion. This is one way

in which we can keep members in touch with St Mary's when they are no longer able to attend in person. Our livestreamed services are also much appreciated by those who have the technology to follow them online. Training in pastoral care is also relevant for many of our volunteers and staff in other caring roles in the church, for example, leaders of our Tinies group, supporting children and their parents, and our Parish Office team and wardens. Their role in supporting others is much wider than just organisation, administration and buildings upkeep— to which those who received tea, cake and a listening ear when things get tough can attest!

If you are involved in caring informally for others and wish to develop your pastoral skills and grow your pastoral role in church, then do get in touch with our Pastoral Assistant, Judith Hasler, who will be pleased to have a chat with you.





FRIENDS OF THE PARISH CHURCH

The Friends of the Parish Church is a very active group and has been so for over 90 years. We are able to help financially with minor and major projects at St Mary's. They range from the new Advent candle which we have just purchased to a

substantial sum to help the proposed Lighting Project.

Almost 40% of our members have active and varied roles in the Church. We have a bookstand with an assortment of items on sale and next to that a dedicated noticeboard which will keep you up to date on our many activities. We are also on the Church website under "Groups" so do take a look.

If you would like to learn more, pick up a leaflet from the bookstand which also includes an application form to **join us**. Just hand it to any of the Friends' Council members or pop in the Parish Office letterbox. If you feel that you would like to leave us a legacy, there are forms available on the bookstand for this too.

Chairman: Denis Tindley, Secretary: Pamela Mugliston, Treasurer: Sandra Marsh

A Friends' Recipe Book

Recipes are coming in slowly but surely, we still need more though so Friends please keep sending them in. Savoury or sweet, or one of each. Don't forget a photo would be great so that we can give the book some colour or a short sentence about the recipe, "from your Grandma's collection" or something of the sort. Remember we can not use recipes straight from a published cookbook for copyright reasons so please make sure you make at least two substantive changes to your version

We hope to gather all your favourites together and be able to publish in time for the Christmas Fair. Perhaps a taster evening in November would be fun. What do you think?

We hope that this will be a favourite for the bookstand and raise some funds for the Church.

Please send recipes to Pamela (pjmteddybear@btinternet.com)

The Cathedral trip to Lichfield This trip is now fully booked but we will take names for a reserve list just in case, so please let me know if you are interested. Places do go very quickly so watch out for the announcement of the autumn trip and book as soon as you can.

Happy Easter everyone to and from all The Friends. Pamela

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The Calendar

This calendar is provisional. See The Grapevine or the church website for the latest information.

St Mary's, Saffron Walden

One service in church each Sunday is streamed on YouTube [Y]: details on the church website. Coffee is served after the Sunday 10.30am services.

Wednesday 2 April

*Get Outside in Lent: Wimbish Church2pm*Lent: The Bible Course, Parish Rooms

Thursday 3 April

10am Silent Prayer in North Chapel

7.30pm *Lent: The Bible Course, Parish Rooms

Sunday 6 April

8am BCP Holy Communion

10.30am Holy Communion [Y] & Sunday Club

Tuesday 8 April

7.30pm *Lent: Unanswered Prayer, Littlebury Green Church

Wednesday 9 April

*Get Outside in Lent: Wimbish Church2pm*Lent: The Bible Course, Parish Rooms

Thursday 10 April

2pm Mothers' Union: The Story of the Quaker Tapestry

7.30pm *Lent: The Bible Course, Parish Rooms

Holy Week

Palm Sunday 13 April

8am BCP Holy Communion

10.30am Holy Communion with Passion Reading [Y] and Sunday Club

6.30pm Devotional Offering: The Crucifixion by Stainer

Monday 14 April

9.30am Holy Communion

7.30pm Bible Study and Compline



Tuesday 15 April

9.30am Holy Communion

7.30pm Bible Study and Compline

Wednesday 16 April

8am Morning Prayer 9.30am Holy Communion

7.30pm Bible Study and Compline

Maundy Thursday 17 April

9.30am Holy Communion

7.30pm Choral Eucharist with hand washing

Good Friday 18 April

10.30am Walk of Witness, starting at URC Abbey Lane, finishing at St Mary's

2pm An Hour at the Cross

Easter Day 20 April

6am Dawn Holy Communion, followed by breakfast

8am BCP Holy Communion

10.30am Easter Communion [Y] and Sunday Club

with congregational Hallelujah Chorus by Handel

6.30pm Choral Evensong

Wednesday 23 April

2pm *Lent: The Bible Course, Parish Rooms

Thursday 24 April

7.30pm *Lent: The Bible Course, Parish Rooms

Sunday 27 April

8am BCP Holy Communion [Y]

10.30am Family Service6.30pm Taize Service

Wednesday 30 April

2pm *Lent: The Bible Course, Parish Rooms



^{*}Lent Courses: see church website for details

Regular weekday services at St Mary's

Tuesdays

5pm Evening Prayer by Zoom, see weekly bulletin for login details

Wednesdays

8am Morning Prayer

9.30am Holy Communion (with Prayers for Wholeness and Healing on the

1st Wednesday of the month)

St James', Sewards End

Sunday 6 April
10.30am Holy Communion
Good Friday 18 April
12pm Hour at the Cross
Easter Day 20 April
10.30am Faster Communion

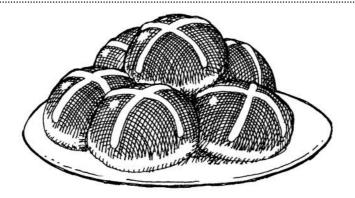


St John's, Little Walden

Palm Sunday 13 April 10.30am Family Service Easter Day 20 April 10.30am Easter Communion



All are invited to H2H, our café-style contemporary worship service, led jointly between the Ministry Team and our Youth Group, Aftershock. H2H takes place in the Parish Rooms at 6.30pm on the 3rd Sunday of the month. Tea, coffee and sweet treats provided. All welcome – young and old!



April Contemplation

Provided by the Prayer Team

As we continue to pray for the peace of a very troubled world, may the words of an old fashioned chorus help you to draw near to God. If you know the tune, you might find it helpful to sing it, and it could become a constant prayer in your heart....

"Cleanse me from my sin, Lord, Put Thy pow'r within, Lord, Take me as I am, Lord, And make me all Thine own. Keep me day by day, Lord Underneath Thy sway, Lord Make my heart Thy palace, And Thy Royal Throne."

(R.Hudson Pope 1879-1967)

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St Mary's Music News

The SMMA aims to bring both sacred and secular music to St Mary's Church. Our popular Spring Coffee Concert series will, by the time you read this newsletter, have taken place from the end of February and throughout March. This started with performances by SWCHS students, followed by an organ recital by Phil Sunderland. The next three recitals, began with Krassimira Jeliazkova and Elizabeth Mucha on violin and piano, then Sarah Lamont singing soprano with Derek Scurll on piano, and concluded with Bob Goldsmith on piano.

As a separate treat, on 22 March the choir of Gonville and Caius gave an evening performance of Fauré's Requiem, with additional pieces by Purcell and Walton. All these events are free, but donations via a retiring collection or via the QR code on programmes are always very welcome. There will be news of the Summer Lunchtime Concert series in future newsletters, as well as details of an organ recital by world-famous organist Wayne Marshall at 5pm on 12 July.

Fostering talent is also a key aim of the SMMA. On 16 February our Organ Scholar Ziyi bravely and successfully conducted the whole of morning service as part of her musical development. Her view on the experience? "Scary, but I'm glad I did it." Most unusually Oli sat with the congregation, no doubt assessing the singing from a different angle.

The choir is always very busy supporting the congregation in worship through Lent and leading up to Easter. The Junior Choir as usual enjoyed being a key part of Mothering Sunday, which was on 30 March this year. The Eastertide Devotional Offering at 6.30 on Palm Sunday 13 April will be Stainer's Crucifixion, with the choir and 2 external talented soloists. On Maundy Thursday 17 April there will be Choral Eucharist at 7.30pm. Then on 20 April there will be a joyful celebration of Easter Sunday, with the brass group in full flight, followed probably more quietly by Choral Evensong later in the day at 6.30.

We have said a sad goodbye to Ellie Beare who has been a member of the choir first as a Junior Chorister, then a Choral Scholar, then in the adult choir, and most recently as a mentor to the current Scholars. She will be much missed. Our sadness was tempered by a party in her honour, kindly hosted by Jim and Siong Siong.

On a more administrative note, the SMMA's AGM will take place after morning service on Sunday 18 May. Everyone, whether or not a member of the SMMA, is very welcome to attend. The Minutes of the last meeting, as well as the Agenda for the AGM and the accounts for 2024, will be available for inspection on the prescribed Church noticeboards as usual.

And finally, after writing the SMMA newsletter for 6 years, I am now leaving it in the very capable hands of Phil Sunderland. I wish you all an uplifting Easter.

Ottilie Lefever

The Editor would like to express his thanks to Ottilie for her years of submitting these reports. In her safe hands, they have become an invaluable way of informing the congregation of St Mary's about the hard work consistently put in to the music here.

Quinqua Quiz

Ashdon's "Black Sheep" team triumphed once again on Saturday evening at the annual Quinqua Quiz held at St Mary's Church, Saffron Walden to raise money for the Bishop of Chelmsford's 2025 Lent Appeal for the Christian charity, Housing Justice. The seven teams present raised £235 in aid of the appeal. Quizmaster, the Reverend Canon Chris Bishop, is pictured awarding the trophy to the winning team while thanking everyone for their support.



The Hundred Parishes Society—Ponds

Late 19th-century Ordnance Survey maps record the location of numerous ponds in farmland across lowland England, but since then farming practices have changed and many have disappeared.

Well-maintained ponds are hot spots for biodiversity, supporting special plants and animals. Responding to concerns about the loss of such habitats, researchers at the Pond Restoration Research Group at University College, London joined forces with others to investigate the potential for restoring such lost ponds and produced advice about the best ways to create new ones.



Following on from this, Essex Wildlife Trust identified 17.200 Essex farmland ponds on these old maps but noted that 10,400 had since disappeared. A few have been restored, and the team is working with the Farming & Wildlife Advisory Group to secure funding to help more farmers reinstate their lost ponds -

https://www.fwageast.org.uk/ponds

However, pond restoration can be challenging - as evidenced by the difficulties faced during the project to resolve problems with Doctor's Pond in Great Dunmow. In recent years it has been polluted by toxic blue green algal growth. Ambitious and costly plans were drawn up to desilt the pond which necessitated the safe removal of fish so they could be returned in due course. Work commenced last October with the installation of safety fencing and the draining of water so that a digger could be used to help remove over 1,900 tons of contaminated silt. Heavy rains made the silt very slippery, and the digger became stranded in January. By the end of February all the silt had been removed.

Future plans include landscaping of the surrounding area and replanting with suitable vegetation once the pond is refilled. It is anticipated that in the coming months this attractive pond will once again provide a great habitat for ducks, fish and dragonflies.



Gelio's Anthology of Obscure Proverbs

Going back to a time when most people did not have wardrobes full of clothes, and you had to "make-do and mend".

Coming up to Easter, the proverb that I found needs a certain amount of reflection.

It comes from a sixteenth century English compiler of wise thoughts called 'Poor Robin', and is

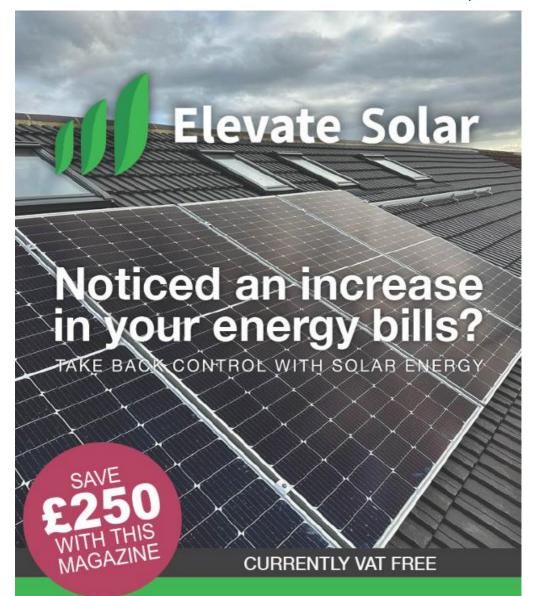
'At Easter let your clothes be new, or else be sure you will it rue.'

1st April—All Fools' Day

In years gone by, the rules surrounding April Fools' Day were this: between midnight and noon on 1st April, everyone is fair game to be made a fool of. It is the morning of the practical joke. But the aim is not just to discomfort the victim; he (or she) must be tricked into taking action himself, sent on a 'fool's errand'.

And so, children would be sent to the dairy for a pint of dove's milk, or to the bookshop to ask for a copy of *The Life of Eve's Mother*. Practical jokes on a bigger scale were played—in 1860, a vast number of people received an official looking invitation to the Tower of London that read 'Admit the Bearer and Friends to view the Washing of the White Lions'. Precisely the same trick had been played in 1698.

Then, on the stroke of noon, tradition decrees that April Fools is finished. If anyone attempts devilry thereafter, even while the clock is still striking, it recoils on their own head. A child would then race through the sing-song formula: "April Fool's Day's past and gone, you're the fool, and I am none".



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Our Replacement Lighting – A Cycle Ride Across Wales to Raise Funds

The Lighting Team has made considerable progress since the update in the March Parish News that the cost of the project has increased. With respect to the approx. £32,000 VAT which we can no longer recover following changes made by the government, we need to fundraise further. To help with this, I have decided to open up for sponsorship a ride I have planned for 6th to 9th May 2025. This is Lon Las Cymru, a 4-day ride from Holyhead to



Cardiff, 253 miles and 16,500 feet of climbing in total. If you would like to sponsor my ride, there will be sign-up sheets on display in St Mary's from the start of April. Donations can also be made by electronic bank transfer using the details on the church website at "www.stmaryssaffronwalden.org/lighting". Please use a reference which includes the word "Lighting". There will also be a website to follow my progress on the ride, details to come in the May Parish News.

We have now assessed the bids received from four installation contractors and have rejected two due to cost. The overall cost from the least expensive has increased by approx. 15%, which is over £30,000. This increase includes the impact of building cost inflation of 10% per year, the previous estimate is now 15 months old. The Lighting Team has identified potential cost savings, and the two final bidders were asked to include these changes in a re-costing when we interviewed them on 6th March. We'll be able to let you know the final cost projection in a future Parish News and on a display in the church.

The challenge now is to raise the extra funds and the Fundraising Team met on 3rd March. We are confident that there are a number of places where we can find the additional funding and assessment gives us confidence that we will be able to find this in 2025. If you have offered to help with a grant application we may well be in contact with you in the near future!

The time to install the replacement lighting is now. A delay of one year will increase the cost by £25-30,000 due to building cost inflation. Unfortunately, the uncertainty of the world political situation creates a considerable level of instability on the cost of building materials including lighting and a delay into 2026 could be even more expensive. In view of this, the Lighting Team are working towards an installation start of mid-

September 2025, possibly with some preparative work just ahead of that. More details on the timing will be made available in the May or June Parish News.

If you haven't donated to the project and would like to but had decided not to because we thought we had all the funding, as noted last month that is no longer true. Details how to donate are still on the church website at "www.stmaryssaffronwalden.org/lighting" and all donations are very welcome.

Steve Hasler March 2025



Muniments Room

From the Archives

A monthly record of pieces of interest from our past Parish Magazines

Compiled by our Archivist, the Rev'd Canon Chris Bishop

From Parish News, April 1952

My Dear Parishioners,

As our preparation for Easter, I do ask that those of you who are regular communicants throughout the year to help me on Easter Day to give a real welcome to those who are not so familiar as we are with the service of Holy Communion. We shall only be able to do this effectively by each one of us taking a reverent, eager and joyful part in the service so that they catch through us the true spirit of the whole activity.

M. ROY SKINNER (Vicar of St Mary's 1946-1963)

What's in a name? (7)

Unless one knows something about the history of workhouses, the name The Spike, a turning off Radwinter Road just before the Community Hospital, seems a strange choice. Although a new frontage has been added, the bulk of The Spike has had a number of incarnations. The most recent of these was the original Saffron Walden Community Hospital. Before that it was St James' Hospital and originally it was the Saffron Walden Poor Law Union workhouse.

Before the Saffron Walden Poor Law Union was formed in 1835, the Saffron Walden workhouse had been at the top of Saffron Walden High Street accommodating some fifty inmates. The new workhouse was built to accommodate three hundred and forty inmates in 1835-6. The workhouse was built on a broadly cruciform plan with the main ranges being three storeys high with some additional single storey ranges enclosing the inmates' yards. There was also an entrance block which had a large clock over the entrance.

The inmates were housed in separate blocks which radiated from the central, supervisory octagonal hub which contained the master and matron's accommodation. Men were located in the west wing, women in the east wing, boys in the north and girls in the south wing. Even families when admitted were separated according to gender and age. The boys' and girls' wings also contained schoolrooms. There was also an infirmary, a wash house, a bakery and a laundry. The workhouse also contained a block of single cells to accommodate casuals. By 1848 the workhouse could accommodate 400 inmates.

But why the name The Spike? The inhabitants of workhouses were expected to work for their living. One of the tasks that was frequently given was to pick apart the fibres of tarred ropes so they could be reused. This practice was called picking oakum. It has been suggested that the workers used a spike to help them, but an alternative suggestion is that a spike or finial often topped the workhouse roof. This was the case in the Great Dunmow workhouse (designed by the great Victorian architect George Gilbert Scott, who also designed the Albert Memorial as well as St Pancras station) where the entrance contained a large metal spike.

The workhouse in Saffron Walden was eventually closed in 1948.

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THAXTED FESTIVAL

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YOU in the **PEW** interviewed by Chris Bishop

Joe and Pauline Hordern

In answer to your question where my roots were, I was born in London and went to St Paul's School. Being a day boy, I was brought up and followed my parents Anglo-Catholic form of Worship, which I still prefer.

After Sandhurst I was commissioned into the Royal Warwickshire Regiment; our family regiment where two cousins were past members of the Regiment, and one younger one joins me at Regimental events. When stationed in Hamelin, the Pied Piper town in Germany, I was invited by the Regimental Padre, who was a good friend, to come to supper with him and his wife, as they had a friend staying. The friend was none other than Pauline. We married fifty-nine years ago this year!

Pauline always made our quarters a home, even when only a hut in the New Territories of Hong Kong

On retiring from active soldiering, I was appointed to run our Regimental Headquarters in the Tower of London; which was back where I had started my career!

This meant finding a suitable house to commute from and we settled in Radwinter. I was a church warden and Pauline worked with the parish council running meals on wheels and nursing on day or night duty, as well as tending to around ninety birds, including chickens, quail, ducks and geese. From there, we moved into Saffron Walden which Pauline knew from her childhood as she had many Quaker relations on her mother's side.

So, it was natural that we should attend the local parish Church when we moved into Saffron Walden, which we have both enjoyed. There is such a family atmosphere amongst the congregation.

One thing which we have particularly appreciated in Saffron Walden is the twice a week Market, with its wonderful selection of stalls and such a warm welcome from all the stall holders. We also both enjoy watching the Saffron Walden Carnival.

The time has come when we have decided, for family reasons, to move to Yorkshire to a village some four miles from our daughter's home rather than the three to five hours drive away as at present.

We have so much enjoyed the friendships we have established in the almost forty years we have lived in the area. We have so many happy memories to take with us. The wonderful wedding of our daughter, Virginia,

on a beautiful day in May in Radwinter, when all the spring wildflowers gave a wonderful setting of lining the roads with white is one most poignant memory.

You ask about the family motto. If I was to provide a new motto for our Coat of Arms I should choose "In Faith, and in Friendship "



Pauline and I take this opportunity to thank all those whom we have met during our time here for the friendship they have given us.



Ghe Crucifixion

JOHN STAINER



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