

The Abbey Church of St Peter & St Paul
serving the communities of Bourne
Dyke Twenty and Cawthorpe



PARISH MAGAZINE



AUGUST 2026
www.bourneabbey.uk



50p
Bourne Abbey Church Group

WORSHIP AT THE ABBEY DURING AUGUST

Morning Prayer and Evening Prayer
are said every weekday
at 9.00am and 5.30pm.

The Abbey is open between 9am and 6pm.



Churches are traditionally designed to be tranquil sanctuaries. They offer an ideal retreat from everyday stressors, providing a dedicated atmosphere for mindfulness, meditation, or simply finding a moment of personal stillness. Do come in.

Sunday 2 nd	Ninth Sunday after Trinity	Sung Eucharist CW	11.00am
		Sung Evensong	6.30pm
Tuesday 4 th		Said Eucharist CW	7.00pm
Thursday 6 th	Feast of the Transfiguration	Holy Communion BCP	10.00am
Sunday 9 th	Tenth Sunday after Trinity	Sung Eucharist CW	11.00am
Tuesday 11 th		Said Eucharist CW	7.00pm
Thursday 13 th		Holy Communion BCP	10.00am
Sunday 16 th	Eleventh after Trinity	Sung Eucharist CW	11.00am
		Sung Evensong	6.30pm
Tuesday 18 th		Said Eucharist CW	7.00pm
Thursday 20 th	MU Corporate Communion	Holy Communion BCP	10.00am
Sunday 23 rd	Twelfth after Trinity	Said Communion CW	9.00am
		All Age Eucharist	11.00am
Tuesday 25 th		Said Eucharist CW	7.00pm
Thursday 27 th		Holy Communion BCP	10.00am
Sunday 30 th	Thirteenth after Trinity	Sung Eucharist CW	11.00am

We welcome the names of those who are ill or awaiting an operation so that prayers may be offered for them. We also welcome the names of loved ones departed to be inscribed in the Abbey's Book of Remembrance.

Contact Churchwarden Jennifer Maclean

From the Abbey's Book of Remembrance for August

1st Elsie Swain : 2nd Wilfred Manderfield : John Wright
3rd Elsie Cullen : Maureen Davison : Ruby Knight : Keith Baggaley
4th John Tilley : Robin Harwood
6th Peter Garner : Philip Watts : Helen Orford
7th Phyllis Dalton : Robert Schwarz : Madeleine Orford
9th Agnes Baker : George Ranson (priest) : Peter Rakowski
10th Anthony Burkitt : John Smith : Alan Pegler : May Roebuck :
Ian James Godfrey : 12th Barbara Grace Shawley
13th Evelyn Allen : Alan Danby : Caroline Dale
14th Edward Livesey : John Mason
16th Darren Fuller : Audrey Gordon : Margaret Haggerty
17th Harvey Burrell, David Buttress : 18th Jean Burgin
22nd Catherine Keen : Stephen Sweeney : 24th Peter Charles Morris
25th Veronica Tyler : 26th John Dear : 27th Leonard Sinfield
28th Linda Elger : 29th James Hicks
30th Ronald Shipley : Graham Benn : 31st Eleanor Steel

Psalms 23 : COMING HOME

A Translation by John Eaton

With the Lord as my shepherd, I shall not be in want.

In green pastures he will let me lie; by still waters he will lead me.

He will restore my soul : he will guide me in ways of salvation for his name's sake.

Even though I walk in the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil;

for you will be with me; your rod and your crook will comfort me.

You have prepared a table before me, a sign to my foes;

you have anointed my head with oil; my cup runs over.

Truly, goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life,

and I shall come home to the house of the Lord for ever.



The Vicar's August Letter : 'The Power of the Adjective'

Dear Friends in Christ,

In our fast-paced, opinion-driven world, we have become quick to define people with one or two 'well-chosen adjectives. We can often be heard saying things like: 'He is arrogant' or 'She is kind' or 'They are lazy.' We often do not mean to be unkind when we label people in this way; we are just trying to make sense of others. But ... labelling people, even with seemingly harmless adjectives, can quietly distort how we see them and, consequently, how we might extend Christ-like love towards them.

The bible reminds us that *'death and life are in the power of the tongue'* (Proverbs 18:21). Words do not just describe reality; they shape it. When we call someone 'difficult', we expect to encounter difficulty. When we label a person 'kind', we may overlook their struggles or mistakes. In both cases, our adjectives diminish a living, growing image-bearer of God into something static and one-dimensional.

On the other hand, God never speaks of people in this way. Scripture records actions, motives and hearts, but it rarely freezes someone's identity with a label. Peter was not for ever 'The Denier', nor was Thomas always 'The Doubter'. Through grace, both became pillars of faith. God sees not only who we are, but also who we can become.

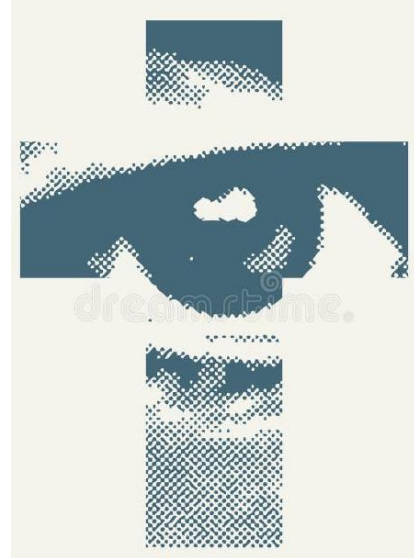
When we define people by adjectives, we often stop being curious about them. We assume we already know their story. But, real love, the kind modelled by Jesus, always involves curiosity and compassion. He did not look at Zacchaeus and think: 'Corrupt tax collector!'. Jesus looked up into the tree and said, *'Zacchaeus, hurry and come down; for I must stay at your house today.'* (Luke 19:5). By refusing to label Zacchaeus, Jesus opened a door that labels would have closed. When we do the same, when we see beyond adjectives to the person God loves, we create a space for transformation - both theirs and ours.



Applying adjectives is easy; seeing with grace takes effort. It means listening more, judging less and remembering that each person is more than their

worst moment - or their best. In his second letter to the Corinthians, Paul wrote: '*... we regard no one from a human point of view ...*' (2 Corinthians 5:16). If Christ has given us new eyes, then we are called to see others as new creations too.

This does not mean ignoring truth or pretending that people have no flaws. It means that we should be describing actions, rather than defining identities. For example, we can say, 'He acted harshly,' instead of, 'He is cruel.' The first invites accountability and hope for change; the second locks someone in a prison of our making.



Imagine a community where we spoke less about who people are and more about what God is doing in them. A community where our conversations were marked not by adjectives but by awe; an awe that acknowledges and wonders at how God can turn pride into humility, fear into faith, bitterness into forgiveness. In such a community, we would find fewer labels and more love; fewer fixed opinions and more patient understanding. In such a community we would grow closer to our goal, as followers of Christ, of not describing others accurately, but loving them faithfully.

As we interact with those around us, let us ask God to help us see beyond adjectives. Let us look past the surface, beyond the label, and into the sacred, messy and beautiful image of God that exists in each person. It is there that we will find so much more than words can ever say.

With every blessing to you all,
Fr Stephen

Confirmation classes will run from 1st August to the end of September - 10.00am on Saturday mornings. Classes are open to anyone wishing to be confirmed or anyone wishing to explore their faith and refresh their ideas on belief and discipleship. Contact Fr Stephen.

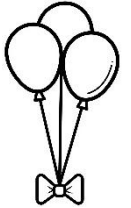


The Mothers' Union remember their Salad Days

Our July meeting began with sadness as we remembered in our opening prayers Derek Page and Susan Macey who contributed so much to the Mothers' Union and to church life.

Summer brings a sheaf of birthdays and cards were given out accordingly.

With age very much in our minds it was appropriate that our programme was all about our "Teens and Twenties". It was a great pleasure to welcome Ray Bennett to introduce the subject by telling us about his experience. He grew up in what was then the new garden city of Welwyn, left school at 15 and was employed locally until there was an opportunity to live and work in London, and not only London but Mayfair, which was what he really wanted to do. Alongside his day job he discovered a talent and passion for art and took life drawing classes. He found he was able to get on well with people but felt that he lacked confidence. A modelling course remedied that and he obtained a job at Anglia TV which he loved. By this time he was approaching 30 years old and regretfully we had to stop him at that point. But we all enjoyed his life story so much that we have managed to book Ray to continue next year with the next phase.

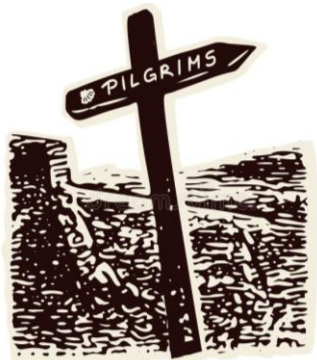


After such an entertaining introduction memories flowed as we shared in small groups. We discovered what astonishingly different lives from one another we had all lived. I certainly found it helpful to review my own life in greater perspective than was possible at the time. We were all shaped by our upbringing and parental values.

Some of us were working in our teens with people suffering from poverty and deprivation in society, or helping on the family farm, while others were in their ivory towers completing their education. A notable common theme was that of failure at some point, which was hard when it happened but dealing with it made us stronger in the long run.

In August we celebrate 150 years of the Mothers' Union with a day at Bishop Lincoln University, and we are invited for Mary Sumner Day on 8th August to our sister branch at Thurlby.

Sarah Speers, MU Leader



THE PILGRIM COURSE

continues on Thursdays at 10.45am
after the 10am BCP communion.

The subject: **THE CREEDS**

THE APOSTLES' CREED FROM THE BOOK OF COMMON PRAYER . . .

I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Ghost,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to the dead.

On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living
and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Ghost,
the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting.

Christians believe in the God
whom Jesus called Father,
who gives life to all things.

Christians believe in the man from Nazareth
who brought that mysterious God close to us,
who showed what it means to be a Son of God,
who was willing to die for his belief,
who lives on, by the power of God,
in his friends,
who will come again
to say who his real friends are.

Christians believe in the friends of Jesus,
who live the way he did, in his Spirit,
who bring God close to all other people,
who tell people the good news
that they are forgiven,
who build up peace on earth,
who know a better world is possible,
and who work together to make it come true.

. . . AND IN A VERSION BY H J RICHARDS

CHURCHWARDEN'S CHAT



Father Isaac and Father Stephen outside the west doors of the cathedral after the service

As you will know from Fr Stephen's letter last month, Fr Isaac was ordained to the priesthood in a service held at Lincoln Cathedral on Saturday 27 June.

It was a lovely service led by the Acting Bishop of Lincoln, the Rt Rev Dr Nicholas Chamberlain. Five priests were ordained, including the Rev Jennifer Lander, Fr Isaac's wife. Over sixty of the congregation travelled to Lincoln to support Fr Isaac, either in the specially hired coach or in their own cars. We arrived quite early and so had the pick of the rows of chairs for the best possible view.

The coach journey was a good opportunity for parishioners to chat to one another, and the buzz of conversation lasted both ways.

Fr Isaac celebrated his first service of Holy Communion in the Abbey on Sunday 5 July, having deaconed on the previous Sunday for his wife in her first celebration in All Saints', Stamford the previous Sunday. Our preacher, the Rev Fr Richard Stanton, had an uneventful journey from Norwich until the last few miles when the road closure for the Tractor Run unexpectedly necessitated a detour along country lanes; he arrived in the nick of time!

At the end of the service Fr Isaac was presented with an ordination gift from the parish – a beautiful home communion set. The service closed with a rousing rendition of 'Praise to the Lord, the Almighty, the King of creation'. It is a tradition that the newly-priested offer personal blessings to those who wish, so immediately after the service many of the congregation lined up in the Lady Chapel to receive one.

We then retired to the church hall for a parish buffet lunch, prepared by Nicola Day and served, with suitable drinks, by the Social Committee.

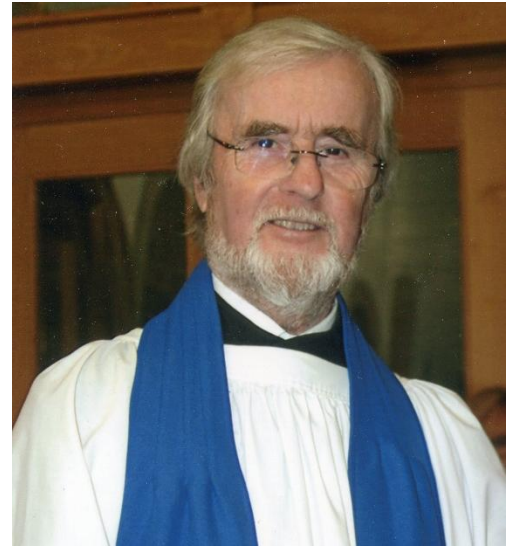
All in all, two memorable occasions.

Jennifer Maclean

REMEMBERING DEREK

This obituary is written by his daughter, Andi

Derek Hugh Page died suddenly of natural causes in Bourne Abbey Church on 28th May 2026 aged 84. He was born in Colchester, Essex, and spent his childhood there with his mother and father, Patricia and Frank, and younger siblings, Lesley and Alan.



He gained a student apprenticeship with Perkins in 1960 and moved to Peterborough. He served with the company for 45 years until 2005 when, at the age of 63 he took the decision to retire. By then Perkins had transitioned to Caterpillar. He started his career as a Design Draughtsman and progressed onto Design Engineer, Development Engineer, Senior Test Engineer, Design Project Engineer to Facilities Project Leader.

Married in 1967 to Elizabeth, they started married life in Peterborough, moving shortly after to Rugby, where Derek completed a Master's Degree in Diesel Engine Design, and then returned to Perkins after graduating. Derek and Elizabeth moved to their family home in Bourne after the arrival of their first child in 1970 and have lived in the town ever since. They went on to have two more children.

Derek was dedicated to his work but also enjoyed cycling, practical engineering in and around the home, and holidays with his family. Life for Derek was not complete without his service to the church. In 1977 he became a member of the Abbey Church Choir in Bourne, and in 1987 served as churchwarden. Over the following years he became more convinced that God had a bigger plan for him. In 1991, he attended a selection conference for ministry training. Whilst unsuccessful, prayer and thoughtful contemplation guided Derek towards lay ministry. He gained his Readers Licence in 1997 at Lincoln Cathedral and spent the rest of his life serving God however he could. He was particularly remembered for taking services in the local care homes, preaching thoughtful and thought-provoking sermons in the Abbey, and providing guidance to, and lively discussion with others called to serve God.

He is survived by his wife, Elizabeth, their three children, Andrea, Vivian and Marianne, and four grandchildren, Llanigan, Shiro, Benjamin and Kristian. Elizabeth and the family would like to thank you all for your cards and letters with their many kind words and memories of Derek.

ON AIR



Military life in Singapore in the 1960s was busy and interesting, so how did it relate to personal life? People found various off-duty interests. Some of us who were based at RAF Changi found interesting work in the local broadcasting system which was wired to all barrack rooms and married quarters. Volunteers operated the studio and some of us provided a weekly Christian slot. We called it “The new life program.”

I wonder now what people thought of it; it depended on their lifestyle, I suppose. If you were a young single getting ready to find amorous adventure downtown, your attitude might differ from others living either contented lives of singleness or married bliss. Imagine all those different people listening to a radio program focused on the story of ‘The Samaritan woman at the well’, recorded in the Bible in John chapter 4. How did that go down with the listeners?

I didn’t need to wait long for an evaluation. While delivering this story “on air” a young woman in the control room had been listening. Once the script had been read and studio red light went out, she met me outside and said, “You read that very well.”

I felt pleased and hoped the spoken message might also have gone home, but then we were interrupted by another guy who was armed with a paint brush. He had been decorating the studio lounge with delightful murals of naked women in a style of Art Deco. Our conversation suddenly switched from “the woman at the well” to our studio lady asking the painter guy, “When are you going to do that one of me?”

Things moved fast as she disappeared into the studio lounge with the painter and I didn’t have a chance to talk with her about the positive side of the story and wondered what she would have made of it. Jesus had opened his conversation with the Samaritan woman with a promise of a satisfying quality of new life. His prophetic insight into her personal life had convinced her that she was talking to the Messiah. What prospect was there for the woman in the recording studio to relate to him?

The studio murals were a reminder of both the tangible pleasure of Art and the spoken words broadcast through the system. At about the same time, another collection of

murals was discovered in an old accommodation block only half a mile away from the studio at Changi. They had been preserved long after their creation by a prisoner of war during the Japanese occupation and illustrated key scenes of greater work of the same Messiah who had spoken to the Samaritan woman. These murals were investigated and their designer eventually traced. (Search online for 'Changi murals'.) I have found this story a poignant contrast between the art of war and peace and worth further discussion.

Malcolm



It's at 2 pm on Saturday 15th August in the Church Hall.

Families and accompanied children all welcome.

Come aboard Noah's Ark
for the afternoon!



MARGARET'S PAGE

I believe in miracles!

This week I went out to move my black bin and came back into the house, forgetting to move the key from the door. Soon afterwards I had a fall, landing on the sitting room floor, and I was unable to get up. I pressed the safety alarm on my wrist and got an immediate response. The lady who answered phoned my next of kin (who lives in Grantham) and ordered an ambulance which would probably arrive in two hours' time. I crawled across the floor and managed to reach my phone. I called my neighbour Doreen. She promised to come straight away but I suddenly realised she wouldn't be able to get in. It was then that the miracle happened. She remembered that when she was a child (more than 70 years ago) she had learned how to open a door if the key was in the lock. A few minutes later I heard a noise in the door and – Alleluya! - she was in!

However, I was still on the floor and very uncomfortable. Doreen could not physically lift me, so she went to fetch a strong neighbour, although, from bitter experience, we knew that he would probably refuse to lift me in case he did some damage. He was not at home, so we had to think again. I asked Doreen to find my diary and in it I found the number of a wonderful friend called Tony. He came at once and we discussed the problem of whether he should try to lift me. I was convinced I hadn't broken any bones, and I was getting cramp on the floor, so we decided to move me. Tony and Doreen worked together and by a combination of brains and brawn they got me onto a chair, from which I was able to stand up and prove I hadn't done any damage. I phoned to cancel the ambulance and asked Tony if he would be willing to go on my list of emergency contacts. He immediately agreed, so out of a bad situation came a good result.

Two weeks ago, I had a fall when I was at an art group in Thurlby. I cannot go into details, but suffice it to say, my friends there were incredible, especially as the ambulance was going to take 4 hours. They fetched an off-duty doctor who lived nearby. She checked me over, got me into a wheelchair, and recommended a visit to Stamford Hospital. One of the members, called Ann, took me to Stamford and stayed with me for two hours until I was well enough to go home.

I am not writing this page to ask for sympathy, but to say a huge thank you to all those who were so kind and helpful. In these days when we hear about so many horrible people in the world, I thank God that I have such wonderful friends and that I live here in Bourne.



Friendship is unnecessary, like philosophy, like art... It has no survival value; rather it is one of those things that give value to survival.

C. S. Lewis

theWI
INSPIRING WOMEN

DYKE WI

INVITES YOU TO AN EVENING WITH

Ruth Smith
and Friends

A MUSICAL EVENING

Join us for a wonderful evening of music
and entertainment with Ruth Smith and Friends.



THURSDAY
20TH AUGUST



7:30 PM



DYKE
VILLAGE HALL

Visitors Welcome
£5 per visitor



REFRESHMENTS



RAFFLE

For any questions please contact:

Helen Whitfield ♥ 07527 236905

THE OLD WEMBLEY STADIUM – I REMEMBER IT WELL – By Len Causton



I was brought up in Wembley, where I lived with my parents in the Fire Service quarters at the back of Wembley Fire Station, a mile and a half from Wembley Stadium. My first visit to the stadium in 1957 was with my Uncle Phil, who was Head Groundsman at Newquay Golf Club in Cornwall. He had been on a course at Sutton in Surrey along with the brother of the Head Groundsman at the Stadium, so a visit was arranged. Whilst there, we got to walk on the Hallowed Turf; it was immaculate.

I was a Scout member at our local Church. The Scouts were involved in showing people to their seats at various sporting events at the Stadium. It became a regular event for me, from the Girls' International Hockey Match to the Rugby League Cup Final and everything in between.

One England v Scotland game was especially memorable. I had never seen so many well-inebriated men before. Two of us were allocated a Scottish bay. Some men asked if we could help their friend and his bag of drinks to his allocated seat, so we 'helped' him and left him. After the game, he was slumped there, so we 'carried' him out and propped him against a wall to be collected by his friends; the bag was empty.

In 1966, World Cup year, our local Corner Shop was advertising tickets. I purchased a full set of 10 tickets for 9 matches at Wembley Stadium and 1 at The White City, all for the princely sum of £3 17s, 6p, or £93.70 today. They were standing tickets for an upper bay at one end. My wife and I were courting, and I did manage to swap my ticket for one game with a friend at work who had two, so Janetta did get to see one game. The bays were always full but the Final was something else. So many extra people got in, you could hardly move your arms. When Hurst scored the Fourth England goal at our end, we all went mad! The Germans gave up singing, - we didn't!

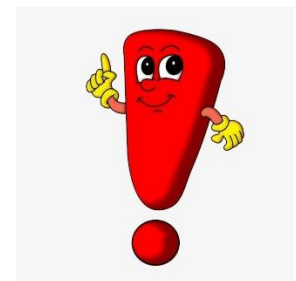
A few years later, I joined the British Transport Police. I was a Sergeant at Euston Station, so was again caught up in events at Wembley Stadium, both escorting fans to matches on the trains or at Wembley Central Station itself. Once all the fans had gone, we could go up to the stadium through the police gate and be allocated to a Bay to watch the game, leaving 10 minutes from the end to get back to the Station! This unfortunately ended when a Met. Police Commander drove through the centre of Wembley and didn't see any of the Met. Officers who were supposed to be in the town. Obviously they were in the stadium watching the game.

Once I met Graham Taylor, the Watford and one-time England Manager, on Queens Park Station. He was on his way to an England International game and was quite happy to mingle and talk to the fans, a really lovely, approachable person.



The last game I attended at Wembley was with our son, Daren, in May 1999. Our team Watford were playing Bolton Wanderers in the League 1 Final for promotion to the Premier League. Watford won it 2-0 and Graham Taylor was the Manager.

Soon after this, Wembley Stadium, as I knew it, was demolished and the New Wembley Stadium was built, as an all-seater Stadium to fit in with new safety laws. Fond memories - and I still have my World Cup Final Programme!



LIFE IN GENERAL

Luxury: something you don't really need and can't do without. - Anon

Civil service: the kind you get when your tip is big enough. - Anon

Grandparents are similar to a piece of string - handy to have around and easily wrapped around the fingers of their grandchildren. - Anon

If at first you DO succeed, try not to look astonished. - Anon

THE AUGUST QUIZ

- 1 E C Segar was the creator of which maritime cartoon character?
- 2 Bettany Hughes and Simon Schama appear on TV in what professional capacity?
- 3 Sugarloaf Mountain and Christ the Redeemer are both landmarks overlooking which South American city?
- 4 Euchre, Clab, Clagger and Scat are games played with what?
- 5 In Shakespeare's *Macbeth* who does Macbeth murder through ambition and to appease his wife?
- 6 In computing, what is a GUI?
- 7 In internet meme culture what does the abbreviation 'tfw' usually stand for?
- 8 Keanu Reeves plays a quarterback turned FBI agent turned undercover surfer in which slightly absurd 1991 action film?
- 9 Which series of religious wars between Christians and Muslims started in 1096 primarily to secure control of holy sites considered sacred by both groups?
- 10 The American sitcom *Frasier* was set in which city?
- 11 With hyperinflation raging at more than 2.2 million per cent, which African country issued \$100 billion notes in 2008?
- 12 For the last years of his life Galileo was under house arrest for espousing which man's theory of heliocentrism?
- 13 The flags of Turkey and Tunisia both bear which two celestial symbols of Islam?
- 14 Which country was formerly known as South West Africa?
- 15 Which Academy Award-winning actress is also Warren Beatty's sister?
- 16 An inflatable life jacket introduced during World War II was named for which shapely actress?
- 17 A butterfly's chemoreceptors (used to taste in lieu of tastebuds) are located where?
- 18 Who preceded Ted Hughes as Poet Laureate?
- 19 Which strict simple-living Mennonite sect was founded by the Swiss preacher Jakob Amman?
- 20 In the 1997 film *Bean*, which iconic portrait painting did Mr Bean accidentally ruin?

JULY ANSWERS

- 1 Indonesia 2 John Bercow 3 The Goons 4 M3 5 Cycling 6 Gary Lineker
7 Leg 8 Kolkata 9 1980s 10 Mercury 11 Joanne Kathleen 12 Belfast
13 Buster Merryfield 14 East Sussex 15 Winter of Discontent (Richard III)
16 Plymouth 17 Frank Zappa 18 Four 19 Almond 20 Buddhism

The reason

On the headstone of a hypochondriac: "See?"

WHAT'S ON IN AUGUST?

Saturday 1 st	And all August Saturdays 10am: Confirmation class
Saturday 1 st	MOTHERS' UNION celebrate 150 th year at Lincoln Bishop University
Saturday 1 st	10 – 12 noon in the Church Hall
	NIBBLE 'N NATTER Browse the books! Try your luck at the raffle! Enjoy the refreshments! Meet your friends and make new ones!
Monday 3 rd	10am in the Abbey
	Julian Group meet for prayer and meditation
Thursday 6 th	The Pilgrim Course See Page 7
Saturday 8 th	10am On MARY SUMNER DAY
	Mothers' Union members join their sister branch at St Firmin's Thurlby
Saturday 15 th	2 – 4pm in the Church Hall
	It's MESSY CHURCH! Families and accompanied children all welcome!
Friday 28 th	10am in the Abbey
	Team Clean Bring your dusters and handhelds! Refreshments to follow.
DO YOUR BIT?	Cleaners always needed. Can't come on a Friday? Why not adopt an area, however small, and come in to care for it when you can? Merryn will be happy to see you and advise!



Tortoise

Martin was a slow-working employee and found it difficult to hold a job. Finally, he found work at the Zoo. The zookeeper, aware of his reputation, assigned him to the tortoise section. Later, the zookeeper dropped by and

found Martin standing by an empty enclosure.

"Where are the tortoises?" the zookeeper asked.

"I can't believe it!" said Martin. "I just opened the door and then ... Whoosh!"

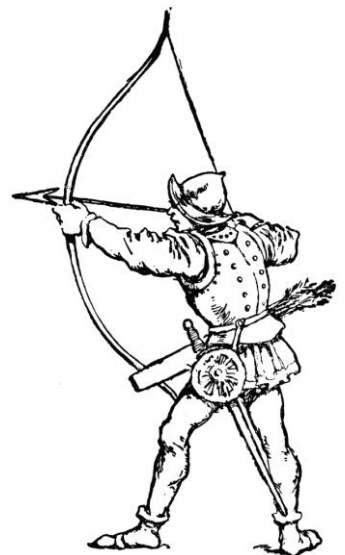
PENULTIMATE PAGE

What do you do after church? Chat and drink coffee perhaps – but then what? Sunday lunch, bit of gardening, visit friends maybe. No laws about how you spend Sundays – but there used to be. For centuries, on Sundays and holy days after mass, every able-bodied male between the ages of fifteen and sixty had to spend time at the butts ‘to learn and practise the art of shooting . . . whence by God’s help came forth honour to the kingdom and advantage to the King in his actions of war.’

Shooting what? The preferred weapon of the English – the longbow, light and fast and easy to operate, and much cheaper than the crossbow, which was extensively used in Europe. But regular use was needed to master the bow. You needed great physical effort to draw it, starting small and using bigger and bigger bows as you grew bigger and stronger yourself. You had to be brought up to it.

When the King needed soldiers, he called on the great men of the land who then ordered the lords of their following to bring troops. Local gentry in their turn were expected to gather fighting men – and those men needed to be able to fight. Every captain was looking for good archers, the men who had practised every Sunday and could ‘lay the body in the bow’ to give the strength and rapid fire feared across Europe. Some kings even banned all other sports on archery practice days to ensure concentration. Henry VIII’s law on the subject was sternly against the playing of football, not because of what was considered acceptable on the Lord’s Day but because it might get in the way of archery practice!

By the way, no doubt you have heard that the yew trees that grow in so many English churchyards were planted there to provide the archers of England with wood for their bows. It’s not true. English yew is not suitable for making bows. The climate is too changeable, and the wood tends to twist as it grows. Spain, Italy and Scandinavia produce the wood bowyers want. In fact, no-one could legally have cut the churchyard wood to fashion their bow anyway. Church property was out of bounds for requisitioning of any kind, even yew!



With thanks to Juliet Barker’s absorbing book ‘Agincourt’ (Abacus 2005)



THE ABBEY CHURCH OF ST PETER AND ST PAUL

Church Walk, Bourne PE10 9UQ what3words:///petrified
wrong trees

<https://bourneabbey.uk>

Charity number:1132631

Vicar		
Rev. Father Stephen Buckman	The Vicarage, Church Walk PE10 9UQ	
<i>Please note that the Vicar's normal rest day is Friday</i>	revstephen@btinternet.com	01778 782779 07464 728545
Curate		
Rev. Father Isaac Frisby	curate@bourneabbey.uk	07587893966
Authorised Lay Ministers		
Jennifer Maclean	j.maclean36@btinternet.com	01778 393590
Marilyn Roberts	marilynroberts17@gmail.com	07443 599217
Churchwardens		
Jennifer Maclean	j.maclean36@btinternet.com	01778 393590
Vicky Buckman	vbuckman@btinternet.com	07769 804138
Director of Music	Vacant	
Treasurer and Ringers		
Alan Payne	alanpayne684@gmail.com	01778 560633
Safeguarding Officers		
Denis and Jayne Smith	denis-smith@outlook.com	07578 653435
Website Manager		
Jennifer Maclean	j.maclean36@btinternet.com	01778 393590
Hall Bookings& Magazine Editor		
Celia Howes	celia.howes45@gmail.com	01778 702627
Flowers in Church		
Ann Northen	mikeann24@sky.com	01778 423353