



# Friends of All Saints' Church Cuddesdon

Newsletter No. 2 December 2024



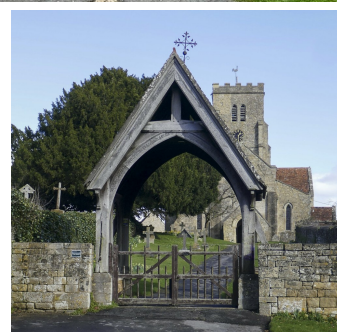
## From the Chair



The **FRIENDS OF ALL SAINTS CHURCH (FOASC)** continues to grow slowly but steadily as a community. The funds raised move ever closer to achieving our goal. The committee meets regularly to plan events and move the repair of the lychgate forward. We are delighted to welcome Ed Collett to our committee. He brings communication and marketing expertise and, with Philip Spinks, lowers our combined ages and raises our energy levels and IT skills!

We have enjoyed a variety of events over the last year and hope some of you have too.

**All Saints' Church Lychgate, Past, Present, ?Future.** In April Mark Chapman gave this interesting and entertaining talk outlining the history of the lychgate, followed by wine and canapés in the church. It was a very enjoyable evening. I was sorry to miss it and am grateful to Mark for giving us an edited transcript of his talk, which is at the end of this Newsletter.





**Village Fete.** The Friends ran a stall at the Cuddesdon Village Fete and we sold a pleasing amount of our 'merchandise', which comprises:

- Bags with our logo
- Notebooks with pens
- Bamboo coasters

If you have not yet bought any of these high quality, good value items please contact a member of the Friends Committee. There is still time to purchase before Christmas!

**Jazz Evening.** The Alyn Shipton Quartet provided excellent entertainment at the Jazz Evening in May. It worked well to combine the Friends and the Village Hall Committees in organising the event. Numbers were disappointing but that was probably because it was the day after the Village Fete.



**Cuddesdon and Denton Open Gardens.** June 30th dawned rain free and continued to be a lovely, warm summer day. We are so grateful to the ten gardeners, who kindly volunteered to open their gardens, for all their hard work. As you will see in the photos below, the gardens looked magnificent. Over 50 people attended and walked, or were taxied, thanks to Gillie and her flower decked 'taxi', from Denton to Parkside. The feedback from participants was very positive. The variety of gardens was greatly appreciated, as were the cream teas served in the churchyard from 4pm.



# Cuddesdon and Denton Open Gardens June 2024





**Harvest Supper.** On October 20<sup>th</sup> there was a lively and welcoming gathering for the harvest supper. Cohosted with the Village Hall committee, we were served a delicious meal beautifully cooked by Jon (many thanks to you, Jon, for all your hard work for us), followed by a great array of scrumptious puddings provided by many kind cooks in the village. It is always so special to gather before the dark nights of winter set in. The hall was full and the funds raised were split between the Village Hall and FOASC.

**Fireworks.** Friends served wine and beer (donated by the Bat and Ball) at the annual village firework evening. The fireworks, organised by the parish council were terrific and the rain stayed away. Another well supported evening with profits going to FOASC.

**Christmas Wreath Making.** At the beginning of December Evie Bennett generously offered to teach us how to make Christmas wreaths. So many wanted to take part that she had to hold two sessions. See the photos below which show both the hard work involved and the finished triumphs. It was a lot of fun and £1,000 was added to the lychgate fund. Thank you so much Evie, and your able helper, Ed. We all hope the event will be repeated next year.



## Coming Soon .....

**Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> December. All Saints' Church Carol Service, at 6 pm**

**A wine tasting evening** run by our own sommelier Philip Spinks. Format and date yet to be decided and will be announced in good time.

**Monday 24<sup>th</sup> February to Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> March. Exhibition in the church** of a selection of Robert Wilson's beautiful engravings and etchings.

**Friday 28<sup>th</sup> February. Reception and talk** by Robert Wilson on the exhibition. 6pm to 8pm.

*For further details see later in this newsletter.*

**Progress on the lychgate.** The carpenter/builder, Kester Rose, is commissioned for the repair and is in the process of finalising the estimate.

Malcolm Airs, an advisor from Oxford Churches Historic Trust, from whom we are seeking a grant, came to look at the lychgate and commented that he considered it essential that the repairs are carried out to maintain such an historic village monument and one of a very few examples of lychgates designed by the architect George Edmund Street. His comment made me think of all those beautiful wedding photos, framed through the lychgate, and how very sad it would be if it gradually rotted and fell down.

We still have a lot of form filling to do, faculty and grants to apply for and an urgent need to keep building the fund. Please consider adding Friends of All Saints to your gift list.

I know many in the village are thrilled to hear the bells being rung regularly now. We have seven committed bell ringers in the village and, as well as practices on a Thursday, they announce the 9.30 service on the 2nd Sunday of the month. The bells are very well regarded in the county and beyond and we have regular requests from groups of ringers to visit and ring our bells. There is an article about both bells and village bell ringers in this newsletter.

The Committee wish you all a very happy Christmas and a healthy New Year and we look forward to welcoming you at our events.

**Anne Stern.**



## **Friends of All Saints' Committee Members**

<b>Chair</b>	Anne Stern	annestern99@gmail.com
<b>Secretary</b>	Lynda Ware	lyndaware@aol.com
<b>Treasurer</b>	Philip Spinks	treasurer.foasc@outlook.com
<b>Events</b>	Gillie Ruscombe-King Caroline Flockton	
<b>IT/Comms</b>	Ed Collett	

## From the Treasurer

Funds raised, following a generous donation from the Parish Council from Bonfire Night, stand at over £4,000 after Gift Aid. There are further funds to add after the wonderful Wreath Making workshops that Evie ran on behalf of the Friends.

If you want to join Friends and get on the mailing list then do please pick up a leaflet from the Church or one of our events, or alternatively email me at:

**treasurer.foasc@outlook.com**

There is no membership fee or further obligations. Should you wish to donate then just let a member of the committee know or pay directly to:

**All Saints Parochial Church Council Cuddesdon**

**Sort Code: 20-65-21 Account: 80001376 Ref: Friends**

Our bank account is managed on our behalf by the PCC and all funds are ring-fenced for our projects.

Please contact me should you wish to utilise Gift Aid, which adds 25% to any donations.

**Philip Spinks**

## Forthcoming Events 2024

### **Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> December 6.00 pm All Saints' Church Carol Service**

The Intermezzo choir from Oxford will lead us in the singing, with volunteers from the various village groups reading the lessons. FOASC Committee will serve mulled wine and Christmas treats. Everyone is welcome.

### **TBC Wine Tasting Evening**

Run by our own sommelier Philip Spinks.

### **February 24<sup>th</sup> to March 15<sup>th</sup> Exhibition of Engravings and etchings**

**'After Michelangelo, After Raphael...**

**Some Engravings and Etchings Inspired by the Renaissance'**

**Robert Wilson** will be exhibiting 25 of his beautiful engravings and etchings, mainly from the 17th century, in All Saints' Church. Subjects are drawn from the myths of Greece and Rome, from the stories of the Old Testament, from the theology and events of the New Testament and from more personal situations and scenes.

Everyone is warmly invited to a reception and short talk on **Friday 28<sup>th</sup> February** at 6.00 p.m. (donations to The Friends of All Saints). The prints will be displayed in the chancel of All Saints and, when the chancel is locked, access can be arranged through Robert Wilson (01865 873513 or robwil@myphone.coop)

# The Cuddesdon Bells

All Saints' Church has six full-circle bells in its bell tower and these can be heard on Thursday evenings ringing out across the village during bell practice. It is so good to hear the bells again after a long period of silence when they were considered too dangerous to ring. Following extensive refurbishment, Bishop Humphrey conducted a service on 21<sup>st</sup> April 2018 to consecrate a new treble bell and to rededicate the other five. The bells were then rehung by Whites of Appleton on the renovated (and now safe) oak frame.



The oldest bells (2, 3 and 4) date from 1617. The original treble bell (1795) was recast in 2017 at Whitechapel Bell Foundry on the last day before it closed after nearly 450 years of casting bells. The treble bears the inscription '*To the glory of God and in loving memory of Dr Christopher Ware 1955-2006*'. My late husband, Chris, would be honoured and amazed to know that the treble rings out in his memory.

A band of ringers was formed in 2016 under the kind tutelage of Brian Lowe, who is tower captain at St Giles, Horspath. Most of the founder members were novices and four remain from the original group. Bellringing ordinands from Ripon College have joined as they passed through their theological training and other experienced ringers have visited from time to time. New members are warmly invited and instruction is available to those who have never pulled a bell rope.

The bells are rung on the second Sunday of every month for the Parish Communion. They are also heard at weddings and other celebrations. They were rung to mark the late Queen's Platinum Jubilee and her death in 2022.

Cuddesdon now has two very experienced ringers, Stuart and Caroline Flockton, who moved to the village two years ago. Stuart learned to ring on a single full-circle bell in his local church. He has taught bellringing for over fifty years. Caroline has been a bellringer for about fifty years. They spoke to me of the joy they have found in ringing and the friends they have made. It has enabled them to visit and ring in many other churches - some in small villages, others much grander, including Canterbury Cathedral and Christ Church Cathedral, Oxford.

The bells need to be maintained and further work is needed to add sound insulation between the bell and ringing chambers. However, for now, like Siegfried Sassoon on Armistice Day 1918, we can simply enjoy them in all their newly restored glory.

From Siegfried Sassoon's diary:

*Monday 11<sup>th</sup> November 1918. I was walking in the water meadows by the river below Cuddesdon this morning – a quiet grey day. A jolly peal of bells was ringing from the village church....*

**Lynda Ware**





## All Saints' Church Lychgate, Past, Present and ?Future



A lychgate is at the entrance to the churchyard and was traditionally the place where the coffin rested before the procession to the church – ‘lych’ is from an old English word for ‘corpse’ as in the German ‘Leiche’. Our lychgate dates from around 1880 and is connected with the extension of the churchyard down the hill. It has an inscription saying ‘erected by members of Cuddesdon College in loving memory of Jane Diana Furse who fell asleep March 20, 1877’. She had died tragically of scarlet fever aged thirty-eight shortly after the birth of a son, leaving her widowed husband, Charles Wellington Furse (1821-1900), Principal of the

College and Vicar of the Parish, with ten children. Appropriately for its location, the writing on the front of the Lychgate quotes from Psalm 43, verse 3 in the Prayer book version: ‘Send out thy light and thy truth. Let them lead me and bring them to thy Holy Hill and to thy Dwelling’.

Jane Furse was born on 25 May 1839, the daughter of the hymn writer John Samuel Bewley Monsell (1811–1875) (of ‘Fight the good fight with all thy might’ and ‘O Worship the Lord in the Beauty of Holiness’ fame) and Anne Waller (d. 1852). He was an Irish clergyman of a landowning gentry. Jane had two brothers, Bolton James Alfred Monsell (1840–1919), chief constable of the Metropolitan Police, and William Thomas Monsell (1843–1900), an inspector of factories in Ireland. Having risen to become chancellor of the Diocese of Connor, John moved to England to become vicar of Egham in 1853 and then rector of St Nicholas Guildford in 1875 where he died soon afterwards in the church from injuries sustained during the restoration.

John’s move to Egham had been prompted by the death of his wife in 1852 and of his brother Charles the year before (1815-1851). He had moved to be near his sister-in-law. In 1839 Charles had married Harriet O’Brien (1811-1883) in Dublin where he was receiving medical treatment before moving to Oxford the following year where he studied for ordination. He was licensed as his father’s curate and then as a prebendary of Limerick, although much of the time he was travelling in Europe due to his tuberculosis, from which he died aged 34 in 1851. Egham was close to Windsor where Harriet had settled soon afterwards to support her disabled sister Katherine (d.1865). Katherine was married to Charles Harris (1813-74), curate to Fr Thomas Thellusson Carter, Rector of Clewer. Harris went on

to be Bishop of Gibraltar. While she was at Clewer, Harriet Monsell entered the recently established House of Mercy where Carter was the warden and she became the first professed sister of the Community of St John Baptist – by a very strange turn of events, that very same sisterhood eventually ended their active ministry here in Cuddesdon, having contributed the new College Chapel.



THE REVEREND CHARLES WELLINGTON FURSE, M.A.

While Jane Monsell was living with her father at Egham, she must have met Charles Wellington Furse, who was serving with Fr Carter as curate at St Andrew's Clewer after ordination by Samuel Wilberforce as deacon in 1848 and priest in 1849 – at the time he was called Johnson but changed the name to Furse in 1854 having come into an inheritance. After Clewer he became vicar of Staines from 1863 before becoming Principal and Vicar of Cuddesdon on 26 July 1873. Jane and Charles were married on 24 Feb 1859 at St Boniface, Bonchurch, IOW. He was aged 37 and she was about 20.

After Cuddesdon, Furse became Canon of Westminster Abbey and Rector at St John's Smith Square and Archdeacon of Westminster in 1883, dying in August 1900. He is buried in the cloister at the Abbey and is commemorated by a large brass plaque on the north wall of Cuddesdon church. His obituary was less than flattering: 'The Archdeacon, who perhaps never made any considerable mark as a preacher at the Abbey, had for some time been unable to perform his residentiary duties and there had been some question of his resigning his Archdeaconry.'

Jane and Charles had ten children, some of whom had artistic leanings and many had strong connections with the church:

1. John Henry [Harry] Monsell Furse (6 March 1860 – 5 April 1950) worked as a sculptor.
2. Charles Cyril Furse (19 June 1861 – 21 March 1862).
3. Elizabeth Diana Furse (1862–1939), married John Primatt Maud, Bishop of Kensington.
4. Mary Theresa Furse (1863–1952), married Charles Abraham, Bishop of Derby.

5. Lt.-Gen. Sir William Thomas Furse (1865–1953) (aide-de-campe to Field Marshal Roberts Master General of Ordnance (educated at Eton).
6. Charles Wellington Furse (1868–1904), painter (died of consumption). He was well known as a portraitist (including of Field Marshal Roberts).
7. Rt. Rev. Bolton Michael Furse (1870–1955) became Bishop of Pretoria and Bishop of St Albans. There is a large memorial next to his father's on the north wall of Cuddesdon Church. He married an American, Frances and they named their daughter after Michael's mother, Jane Diana Furse. She was born on 19 August 1904 a year after they had moved to South Africa. After he had become bishop in 1909, Michael was often accompanied by Jane around the Diocese. She had resolved to become a doctor, but, like her grandmother, she contracted scarlet fever and died on 3 August 1918. She was buried at a cemetery in Irene in Pretoria. The Jane Furse Memorial Hospital in Sekhukhuneland was founded by Michael Furse in her memory.
8. Margaret Walter Furse (1869-1963) married the Ven. William Aubrey Robins, Arch-deacon of Bedford and Vicar of St. Paul's, Bedford.
9. Edith Furse (1874–1960), married Cecil Lubbock, Deputy Governor of the Bank of England.
10. John Monsell Furse (1877–1888) was born six weeks before his mother died.

On 7 January 1880 Furse married Gertrude Louisa Barnett, daughter of Henry Barnett MP, and had two more children, Emily Katharine Furse (1881–1911) and Herbert Reynolds Furse (1887–1956).