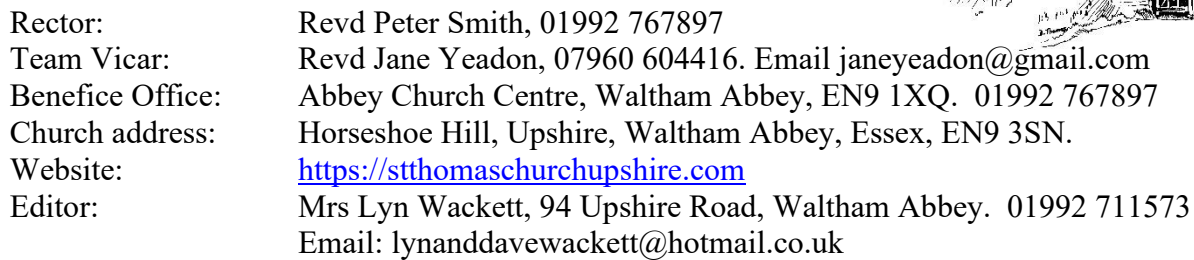


September 2026



We are committed to safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults. The PCC has adopted the Church of England's policies and best practice on safeguarding which may be found on the Church of England website and also on the Diocese of Chelmsford website.

Saturday 5 th	3pm-4 pm SEEDLINGS meet in the church	
Sunday 6 th	Fourteenth Sunday after Trinity 9.15 am HOLY COMMUNION Readings: Ezekiel 33:7-11	Matthew 18:15-20
Sunday 13 th	Fifteenth Sunday after Trinity 9.15am HOLY COMMUNION Readings: Genesis 50:15-21	Matthew 18:21-35
	2.30-4.30pm AFTERNOON TEAS	
Wednesday 16 th	11.30am for 12 noon COMMUNITY LUNCH in church. 07899 846711 to book, Please let us know if you have to cancel	
Saturday 19 th	MACMILLAN COFFEE MORNING with Upshire Bake Off in church 10am-2pm Please bring your cakes for judging to the church at 9.30am	
Sunday 20 th	Sixteenth Sunday after Trinity 9.15am HOLY COMMUNION Readings: Jonah 3:10-end of 4	Matthew 20:1-16
Wednesday 23 rd	2.15pm Upshire Mothers' Union Corporate Communion in church - all welcome.	
Sunday 27 th	Seventeenth Sunday after Trinity 9.15am HOLY COMMUNION Readings: Ezekiel 1-4, 25-end	Matthew 21:23-32
	2.30-4.30pm HARVEST TEAS with Harvest Service at 4pm	
Saturday 3 rd October	3-4pm SEEDLINGS meet in church	
Sunday 4 th October	Eighteenth Sunday after Trinity 9.15am HOLY COMMUNION Readings: Isaiah 5:1-7	Matthew 21:33-end

CHURCH DECORATIONS
We will meet in the church to decorate the church for Harvest on Friday 25th September from 10.00am. Everybody welcome to come and help. Donations of foliage, etc, will be very welcome.

Each month we can create memorial dedications, wedding, anniversary or special occasion flowers -
Contact Kate Dale email: dalek16@btinternet.com. Tel: 02085083942

THE VICAR WRITES

Throughout September Christians around the world celebrate the Season of Creation. It's an opportunity to give thanks for the beauty of God's world, to reflect on how we care for it, and to remember that creation is one of God's greatest gifts.

This year's theme is Living Water, inspired by a vision in the book of Ezekiel. The prophet sees a river flowing from God's Temple, bringing life wherever it goes. Trees flourish, fish return, and even barren places are restored. It is a wonderful picture of God's life-giving power, especially this year as I am writing this article in the middle of an ever increasing drought.

Although Ezekiel first shared this vision with people who were living through difficult times, his message was one of hope. God had not abandoned them. New life would come.

I believe that promise still speaks to us today.

Water is something many of us rarely think twice about. We turn on a tap and expect clean water to appear. Yet around the world, millions of people still struggle to access this basic necessity. At the same time, we are becoming increasingly aware of the pressures facing the natural world, from polluted rivers to the loss of wildlife and changing weather patterns.

As Christians, caring for creation isn't simply about being environmentally friendly. It begins with recognising that this world belongs to God. In Genesis, humanity is given the responsibility to care for the garden, not to exploit it but to look after it wisely. We are stewards of God's creation, not its owners. The image of living water also reminds us of Jesus. Speaking to the woman at the well, he offers her "living water" that satisfies our deepest thirst. Jesus doesn't just restore the world around us; he renews our hearts as well. His love refreshes us, gives us hope, and sends us out to share that hope with others. Looking after God's creation doesn't have to mean making huge changes overnight. Often it starts with simple choices: wasting less, planting something that helps bees and butterflies, picking up litter, using water carefully, or simply taking time to appreciate the beauty of the world around us.

Living where we do, we are blessed with the beauty of Epping Forest on our doorstep. The ancient trees, woodland paths, birdsong and changing seasons remind us daily of God's creativity and generosity. They invite us to slow down, notice the gifts around us, and offer our thanks.

The Season of Creation reminds us that our faith isn't only about what happens inside church buildings. It shapes the way we live every day, including how we care for our neighbours, use the earth's resources, and protect the wonderful world God has entrusted to us.

As we enter this Season of Creation, may we drink deeply from the living water that Christ offers. May he refresh our hearts, open our eyes to the beauty around us, and inspire us to care for creation with gratitude, hope and love.

--

Revd Jane Yeadon

Team Vicar St Thomas, Upshire and Holy Innocents, High Beech

Benefice Youth Missioner

Deanery Vocations Advisor - Epping Forest and Ongar

MB: 07960 604416

Monday is my rest day

PRAYER REQUESTS

You are invited to offer names to be added to our prayer diary to remember those who are unwell or unhappy. First names only are required as God will know who we are praying for.

Contact Lyn Wackett on 01992 711573 or email lynanddavewackett@hotmail.co.uk

This month we pray for Laura, Alan & Pam, Lesley, Charlie & John, Anne, Pam & John, Barbara, Vernon, Mal, Sue, Ann & Cyril, Rosalind, Carol & George, Jackie, Andrea & her Mum & Dad, Nina, Carmel & the Price family, Nigel, Lola, Pearl, Susan & Alan, Jackie & Linda, Graham, Christine, Chris, Izzy, Pennie, Steve, Kevin, Gina, Sue, Rosemary, Gill and Fred.

SUNDAY AFTERNOON TEAS

Our season of Sunday Afternoon Teas continue on Sunday 13th September, 2.30-4.30pm, then on 27th September we have our Harvest Teas with the Harvest service at 4pm.

Come and sit in our lovely little church or enjoy the views over London and the Lea Valley whilst sitting in the churchyard and spend a friendly afternoon at St Thomas'. Dogs on leads welcome.

St Thomas Church, Upshire Bank details

St Thomas Church Upshire PCC

HSBC Bank

Sort Code 40 45 20

Account number 00724505

Any queries regarding setting up a Standing Order, giving a donation to the church, Gift Aid or about joining the Parish Giving Scheme please contact our Treasurer, Ruth Moore on 07852 668633

Ruth4366@gmail.com

If you are able to Gift Aid donations this increases your gift without any extra cost to yourself.



ST THOMAS' SEEDLINGS

1st Saturdays of each month (unless otherwise stated)

A free Stay and Play church group for children and those who care for them

Join us Saturdays 3-4pm for messy craft, play, songs and stories along with a welcome cuppa

St Thomas' Church, Horseshoe Hill, Upshire, EN9 3SS



ELECTRONIC NEWSLETTER

Our mailing list to receive the electronic version of the Newsletter is now in excess of 100 participants so if you are not one of those and wish to be included please send your email address to Kate at

dalek16@btinternet.com or phone 02085083942. We are looking to reduce our 'paper footprint' for climate change by printing fewer copies – your contribution will help. Thank you.

NEWSLETTER ARTICLES

Thank you to the people who have sent in articles to be included in the Newsletter. Please keep them coming! Anything: maybe a poem you have written, what you have been doing in the garden, childhood memories, something that happened to make you smile, it all makes for interesting reading.

ST THOMAS' CHURCH COMMUNITY LUNCHES 2026

3rd Wednesdays, 11.30 for 12noon start

16th September, 21st October,

11th November (a week earlier than usual), 2nd December (Christmas Lunch)

If after booking you are unable to come, please phone to cancel,
we can then offer a place to people on the waiting list.

COPPER JAR

Our thanks to all who donated their coppers and small change to Water Aid via the Copper Jar raising £51 last time it was emptied (includes a donation of a 50/50 Club win).

COMING UP AT ST THOMAS':

Monthly Community Lunches (see separate article)

Sunday Afternoon Teas 2nd & 4th Sundays 2.30-4.30pm

Saturday 19th September: Macmillan Coffee Morning 10.30am-2.00pm

Sunday 27th September: Harvest and last Sunday of Afternoon Teas 2.30-4.30pm Service at 4.00pm

Saturday 17th October: Quiz Night 6.30 for 7.00pm

Saturday 21st November: Christmas Fayre in Village Hall 10.30am-2.00pm

Sunday 13th December: Brass Band Christmas Concert 3.00 for 3.30 start

MACMILLAN COFFEE MORNING with UPSHIRE BAKE OFF

Saturday 19th September, 10am-2pm

Hone your baking skills and take part in the Cake Competition for Star Baker

Please bring your cakes for judging to the church at 9.30am

2 classes: 16 and under and adults

Tea, coffee, cake, soup and bacon rolls will be available. Raffle.

ANAGRAM Unscramble this 9 letter anagram: DRYOURCAT. The answer can be found elsewhere in the Newsletter.

GROWERS CORNER

It really has been a tough summer for gardeners and nature lovers. We've just been through the fifth heatwave of 2026, and apparently there could be another this month. Keeping everything watered at home and at the allotment has been relentless, and we are feeling worn out. Much like the plants and trees.

The risk of fires was so high we even got a government warning on our mobiles. I'm really hoping we get some much-needed rain and cooler temperatures soon.

Plot Update

The harvests have come early. We've already been harvesting pumpkins, and the maincrop potatoes came out last month.

I've held back on sowing autumn crops as it's been just too hot. But I will get things going now as I love winter salads and greens.

Hopefully this month I can do some *actual* gardening and not just watering! There's a lot to do, and I need to get planning and tidying the back of the plot, which has become a bit of a dumping ground.

September To-Do

- Harvest beans that you've been drying on the plant
- Keep harvesting courgettes and marrows
- Remove any remaining outdoor tomatoes, allowing green ones to ripen indoors to prevent the risk of blight
- Harvest apples and pears as soon as they lift off the branch easily — although mine have been early this year

September Sowings

- Overwintering onions
- Salad leaves / winter lettuce
- Spinach
- Sow green manures like phacelia or grazing rye on bare soil to stop nutrients washing away and to block winter weeds
- If you have a covered space, sow oriental greens such as mizuna, pak choi and salad crops

Flowers & Shrubs

- Leave sunflower heads on — birds will continue to feed on them
- Divide perennials: Lift and split crowded herbaceous plants like hostas, asters, and rudbeckias
- Continue deadheading: Keep removing faded blooms on dahlias, roses, and penstemons to prolong the display

Tip of the Month

Any gluts of fruit or vegetables? Think about pickling or preserving to make the most of them.

'O sweet September, thy first breezes bring
The dry leaf's rustle and the squirrel's laughter,
The cool fresh air whence health and vigor spring
And promise of exceeding joy hereafter.' George Arnold

Happy growing. Love Louise

UPSHIRE MOTHERS' UNION

At our July meeting Revd Jane gave us another interesting talk from her travels, 'Going totally off grid'. In 2018 Jane visited Chernobyl, near Pripyat in Ukraine, the site of the world's worst nuclear power disaster in history. The disaster happened on 26th April 1986 when one of 4 Nuclear Reactors exploded, (There are 4 Nuclear Reactors, 3 of them still operate today) causing a mass radiation cloud and a 1000 square mile exclusion zone. The disaster caused many deaths and many casualties with life long effects from the radiation. A concrete structure was rapidly built in 1986 around the exploded Reactor and replaced by a massive steel confinement arch in 2016 to prevent further leaks. Before going to Chernobyl Jane went to Kiev for 24 hours first, as a stop off as it is only 4 hours from Chernobyl. Kiev is the oldest city in Eastern Europe. While walking around the city Jane noticed there were lots of murals painted around the city and lots of keen photographers everywhere. Jane was lucky enough to enjoy another 24hr stay in Kiev after visiting Chernobyl. To enter or leave Chernobyl Jane had to go through Radiation Chambers. Today, you don't have to go through radiation chambers or screening to enter but you do have to go through radiation screening equipment before leaving. Chernobyl is still highly radioactive but it is safe to go to, although there are exclusion zones and you cannot touch anything or sit on the ground. Plants are especially of interest and they absorb the radiation.

Jane also visited Pripjat, she found it to be a most interesting place, a model Soviet city, mainly built for the Nuclear Power Plant workers. Following the Reactor explosion Pripjat residences were forced to evacuate the city for 24 hours. They have never been allowed back.

The city is now frozen in time and nature is reclaiming the city, with trees and plants growing abundantly. Jane showed us many pictures of the frozen city. Around the city there were informal memorials of all the people who died and many formal memorials also. There are some old buildings that visitors are allowed to look around, i.e. an old supermarket and some abandoned homes. The residences were not allowed to take pets with them when they were evacuated. The pets survived and there now are many living in the city. Studies are on-going to find out how the pets and wildlife survived the disaster. Jane summed up her trip as extraordinary and one she hopes to do again once the current war in Ukraine is over.

Jane finished with a couple of statements:

Not all those who wander are lost - JRR Tolkien.

Travel is the only thing you buy that makes you richer - Anonymous

Everyone thoroughly enjoyed listening to Jane's adventures and Jane has said she will come back next July with more. Thank you, Jane.

Our next meeting is on 23rd September at 2.15pm, our 150th year Corporate Communion service in Church, followed by Tea and cake. Everyone is welcome to join us.

Tea Hostesses: Ann Smith and Kate Dale. Raffle: Eleanor Huxter

SHOEBOXES

Please remember to save your shoeboxes for Blythswood's shoebox appeal. Shoeboxes will be distributed to Albania, Bulgaria, Hungary, Kosovo, Moldova, Romania, Serbia & Ukraine. It is easy to choose gifts for people who have so little; Shampoo, a pair of socks, a notepad, a small toy, a bag of sweets – things that we take for granted will seem like luxuries to people living in poverty.

Shoeboxes need to be covered in pretty paper (please ensure the box can still be opened as the contents need to be checked for customs). It costs approximately £7,000 to send a container load of shoeboxes to Eastern Europe so if you are able to donate any amount to help with the cost of transporting your box that would be much appreciated.

Leaflets with all the information will be available in the church or from **Lyn at 94 Upshire Road** but essential items asked for include hat, scarf, gloves, toothbrush & paste, underwear, tights/socks, toiletries (no talcum powder) shampoo, soap, small toy (not war related) sweet (no lollies or chocolate or sweets containing chocolate). Other items: notepad/colouring books/pens/pencils etc, new make-up, sewing equipment, household candles, screwdrivers/pliers, kitchen utensils, t-shirts, pyjamas, jumpers, shirts – anything you can give will be appreciated. Boxes can be for any age – children aged 3 and over, adults – the choice is yours.

Last year we were able to send 148 shoeboxes to needy people in Ukraine and the above countries. Boxes and any items to go in them can be left with Lyn as above **no later than 11th October** or they can be left in the church.

Thank you.

ANAGRAM The answer to the anagram is COURTYARD.

STAMPS

Please continue to save your postage stamps and foreign or out of circulation coins as the charities we support can use them to raise funds. At present we collect the coins for Essex and Herts Air Ambulance and The British Legion

and stamps for British Heart Foundation. Stamps and coins can be left with Lyn at 94 Upshire Road – please leave in the porch if no reply. Please leave about ½“ of envelope around the stamps. Thank you.

SUMMER FAYRE AND FUN DOG SHOW

After a sudden, much needed heavy shower in the morning of the Summer Fayre, we had another beautiful sunny day, with many visitors. It was good to see so many well-behaved dogs with their owners mingling with the crowd before heading off for the Dog Show. It was a successful day all round; so good to catch up with old friends who have supported St Thomas' for so many years and to have raised £2,153.08 for church funds was the icing on the cake! We'd like to thank everyone who worked so hard arranging the event, the stall holders, cake-makers and all the ladies serving refreshments, the 'behind the scene' team moving tables and chairs and erecting gazebos, and those who donated so many items for the tombola and raffle, with special thanks to Andrew Crowley Independent Funeral Director, Daniel Robinson & Sons, Cooper's Cards, Flowers by Danielle, Matthew's Plants and Waltham Abbey Museum.

We all went home feeling very weary but very happy!

SUMMER FAYRE DOG SHOW RESULTS

We held a Fun Dog Show in the far field in the church yard. The weather was kind to us this year and cooled down enough for us to go ahead. Lots of lovely dogs and their handlers come along to take part, have fun and have an enjoyable afternoon.

The classes and winners were:

<u>Class</u>	<u>Winner</u>	<u>Handler</u>
Prettiest Bitch	Tina	Jean
Most Handsome Dog	Ollie	Sue
Best Puppy	Piper	Zoey
Best Veteran (Over 7)	Lucy	Miles
Best Child Handler (Under 14)	Betty	Dolly
Best Condition	Willow	Julia
Waggiest Tail	Hetty	Debbie
Dog the Judge would most like to take home	Nala	Shelley

Best in Show went to Hetty and Debbie.

Best Reserve in Show went to Tina and Jean.

Well done to all the winners and thank you, to you all that came along to support us. A big thank you goes out to Cat and Jess from Medivet and Tina Stewart. Special thanks to Kate for organising the event.

50/50 CLUB

Congratulations to the winners of the 50/50 Club Draw in July:

1 st :	£35	No. 87	Brenda Pennison of Waltham Abbey
2 nd :	£25	No. 74	Barbara Fowler of Upshire
3 rd :	£15	No. 1	Ruth Battams of Swaffham

It is not too late to join Draw 18 of St Thomas' 50/50 Club.

There will be monthly draws and the entry fee is £12.00 every six months (or £2 for every month of membership). Each member is entitled to a maximum of two entries, couples can have four. Please complete the form below and return it to me; payment by Bank Transfer is preferred or alternatively you may pay by cheque or cash to the address stated. Please let me know if you pay by Bank Transfer so I can include your number in the Draw (email lynanddavewackett@hotmail.co.uk or phone 01992 711573).

Our thanks to all our members for their support of St Thomas' Church. Good luck to everyone who enters.

St Thomas' Church 50/50 Club Draw 18

July to December 2026

I wish to become a member of St Thomas' 50/50 Club and have paid by Bank Transfer to HSBC Bank, A/c St Thomas Church Upshire PCC, Sort Code 40-45-20, A/c No: 00724505.

OR I enclose cash/cheque of £12 per entry (maximum 2 per person).

Please make cheques payable to St Thomas' Church Upshire PCC and return your entries to Lyn Wackett, 94 Upshire Road, Waltham Abbey, EN9 3PA. Thank you.

Name:

Address:
Telephone:

MUSIC FOR LUNCH at Waltham Abbey Church Saturdays at 12 noon.
Refreshments available from 11.30am. All welcome, free admission with retiring collection.

August 30th: Bonus recital: Jonathan Pilgrim, organ
September 5th: Joshua Harris and Jonathan Lilley, orchestral music arranged for piano duet
12th: Jonathan Lilley, piano – A Summer idyll
19th: Sofia Holovchuk, violin, Douglas Tang, organ
26th: Charles Spanner, organ
October 3rd: Brahms' quintet for clarinet and strings
10th: Steel Pan in Motion: Classical Sounds of Steel
17th: No recital
24th: Simeon Walker, piano
31st: Alexander Evans, organ

HIGH BEACH CHURCH

Sunday Afternoon Teas every Sunday until 27th September, 2.00-5.00pm.

Everyone is welcome to come and sit in church or in our churchyard and enjoy home-made cake with tea/coffee and to ring the carillon. Please be careful where you park – you must NOT park on any single or double red line between 8.00am to 10.00pm otherwise you will receive a penalty notice.

Organ Recital Saturday 5th September, 7.00pm by Jonathan Lilley to celebrate the restoration of our Father Willis Organ. Tickets £15 each (under 16s £5) from Margaret Wackett on 07949 961184 to include light refreshments.

Prom in the Forest Saturday 26th September, 7.00pm. The return of the popular concert with all the pomp of the Proms. Tickets £15 to include a light buffet and glass of wine or soft drink. Available from the TicketSource website at www.ticketsource.co.uk Just search for 'Prom in the Forest'.

All proceeds to church funds.

POPPY PROJECT

Saturday 12th September, 2.00 - 4.00pm. Meet up at Waltham Abbey Library. Come along and get involved.

ST LAWRENCE CHURCH in the C of E School, Ninefields, EN9 3EL

HARVEST QUIZ on Saturday 3rd October in the school hall. Doors open 1.45 for 2.00pm start.

Tickets £10 (children £5) include Ploughman's Lunch. Teams of up to 8 people.

Please contact Valerie on 01992 713996 by 1st October.

UPSHIRE SHORT MAT BOWLS CLUB

Held in Upshire Village Hall, Mondays 2.00-4.30pm, Tuesdays 7.00-9.30pm No experience necessary.
Tuition and bowls available. It's fun to play! Contact Jean on 07733 084815.

At **HOME INSTEAD** Epping Forest we recognise that as we get older, you may need help to be able to stay living in your own home. We Tailor our care packages to meet your needs making it possible for you to stay living in your own home where you are happiest.

Our services include Dementia Care, Personal Care, Home Help, Companionship and much more.

Our monthly Memory Lane and Singing for the Brain Sessions are held at Theydon Bois Village Hall providing lots of fun complimented with refreshments served by our lovely Team. Why not contact us to find out more and to get a copy of our What's on Where Guide (WOW Guide) and future newsletters.

Telephone 01992 666777 or email: Victoria.rigby@homeinstead.co.uk

WALTHAM ABBEY FLOWER CLUB

We meet on the 4th Tuesday in the month except January, June, August and December at Waltham Abbey Community Centre, Crooked Mile, EN9 1QD. Doors open 1.45 for 2pm start.

Next meeting: 28th July. All are welcome, raffle, sales table, tea, coffee and homemade cake. Further details from Chris on 07792 594443.

CRAFT MARKET

The next Craft Markets in Waltham Abbey Town Hall will be on Tuesday 6th October, Tuesday 3rd November and Tuesday 1st December 10.00am – 2.00pm. Admission free – also free tea/coffee.

AN INTRODUCTION INTO HISTORIC WALTHAM ABBEY

Contact Waltham Abbey Tourist Information Centre on 01992 660336 or tic@walthamabbey-tc.gov.uk for more information on day/evening guided tours.

Cooper's Cards

40a Sun Street, Waltham Abbey, EN9 1EJ
(Library end)

Greetings cards, balloons, toys, wrapping paper, stationery and seasonal items
Family run and friendly shop, pet friendly
Monday to Saturday 8am to 5pm

WALTHAM ABBEY STITCHERS Knit, Crochet and Chat! Every Friday 1.30-3.30pm in 'The Space', Epping Forest District Museum, cost £4. Everyone welcome, bring your stitching project and pop along any Friday or contact Diana dian@thecrochetchain.co.uk for more details.

What's on at Epping Forest District Museum!

Join us at the Epping Forest District Museum on Sun Street in Waltham Abbey for changing exhibitions, community curated displays, exciting events and lots more! We are the museum service for the Epping Forest District of Essex, housing around 75,000 items which tell the story of the people, places and events that have shaped our corner of Essex over many centuries. Visit the museum to discover and help shape the telling and display of your local heritage.

The museum is open 10am – 4pm on Mondays, Tuesdays Wednesdays, Fridays and Saturdays.

Upcoming at the museum...

Tuesdays and Saturdays – Drop in Summer holiday crafts! 10:30am – 3:30pm, £3.50 per child. Join us for lots of fun crafts inspired by the Ancient Romans!

Wednesdays – Art workshops! 11am -12pm or 2 – 3pm (check our booking link below), £5 per child, for 7+ and their adults. Join us to learn some new art skills!

Friday 18 September – Museum Quiz! Grab your teammates and join us for a quiz at the museum! Are you up to the challenge? £7.50 per person, tables of up to 6 people. Bring your own drinks and snacks, there will also be a raffle! Doors open at 6:45pm, quiz starts at 7pm and will finish between 9 and 9:30pm with a break in the middle. Book via www.ticketsource.com/efdmuseum or call us on 01992 716882, or email us on enquiries@efdmuseum.org.uk or pop into the museum and book at the front desk!

WALTHAM ABBEY MEN'S SHED

Every Monday at Epping Forest District Museum, 1.00-3.00pm.

A welcoming, inclusive place for local men to get together, socialise and turn their hand to practical tasks. New members welcome. Free to join, free refreshments, just turn up.

For more information contact 01992 910701 or communityhub@vaef.org.uk

WALTHAM ABBEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Friday evenings at 7.30pm at the Baptist Church, Paradise Road, Waltham Abbey EN9 1RL.

Visitors welcome: donation of £4 per person requested.

18th September: An Audience with Florence Nightingale. An interview with the Lady of the Lamp as she talks about her experiences, her attitudes to nursing and to life in general. A formidable lady, she will present the history of nursing. Speakers: John Drewry and an actress.

There is no charge to us for this presentation, but there will be a bucket collection in aid of the Nursing Memorial Appeal. The appeal has already funded a permanent memorial at the National Memorial Arboretum to nurses who

gave their lives in both World Wars, and now supports student training and researching conflict and humanitarian nursing. So bring your cash to the meeting to contribute if you can.

Double entendre

Double entendre /doo-b'l on-ton-druh/ a word or phrase with two meanings, one of which is usually slightly indecent or rude – from former French, ‘double understanding’ so says my Oxford English dictionary. I have to admit that I was unaware that ‘double’ was pronounced ‘dooblay’ rather than the vernacular English, where have I been all this time? We are blessed in this country with many place names that could have two meanings in the double entendre sense – the classic being the Piddles in Dorset. Piddle can also refer to the word ‘urine’ which the Victorians took exception to hence many of the places that were once Piddle-something became ‘Puddle’ as in ‘Tolpuddle’ and ‘Puddletown.’ Somehow Piddlehinton and the River Piddle survived! Talking of rivers, now would be a suitable time to mention the River Liddle, a name that might be familiar to some of you, which is used as the border between Scotland and England. I should admit that most of the river is referred to as the Liddell Water which is the posh spelling of our name although there are parts of the river which use the more common spelling as does the small hamlet of Liddlesdale. My Father often used to mention that our family researched the name and found that we were directly related to the Royal Stuarts, the ones who were overthrown by William of Orange but as the story usually prefaced a joke I never knew if what he was saying was actually true or not! The Scottish language and their place names are in the main unpronounceable and completely bizarre to us mortal Sassenachs so whether any have double meanings is an unknown quantity. Talking about words being unpronounceable, nothing can beat the Welsh. Mind you history tells us that when the Normans invaded, the Anglo-Saxons were driven back into Wales so actually Welsh is the original English – make of that what you will but only a small nation such as theirs can have a tiny railway station with the longest place name in Europe and the second longest one-word place name in the world, so long at 58 letters that it is generally shortened on maps to Llanfair PG. Evidently it means: “St. Mary's Church in the hollow of the white hazel near a rapid whirlpool and the Church of St. Tysilio near the red cave.” It is safe to say that ‘Llanfair PG’ is a lot easier to use when you’re buying your train ticket!

But there is one place here in good old England that does not have a double entendre, as far as I am aware. Rather, its name became changed over time and it’s the small village of Crowland that was originally known as ‘Croyland’ which evidently was a medieval era name and the one still in ecclesiastical use. It is possible that the East Anglian dialect would pronounce ‘Croyland’ as ‘Crowland’ and the spelling stuck. I first became aware of Crowland when I was travelling by bus from Spalding to Peterborough, a journey I have written about previously. The bus generally followed the main road but where the road by-passed villages it deviated off the main road to go into the villages which is how I encountered Crowland. The bus followed the main street picking up passengers on its way until it could go no further and then did a three-point turn to retrace its route back to the main road. The main street which starts as West Street and then becomes East Street at the junction with North Street and South Street has at the junction a most peculiar bridge. Firstly, it does not actually cross anything and secondly it has three supports. Nothing unusual about that except their footprint is in the shape of a triangle, hence the bridge’s name: ‘Trinity Bridge’ as the three supports historically relate to the Holy Trinity. Originally it crossed the canals that ran down what are now the north, south, east and west streets. Built in stone between 1360 and 1390, it replaced an earlier wooden structure and was surmounted with a large cross. Charters of 716 and 943 speak about a triangular bridge and that it was also used as marker to measure boundaries of land in grant to the Abbey. Two of the canals were linked with the River Welland and another known as the ‘Cat’s Water’ with the River Nene. And possibly there was another that ran along what is now East Street to the Abbey. These were major arteries for goods coming into the village and leaving, and for the transport of people. They were so busy that they became referred to in a 1586 book as ‘Venice’. Eventually trade using the canals diminished and they silted up and were then built over leaving the streets that are now present. The bridge, though, was allowed to remain although the gently sloping stone roadways up and over it were lost and accessing the top of the bridge now is a climb up steep steps. Fastened on one side is a statue, much worn, supposed to be of Christ holding an orb and sceptre, symbols of his kinship, hence it surviving into the 21st century.

The trade that occurred in the village led to great wealth and as often happened the Church benefited and subsequently a large abbey was constructed at the end of what is now East Street. As has happened in many other places, the abbey fell foul of Henry VIII’s reformation and was destroyed but remarkably a parish church was later constructed using some of the still standing walls of the abbey. The church which I had limited time to visit properly will need another visit from me sometime in the future. Watch this space as they say! I can’t finish without praising the Parish council for when I visited there was not a speck of rubbish anywhere, the grass verges were immaculate and there were flower tubs aplenty festooned with gloriously coloured flowers. And to top it all, for sustenance I can recommend the Copper Kettle Tea Rooms in North Street, a dog friendly establishment, where the tea is served in proper china pots and crockery, and the cakes are to die for! Lastly, if you’re reading this late at

night and have become tired can I suggest a somnambulistic trip to either of two places, one in Hampshire, the other in the East Riding of Yorkshire but both with the same name: the Land of Nod.

Adrian J Liddle