Christmas is coming, and for Leckhampstead that means candlelight and carols to set the festive scene.

It began with the Christingle service at St Mary’s on 4 December with the theme of Light. Everyone enjoyed making a Christingle or a candle decoration, which were then lit.

The church will look its Christmas best for carols by candlelight on Sunday, 18 December. This traditional carol service starts at 6pm and includes a special moment as children are invited to sing around the crib. The church is lit entirely by candles for the service, so it is advisable to bring a torch in order to read the words of the carols. To add to the occasion, there will be drinks and nibbles after the service, and it is hoped everyone will be able to stay and share Christmas greetings.

On Christmas Eve, there will be Holy Communion at 10pm. Again the setting is lovely as the church will be candelit.

IT’S CHRISTMAS!

Slowing the flow

Fresh thinking on ways to hold back the flood naturally has been revealed.

A team from Bucks County Council is looking at ways of slowing down the floodwater before it reaches Church End and cuts off access to the village.

Speaking at a village meeting, strategic flood management officer Andrew Waugh explained that while only a small number of properties suffer directly, there is concern about the wider impact and danger from the speed, power and depth of the floodwaters.

Rather than major ‘hard’ civil engineering – as in the ill-fated proposal put forward by Aylesbury Vale District Council – the county options centre on more natural solutions.

Methods such as creating ‘leaky dams’ of materials like branches upstream could slow the flow sufficiently to reduce the impact.

Planting tree barriers and establishing slow release water-holding areas to manage run-off from fields could also help.

This would have environmental benefits too, by reducing the amount of silt and fertiliser washed into the stream and which in turn could attract additional funding to help pay for any scheme.

There is no quick fix and any proposal would need approval and funding from Defra before work could begin. Andrew stressed that residents’ views, knowledge and experiences were vital to finding a viable solution that has the support of the community.

The team aims to report back with more detail in the spring.

Join the merry band

The carol singers will be out and about again this year raising Christmas spirits and money for charity.

The more who join in, the merrier the sound, but don’t worry if you feel that you are not a very good singer – come along anyway as people are also needed to go to the doors with the collection boxes.

The carollers will set off on Monday, 12 December, meeting at South End car park at 6.30pm. Please wrap up warmly and bring a torch. This year the collection will be for Parkinson’s UK. If you have any queries, contact Beth King on 860657.

Speeding solution?

The parish council is to look at ways of encouraging motorists to stick to the speed limits through the village.

A particular problem spot is the stretch from Home Farm, past South End and through to Middle End, taking in the Maids Moreton road T-junction with its notoriously poor vision splay.

Villagers are generally mindful of the 30mph limit, but others driving through are regularly flouting the restriction.

One possibility being investigated to get motorists to slow down is the use of ‘smiley face’ flashing speed warning signs.
Goodbye to a good friend
Leckhampstead lost a good friend when Ruth Aran passed away on 30 September.
Although she lived in Warwick, Ruth was a frequent visitor to the village to stay with her son and daughter-in-law, John and Mary Aran, at The Swallows, Church End.
Ruth loved the village and became a great supporter, especially when various fundraising events for the restoration of the village hall were being organised.
She was accomplished at serving on the produce stall, always cheerful and helpful to the customers.
For Hallowe’en Fun on the village green, Ruth brought a supply of delicious homemade parkin.
She also showed her flower arranging skills with some lovely displays for flower festivals in the church.
Those who knew Ruth have fond memories of her, and are grateful for the interest she took in Leckhampstead, her cheerfulness and willingness to help.
Her funeral was at Bishops Tachbrook, Warwickshire on 28 October. We extend our deepest sympathy to John and Mary, and to all the members of Ruth’s family.

News from St Mary’s
The church has been receiving a touch of tlc.
New gravel laid on the paths will make it all look very tidy and, hopefully, will also deter the weeds.
The gutters and drainpipes have been cleaned out in preparation for the winter and some repointing has also been done where the mortar bees have been busy.
This year, the church has had its Quinquennial Inspection.
This is a general inspection of the church building which is obligatory every five years. The architect’s report is awaited but he is hopeful that no major work will have to be done in the near future.

The church was floodlit on the following occasions:
10 November – in memory of Rose Baker on what would have been her birthday.
Rose came from London with her husband, Percy, to live at Rosemount, Wicken Road in 1945. She worked in the canteen at Leckhampstead School, then around 1951 took over the village shop and post office at what is now Willow Bridge Cottage, where she also lived. Rose was involved in village life, including the Women’s Institute, looking after the church and also organising coach outings to shows in London. Rose was living in Buckingham when she passed away in 1986.

30 November – in memory of Gladys Mansfield on what would have been her birthday.
Gladys came to live at Manor Farm in 1953. Later, after the death of her husband in 1959, she moved with her family to Lodge Farm. She contributed a lot to village life, serving as Women’s Institute president and secretary, chairman of the village hall committee and as a churchwarden for many years. She was also skilled at flower arranging and organised many flower festivals at St Mary’s, as well as fetes and other fundraising events. She died in May 2003, at the age of 100.

Generous donations were given to the church on both these occasions.
The church was also floodlit on 13 November, Remembrance Sunday, in memory of Harold Gore Browne, who died in the First World War on 31 May 1916, at the Battle of Jutland. He was 30 and son of the Rector of Leckhampstead, the Rev Robert Melville Gore Browne. He had joined the Royal Navy on leaving school and, at the time of his death, was Assistant Paymaster on HMS Invincible. Sadly, his brother, Eric Anthony, also died in the First World War, in 1918.

Ready for lunch?
The village lunches have been continuing monthly, on a Thursday.
The next village lunch will be on Thursday, 15 December at 1pm. There is no need to book – just come along to the village hall and bring a plate of food to share. Tea and coffee will be provided, but you are welcome to bring other drinks if you would prefer.

In memory of Philip
Smart new oak gates have been installed at the cemetery in memory of Wing Commander Philip Cash.
Philip, who died in February 2015, lived at Cottage Farm, Church End, and had been a long-serving churchwarden at St Mary’s.
His family felt that the much-needed new gates would be a perfect way of using money donated in his memory.
A commemorative plaque is to be fitted to the gates.

Poppy day thank you
The door-to-door collection for the Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal in November raised £218.94.
In addition to this, the collection at the church service on Remembrance Sunday was £307, making a grand total from Leckhampstead of £525.94.
Poppy seller Peter Hay, thanks all who gave so generously.

Floodlighting the church is a lovely way to remember someone or to mark another special date, such as a birthday or anniversary. If you would like the church to be floodlit, please get in touch with Beth King on 860657. There is no charge, but donations are welcome.
A year in focus

Previously unseen snapshots of some of the events of 2016 captured on Beth King’s camera

Would you like to help with the village social life? The small group of people who work hard to put on events would love to see more people joining in – bringing more ideas, more help and more enthusiasm!

The group will be meeting at Rosemount, Wicken Road on Wednesday, 1 February at 7.30pm to plan the 2017 calendar. Do put the date into your diary and bring your ideas along. If you have any queries, contact Zoe Jones on 07540527691 or email zoe@connolly.co
A pleasant autumn stroll

Good weather and dry paths made perfect going for the 10 people who joined in the village walk on 22 October, writes Beth King.

Avoiding the fields which had been ploughed recently, the walk took us along the bridleway to Barrett’s End, along the Akeley road and back across Valley Farm to Church Path.

Back at the village hall, we enjoyed the lovely food which everyone had brought, and had a good time catching up into the late afternoon.

The next village walk will be our annual New Year’s Day Walk. We hope that you can come along to join in. It is always a fairly short walk and not too strenuous, and it is a lovely way to meet up for the beginning of the year and work off some of those Christmas calories!

Please meet at the village hall at 1pm. Suitable footwear is a must, as the paths may be muddy at that time of year. Dogs are welcome, but please bring a lead.

We will have refreshments in the village hall when we return from the walk, so please can everyone bring some food if possible. Drinks will be provided.

If you have any queries, contact Keith or Beth on 860657.

A warm welcome

to Tom and Tanya Holmes and their children, Shane and Summer, who have moved into 9 South End. We hope that they will be very happy living in Leckhampstead.

Olivia’s fast 1st

Congratulations to Olivia Hitch, who graduated from Kings College London with iBSc (1st) in Advanced Human Anatomy and Surgery.

The ‘i’ prefix stands for intercolated degree – completing a three year course in 12 months.

Olivia, whose family home is The Orchard at Limes End, has now returned to her studies for the remaining three years of her degree in Medicine.

Leckhampstead Parish Council is still looking for a new clerk.

The role offers a salary of £10.83 an hour for approximately six hours a month and involves working from home and attending evening meetings every other month.

If you are interested, contact chairman Tobin Jones at Willow Bridge Cottage, Church End, email: tob@tj44.demon.co.uk

For full details go to the village website www.leckhampsteadvillage.co.uk

Hot competition at quiz night

Brains were exercised as seven teams competed for glory at the Quiz Night on 12 November.

The Horwood Ringers took top spot followed by Last Place, with Five Go Mad in Leckhampstead close behind.

A delicious supper of chilli con carne, baked potatoes and green salad was served, followed by fruit crumble.

Thanks to all who helped make the night a success, especially Zoe Jones for organising the quiz, to quizmaster Glenn Coffey, to Alison Sinclair who made the chilli and to everyone who made crumbles.

A profit of £408 has gone towards the maintenance of St Mary’s Church building.

100 Club winners

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1st (£25)</th>
<th>2nd (£15)</th>
<th>3rd (£10)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>September</td>
<td>Mark &amp; Charlotte Salisbury</td>
<td>Sarah Woods</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October</td>
<td>Bidie Cash</td>
<td>Angie Flynn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November</td>
<td>Lesley Smith</td>
<td>Tori King</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The 100 Club costs just £12 for a year and pays out every month. Money raised goes to the upkeep of the village hall. Subscriptions are due for 2017 so Mary Aran and Beth King will be collecting in the next few weeks.

There are a few numbers available so if you are not already in the Club and would like to join contact Mary on 860301 or Beth on 860657.

Dates for your diary

| Monday 12 December | Carol singing around village | meet at South End car park |
| Thursday 15 December | Village lunch | Village Hall |
| Sunday 18 December | Carol Service | St Mary’s |
| Christmas Eve | Holy Communion | St Mary’s |
| New Year’s Day | Village walk | meet at Village Hall |
| Wednesday 1 February | Events planning meeting | Rosmoun |

Contributions to the Newsletter are always welcome.

Please submit copy to the editors, Debbie Boyce tel: 860343 email: dbcommunications@tiscali.co.uk or Beth King tel: 860657 email: beth133@btinternet.com