



The Pilsdon at Malling Community Christmas 2013



This year seems to have flown by. It has been a busy year and we have thoroughly enjoyed welcoming new and old friends for different occasions throughout the year. In May St Peter and Paul's Church, Leybourne, put on a production of the musical 'Mary Magdalene' in the Barn Chapel. It was a wonderful performance. In June we welcomed Duo Isaria - Rebekka Hartmann on violin and Caroline Bergius on harpsichord – who played amidst the beautiful saris and wall hangings that Bazaar had begun to hang in the Barn Chapel in preparation for their summer show here the following week. The music was amazing and we are really pleased that they plan to come back in June 2014. It was good to welcome back Jo, Alex and the team with the wonderful Bazaar. Unfortunately, whenever they are here it seems that it hardly ever stops raining. But there was a steady stream of people, especially over the weekends when we provided light lunches of cheese ploughmans and hot pork rolls, as well as cakes, tea and coffee.

At the end of June some of us went to Eden Hall in Edenbridge to join in the celebrations to mark the end of more than half a century of the Sisters of St Andrew at Eden Hall as they began their move to a much smaller house in Lewisham. We have continued to help them to pack up over the months since. It was such a huge task

and many unusual and ancient items were found in the dark recesses of sheds and cupboards.

It was good to welcome Francisco Andaluz from Spain, who came to volunteer for a few weeks in July and August. Our dear friend and ex-volunteer Anne Garnier visited for a couple of days at the end of July – not nearly long enough! And Himalee came from Sri Lanka to stay for most of August. It was really great to spend time with her again, and to enjoy her cooking and her enthusiasm for everything. The end of July also saw us saying goodbye to our residential volunteer James Race, (pictured right) who left after almost a year with us to join the Franciscans at Alnmouth Friary. He contributed much to the community and is missed.



The highlight of the year has to be Berta and Woody's wedding which took place here on 24 August. We obtained an Archbishop's licence so that the whole marriage could take place here. It was a wonderful occasion and very different to the usual run-of-the-mill wedding – happily, Berta is not one for tradition so there were some unexpected surprises. She looked beautiful and had worked so hard to make sure the day was as special

for all the guests as it was for her and Woody. There were many old friends here and there was much catching up going on during the barbeque afterwards. It was unfortunate that the weather was so poor, but that didn't dampen anyone's spirits.

Sadly, we learnt of Steve Miller's death a few days later. Steve was well known to both Pilsdons, having visited them frequently over many years. He lived here for two years before moving on to live independently in a flat, first in Snodland and then in Wateringbury. He is someone who will live on in our memories and of whom we were very fond, a dear soul who had taken a few wrong turnings in life but who was always cheeky and cheerful.

In September we opened for the Heritage Weekend and had a very successful 'Café in the Barn' selling cakes, tea and coffee. The Barn Chapel is such a special building and it's amazing how many local people have no idea it is here until they visit for one of our events.

At the end of September we took part in the marvellous Music@Malling Festival by hosting a lunchtime concert featuring Chamber Domaine, who played pieces from Mahler, Simpson, Britten, Mozart and Schumann.

In mid-October Bishop Brian of Tonbridge visited Pilsdon at Malling as part of a week in the Malling Deanery. It was good to welcome him, the Chief Executive and the Director of Finance and Transformation of Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council for lunch and to discuss



Woody and Bertie on the happy day

the life, work and vision of this community with them all.

In November the Bazaar was back giving us all an early taste of the Christmas season. We so enjoy having them all here, with the wonderful colours, sights and smells of India filling the Barn. Yet it also seems to give a deeper meaning to the approach of Advent, as the Barn Chapel is returned once again to simplicity and emptiness when they leave.

We thoroughly enjoyed having the Shanghai Syncopated Orchestra here on 13 December, playing music from the 20s and 30s. We served spiced fruit punch and mince pies and the event was well

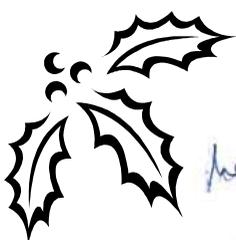
attended. On a much more serious note, it is a sad indictment of our times that so many people are struggling to feed themselves and their families, even in this supposedly affluent area. In response to this Pilsdon at Malling has started a Food Bank which can be accessed by local churches, social services and other local charitable organisations to provide food for those in need. There has been a growing call for this over the past four months and this month we have worked with the Malling Lions to provide about one hundred Christmas hampers. Many of these families will need ongoing support over the coming months. We are very grateful to the many individuals and churches who have been so generous in giving non-perishable food to stock the Food Bank and our own store cupboard.

Just after Christmas we look forward to celebrating James Tuite's marriage to Lisa at West Malling Church. James lived here for some years before moving on to live in Tunbridge Wells. We are thrilled for both him and Lisa and wish them much joy in their new life together.

We will celebrate Midnight Mass at 11.30pm on Christmas Eve and will hold a short service of prayer to welcome the New Year at 11.30pm on New Year's Eve. All are welcome to join us for these and any of our daily offices and twice weekly Eucharists.

As we celebrate the coming of the Christ Child this Christmas, may you be richly blessed and filled with the peace and joy of the Kingdom.

With love and prayers from all of us at Pilsdon at Malling.



GOD BLESS
MIKE G.

Maigh
Happy Christmas
Phil D.

A.H.T. Bend

Benjamin Page-Jones

Paul

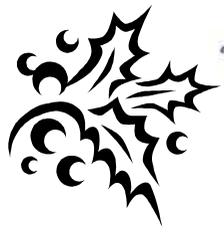
Marcel

God Bless Tim ("Timbo")
Loder
MERRY CHRISTMAS
Paul M

James
Dennis

Philip
Merry Christmas

live
Petra



Where does your old bike go when you no longer want it? To the tip? The steel merchants (the modern equivalent of the knacker's yard)? Or does it stay hidden at the back of the garage or garden shed, gathering dust?

Pilsdon at Malling is setting up a social enterprise that will take old bicycles and, hopefully, make them as good as new. The born-again bikes can then either be used by Pilsdon residents for transport, exercise or leisure, or we will sell them (at reasonable prices) to raise funds for the Pilsdon community. We also aim to run a repair business, fixing problems that might be too minor for mainstream bicycle shops to take on economically. And we will have a puncture-repair service for those who don't have the time (or patience, or know-how) to get those tyres all pumped up and ready to go. Of course, if you can't bear to part with your old bike and want to get it back on the road, we can help you to give it the necessary love, care and attention. After all, that is what all bikes want.

In preparation for this venture Dennis attended a two-day Bicycle Recycle workshop in Cheshire during November



where he learnt about setting up a social enterprise and how to source old bikes. And during the week before Christmas he will attend a five-day bike repair course near Canterbury.

Our enterprise is aimed primarily at helping our residents to learn new skills and to give them something for transport or leisure. But it is also aimed at the wider West Malling community, which has no bike shop. We are almost ready to begin pedalling – I mean peddling – our wares. We have the space for a workshop, and we have applied for a grant to buy tools and basic supplies. Now all we need is old bikes and parts, which is where you come in. If you have an unwanted (or unloved) bike lingering in the back of the shed, we'd be happy to take it off your hands and give it a new life. Born-Again Bikes. Hmm, now that wouldn't be a bad name, would it?

The Pilsdon at Malling Community

27 Water Lane, West Malling, Kent ME19 6HH

Tel 01732 870279/01732 870434

www.pilsdonatmalling.org.uk email: pilsdon@pilsdonatmalling.org.uk

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