

***ST. BARTHOLOMEW'S CHURCH,
DUCKLINGTON***

ANNUAL REPORT for 2013 – 14

Thursday April 3rd 2014 in the Village Hall.



The Village Pond Ducklington

Wine and cheese will be served from 7.00pm;

***Annual Church Wardens Vestry Meeting will start at
7.40pm***

***Annual Parochial Church Meeting follows the Vestry
Meeting***

Annual Church Wardens Vestry Meeting at 7.40pm

Agenda

- 1) Prayers
- 2) Apologies
- 3) Minutes of the meeting of 18 April 2013
- 4) Vote on a proposal relating to the election of Church Wardens

In 2007 the AGM decided that as from 2008, Church Wardens should stand down after 6 years. The PCC has discussed this decision in light of comments from a number of people including the Bishop who question the wisdom of changing both Church Wardens at the same time. The proposal from the PCC is that we vote to rescind this 2007 decision to leave open the option of voting to keep one of the Church Wardens for at least another year to ensure continuity.

- 5) Election of two Church Wardens

Annual Parochial Church Meeting follows the Vestry Meeting

Agenda

- 1) Minutes of the AGM of 18 April 2013
- 2) Matters Arising from the minutes
- 3) Secretary's Report
- 4) Reports (see booklet)
 - Church Wardens
 - Treasurer including adoption of accounts
 - Deanery Synod
 - Other Reports
- 5) Appointment of the Auditor for 2015/16
- 6) Creation of position of 'Church Warden Emeritus' for Peter Nichols
- 7) Election of Deanery Synod Members
- 8) Election of PCC Members
- 9) Proposal that the current PCC Secretary and Treasurer remain in post after the annual meeting until the first meeting of the new PCC
- 10) Discussion about suggestions that the Church should be opened unattended during the week
- 11) Discussion about how we might improve the 'children's corner' & 'the space'
- 12) Any Other Business
- 13) Closing Prayers

Rector's Report

It is a good discipline for us to engage in this annual stock-take of our life as a church – and once again we have so much for which to be grateful.

Twelve months ago, as we were preparing the annual report, we were in the grip of one of the longest spells of cold weather for many years which led to the unprecedented decision to postpone Fritillary Sunday until May 5th. This proved to be a wise decision as we were blessed with warm, sunny day, a large number of visitors – and the fritillaries at their beautiful best.

The new toilet made its first appearance on that day and it too was blessed as Bishop Colin joined us for a prayer of thanksgiving and consecration of the new West End, in the presence of, among others, Roger Barnes and Peter Hamilton who, in their different ways, contributed so much to the project. Roger and the Fabric Committee have not stopped with the West End project and continue to look after the church building with great dedication, including seeing us through the recent quinquennial inspection.

Visitors to the church invariably comment on two particular features: the quality of the music and singing, and the warmth of the congregation (during the winter they always comment on the warmth of the building too!). We are very grateful to all who make music for us and it is great that so many members of the congregation look out for, and offer friendship to, those who are new to the church. It's an important part of our collective ministry.

So many people make serving the church community a regular commitment – through working with the children, cleaning the building, making coffee, reading lessons, leading prayers, leading the singing, administration, caring for the fabric, ringing bells, supporting baptisms, weddings and funerals – thank you to all. Thanks, too, to the lay ministers, Dave Adams, Ruth Edy and Ian Paul, for their leadership of worship and other contributions to church life.

I would like to make special mention of, and give particular thanks to, the Standing Committee: Edmund Strainge, Peter Nichols, Marian Pitman, Jane Dines and John Pearson, each one of whom has made an invaluable contribution to the smooth, behind-the-scenes running of the church for several years. During the last year, The Committee has been reinforced by Rachael Levermore whose insights and efficiency as PCC secretary have been greatly appreciated.

One of the real joys of Sunday mornings is the presence of the children. We recognize that it takes great commitment from parents to get their families in church by 9.30 and it is lovely to sense that the children feel so 'at home' – particularly when the biscuits appear at coffee time! It's a real blessing to be part of an all-age congregation each week.

Please read and enjoy this booklet – and make it a basis for prayer - for each other and for our church - as we use these reports to reflect upon the last year and look forward to the next stage in our faith journey together.

Bob Edy

PCC Secretary's Report

This has been the first year that I have been the PCC Secretary after taking over the responsibility from John Pearson in July 2013. Things would not have run so smoothly had John not been on hand to offer his support and invaluable advice so my personal thanks to John for everything he has done and I know this is wholeheartedly agreed with by my fellow PCC members. The PCC met 6 times in 2013 and discussed many things including the Quinquennial Inspection carried out in 2013, the progress of the West End Project and making arrangements for the twinning of the toilet. The Council also discussed issues such as the possibility of opening the Church during the week, our church giving policy and how the South Aisle could be better utilised.

There was also a focus on implementing policies for ensuring the safety of Church members and we spent some time reviewing policies including the Parish Safeguarding Policy and Health & Safety Policy. The Parish Safeguarding Policy will ensure the continued safety of our children, young people and vulnerable adults in Church and to create a culture of 'informed vigilance'. The Health and Safety Policy is designed to keep all worshippers and visitors safe from any safety hazards. We are actively working to ensure that this objective is achieved.

Probably one of the highlights was the restoration of Ducklington Church to a benefice which means that Ducklington Church will keep its identity and remain a Parish in its own right. As the PCC Secretary I have been asked by the diocese to consider disclosing the number of meetings PCC members attend. We would be interested to know your thoughts - would this be helpful for you to know? If you have any comments, please let me know. The final numbers of people registered on the Electoral Roll for 2014 will be reported during the AGM.

Rachael Levermore

Warden's Report

Our year started with the completion of the West End Development and what a success story that has been with all objectives met and all bills paid. The toilet has proved to be invaluable, we have a superb ringing chamber on the first floor of the tower and the whole aspect of the west end totally transformed. The Fabric Group continues to meet monthly under Roger Barnes leadership and through their efforts the ongoing repairs and maintenance are very well controlled, (see fabric report). In our last report we listed several vacancies which we are pleased to say have all been filled with the exception of weddings and funerals. We do need, as soon as possible, one or two people to understudy Marian so that we have a contingency plan in place for these important services to our community. Please talk with one of us or Bob if you might be interested.

Our view of the year as a whole is that it has been once again a very happy and fulfilling time at St Bartholomew's. At the time of writing no services have had to be cancelled, our social and fundraising events were very successful and the church continues to grow. On top of this Bob was promoted to Rector by the Bishop of Dorchester in recognition not only of his sterling work, but also the strength of the whole Parish of Ducklington.

As always we are very grateful to all of you who work and contribute to enable the church to run effectively both in terms of the building and services, and also to those working in the wider parish. We are indeed very fortunate that when a job needs doing someone will always step forward and take it on, this is a great reflection of where we are as a Church and a tribute to you all.

At our AGM in April we have the opportunity to elect wardens for the coming year. Peter is not standing for re-election but we are encouraged that we have already received interest from several members who are considering taking on this role. Being a warden at Ducklington is a wonderful and fulfilling job. We have always felt that we are simply servants of the parish in church matters. To share our responsibilities with a minister of Bob's standing enhances our role to one of great pleasure. Whatever happens in April, we both commit to assist the new wardens in every way we can.

And finally, thank you for allowing us to be your wardens for the past year. It has been a privilege to serve.

Peter Nichols and Edmund Strainge

Wardens Report - Fabric Committee

The Fabric Committee met eight times during 2013 and much of the discussion centred on the West End Project, phase 1 of which had been completed during 2012. During January we erected new shelving in the Vestry, and work commenced on the installation of the toilet, and associated drains, in March. Oxford Archaeology attended during the excavations in the churchyard and produced a detailed report of their findings. No significant "finds" were uncovered, but a considerable number of burials, mainly from the 18th and early 19th centuries, were recorded and the remains reinterred as near to their original resting place as possible. The target to complete this work was Frittillary Sunday – and thanks to Steve Townsend and his team this was achieved. Well done!

On completion of the West End Project it was agreed to instruct Treloar Associates to carry out a full Quinquennial (structural) survey of the church. Their report identified that the structure was sound and that no significant repair work was required.

Other tasks completed by the Fabric Committee during the year included:

- Decoration of vestry and toilet
- Repair to small areas of plaster in the Nave
- Gully cleaning
- Replacement of lights and heater tubes as required
- Sound system completion and training manual

We are thankful to volunteers who give their time to carry out minor repairs and inspections, thus saving the church money and helping to keep the fabric in good condition.

Roger Barnes

Treasurer's Report for 2013

Following on from the concerted fundraising efforts in 2012, for the west end appeal, 2013 has been a little calmer!

The appeal and building works finished during the year, and successfully on both counts, for which many thanks go to Roger Barnes for his project leading and all those who contributed in many varied ways to raise the money needed. During 2013 I am very pleased to report that we met all our commitments. Our overall income was lower than 2012 but we have to remember that was an exceptional year due to the appeal fundraising and the grants and donations that we received from outside bodies. Looking at committed giving and loose plate collections, the amounts given are very similar to previous years.

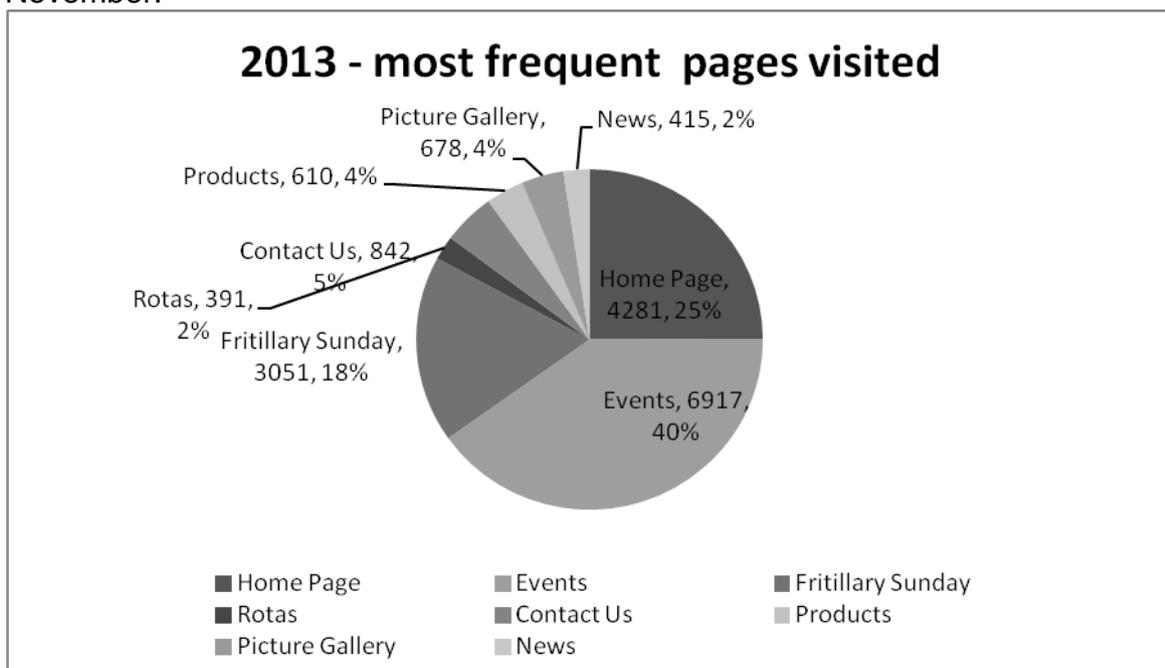
We cannot be complacent and must ensure that we put enough money aside for “a rainy day”, of which there seem to be so many at the moment, as major repair works are sure to come up over the next few years. Our annual events such as Fritillary Sunday enable us to raise significant sums for the Fabric Fund and I urge everyone to encourage as many friends and family to attend this lovely day which not only raises those funds but is such a good opportunity for outreach to the village and communities beyond.

My thanks to all who contribute regularly to the church; weekly, monthly, quarterly and on an ad-hoc basis. St Bartholomew’s focus is not on money but we do have to recognise that we need it and thanks to you all, no matter how small or large your contribution – it is always there. If you are able to Gift Aid your donations, that would help a lot! Do ask me if you would like a Gift Aid form or envelope. Thank you.

Jane Dines

St Bartholomew’s Web Site and Facebook page

During the year there were 7,433 visits to the website; a 28% increase from 2012. Of these visits, 61.33% were unique visits – in other words, first time visits to the site. 2,875 (38%) were returning visits which is encouraging as it suggests that those people have found it helpful and of interest. The highest month for visits was May and November.



The chart shows the most popular pages on the site during the year.

During the year a weekly newsletter has also been introduced that is sent to subscribers to the website. The newsletter gives a further reminder of events taking place, not only at St Bartholomew's, but in the Diocese and further afield where applicable. If you want to receive regular updates on events and other items then do subscribe to automatically receive emails by visiting www.ducklingtonchurch.org.uk

Facebook

Our Facebook page "likes" are slowly growing and currently stands at 76. These are the number of people who have specifically liked the page and this means that they see anything posted by us on their own Facebook page. The post can then be seen by their own friends. If they also share the post or "like" it, then all their friends will be notified of that too.

The most popular post during the year was the video of the Christingle service which was seen by 259 people. It was then shared another 410 times. A close second was a post the day before Fritillary Sunday which was seen by 257 people and then shared 488 times.

If you use Facebook, do remember to take a look at our page which often links back to the website to try and drive traffic there or tries to engage others in what St Bartholomew's is all about.

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/St-Bartholomews-Church-Ducklington/>

Jane Dines

Witney Deanery Synod

Witney Deanery Synod met twice in 2013. The June meeting was largely concerned with the parish share. The diocese will introduce (in 2014) a new system to apportion its running costs to the deaneries. Each deanery will pay in full its ministry costs (clergy salaries, pensions, and housing). However, other diocesan costs (support, website, administration, etc) will be divided between the deaneries by system that takes 'ability to pay' onto account. (The formula includes electoral roll numbers, Sunday church attendance, and a community profile score).

Synod decided to use exactly the same system when the deanery share was apportioned between its benefices and parishes. There will be a transitional timetable.

The November meeting confirmed this decision, and set caps of +4% and -2% for changes in the parish shares in 2014.

Rev Bill Blakey stood down as area dean at the end of November, following a diagnosis of cancer. Rev Toby Wright has been appointed in his place.

John Pearson

Services

There continues to be a demand for 'occasional services' with ten weddings and thirteen funerals at St Bartholomew's in the past year. Baptisms remain an important part of our ministry with 30 during the year. We are grateful to Sarah Temple for her work in co-ordinating these and grateful too, to the team which takes anniversary and birthday cards to the homes of all children baptized in St Bartholomew's, until they are four.

An innovation in the past year has been the introduction of a 'Songs of Praise' format for the first part of Communion services when there is a fifth Sunday in the month. We also have the children back in church for the administration of Communion on most Sundays now, which allows families to go to the altar together.

Attendance at morning services has been good throughout the year and recently the number taking Communion has been in three figures. The 6pm service continues to provide a monthly oasis of calm for its 20 or so regulars!

In November we welcomed Bishop Colin for a Confirmation Service. An unusual feature of this service was that Bob was 'welcomed' as *rector* and inducted into his post! (Bob was appointed originally as priest-in-charge but the diocese decided to 'upgrade' the post to rector – a recognition from the diocese that St Bartholomew's is of sufficient size to remain an independent benefice).

Bob Edy

Fritillary Sunday 2013

For the first time in its thirty years, Fritillary Sunday had to be postponed because the cold weather had held back the development of the flowers. May 5th turned out to be a beautiful day in the middle of a spell of otherwise indifferent weather and it was a very happy and well-attended occasion. So many people work hard on Fritillary Sunday which makes it invidious to highlight individuals but mention should be made of Ruth and Alan Bushnell who for the thirtieth year produced and sold copies of the quiz which they and Mollie Madge had created. The quizzes raised £200 of the £3,600 which the day raised for the Fabric Fund.

Bob Edy

Music

We are indeed extremely fortunate to have such a wonderful group of accomplished musicians who are prepared to use their talents to enrich our worship. During the year, we welcomed Harriet Warner to that number and continued to enjoy music from Paul Herrington, Pauline Parkman, Ruth Almgill, Amanda Bennett and Dave Adams. Many of us really enjoy the occasions when a group of instrumentalists enhance the musical offering and the Singing Group is greatly appreciated at Christmas and on other occasions when they are involved in leading the service. The Singing Group in turn greatly appreciate the patience and inspiration of Paul Herrington.

Bob Edy

Singing Group Report

The committed singers meet on Thursdays in Church preparing for occasional involvement in services or for seasonal services. The growing sense of fun and fellowship is evident and all appreciate the positive comments made when the singers do take part in Services. Occasionally some of the regular members of the group need to be absent which restricts what is able to be achieved musically, but perseverance and commitment ensure that confidence in Ministry is developing. The group is open to new members, male and female, and you do not need to be able to read music! A willingness to learn, and being able to keep in tune are important, as well as understanding that the role of the group is to serve as a Ministry to others, as well as offering musical leadership. If interested please contact Paul Herrington or Bob Edy.

Paul Herrington

Pastoral Team Report

The Pastoral Team have continued to try to get to know as many of our Church members as possible, and give support to any who would like it. We do our best to notice if people are 'missing' so that we can offer help during illness or bereavement, or just a friendly chat after church. Cards are sent to those who are ill or bereaved, and in the past year we have started to send a card to the family on the first anniversary of a death. We also try to send Christmas and Easter cards to people who are now unable to get to church. We continue to offer help with transport to hospital or other medical appointments, and to assist people in getting to church. Meg Roberts coordinates this service. Would anyone who would be willing to offer this kind of help occasionally, please give their details to Meg. Anyone who feels that they might be able to join the Pastoral team should speak to Bob Edy or Meg Roberts. We usually meet together 2 or 3 times a year. We encourage every member of the congregation to assist us with these activities and to let us know of any needs of which they become aware.

Meg Roberts

Sunday morning activity groups and events for children

As with other things this year, there have had to be cuts in our provision for children on Sunday mornings as we have fewer helpers and fewer children in some of the age-ranges. We now have a crèche for 0-3year olds [Rhoda and Pippa have taken responsibility for organising this] and this is a real growth area!

The next group is for 3- 8year olds: this is quite a wide age range for a group and not easy to manage so we are grateful to the helpers – both adult and teenagers - who make the leader's task a little easier! The leaders in this age-group are Angela Williams, Julie deBanks, Liz Chapman, Celia Cunningham and Ruth Edy.

The older group for 9-14 year olds meets on Sunday mornings, twice a month in the upper room of the village hall, and the leaders for this group are John Phipps, Phil Levermore and Martin Dines, along with their helpers.

Ruth Edy

Creche

Creche continues to be a lively place to be on a Sunday morning! Last summer, it was decided that children aged 3 years and over would join the youngest Sunday School group in the main hall rather than staying in creche. This has made creche a rather safer place for the 0-2 year olds, especially babies who are not yet crawling or just starting to master the skill, with fewer big people crashing around! We have 6-9 regular attendees and a little group of mums and teenagers who help on a rota basis. Thank you to all our lovely helpers. If anyone would like to join the rota to spend 45 minutes approx once a month playing, reading to toddlers, cuddling babies, etc., do let Rhoda or Pippa know!

Rhoda Hardie

The Easter Experience - this year was based in the primary school and not the church. The children re-told the Easter story, each class taking a different event in the story. The members of the congregation who attended the presentation in the school were impressed with the ingenuity of some of the displays and the enthusiasm of the children.

Christmas Craft morning - Some time around the October half-term, we are always asked the date of the craft morning – which is more an Advent event than a Christmas event. It is usually the Saturday morning before the Christingle service [which is usually Advent Sunday] and includes the making of the Christingles, as well as other Christmassy crafts. We all enjoy it – the church members who provide the different activities, the parents and even the children!

Ruth Edy

Foundation Governor Report - Ducklington Church of England Primary School

I am pleased to report that the school has had a great year. Each term has had a theme started by WOW days, the current theme being water. The students have worked hard and included themselves in a number of activities based around these themes.

There has been a reading week, a visit by the author Katherine Languish, and the poet John Foster came to open the schools brand new library which has been a great success. There have been visits including to Chedworth Roman Villa, the pantomime 'Jack and the Giant' and a number of students entered the Junior Strictly at the New Theatre, Oxford. At Christmas the Key Stage 1 Nativity and Key Stage 2 Carol services at St. Bartholomews Church were both very well received.

Developments and improvements to the school continue not only with the provision of the new Library, but also the decoration of the hall and central areas has been completed, with further decoration to come. There is a brilliant new play area which the school has provided with further developments outside planned, kindly supported by FODS (Friends of Ducklington School).

The students education continues to grow through good teaching and development of the environment in which they learn.

Henry Cooke

Prayer on Friday mornings

This has continued on a pretty regular basis, on the third Friday in the month, except during Lent and when the pattern is interrupted by holidays!

Ruth Edy

Ladies AwayDay 2013

Saturday 23rd March was meant to be the Ladies' AwayDay in 2013 but we had to postpone it because of the snow and ice, and so we met at Friars Court on Saturday May 11th instead! The Rev'd Ann Hartley was our guest speaker and the theme was 'journeys'. We enjoyed a relaxing day together, with some sunshine!

In 2014 we are stepping out of our usual pattern and going to the Women's Institute's centre for residential adult education, Denman College, at Marcham.

Ruth Edy

Flower Report

We have a very happy little group of volunteers who arrange the flowers on a rota and do the Wedding arrangements when needed. We all get together for the festivals, Christmas, Easter and Harvest when we make the church look wonderful, and it is a great pleasure for us to hear the lovely comments!

There will be several Weddings in the coming months, we enjoy arranging the flowers for these, we also depend on weddings and some donations for our flower fund. For those who do not know, the brides pay us to arrange their flowers and this money goes straight into the flower fund. This fund is there to buy the flowers needed for the church for the rest of the year.

If anyone is interested in joining the flower group you would be most welcome. No qualifications needed, just a love of flowers!!

Jane Nichols

Christian Aid Report

2013 was another successful year for the seventeen Christian Aid collectors from the church. There were a few retirements but several people agreed to collect for the first time, and collected a total of £931.16. After Gift Aid this amounted to approx. £1,747.32, which compares well with previous years. Since the Witney chairperson retired after more than 10 years in the role, Paul Langley has agreed to take it on. We are very grateful to all the collectors and to all who support the collection.

Christian Aid week 2014 is from May 11th to 17th. Anyone who would like to help would be very welcome, and if there is anyone who would like to take on or share the role of Organiser for the village, then I would be pleased to discuss this with them.

Meg Roberts

Witney Area Fair Trade Action Group

This group has been running for several years and in 2011 achieved its target of making Witney a Fairtrade town. However the number of active members has lessened in the last couple of years and more volunteers would be welcome, so that we maintain our status by keeping issues of Fairtrade in the public consciousness. This year's event was a lower-key affair than in the past, with just a few Fairtrade stalls, cream teas being sold in the High Street Methodist Church hall, smoothies

made using pedal power and entertainment by Songscope. (This had not taken place as this report was written) For more information see Meg Roberts.

Friends of St. Bartholomew's

The membership of the Friends remains firm at just under 100. A complimentary copy of the Newsletter is sent to all couples recently married in our church, and also the parents of any recently baptised child together with an invitation to 'become a Friend'. This is seen as perhaps the best way to enrol new 'Friends' but as the response to this invitation has been minimal we are now considering ways to try to improve this response.

A 'Cheese and Wine get together' of the Friends was held in August, and an encouraging number of members turned up in the Village Hall. A dry, warm and pleasant evening started with a delightful walk around the Old Rectory gardens, followed by a pause for refreshment and then a visit to church where members were able to see and admire the refurbished vestry and ringing chamber. This visit was very much appreciated perhaps more so by those who live away from Ducklington, and gave members the opportunity to browse and admire the workmanship at their leisure. It was thought that a visit to the crypt would be interesting this year, but having been down there some years ago it is much more difficult to descend to the crypt than to ascend to the ringing chamber!

Our thanks to all who contribute to the Newsletter, and also those who assist in delivering it around the parish.

Maurice Spalding

Tower Ringing 2013

In January the ringers held their annual dinner at The Strickland Arms which was well attended by ringers and their partners, with Bob and Ruth as our guests. On the first Sunday of each month we usually attempt a Quarter Peal, which is about 45 minutes of continuous ringing, before the evening Communion Service. Out of 9 attempts, 4 were successful. In July we rang a special Quarter Peal to celebrate Chris Putt's 50 years membership of the Oxford Diocesan Guild of Bell-Ringers. Christine was responsible for the restoration and rehangings of the bells in 1989 and was Tower Captain until 2007.

In July we held our annual outing, this year ringing at Hilton Waldrist, Shellingford, Uffington and Shrivenham, with an enjoyable lunch at The Fox & Hounds, Uffington. We also competed in the Witney & Woodstock Branch Striking Competition, held at Ducklington, where we were pipped at the post by Woodstock – but still a very creditable performance. We gained Pat as a new ringer during the year, but are still seeking more to come forward to learn this curious but skilful English art. In August, Angela, one of our ringers, married Tom at Ducklington. We wish them both well in their new life together. Our new ringing "space" is proving to be an invaluable asset making ringing at Ducklington much less claustrophobic, and much more enjoyable. Fortunately we had sufficient ringers, with some outside help, to ring for all the services and weddings required – but it would be nice to do this with 100% Ducklington ringers (hint for more recruits!). All in all a very good year.

Roger Barnes

Cradle Roll

Children Baptised at our Church receive two cards a year, one on the Anniversary of their Baptism and one on their Birthday for four years. On these occasions the family receive a copy of the latest Church Newsletter. We have three people on this team, Ruth Bushnell, Margaret Warner, and Barbara Farrar.

Barbara Farrar

Julian Group

Julian Meetings are groups of people who meet in order to grow in the practice of contemplative, wordless silent prayer in the Christian tradition. We have learnt about Julian of Norwich, her life and ways of this silent time of listening, giving God time and our complete and undivided awareness and attention. Something we find little time for in this busy, noisy world we live in today. We first have a reading, 30minutes of silence, then a social time with a cuppa. We are on the National Register. We meet on the first Friday of every month at, 62 Beanhill Road, Ducklington, all are welcome. Ring Barbara Farrar, on 01993 359236.

Barbara Farrar

Ladies' Reading Group

"An unmarried woman, just over 30, who lives alone and has no apparent ties, must expect to find herself involved or interested in other people's business."

(Barbara Pym, Excellent Women) This was our first book choice this year, with its excellent depiction of vicars, jumble sales and romance in 1952!

We have moved on to a varied selection of books including a portrait of the artist Gwen John, Alan Bennett's autobiographical "A life like other people's" and John Wyndham's "The Chrysalids", which gave a new, disturbing slant on prejudice.

We greatly enjoyed "A room with a view" and indulged ourselves by watching the DVD starring Helena Bonham-Carter. We felt erudite, reading Julian Barnes' "The Sense of an Ending" but hoped we understood the ending with the unreliable narrator. Now we are back with an old favourite, Kate Atkinson, with her Costa prize-winning "Life after Life".

Ruth Edy has been an excellent Hostess to us all and encouraged the convivial atmosphere. Why not join us?

Rosemary Bold

Mothers' Union at Ducklington

We are still increasing membership and meeting in members' homes. Our thanks go to the "hostesses" for having us and refreshing us. Our thoughts and discussions are varied, following an Advent theme, visits, and hearing of the continual work at Helen & Douglas House and its chaplaincy role.

We have just heard of the death of Joan Baron at 'The Homestead' Carterton. She was a very active member for many years and we thank God for her time with us and her dedicated work for the Mothers' Union.

Brenda Cook

SAINT BARTHOLOMEW'S CHURCH, DUCKLINGTON

Minutes of the Annual Meeting held in church on April 18th 2013

Present: Rev R.Edy (Chairman), Dr J. Pearson (Secretary), Mrs J.Dines (Treasurer) and 20 church members

Apologies were received from 11 church members.

The meeting was opened in prayer by the Chairman.

Annual Church Wardens Vestry Meeting

1. The minutes of the meeting held on March 29th 2012 (see Annual Report Booklet page 14) were approved as a correct record (proposed by Maurice Spalding, seconded by Marian Pitman).
2. Peter Nichols explained that, despite his former intention to stand down in 2013, he now felt that he should if possible see through the administrative developments he had already set in motion.
3. Peter Nichols and Edmund Strainge have been nominated to stand as wardens for 2013/14. They were elected by acclamation, and warmly thanked for all they had done in the past year; Edmund was especially congratulated, this being his 40th year as warden.

Annual Parochial Church Meeting

1. The minutes of the meeting held on March 29th 2012 (Annual Report p.14-16) were approved as a correct record (proposed by Ian Paul, seconded by Alan Bushnell).
2. Matter Arising – the library is still underused – the fabric committee was asked to suggest an alternative site for the bookcase. The possibility of it becoming included in a shared library facility in Witney was mooted.
3. Secretary's report (p.3)
4. Wardens report (p. 3-4) Peter Nichols emphasised the need to plan to fill future vacancies (in a years time we will need new wardens, treasurer and secretary). He expressed special thanks to Roger Barnes Peter Hamilton for their work on the West End Project (and to the church cleaners who had to clear up the resultant duct week after week!).
5. Treasurer's report (p. 4-5) Jane Dines presented the audited accounts for 2012. We have (pretty well!) kept within budget; we have missed only one small payment of the parish share, and expenditure has closely matched income. The costs of the west end project account for the considerable increase in income and expenditure in 2012. The accounts were unanimously adopted (proposed by Edmund Strainge, seconded by Adrian Walsh), and

Jane was warmly thanked and congratulated. It is uncertain who will audit the accounts for 2013; the appointment of an auditor was delegated to the PCC.

6. Witney Deanery Synod report (p.6)
7. Rectory report (p. 2-3) Bob emphasised the way in which so many people share the work and service of our church. Now that the west end project is near completion we can see it all and delight in the result.
8. Other reports are included in the annual report booklet and were presented by the Chairman. Comments included:

Web Site (p. 5-6) updated daily and very good.

Services (p. 7) we need to improve how we greet people (particularly newcomers). It would be good if more church members stayed for baptisms. The 'never boring' morning services, and the peaceful evening Communion services were highly commended.

Frittillary Sunday (p. 7) is now in its 30th year.

Pastoral team (p. 8) the team could do with a few more car drivers.

Tower ringing (p. 8-9) we do not yet have our own full team of Ducklington ringers.

Church opening (p. 9) we cannot yet leave the church open unattended. It might be possible to restart Wednesday morning opening; alternatively we might open for an hour or so everyday.

Easter experience and craft mornings (p. 10) these have been great forms of outreach.

9. System for electing PCC members – The Annual Meeting in 2011 decided that PCC members should be elected for one year terms of office. The PCC reviewed this decision (Jan 10th 2013); there was no appetite for a change to electing 4 members each year to serve 3 year terms. On discussion at this annual meeting no one felt strongly that we should change the present system, and two or three were fairly strongly in favour of no change. Accordingly it was agreed that we should stick to the present system.
10. Election of 12 PCC members – the following persons were elected to serve on the PCC for 2013/14;

Mr Roger Barnes, Mr David Cole, Mrs Rachael Cole, Mrs Jane Dines, Mrs Rachael Levermore, Mrs Gill Long, Mr John Phipps, Mrs Marian Pitman, Mr Glynn Rees, Mrs Meg Roberts and Mr Adrian Walsh.

The following persons attend meetings ex officio;

Mr Edmund Strainge, Mr Peter Nichols, Mr David Adams, Mr Ian Paul, Mr Martin Dines, Dr John Pearson, and Rev. Bob Edy.

Our thanks were expressed to Sue Green and Sarah Temple who have stood down having served on the PCC.

11. The proposal that the PCC treasurer and PCC secretary remain in post after the annual meeting until the first meeting of the PCC was unanimously agreed.
12. Alan Bushnell expressed our thanks to Bob and to his ministry team for their work and leadership during the year.

The meeting was closed with the Grace.