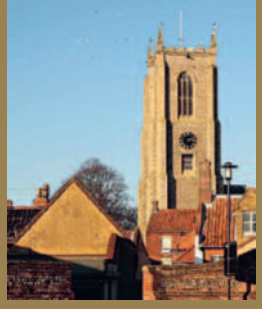
FAKENHAM PARISH CHURCH

A ROCHA UK SILVER AWARD WINNER 2024 ECO CHURCH ecochurch.arocha.org.uk



February 2025

THE BEACON

Church and Community Magazine



Rector's Reflection
Light up your tower * Let's meet
Dates for your diary – Lent and Easter
Come to church for your special day
Town Talk * Community Archive

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www.fakenhamparishchurch.org.uk

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Andrew Lee 01328 878870 – Fulmodeston

Safeguarding Officer:
Anne Peppitt 01328 878355
Email: anne.peppitt23@gmail.com

Parish Prayers

2 Feb Clover Way, Field View Court, Bramble Court, Plantation Road, Sedge Close.
The healing of society's ills.

9 Feb Market Place, Norwich Street, White Horse Street.
People suffering from addiction, their families and support workers.

16 Feb Bridge Street, Cattle Market Street, Hempton Road.
Guides, Brownies and Rainbows.

23 Feb Greenway Lane, Greenway Close, Buckenham Close, Baxter Close.
Local shops, trades, businesses and industries.

From the Parish Registers

Funerals

17.1.25	Ann Folkard	3.2.25	Philip Walker
17.1.25	Wendy Creed	5.2.25	Brian (Ben) Brown

Cover pic:
by The Revd Tracy Jessop.

"Sorry St Peter's not here at the moment - he's just oiling the gates"



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Rector's Reflection



I have been thinking about Easter, prompted not by the Easter eggs I can buy in the shops already, but that Sun 2 Feb is Candlemas. This day marks a great pivot point in the Christian year, where we turn away from the festivities of Christmas and turn towards the cross of Christ and the empty tomb, when we move our attention 'from the crib to the cross'.

The date marks both the purification of Mary forty days after the birth of Jesus and the presentation of Jesus at the Temple. Candlemas is the mid-point between the shortest day of the year and the spring equinox, as it falls halfway through winter and takes its name from the Festival day – or mass – of the candles.

It was the day when people brought all the candles to be used throughout the year to church to be blessed. Some people thought that candles provided protection against plague, illness and famine. They were asking God's protection on their homes and families for the coming year. Clergy would bless the candles and give them to the people. In the middle of a cold, dark winter, the lights of Candlemas were placed in every window to remind people of the light of Christ shining in the darkness, bringing hope in the midst of uncertain times. There are some candles in church for people to collect if you would like to pick one up and join us in bringing some light to Fakenham.

There is a wonderful passage at the beginning of John's Gospel where he writes about how Jesus came to be a light in the darkness of this world and to shine out as a sign of God's presence among us. *'The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world. (John chapter 1, verse 9).*

Whether or not we associate light with anything or anyone in particular, we all need the hope of some light to come in our lives. We all have something going on. Some are dealing with difficult and painful issues, like the illness of a loved one, a bereavement, health or mental health concerns or financial worries.

In the meantime, we remember that there is light, there is hope and that God is with us even in the darkest moments. Wishing you God's blessings for the month ahead.

Revd Tracy Jessop





Churches around Fakenham welcome *you* in February

Parish Church Upper Market Place, Fakenham NR21 9DY

Sun 2	10am Parish Communion on the Feast of Candlemas
Sun 9	8am Holy Communion (Book of Common Prayer)
	10am Morning Praise
	6.30pm Choral Evensong
Sun 16	10am Parish Communion
Sun 23	10am Parish Communion

Other Services

Every Thursday 9.30am Market Day Holy Communion (a short, said service)
Every Monday (except Bank Holidays) 9.45am Stepping Stones for pre-school children with a grown-up.

Salvation Army Oak Street, Fakenham.
Every Sunday morning at 10.15 am

Methodist Church Chapel Lane, Sculthorpe. NR21 9QB
Morning service of worship 11am each Sunday

Fakenham Baptist Community Church
Sunday services 10:30-12:00 at Fakenham Community centre

St Anthony RC Church Wells Road, Fakenham.
Sunday Vigil Mass every Saturday at 6.00pm
Sunday Mass at 10.45am and Tues-Fri at 10.00am

Orthodox Church of the Holy Transfiguration, Scarborough Road, Gt Walsingham
Every Sunday morning 10.00am Hours 10.30am Liturgy.

Holy Trinity, Hempton *Contact: The Revd Dr Harri Williams SSC, harri1985@gmail.com*
Sunday Mass at 9.30am.
Wednesday Mass at 9.30am.

We continue to pray for peace for all the people of Gaza, Israel and throughout the middle east at this time.
We pray for peace for the people of Ukraine.
"God of peace and justice, we pray for the laying down of weapons in every place of war. We pray for all those who fear tomorrow, that you would hold and protect them".

Let's meet . . . Pat Brown - owner of The Extraordinary Hat Company.



She was born in her grandmother's front room in Castleford, on her mother's birthday. The family moved quite often - living in Mablethorpe, Lincoln, Newmarket and Skegness, where her parents were the landlords of the Bull's Neck in Holbeach. There Pat met her husband, John. They married in 1970 and have two children. John decided to join the Army, and was in the Royal Engineers, Survey section. They were posted to Dusseldorf, and then to Barton Stacey, close to Winchester. Pat had a dream of becoming a teacher and eventually the time was right. She trained at Middlesex University. Her first post as Head teacher was in Barnet, North London. In 1999 the family moved to Shipdham to her second Headship and to be closer to her elderly parents who by now lived in Norwich. Pat retired at 60, but after only five days went freelance, working as a stand-in Head where needed. She's worked in both large junior and small village primary schools. She loved teaching - meeting with the teachers, children and their parents.

Pat had always been interested in crafting. She'd done silversmithing and pottery. In retirement she set up a business with her sister, Linda, called Country Essentials. Pat felt drawn to the hats they were selling and would embellish them, to give appeal. Pat went on a course about hat making and found it was 'her thing'. No two hats are ever alike, when made from scratch.

What brought you to Fakenham? I'm a believer in chance and karma. A series of events on a visit to Fakenham, involving coffee, eye tests, visiting Venetia's shop, and being directed to the vacant shop in Norwich Street, led me here.

What did John think? He's always supported me, but just queried my retirement!

What was your vision for the shop? To have the right furniture, fresh flowers, nothing on the floor and to have a natural and welcoming look.

Do you have a motto or saying you like to follow? Everyone is different and everyone deserves something for themselves.

If you could change something about yourself, what would it be? I'd like to be a foot taller.

Are there any gadgets you couldn't do without? My steamer and pair of pliers.

Your pet hate? Inconsiderate behaviour with people not taking responsibility for their own actions.

Who has been a great influence in your life? My Mum, a strong lady, and a talented sewer and knitter.

Your biggest decision on the spur of the moment? Definitely setting up this business.

Does it take up most of your time? Yes, but I still have a stand at Fakenham Races and run workshops, and make hats of course, with something to suit every pocket.

Your greatest strength? Tenacity …..**and weakness?** Sweets.

Your greatest challenge? Going to university with two small children.

Your earliest memory? I was about three and I remember being chased round Grandma's garden by her chickens. I had a fear of the cellar in her house but it was the only way to get out to the garden.

What might you buy on impulse? I'm an avid car-booter and it sometimes pays. I found a small piece of Lalique glass at one car boot and it sold very well indeed.

Have you ever been grateful for the kindness of a stranger? When Linda and I were doing shows, we had a 6m x 6m canvas stand to put up. The number of people who would just give us a hand was heart-warming.

Your biggest extravagance? When I left my first school as a teacher, they asked me what I would like as a leaving gift; I wanted a glass scent bottle that I just loved. We had to be frugal at the time, and it's been my pride and joy ever since.

What concerns you about modern life? Not knowing what is and isn't the truth on social media. It also takes strength to be yourself.

How would your husband and children describe you? Ambitious, loving, taking pride in what I do, and caring.

What do you no longer worry about? What other people think.

What lessons have you learnt from money? Early on, not having much of it, led me to be resourceful.

Have you any regrets? My Mum died during the covid pandemic and I regret not being able to be there for her.

What do you like best about your work? Being my own boss, the hat making and the diversity. **And the most difficult?** When a client likes a hat that doesn't suit them, I try to get them interested in another, but it's difficult.

Your secret happiness? Catching up with my family.

And guilty pleasure? Time to myself.

An epitaph? She lived life to the full.

Kay Hathway

Thinking about a wedding or a blessing for your civil marriage?

The Rector explains why the church is so much more than simply a venue for your special day.



There are not many things more important than committing yourself to another person for as long as you both shall live. Here are a few reasons why taking that commitment in church will be unique and special, on the day itself and beyond:

A church wedding or blessing will add a spiritual dimension to your marriage or partnership. God's blessing is the main attraction for many couples, whatever their beliefs.

You can make amazing vows, or promises, in a church. You can only make vows this big in a church. These vows, made in public, will help you to stay together and grow together. God and your church are there for you to help you keep your vows.

The priest has a very particular role to play in your special day. They can blend ancient tradition and modern experience to reflect your story. Because of the relationship you develop with the priest, your service can be made personal, memorable, meaningful and beautiful.

Church buildings offer outstanding beauty. The combination of old and new, whether intimate for a dozen people or big scale with a few hundred people, the parish church can offer something to suit you and yours.

You will be involved in making choices about your ceremony. It is your day, and the priest will involve you from the beginning on planning the details to make it all you want it to be.

The basic cost for a church service is £544, which is very similar to a civil service in a Registration Office. There are optional additional fees for an organist and you might want to treat yourself to hearing the bells rung, but you could have a great service for less than £600.



For some people, a church simply seems like the proper place to get married. Churches can be described as 'peaceful', 'serene', or having an atmosphere that adds to your special experience.

After your ceremony, you'll realise that a church is more than simply a venue for your service. We'll always be here for you.

If you want to know more or have a chat about your special day, get in touch with me:

The Revd Tracy Jessop
rector@fakenhamparishchurch.org.uk
01328 862 268

Old Fakenhamian - New Year's Honour for an indomitable volunteer.

On the 30th December, I received a phone call from my friend, Sheila Warner, letting me know that she was receiving an MBE in the New Year's Honours' List for her charitable work for the RNLI.

Some years back, she was telling me a little about her years volunteering for the RNLI in Wells. 'Goodness Sheila' I said, 'you should get invited to the Buckingham Palace Garden Party'. 'Oh' said Sheila with her typical modesty 'I've been to that twice'. Well, now she will be off to the Palace again, receiving acknowledgement of her 60 years of unstinting work for one of our best-loved charities, the RNLI.

Sheila attended Wells School until the age of 15. She became a nursemaid to a lady teacher and then trained in Great Yarmouth to be a nurse. Sheila's husband Albert, always known as Sonny, was a fisherman and a volunteer for the lifeboat, first in Cromer, then in Wells. Sheila joined the other crew members' wives in fundraising. In 1984 she joined a committee to repurpose Heritage House from an unused nurses' home into a day care centre, the first in Norfolk. Sheila was the first Coordinator and built the centre up from a one day a week to a 5 day a week service. After only 4 years they were able to purchase their first ambulance. During that time Sheila was also involved in the Wells Community Association in the Maltings and had been a founding member of the Ladies Lifeboat Guild in Wells of which she was a member for over 50 years. Sheila retired in 2004 and after her husband's death in 2007 moved to Fakenham. Here Sheila continued her support to the RNLI as well as for the East Anglian Air Ambulance. She also became a volunteer and member of the Friends of Cranmer House where her knowledge gained at Heritage House was invaluable.

The new lifeboat station, including a shop and viewing gallery, opened in 2022. In June 2023 the new boat for the Wells Station' The Duke of Edinburgh' was officially launched by the Duke of Kent. Sheila had the honour, along with the Coxwain, to be signatory of the 200th Charter of the RNLI. Sheila is part of a group of 8 other volunteers who man the station during weekends in the season to welcome visitors and their shop is the 3rd most profitable in the United Kingdom.

Sheila, now 88, is living proof of a life well-lived. I am not alone in considering myself blessed to call her my friend. Sheila and her sister and brother-in-law will be off to Buckingham Palace in the Spring. She might even be encouraged to buy a new hat!

Gilly Foortse





The story of a hymn: O for a closer walk with God

This well-known hymn speaks of profound longing for a deeper connection with God. The lyrics echo with believers who crave spiritual growth and a greater sense of closeness with their Creator. It reminds us of the certainty that we, though being children of God, do still walk away from him, lose the sense of his presence, and need to return. Being led astray by mortal pleasures might imply the need to walk alongside God, but, perhaps, when we are spiritually ready.
The inspiration for this hymn was Genesis 5:24, "And Enoch walked with God", and also Amos 3:3, "Godliness is walking with God".
The writer is William Cowper (1731-1800), regarded as one of the best early Romantic poets. His mother died when he was six and he was badly bullied at school by older pupils. His whole life was blighted by periods of severe depression and melancholy. He loved Latin and enjoyed translating the classics. He trained for the law but never practised. He fell in love with his cousin Theodora but his uncle felt that cousins should not risk marrying, leading to an increase in his periods of melancholy. He attempted suicide more than once and was sent to Dr Nathaniel Cotton's asylum for recovery. His lyrical poetic style lent itself to producing some of the finest hymn texts. He later collaborated with John Newton, who was a curate at a friend's parish. Another well-known hymn that he wrote was 'God moves in a mysterious way'. Cowper eventually settled at East Dereham, but when a close friend died, he descended into melancholia from which he never fully recovered.
The tune is called 'Martyrdom' or 'Avon', composed by Hugh Wilson (1766-1824).

O for a closer walk with God,
a calm and heav'nly frame,
a light to shine upon the road
that leads me to the Lamb!

The dearest idol I have known,
whate'er that idol be,
help me to tear it from Thy throne
and worship only Thee.

Sources:
Musician's Wages; Hymnary.org; Wikipedia
Kay Hathway



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to check on days and routes

ROSEMARY ROOMS

Dementia Support Group
The Gallow, Fakenham Racecourse
Every Monday 10.30 – 12.30.

We meet to provide a chance to socialise for people suffering from memory problems and those who are helping them.
There are refreshments, games, jigsaws and conversations.
There is disabled access.
Please contact Judith 01328 829735 or Pam 01328 829735 for more information.

Can you deliver The Beacon?

We need deliverers in the following areas – you don't need to live there!
Thorn Rd and Heather Barrow Court
Wensum Way
Baron's Close
Greenway Lane
All help appreciated! Thank you!

Domestic abuse – If you need help

If you, your family or friends, are experiencing this here are some phone numbers which may be of help.
If you are in immediate danger, always call 999.

Norfolk Integrated Domestic Abuse Service (NIDAS) provides joined up services for those experiencing violence or abuse regardless of where you live in Norfolk.

Working hours: **0300 561 0555**
Out of hours **0808 2000 247**



VISIT TO FULLERS MILL GARDENS SUFFOLK 13 JUNE 2025

We shall visit this lovely garden near Bury St Edmunds on Fri 13 June in a private coach leaving Fakenham at 9.30 for arrival at 10.30. It is a beautiful site of light, dappled woodland, with a plantsman's collection of unusual shrubs, perennials, lilies and marginal plants. Afterwards the coach will take us into Bury for a light lunch. There are plenty of good eateries, or you may prefer to bring a picnic to enjoy in the gardens.

There will be time to visit the cathedral or wander through the town. We aim to return to Fakenham by 18.00. Cost of the visit to include the hire of the coach and garden entrance will be in the region of £25 per person. Contact Moira Morley on 01328 855874 for further information and to make a booking.

Town Talk *by Wayfarer*

We are fortunate to have a river winding its way through our town and accessible by various footpaths. As a keen walker I picked up on this fairly soon after we moved here from Lowestoft. Nowadays I rarely miss the chance to cross the road from our house in Norwich Road and meander down to the three brick arches bridge, continuing from there into town. Through the years I've managed to spot plenty of birds of prey and am always on the lookout for early migrants from the south during Springtime. I got most excited one morning when, not far from town, an otter popped its head up in the river and treated me to some moments of delight. Rarely, there have been glimpses of kingfishers skimming low over the surface. After storms, which have happened quite often, trees can crash down in the neighbouring woods. Just recently a few have fallen over the footpath which makes the outing a bit more adventurous. When the river has flooded, it can be difficult to get through, but work over the past year has helped with this setback. It would be fair to say that the Wensum has provided me with hours of pleasure and has actually been something of an inspiration when I'm wondering what I might write for my weekly column in the Lynn News. Perhaps it has a calming influence when my mind just switches off from other concerns. If you have yet to wander down that way, do give it a try in 2025 as I'm sure the experience will be positive in ways you might not have expected. I grew up in Old Woking and recall walking or running beside a river there when I ventured out every morning before school. Anyway, whatever decisions you make, I hope they turn out well and leave you feeling better for having 'taken the plunge' - not literally, of course.

Wayfarer
Photo: Jim Harding



Fakenham and District Community Archive

This month's photo from the Archive shows Tommy Ruffles conducting the Fakenham Town Band in the rectory gardens, Oak St. in 1945. Still going strong today and rehearsing in the Trapp Lane pavilion, the band was formed in 1881 by three men in a pub and at this time of year they may well have been asked to perform for Valentine's Day dances. Most recently they hosted a lovely Christmas carol concert in the market place.
Tommy Ruffles was well known for being president of the East Anglian Brass Band Association and musical director of Fakenham and Reepham town bands.
This photograph was donated by the former Fakenham Local History Society.
If you would like to see any more of our huge collection of photos, look at our displays and scrapbooks and meet many other Fakenham people you can come to one of our meetings in church, from 2.00 to 4.00 on the last Tuesday of every month. You can also find them on our website which is www.fakemhamcommunityarchive.weebly.com

Howard Young



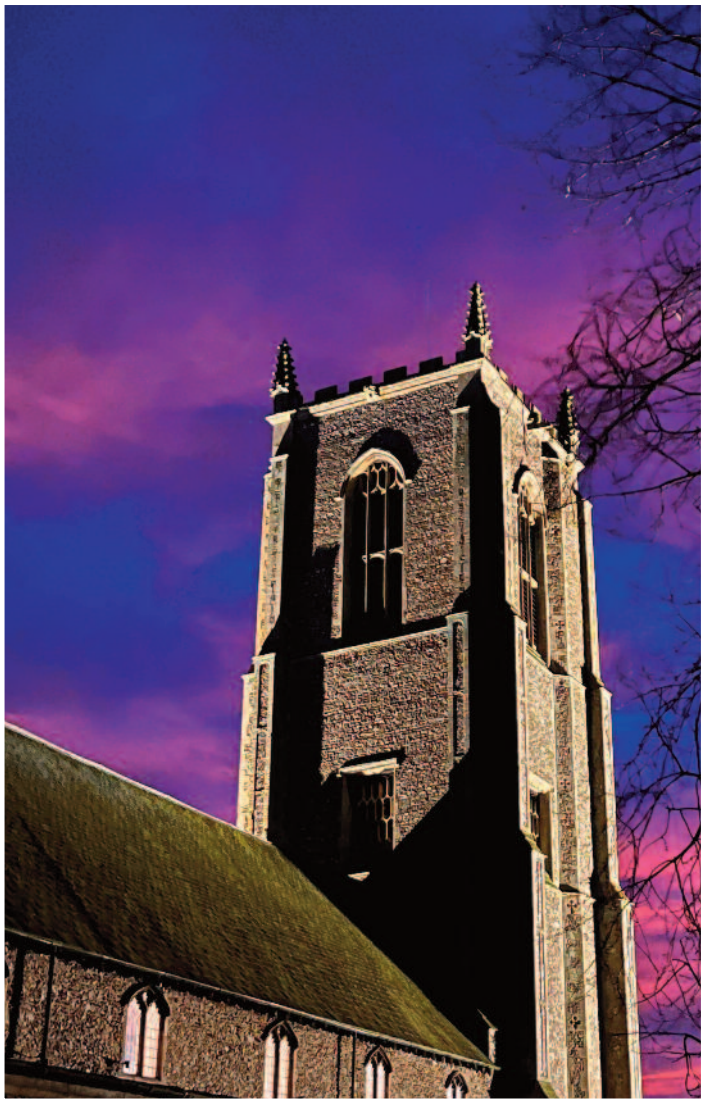
Floodlighting Sponsorship

Many people comment on the fact that it is a joy to see St Peter and St Paul Church floodlit during the evenings, especially in the dark winter months. We are launching a new fundraising scheme to help pay for the expense of this by giving donations to commemorate an occasion – perhaps celebrating a birth, a marriage, an important anniversary, or remembering a loved one no longer with us on a special day.

To keep our Church beautifully lit, we invite you to sponsor one of our floodlights for £15 a week. If you are a taxpayer please do consider gift-aiding your contribution (there is a space on the application form for this). The form gives details of how to make your sponsorship payment.

Unless you request anonymity, dedication details will be displayed on the Church noticeboard, our website and included in The Beacon.

If you would like to sponsor our floodlighting to commemorate a special person or event, please use the form available from church or on our website or call us on 01328 862268 for more information.



February Walks with Fakenham Ramblers

Saturday walks start at 10.30am. Wednesday walks begin at 10am. Bring a packed lunch on Saturday walks which are generally over 6 miles. Otherwise, sturdy boots and waterproofs are all that's required. Please arrive ten minutes or so before the walk start time..

Please contact the walk leader for up-to-date walk information.

Date & Time	Venue	Grid Reference Postcode Distance	Walk Leader(s)
Saturday 8th Feb 10.30am	**Blakeney & Glandford** Park/meet at Blakeney Village Hall	OS 251/ 026437 **NR25 7PG** 9miles	**Bridget** 07866 034378
Wednesday 12th Feb 10am	**Blickling & Itteringham** Park/meet at Blickling main NT car park Free for NT members	OS 238/ 176286 **NR11 6NT** 6.5 miles	**Jane & Dave** 07790 642185
Saturday 22nd Feb 10.30am	**Syderstone** Park/meet on road side, near Church	OS 251/833326 **PE31 8RY** 6.5 miles	**Lily & Christine** 07899 941989

Christ Church, Fulmodeston



February offers us no more enjoyable weather than January, but Christ Church is always open and with a warm welcome for all at our services.

Parish life also continues with plenty of good cheer, such as that provided by Mike and Christine at Coffee and Chat in the Old School Hall, where you can be sure not just of a warm welcome and warm company, but also a warm space. This month it will be on the 17th from 10.30am. For more information telephone 01328 878053.

February Services

Sunday Feb 2 4.00 pm Evening Prayer
Sunday Feb 9 11.00 am Holy Communion (BCP)
Sunday Feb 18 10.00 am Parish Communion service at Fakenham Parish Church
Sunday Feb 23 4.00 pm Evening Prayer

Carolyn Thomas-Coxhead

Town Council news

VE80 Day events

Following the success of the D-Day80 event last summer, the council is joining forces with the team at St Peter and St Paul's Church to host celebrations to commemorate the 80th Anniversary of Victory in Europe Day. As the 8th May 2025 is on a Thursday, and, at the time of writing, we do not know if it will be declared a Bank Holiday, the afternoon events, which will include music from the 1940s, will be held in the garden and in church. More news to follow on the council website: www.fakenhamtowncouncil.gov.uk and on our social media pages.

Bowling away to fundraising success

The 7777 Bowls challenge, held on 28th December at the Gallow Sports Centre was inspired by Kevin Sinfield's epic fundraising achievements on behalf of his friend, the late Rob Burrow. Rob was diagnosed with Motor Neurone Disease after a successful career playing Rugby League at number 7 for Leeds Rhinos. Gallow member, Dave Garner, had the idea of a challenge to bowl 7,777 bowls to raise £7,777 for MNDA, a very ambitious target! Mayor Angela Glynn bowled the first woods and her efforts were followed throughout the day by 32 teams of three players competing in various competitions in their attempt to hit the target figure for this very worthwhile cause. Decked out in festive attire and MNDA tee shirts, players bowled their way to the staggering total of £11,702.61. Bowled over? Indeed!



Angela Glynn, Chairman, Fakenham Town Council

Obituary – Marion Pruden "Nurse Pru"





We don't normally have space to print obituaries and it would be difficult to choose from all the marvellous people in this town who have contributed in their different ways to its strong community. We've made an exception for a woman who was, in herself, exceptional.

Kay Hathway writes …

Marion Pruden, affectionately known as Nurse Pru or simply Pru, who was born in 1934 in Wisbech, died in November last year aged 90. At her funeral, just before Christmas in Hempton Parish Church, there was standing room only.
She trained as a nurse at the North Middlesex Hospital, where her mother had trained years before. Once a qualified nurse, she studied midwifery, and teamed up with another midwifery student, Molly Quantrill. Allegedly, after having worked for a time in East London, the pair opened a map of the UK and chose where they might work with the aid of a pin. They started in Melton Constable, then located to Fakenham, living opposite the Health Office in the District Nurses House. It is said that Pru delivered her first baby in Hempton Post Office, no doubt providing a first-class service. The duo held the unique honour of having each delivered half the population of Fakenham and surrounding villages, in the 1950s/60s. Pru also trained as a Health Visitor, being one of a small number holding triple roles.
When I first met Pru, it was at the Baby Clinic she ran in the Health Office, and she made sure she gave each mother enough time to talk. She never prejudged anyone or any situation and her legendary advice was passed on between mothers. Pru gave of her time and had a genuine interest in the people she served. Her role as Health Visitor meant she worked with children and families and the elderly. She gave a level of confidence as well as support to those in a difficult situation. It was clear she was an asset to the local Doctor's surgery. In fact, she became part of the team of district nurses based at the surgery.
In retirement she kept very busy with various voluntary roles, which included transporting people to Heritage House in Wells, administering funds from a charitable trust to those with a disabled child, and was on the board of a local charitable trust. She dearly loved her family and godchildren and spent time with them and her social gatherings were fun. She also had lifelong friends, the most prominent amongst them being Val Reeve and Jean Bennett. She visited those she had trained with, whether in Canada, New Zealand and Australia. I lived next door to Pru for 35 years, and there was never a dull moment, always a story to be told, and she was incredibly supportive when times were difficult. Pru continued to informally administer to those in need in the community, until unable to do so. A life-long Christian, her faith guided her in her life and health ministry. She was unflappable, non-judgemental and had a strong vocation and commitment to people. She truly had a life of service.

(Pru features in the book 'Characters of Fakenham' by Raymond Monbiot)

A big Thank you…

to everyone who supported the Rotary Christmas Prize Draw.
Thanks to the hard work and generosity of everyone involved, over £2300 was raised, to be shared by local foodbanks and Fakenham Community First Responders.
If you would like to support Rotary in its charitable work, as a member, partner or friend, we'd be delighted to hear from you.
Contact fakenhamrotaryclub@gmail.com to find out how you can help.
THANK YOU!

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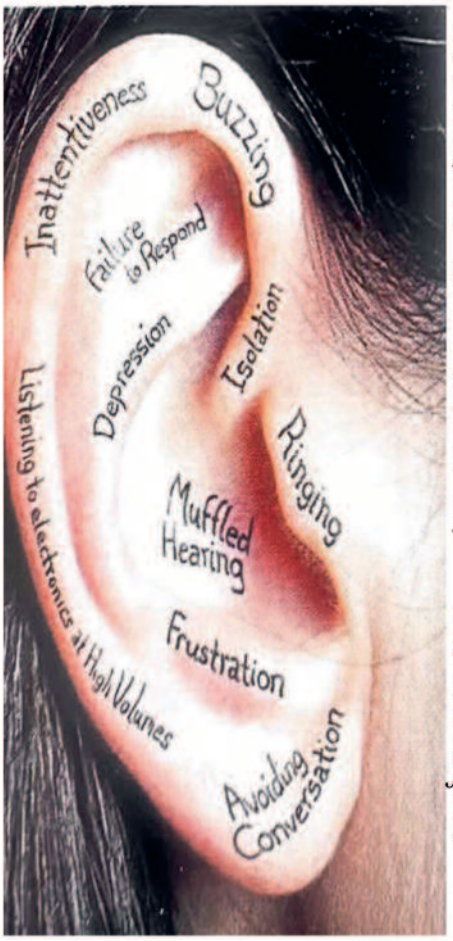
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