

FAREWELL AND ADIEU



In early 2011, the Bishop of Dover, the Diocesan Director of Ordinands, the Archdeacon of Maidstone, and the Area Dean of Sittingbourne Deanery sat round a table looking at a map of Sittingbourne Deanery and said, “well we’ve agreed to train him for Ordination, he can’t stay where he is so where are we going to put him”?

After a lot of head shaking and scratching, a phone call was made to the then Rector of Tunstall and Rodmersham who said he was willing to take a chance and take on an Ordinand. The Bishop promised that providing the Ordinand and Training Incumbent had not strangled each other in the 3 years of Theological College, the Ordinand would be allowed to serve his 3 year Curacy there too!

Fast forward 8½ years. With the exception of the then Ordinand, the original protagonists have all retired/moved on, training is complete, Ordination is a distant memory, and the Mem, (aka Suzie), and I are about to end our time at what is now the Benefice of Tunstall and Bredgar.

If everything goes ahead as planned, (please God!) I will celebrate my final Mass in the Benefice on Sunday 21st July, 8 years+1 day after we became the benefice we are today. (If it doesn’t, I will begin a series of comebacks akin to Frank Sinatra!!)

Whatever happens, by the time the next Parish Magazines are published in October, the Mem and I will have moved on to pastures new, carrying with us a wealth of experience and memories, memories that we will treasure for the rest of our lives.

Where do we start to thank everyone who welcomed, encouraged, supported and helped us through the turmoil and stress of those days of essays and tasks? The truth is, we can’t. To even try and name everyone would be a folly as we would be sure and miss someone out, so thank you everyone who gave of their time and effort to get me through everything that led to my Ordination and beyond. Thank you to everyone who welcomed the Mem and made her feel at home in the Benefice, especially to the members of Tunstall Choir who welcomed her to their number. I have in previous missives thanked members of the ministry team for their support, but it would be remiss of me not to give a special thank you to The Revd Alan Pinnegar for his help, guidance, support, encouragement,

but most of all for his love and friendship to us both, and his unending tolerance for my leanings toward chaplaincy ministry; Thank you Alan, I will always treasure our time in ministry together, especially our weekly meeting where you allowed me to unload my frustrations.

A number of you from around the Benefice have been kind enough to say you will miss us; we shall miss you too, enormously, but there is a part of us that will always be with you and we will continue to hold you in our prayers and hope you will hold us in yours.

Once again, thank you for everything and God bless and keep you all.

Fr Kevin

'Changing Lives Prayer Network'

People often ask "*what is the purpose of prayer? Does it actually change anything?*"

There is a saying - **Prayer changes people and people change things!**

Essentially, prayer is the means by which people of faith communicate with God. For prayer to work well, it is important to allow space for God to communicate with us, rather than simply presenting a list of requests! It is surprising how often a course of action or a way forward becomes clear after spending time in prayer.

As well as our regular Sunday services, a group of us gathers together on Tuesday mornings at Tunstall Church and Friday mornings at Bredgar Church to pray, using prescribed bible readings for the day to speak into our daily lives now. Both currently take place at 9:15.

A few of us also meet at Bredgar on Friday afternoons at 1:30 to pray informally about issues of the day, both local and national. Prayer with others involves respectfully maintaining confidentiality - anyone is always welcome to join us.

We are also inviting people to join us in prayer at any time during the week from **14th to 21st September**. Each of our churches will be open for half a day or in the evening, in rotation, with prayer stations around the building and an opportunity to come in and reflect or pray as you wish. Each occasion will include a short time of structured prayer appropriate for the time of day. For those who would like to pray alongside us but are unable to get to church, please join us in prayer from home or wherever you are.

This is part of the 24/7 prayer movement – while we're not asking for people to fill a 24-hour 'rota', we recognise that most of us wake up at some point during the night and we're encouraging people to use such times to engage in prayer, even while trying to get back to sleep!

The purpose of the week is to pray through the Holy Spirit for the renewal of our churches and communities:-

- Sharing in wonder at the work of the Spirit among those we serve
- Giving thanks for courageous voices witnessing to God's presence
- Upholding our work with those on the edges of our communities
- Seeking common ground with those of diverse views

I hope you can join us, even if only for a short time. Even if prayer is not your thing, please feel free to come in and enjoy a time of peaceful reflection. The schedule is as follows:-

Saturday, 14th Sept: 9:00 until 12:00

Bredgar (Morning Prayer will be said at 9:15)

Sunday, 15th – normal Sunday services around the benefice

Monday, 16th – 6:00pm until 9:00pm

Frinsted (Night Prayer will be said at 8:30pm)

Tuesday, 17th – 9:00am until 12

Tunstall (Morning Prayer will be said at 9:15)

Wednesday, 18th – 2:00pm until 5:00pm

Rodmersham (Prayer During the Day will be said at 2:30)

Thursday, 19th – 9:00am until 12:00

Milstead (Morning Prayer will be said at 9:15)

Friday, 20th – 6:00pm until 9:00pm

Wormshill (Evening Prayer will be said at 6:30pm)

Saturday, 21st – 9:00am until 12:00

Bredgar (Morning Prayer will be said at 9:15; Prayer during the Day at 11:45)

Benefice Services - August, 2019

Sunday, 4th - 7th after Trinity

8.00am	Holy Communion (said)	Tunstall
9.30am	All-Age Communion	Tunstall
10.30am	Family Service	Wormshill
11.15am	Parish Communion	Bredgar
4.00pm	Café Tunstall	Tunstall
6.00pm	Evening Prayer	Frinsted
6.30pm	Evening Prayer	Tunstall

Sunday, 11th - 8th after Trinity

8.00am	Holy Communion (said)	Tunstall
9.00am	Holy Communion (said)	Frinsted
9.30am	Parish Communion	Tunstall
10.30am	Morning Prayer	Bredgar
10.30am	Matins	Wormshill
11.15am	Parish Communion	Rodmersham
6.30pm	Evening Prayer	Tunstall

Sunday, 18th - 9th after Trinity

8:00am	Holy Communion (said)	Tunstall
9:00am	Holy Communion (said)	Milstead
9.30am	Parish Communion	Tunstall
10.30am	Informal Communion	Bredgar
6.00pm	Evening Prayer	Wormshill
6.30pm	Evening Prayer	Tunstall

Sunday, 25th - 10th after Trinity

8.00am	Holy Communion (said)	Tunstall
9.00am	Holy Communion (said)	Wormshill
9.30am	Parish Communion	Tunstall
10.30am	ExCiTe all-age worship	Bredgar
10.30am	Morning Prayer	Frinsted
11.15am	Morning Prayer	Rodmersham
6.00pm	Evening Prayer	Milstead
6.30pm	Evening Prayer	Tunstall

Benefice Services during September, 2019

Sunday, 1st - 11th after Trinity

8.00am	Holy Communion (said)	Tunstall
9.30am	Parish Communion	Tunstall
10.30am	St Giles Patronal Family Service	Wormshill
11.15am	Parish Communion	Bredgar
4.00pm	Café Tunstall	Tunstall
6.00pm	Evening Prayer	Frinsted
6.30pm	Evening Prayer	Tunstall

Sunday, 8th - 12th after Trinity

8.00am	Holy Communion (said)	Tunstall
9.00am	Holy Communion (said)	Frinsted
9.30am	Parish Communion	Tunstall
10.30am	Morning Prayer	Bredgar
10.30am	Matins	Wormshill
11.15am	Parish Communion	Rodmersham
11:15am	School Welcome Service	Milstead
6.30pm	Evening Prayer	Tunstall

Sunday, 15th - 13th after Trinity

8:00am	Holy Communion (said)	Tunstall
9:00am	Holy Communion (said)	Milstead
9.30am	Parish Communion	Tunstall
10.30am	Informal Communion	Bredgar
6.00pm	Evening Prayer	Wormshill
6.30pm	Evening Prayer	Tunstall

Wednesday 18th

7.00pm	Midweek Communion	Tunstall
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Sunday, 22nd - 14th after Trinity

8.00am	Holy Communion (said)	Tunstall
9.00am	Holy Communion (said)	Wormshill
9.30am	Parish Communion	Tunstall
10.30am	ExCiTe all-age worship	Bredgar
11.15am	Morning Prayer	Rodmersham

6.00pm	Evening Prayer	Milstead
6.30pm	Evening Prayer	Tunstall

Sunday, 29th - 15th after Trinity

8.00am	Holy Communion (said)	Tunstall
10.30am	United Benefice Service	Frinsted
6:30pm	Evening Prayer	Tunstall

Entries in the parish registers

Baptisms

June 30 th	Dominic Powles	Rodmersham
July 14 th	Sebastian de Kock	Tunstall
July 14 th	Lilia Denison	Rodmersham

Funerals

July 10 th	Irene Best	Garden of England Crematorium
July 15 th	Joan Godfrey-Jull	Tunstall
July 22 nd	Dr Shirley Jones	Bredgar

Committal

July 10 th	Betty Scoones	Tunstall
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The Benefice Weekend Away

Ashburnham Place
23rd – 25th October 2020



Following the success of the last Benefice Weekend in October 2018 we are currently planning a second weekend in October 2020. The focus for the weekend is to spend time together getting to know each other, sharing meals, looking at a specific theme relating to our faith, and relaxing during the social evenings.

Ashburnham Place located in Sussex is approximately one hour and thirty minutes away, the accommodation is comfortable and we have access to

large meeting rooms, lounge areas and our own dining room, alongside the 28 acres of gardens to enjoy.

The weekend will take place from Friday night at 4.30pm through until 4.00pm on Sunday. We will be provided with Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner, alongside tea and coffee breaks in the morning and afternoon. We will have an external speaker leading us and the committee are working with them to provide an interesting and varied programme.

The weekend will incorporate different styles of worship from traditional through to informal, but all sessions are optional so people can choose if they want to attend. There will be free time Saturday afternoon with the opportunity to enjoy the venue, the beautiful garden, or other places of interest in the surrounding area. We would warmly welcome those with young families to join us, as the weekend will incorporate something for all ages, with creche facilities and a play area for the very young. Social activities are being devised for both nights with a variety of entertainment, including quizzes, music and song.

The accommodation is all en-suite, ground floor rooms can be allocated if required, and there is disabled access throughout the venue. Larger style family rooms that accommodate additional beds and cots are available in the main house. Transport can be arranged if anyone needs a lift. If you have a partner/spouse who does not attend church they would be welcome to join us with no pressure to attend worship or the sessions, merely to enjoy the venue. The cost for the weekend is £170 per adult, £61 for those aged between 5 years and 17 years, and no charge for the under 5's.



The Benefice is within a period of change and we need to work together as we face difficult challenges with finance, and resources. This is an ideal opportunity to develop relationships between our different congregations and we would encourage you all to think about joining us. Information

packs will be distributed throughout the Benefice at the beginning of September 2019, if you have any initial queries or concerns please ring me on 01795 428300 and I will be happy to assist,

Tricia Longbottom

Update on Tunstall Church Roof

Thanks to fundraising activity over several years by our own church community, a substantial donation from the Friends of Tunstall Church enabling removal of the aisle ceilings 2 years ago and grants from Friends of Kent Churches, Marshall's Charity, Garfield Weston, Tunstall Parish Council and Swale Borough Council, we have been able to carry out major restoration work on both sides of our church roof. This has consisted of repairing and re-rendering the parapets, replacing some of the copings, repairing flashings and masonry joints, repairing or replacing guttering, hoppers and downpipes.

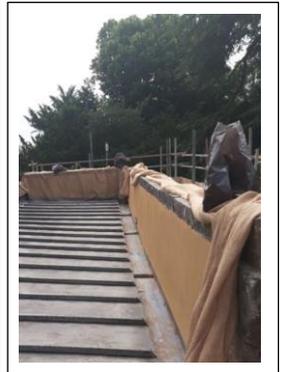
The building contractor, Paye, and the architect, Purcell UK, have carried out the work diligently and to a very high standard. At the time of writing most of the work has been completed and it is hoped that by the time of publication, the work will be finished and most of the scaffolding removed.

Thank you all for your patience over the last couple of months.

Alan P



Before work



After work



Friends of Kent Churches Ride and Stride

The Friends of Kent Churches Ride and Stride will take place on Saturday 14th September. Please try and support this event as the Friends of Kent Churches have been generous to us this year. I have sponsor forms available now. You can also be sponsored for sitting in the church checking people in so please consider this if you are unable to ride or stride. If you are able to provide refreshments for this day please let me know.

This is a most enjoyable event. I have taken part for a good number of years and enjoy visiting different churches. The money collected is divided equally between our own church and the Friends of Kent Churches.

Sue Thomas 01795 422810

Rodmersham Society Hog Roast

The very last Hog Roast to be organised by Deidre and Anthony Birch in the garden of Orsett House took place on Saturday 6th July. While other venues have been used for a hog roast the majority have been at this venue and many members present could recall happy memories of previous evenings spent enjoying themselves in the evening sunshine. We shall miss coming to Orsett House for this event but all good things come to an end!

The day began as always with an early start to get the barbecue fired up in time for cooking to start at 7am as Mick Bennett and John Morley began the first of a series of two hour shifts that continued until just after 5pm when Trevor Arnold decided that the hog was ready and helped by Philip Fagg lifted the hog from the barbecue, removed the crackling and began carving. Meanwhile a mouth-watering array of salads plus baked potatoes and French bread had been laid out and the self-service could start. There were a few drops of rain during the evening but not enough to dampen spirits or the happy hum of conversation and discrete back ground music provided by Ed Bevan. The Rodmersham Society is very grateful to Deidre and Anthony for their excellent organisation and the use of their garden over the years. We must also thank members and friends for hard work before and after the event and of course everyone who regularly donated and served salads and baked potatoes to accompany the hog. A well-

supported raffle and an impromptu game of “Heads and Tails” pushed the total raised for the evening of £1023 –an excellent result.

John Fisher

RodSoc 100 Club

Our first draw for 2019 took place at the Hog Roast and resulted in prizes for Don Jordan, Pauline Cole and Ed Bevan. Many thanks to everyone who supported us this year. The 100 Club raises £500 each year to swell the funds.

Barbara Fisher

Harvest Supper 2019

Our Harvest Supper this year will take place on Wednesday 16th October in the Village Hall at 7pm for 7.30pm. Tickets at £12 are available from Barbara Fisher (424952) but please take note that this is a very popular event so book in early to avoid disappointment. Caroline at The Fruiterer’s will again be providing us with a two course supper with roast turkey as the main event and the Singing Waiters will serve supper and then entertain us later in the evening. There will be a licensed bar.

Rodmersham Church News

Repairs to church windows have risen to the top of the priorities list supplied by our architect, Roger Turner, so at a recent PCC meeting it was agreed that we should make a start– although not necessarily all at once depending on the costs involved! The church windows vary in age from the 14th to the 19th century and probably last received attention in the great restoration during the late Victorian era. The first priority was repairs to the external masonry surrounds that have been damaged by the corrosion of the cast iron glazing bars that support the glass panes at an estimated cost of £3880. After that the windows can be repaired from inside the building on a case by case basis at a total cost of £17,574. Mr Turner kindly provided an estimate of the cost per window and an order of priority to guide our decisions.

Seven windows in the chancel are high priority and are covered by chancel repair liability so that G H Dean & Co will be asked to pay 57.74% of the total costs for both masonry repairs and glazing. Their bill will come to

£5236 so the PCC will need to fund the balance of £4372. The PCC decided to go ahead with this part of the repair work as soon as a Faculty had been obtained from Diocesan House. The remaining windows that are all in the nave will be repaired once the necessary £8,500 has been raised by the PCC with the usual generous support from the Rodmersham Society. We hope that the work can be carried out as soon as possible so look out for scaffolding inside and outside the church and please watch the notice boards for details of fund raising events.

Rosemary Shrubsall

We would like to acknowledge a debt of gratitude to Rosemary Shrubsall who passed away recently. Although not a member of our congregation Rosemary was a familiar face to many of us at church coffee mornings and the St Nicholas Fair over many years with a stall selling an array of her handiwork – such as aprons, cushions and peg-bags -- with the support of her daughter, Lynn Rossiter. Her support and her enthusiasm will be greatly missed.

John Fisher

'Grove End Farm Coffee Morning and Table-Top Sale of Country House Effects, Saturday 13 July 2019



I am delighted to say that thanks to an amazing group of people, we managed to raise over £1,000 - and the figure is still rising - to be shared between the Friends of Tunstall Church and Church Funds.

Great thanks to the generosity of Richard and Julie Lumley Webb who kindly donated a wonderful collection of crockery and various pieces of memorabilia and many others who also donated an interesting range of items, which over 60 people enjoyed rummaging through - and buying!

We were also able to enjoy tea and coffee and a stunning range of homemade cakes.

A huge thank you to everybody who helped with all of the setting and clearing up, the raffle, the teas/coffees, bringing the marmalade / biscuits, selling all of the items under the expert eye of Shirley Bedelle and a particularly warm thank you to Pauline for hosting the event and allowing us to use her beautiful garden.

Thank you

John Slate



Friends of Tunstall Church Summer Night City Special

Please note the venue this year which is **Tunstall Primary School**.



Friends of Tunstall Church
MAMMA MIA
Greek style supper
and music with
NICK BOSWORTH

7.00pm to 10.30
Saturday 31st August
TUNSTALL PRIMARY SCHOOL
Tickets only £12 from
Pauline 472218
please bring your own drinks

The Diary Date for all you Super Troupers and Dancing Queens. **Saturday August 31st** at Tunstall Village Hall, 7.00pm till 10.30.

When All Is Said And Done Take a Chance On Us with a real Greek style supper and music with Nick "Thank You For The Music" Bosworth.

Come and enjoy the evening The Way Old Friends Do. I Do, I Do, I Do, I Do. Money, Money, Money to Pauline 472218.

Mamma Mia Tunstall Style.

See You There. Where? At Tunstall Primary School. It'll be fun as always.

David Prew

Tunstall Church Christmas Tree Festival, 5th – 8th December 2019

This years' Christmas Tree Festival will take place in St. John the Baptist Church in Tunstall between 5 and 8 December 2019. Timing is likely to be 10.00am – 17.00pm Thursday to Saturday and 10.00am – 16.00pm on Sunday. There will be a Reception in the Church on the evening of Wednesday 4th December, time to be arranged.

Those of you who have provided trees in the last year or two will be contacted by email and/or telephone in the next few weeks to ask if you wish to submit a tree this year. However, we would be delighted to hear from anybody who wishes to provide a tree. We would welcome trees from any groups, societies, schools, charities and local businesses. Entry forms will be available soon and will be placed in all of the Churches in the Benefice.

When we say 'trees' we have been very impressed over the last few years by how many of you interpret the word and we have witnessed many superb creations, so let your imagination run wild.

As you might imagine, the organisation behind this event is immense and we have been extremely grateful for all the help that we have received in previous years. We will again be seeking volunteers to help with a multitude of tasks depending where you feel most comfortable - be it setting up, meeting and greeting, car parking, refreshments and generally helping. We will be arranging rotas in due course, so please see Tricia, Alan or myself if you are happy to help. The days where help is essential is when we are setting up on Monday 2 December and Tuesday 3 December and clearing and tidying up on Monday 9 December.

More details will follow in subsequent Church Magazines and Notice Sheets, but if you have any questions or comments in the meantime, please contact any of the following people -

Tricia Longbottom (01795 428300, tricialongbottom@outlook.com,

Alan Pinnegar, 01795 471483, apinnegar@gmail.com

John Slate, 07717 295376 - john.slate49@hotmail.com

Many thanks, John Slate

Tunstall Gardeners' Society 21st ANNUAL OPEN SHOW

Tunstall Village Hall

Saturday, September 7th 2019 at 2.30pm

Class	Specification	Details
1	Apples, cooking 3	Single variety on a white paper plate
2	Apples, dessert 3	Single variety on a white paper plate
3	Pears 3	Single variety on a white paper plate
4	Single variety of fruit, not otherwise listed	On a white paper plate
5	Beans, French 5	Single variety on a white paper plate
6	Beans, runner 5	Single variety on a white paper plate
7	Beetroots, 3 with leaves trimmed	Single variety on a white paper plate
8	Carrots 3 , with leaves trimmed	Single variety on a white paper plate
9	Courgettes, 3	Single variety on a white paper plate
10	Cucumber 1	
11	Leeks, 3	Trimmed
12	Onions, 3	Single variety on a white paper plate
13	Potatoes, 3	Single variety on a white paper plate
14	1 runner bean	longest
15	1 Marrow	
16	Tomatoes, 5 cherry with calyx	Single variety on a white paper plate
17	Tomatoes, 5 other with calyx	Single variety on a white paper plate
18	Tomatoes cherry, a bunch on their stem	Single variety on a white paper plate
19	Single variety vegetable, not otherwise listed	On a white paper plate
20	Salad collection, 5 different	Mixed salads in a suitable box.
21	Vegetable collection, 5 different	Mixed vegetables in a suitable box
22	Vegetable of curious shape	Naturally grown
23	Picked fresh herbs	In a container
24	Flower(s), one stem	
25	Vase of mixed flowers	No more than 10 stems
26	Flowers, fresh 3	Same variety
27	Flowers, fresh arrangement (no theme)	No height limit
28	Flowers, fresh mini arrangement	Maximum height 10cm (4")
29	An Autumn arrangement	In a basket
30	Jar of chutney	Any variety, plain/clear lid
31	Jar of jam	Any variety, plain/clear lid
32	Jar of jelly	Any variety, plain/clear lid
33	Jar of marmalade	Any variety, plain/clear lid
34	Vegetable, preserved in any way	Any variety, plain/clear lid
35	Photograph Wildlife in the garden	Unmounted, 7" x 5" maximum
36	Men's cooking class – Snickerdoodles	Men only – Made to recipe on p. 25
37	Ladies' cooking class – Raspberry jam Swiss Roll	Ladies only - Made to recipe on p.24

Lids must
be
loosened

TUNSTALL GARDENERS' SOCIETY Open Show (continued)

Entrance is £1.50 to include a drink with cake/biscuit. (children free)

All entries should be taken to the Village Hall between 9.30am & 11.00am.

Entry fees: 20p for the first five items , thereafter 10p each entry.

Judging commences at 11.30am

The Show will include a Raffle, (***prizes welcome***), drawn after the auction.

Show Recipes

Swiss Roll

You will need.....

3 large eggs

3oz castor sugar, warmed

3oz self-raising flour, sieved

For the filling and top

4 level tablespoons raspberry jam

castor sugar

Cooking Time 7 – 10 minutes

Oven setting 425°F, Gas Mark 7

- Grease and line a shallow Swiss roll tin 9"x12"
- Take the eggs at room temperature and whisk with the sugar until the mixture is light and creamy and leaves a trail when the whisk is lifted out of the mixture. Fold in the flour, using a metal spoon.
- Turn into the prepared tin and smooth level with a palette knife. Bake in the hot oven for 7-10 minutes until the sponge begins to shrink from edges of the tin and is pale golden.
- Turn out on to a sheet of greaseproof paper dredged with castor sugar. Trim edges of the sponge, spread with warm jam and roll up tightly. Dredge with castor sugar and cool on wire tray.

Snickerdoodles

6oz self-raising flour

6oz castor sugar

1 egg

¼ teaspoon salt

3oz fat

2 level tablespoons castor sugar 1 level teaspoon cinnamon

Grease 4 baking sheets with fat. Sift flour, salt and 6oz sugar into a bowl and add fat in one piece, and the egg.

Using a wooden spoon stir thoroughly until dough is formed.

Turn onto a floured board and shape into a roll approx. 8" long and cut into about 28 slices with a sharp knife.

Place on the baking sheet. Mix the castor sugar and cinnamon together and sprinkle liberally on top.

Bake in a fairly hot oven for 10 – 15 minutes. 375°F, Gas Mark 5

Transfer the cookies to wire racks for cooling.

Tunstall Bell Ringers

In April Tunstall won the call change competition held at High Halstow (this was a Rochester District event), so well done to them.

On June 29th Tunstall hosted the Kent County Association of Change Ringers County Eight Bell Competition. The County is divided into six districts and Rochester District won it for the second time running. Three members of the band were from Tunstall (Stuart Cox, Emma Cundiff and Roger Pocock) and also Stephen Trafford who learnt to ring at Tunstall.

We provided refreshments in the Village Hall and the Judges were John and Anne White from Towcester in Northamptonshire.

Richard Bushell

Tunstall Bellringers Trip to Ypres 6/7th July 2019

A Tunstall Tower Outing was once an annual event in our ringing calendar along with the Christmas Dinner and annual barbeque. The last time we all went out for an outing many of our current ringers weren't even

ringing. Tower outings usually feature ringing at 5 or 6 towers, a visit to a pub or two and in Terry Barton's time, a visit to a fish and chip restaurant. This outing featured one tower, a ferry crossing to Calais, an overnight stay and for some, lots of food!

The venue for this outing was St George's Memorial Church in Ypres. This church was built as a memorial to the British and Commonwealth troops who lost their lives in the Great War. The bells were cast in 2017 by the same founder as the bells at Tunstall - John Taylor of Loughborough and dedicated in August 2017.

Planning for this trip had started earlier in the year. But things don't always go to plan and on the Friday afternoon before, it went very pear-shaped with the hotel where most of the ringers were staying cancelling our booking citing a bed bug infestation! Panic ensued and accommodation organiser Christine Tatler McCluggage frantically called round other hotels seeking alternative billeting.

Saturday started with breakfast on P&O's Spirit of France. An advance party took an earlier boat and headed straight for Ypres and lunch whilst

the rear guard headed for the Poperinge New Military Cemetery to pay their respects to Tunstall fallen Private Walter Slarks. *(photo left)*



St George's has a ring of eight bells with a tenor weight of 6cwt. The ringing room is smaller than ours and on a hot afternoon it was very warm despite the air conditioning. Following general ringing we attempted a quarter peal but were unsuccessful owing to the heat affecting concentration levels, I'm sure all eight ringers enjoyed the sauna!

Later we joined the crowds at the Menin Gate for the nightly sounding of the Last Post.

Every evening since 1928 the last post has been played under the Menin Gate Memorial at 8pm. The ceremony we attended was the 31458th time it had been performed. At 8pm the crowd fell silent as three buglers took their places. It is a sobering place as the walls record the names of those who have no known grave.

On Sunday morning we took a trip out to Tyne Cot, a memorial to the Passchendale offensive; a vast cemetery with its own memorial wall. You

could be misled into thinking that it contained the graves of men who fell over the length of the war, but this memorial was for one offensive. Its scale is simply breath-taking. The visitor's centre has a loop recording which reads out the name of a missing soldier every 10 seconds. With 34,887 missing in action this recording would take just over 96 hours to complete.

Once back in Ypres we assembled at St George's for a group photograph and another quarter peal attempt this time on the back 6 bells. With lower temperatures we were successful and dedicated the quarter peal to the fallen pupils and choristers of King's Rochester who died at Ypres Salient and on the Somme.



Tunstall Change Ringing Society

**Ypres, Belgium - St George Sunday, 7 July
2019 in 42m (6-1-11 in B)**

1260 Plain Bob Doubles

1 Bethan Senior 2 Rachel Cox OR
3 Christine Tatler - McCluggage 4 Roger Pocock
5 Emma Cundiff (C) 6 Gill Rannard

*Dedicated to the memory of Old Roffensians
and Choristers of Rochester Cathedral who
served in the Ypres Salient and the Somme.*

For those not ringing it was a chance to do some last-minute sightseeing and shopping for beer, chocolate and cake or just soak up the atmosphere of the Grote Markt and have lunch.

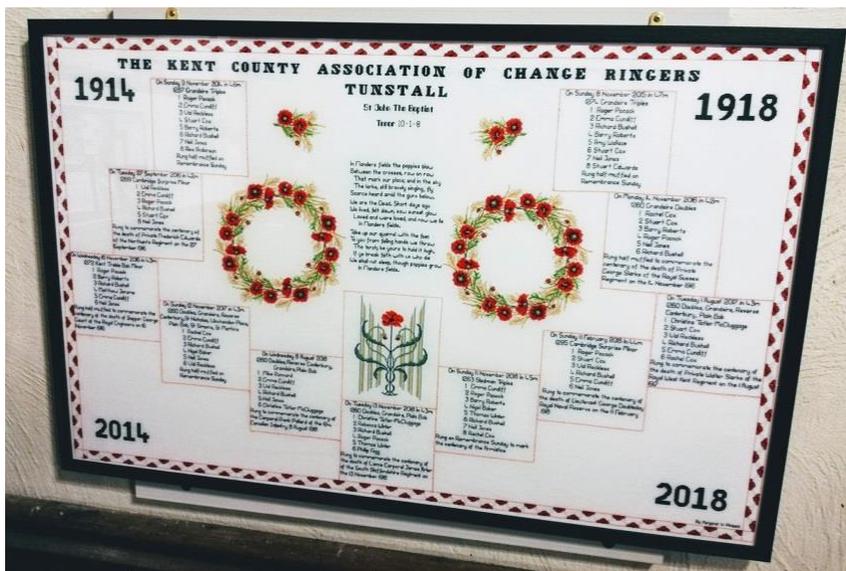
Amid texts and emails from P&O warning of pestilence, traffic delays and check-in requirements, it was time to leave Ypres. We made it in plenty of time (this seasoned Calais traveller thought we got off lightly). The car with the priority boarding booking got a table in the Brasserie for the end of trip meal as we crossed back to Dover.

Ypres has a fledgling band but visiting other towers to gain experience is not easy for them. Their nearest tower without a channel crossing is Dordrecht in Holland or as the crow flies over the channel, Walmer. Several members of the Tunstall band expressed an interest in going over to help occasionally and we extended an invitation to the band to visit us here in Tunstall. The formal twinning between Sittingbourne and Ypres may be on hold with the exception of the Royal British Legion, but if the

bellringers could build links, you never know what might happen in the future.

Emma Cundiff

St John the Baptist church Bell Ringers' news



At Bell ringing service on May 19th 2019 this absolutely wonderful tapestry was unveiled and blessed. Margaret Philpott hand embroidered all Quarter Peals that had been rung for the centenary of WW1 and for each of the Tunstall fallen. All the bell ringers would like to thank Margaret for this amazing work of art that will hang in the Church for posterity. If you pass or are near Tunstall Church do go in and have a look at the tapestry, it is truly spectacular.