

BROMLEY & SHEPPARD'S COLLEGES



Herald

April/May 2026



Welcome

Dear Collegians and Friends,

As Spring advances, we reach the time of bluebells, both here in our grounds, and across the countryside. Here and on the cover are two photographs of bluebells near Chartwell by Clare Preston.

We have welcomed our newest collegian, Colin Patterson and look forward to another soon.

Nick, our Chaplain celebrated his first Easter here, and Linda Balmer has retired after many years service to the Colleges – with a tasty tea party.

The deadline for the next edition, for June, will be May 30th. Please send contributions to me, preferably by email to: therevvedbee@hotmail.co.uk

Thank you to Jo for printing and distributing them.

Thanks to Rob for his support, and to all our contributors, both with words and pictures!

Brandy Pearson



From the Chaplain's Window

Dear Friends

I am happy to announce that I have identified 'my tree' – the one I see from my window,

As the leaf buds were starting to open I was a bit uncertain – perhaps a variety of Ash. Then when the leaves were finally

visible I was able to use the marvellous App called 'Picture This' which positively identified it as a Dutch Hornbeam. (see above). It has a lovely shape – as like a lot of trees in the grounds have been able to find it's own space - and I am of the opinion that it is 'handsome'. I continue to wonder about my attraction to it – as it is there and I see it many times a day – in different lights, and now in it's returned 'newness'.

I think it is partly that we arrived in August, and so I am experiencing it for the first time properly go through the cycles – I shall remain enchanted!

It was lovely to celebrate the Holy Week and Easter Eucharist in the Colleges, and to exchange cards of greeting and celebration. We had a theme of exploration of Hope running through Lent and it was wonderful (as ever) to celebrate the return and renewal of the Hope this season brings. Thanks to everyone who shared with each other the joy and thanksgiving.



I have been reading recently some of the writers who were well known in the 1970's and '80's who were members of SSJE - The Cowley Fathers. As it took down, and dusted off long neglected volumes that were read for necessity, and have been re-discovered and I now am happy to say they are being read with renewed (and perhaps with first) appreciation by me.

Christopher Bryant, and Herbert Slade were doing and thinking what might have seemed - at the time - to be radical thinking, but it was more accurately - and more importantly - an encouragement to recognize the possibility of a satisfying and important synthesis of Psychology, Faith, and Spirituality.

I have to say I remember reading them at the time and thinking - 'yes - mmm - so what?' And I now see that they were pioneers in enabling a wider understanding of the process of knowing 'The River Within' (Christopher Bryant) and 'The Exploration into Contemplative Prayer' (Herbert Slade).

Re-interpreting and renewing our familiarity with ancient roots of aspects of our faith is each generation's responsibility - and I am playing 'catch-up' and seeing how these impressive figures are part of our Anglican identity. Thanks to all who are encouraging a 'dusting off' and re-assessment of these books and writers.

We pray that this month of May will bring light, refreshment, peace and renewed hope to you.

With warm wishes *Nick*

Broom Day



To celebrate Bromley's heritage (the name Bromley is derived from old English Bromleag, meaning broom meadow) there will be an exhibition in the Glades on Sunday 10th May and a parade at 12 noon led by the mayor to Martin's Hill where broom is flowering on the slopes below the War Memorial.

Broom is not indigenous in South Africa but is planted in gardens. I have happy memories of sitting on a secluded bench in the school grounds after exams were over, surrounded by flowering broom which had the most delicious scent. I have been puzzled to find the broom on Martin's Hill unscented. In May last year I was travelling

by coach in northern Spain and Portugal and was surprised to see the sides of the motorways all yellow with broom. This prompted me to look up broom and discovered that Spanish broom is scented, but alas, English broom is not. So the broom I remember from my childhood must have been Spanish. I took some impressionistic views of the Spanish broom through the coach window while travelling.

Clare Preston

Falling Down

I was walking back from the surgery a couple of days before Christmas when I fell flat on my face, necessitating a trip to Beckenham Beacon Hospital. I was particularly worried about the incident, because I could find no obvious explanation of why it had happened. I spoke to a District Nurse who was visiting me about another matter and she told me about the Bromley Falls Service. Although she could have referred me, she said that I could self-refer. She also told me to expect to wait around 4 weeks for an appointment.

I e-mailed bromh.bromleyhealthcarereferrals@nhs.net (although I could have rung them on 0300 330 5777), with a short summary of my fall, and asked for a referral to the Falls Prevention Service. I received an e-mail later that day, confirming receipt of my e-mail and advising me that it had been referred to the appropriate department.

A month later, I was invited to meet a physiotherapist at St Paul Cray Clinic. During the 75 minutes that I was with her, she asked some detailed questions and carried

out various tests. I was advised of my score, and that it meant I was at moderate risk of a further fall. I was given some daily exercises and sent for an ECG. It was definitely worth the effort, as I feel reassured and less likely to suffer a repeat event. I commend the service to Collegians.

Bob Wallace

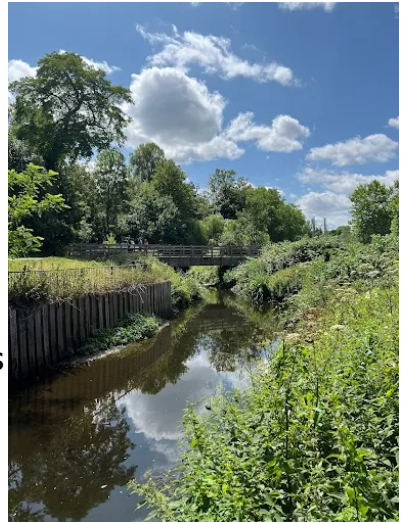
Ladywell Fields

I recently enjoyed a walk through Ladywell Fields, which extend behind Lewisham Hospital along the course of the Ravensbourne, our own little river.

The name Ladywell refers to a holy well connected with St Mary's Church, Lewisham which was supposed to cure eye complaints. It was a good day when I discovered this open space

some years ago and quite transformed my view of Lewisham. I was delighted this year to find a stretch of bluebells by the river.

There is also a very rare tree, a survivor of the deadly Dutch Elm disease which killed 75% of elms in the UK. The Ravensbourne rises at Keston Ponds, flows past Bromley and Lewisham and joins the Thames at Greenwich. *Clare Preston*



From Bernard

In the 1400s a law was set forth in England, that a man was allowed to beat his wife with a stick no thicker than his thumb. - Hence we have the "rule of thumb".

Many years ago in Scotland, a new game was invented . It was for. "Gentlemen Only. Ladies forbidden" , and thus the word "GOLF" entered the English language.

Bernard Fray

Easter Day

It was good to have Nick celebrate our Eucharist on Easter Day. Our Easter Fire was accompanied by Paul Jenkin's really thoughtful and impressive Sorrows and Joys Cross.





Here are two lovely sunny photos this Paschal Cross, showing both the Joys and Sorrows sides, taken by Nick



Creative Arts Exhibition



This took place in the Common Room from April 2nd to April 15th. A Visitors Book was added, and garnered some very pleasing comments. We are feeling encouraged to put on another exhibition later in the year.

The works were created at the Creative Arts Group that meets on a Monday once a month from 10am in the Common Room. Collegian Bruce Driver helps us to express ourselves mainly in watercolours, but other media and crafting are very welcome.

"Through Creative Art I now see the world with new eyes"

"It is lovely to have such a free opportunity to create in the company of others"

"Moments of encouragement abound"

New Advice from the RSPB

We all want to help birds and make our gardens or outdoor spaces a place where all wildlife can thrive. But some species, such as Greenfinches, are experiencing serious declines because of disease.

The good news is that we can help reduce the spread of disease by making two simple changes to the way we feed our birds.

What's the problem?

Research has shown a worrying decline in some of our much-loved garden birds due to a disease called trichomonosis. This is a highly contagious disease and can spread where birds gather in large numbers such as at bird feeders.

Greenfinches, for example, have dropped by over 65% in the last three decades – and you may have seen this decline yourself. Back when the Big Garden Birdwatch started in 1979 Greenfinches were at number seven in the top ten birds seen. This year they were down to number 18.

How you can help

We can help stop the spread of disease among garden birds by making two simple shifts to how we feed birds. Put simply: Feed seasonally. Feed safely.

1. Feed seasonally

During summer and autumn, there's a higher risk of disease spreading. But it's also when there are more natural foods available to birds, such as seeds and insects.

1 May to 31 October

Pause filling your bird feeders with seeds or peanuts.

You can continue to offer small amounts of mealworms, fatballs or suet.

1 November to 30 April

You can feed your birds a full range of bird foods, including seeds and peanuts.

2. Feed safely

Busy bird feeders can become hotspots for disease. To help keep birds healthy, it's vital to keep things clean – which is why we've strengthened our existing hygiene guidance. We recommend you:

Clean your bird feeders and water baths at least once a week. Good hygiene is essential. Be sure to also clean away any old food or droppings from beneath feeders.

Place your bird feeders in a different spot every week. This will help to prevent any build-up of potentially contaminated debris underneath. If you have more than one feeder, put them in different areas to reduce the number of birds in one place and the mixing of different species.

Avoid putting feeders under places where birds roost, such as under trees. This will help to avoid contamination through droppings.

Don't use bird feeders with flat surfaces, such as bird tables, window feeders and feeders with trays. Research has confirmed that there's a higher risk of disease spreading on flat surfaces, where contaminated food can collect.

Feed in moderation. Make sure all the food you put out is eaten within one to two days. Adjust the amount you offer based on demand to avoid overfeeding.

Keep food as dry as possible. Damp food allows disease to survive and spread. Choose feeders that prevent rain getting in and limit condensation.

Change water in bird baths daily. Only offer water if you're able to change it every day and make sure it's tap water. A pond is the best way to provide birds and other wildlife with water.

Help birds find their own food. One of the best ways to support garden birds in the long-term is to help them find their own food. So fill your outdoor space with bird-friendly plants – such as sunflowers, teasels and ivy. These help provide natural food sources for birds.

Adapted From the RSPB website

Linda's Retirement Party

Linda Balmer has been serving this community for many years, and has now retired to Flat 42. She kindly put on a tea party for all the Collegians, where she was presented with one of Bruce Driver's beautiful watercolour painted cards, and a collection from the Collegians. We all wish her a long and happy retirement.







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