



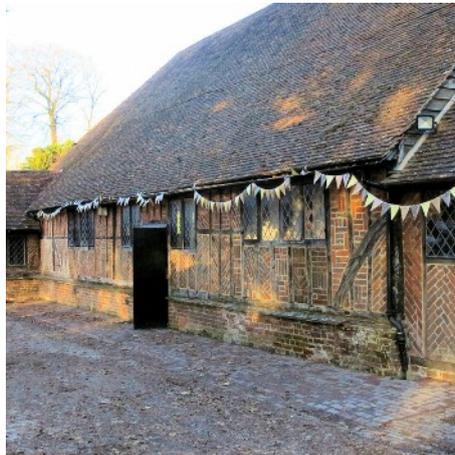
THE HALLAS CHRISTMAS NEWSLETTER 2016

I've deliberately left the composition of this annual piece of trivia later than usual for one very good reason – which is that the most exciting event of the year took place last Saturday.



Matt and Lizzie

The day went very well, despite the freezing temperature and the bride and groom had a wonderful day to remember. There were one or two surprises. Lizzie sang *If ever I would leave you* from Camelot to Matthew. Big brother, Tim, as best man got Matthew to sing, or possibly to rap, Will Smith's *Gettin' Jiggy wit it* as an unrehearsed duet.



Chilham Village Hall

We were thrilled when our younger son, Matthew, and his then girlfriend, Lizzie, announced their engagement just after Christmas last year. They didn't want a long engagement, so the date of November 26th was set. The location of Chilham, near Canterbury in Kent, was chosen and then it was all systems go to plan and organise a beautiful wedding.

The Wedding

Chilham is a quaint 16th century village located on the Pilgrims' Way. (Please brush up your Chaucer, if you've not heard of it). There is a lovely parish church there, if one can turn a blind eye to the sentimental Victorian statuary within, and a restored Tudor tithe barn where the reception was held.



Chilham church



99 Mill Road, Royston

Now the new Mr and Mrs Hallas are settling down to life in Royston, which is almost on the Herts/ Cambs border. Lizzie has started a Master's degree in Music Therapy at Anglia Ruskin University. Matthew is teaching at Freman College in Buntingford.

Tim and Harriet

Tim and Harriet are always very busy. Tim has been working as a Music Technology teacher for years and knows his subject



Chilham statue

inside out. He sometimes addresses teachers' conferences and is the proud possessor of a BA, MSc and MEd, but is not a 'qualified' teacher so has decided to remedy that this year. He will have finished by the time you read this, but some of the assessments have been very thorough and quite gruelling.

Harriet continues to enjoy the delights of commuting into London to work at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine. She has recently had a promotion so she is getting used to and making her mark in a new role. It's not all work and they have had some fun as well



Sissinghurst (N.T.)

with trips to New York, Amsterdam and Paris.

Sam and Sheila

Sam and I continue with our various interests and commitments. Sam spends much time helping other people with various techic problems and gives any little 'thank you' gifts to the Railway Children. This is a charity which helps street children, originally in India but now in several countries. In India many survive by begging or scavenging at railway stations – hence the charity's name.

In June we spent a few days in Kent. The other year, Sam splashed out on lifetime membership of the National Trust. So on holiday, we need look no further than the members' handbook for our entertainment. We've also hammered our English Heritage membership. Places to visit were Chartwell (EH), Churchill's home, Sissinghurst (NT), Vita Sackville-West's house and gardens (NT) and Ightham Mote (NT). We found time to tour Canterbury Cathedral and preview the wedding venue at Chilham. A visit to Sheila's sister in Tunbridge Wells was part of the itinerary.



Bakelite Museum

In early September we stayed near Bridgwater in Somerset for the best part of a week. This included an outing to the Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust reserve at Stearts Marsh, the only one we hadn't been to. A visit to the Bakelite Museum at Williton provided a quirky diversion on the



Hitchin seen from Pirton

way to the West Somerset Railway. The owner of the museum delights in his inclusion in a book called *Dull men of Britain*.

We also had a lovely hot weekend with my brother and sister-in-law in Littlehampton and crammed in some more visits to historic sites. Uppark (NT), Portchester Castle (EH) were on the list. The picture taken at Nymans (NT) shows Sheila's stepmother, Val, brother, Ashley, and his



Family at Nymans

wife, Kerry, along with Sheila and Sam. It was during the Olympics games and we watched some of the cycling. I hadn't realised how peculiar some of the races and the points system are. A gold chocolate coin may be on its way to anyone who can explain them.



Hitchin Street: Westbury Close

Over the summer Sam took part in a project run by Hitchin Camera Club to photograph every street in Hitchin. With the help of various street maps and Dr Google he was able to fill in the gaps of more obscure roads and footpaths.



West Wood

Each year we start going on short walks in the country described in leaflets picked up at the library. It's intended as health-giving exercise, but tends to peter out when the weather gets poor. Some pictures below.

Church Events

There has been one other significant event this year. Hands up all of you who scrutinise and memorise these epistles every year. What, no-one? Then you may not recall that our previous Church Minister, John, retired in September 2015. The Church was prepared for a period without a minister, possibly lasting for a couple of years, but God had other ideas. Enter Revd. Jane Robson who came to take a service in the following December. Everybody liked her very much and was hugely impressed by her enthusiasm and energy, so by the end of January she had accepted the invitation to our Pastorate. Having only just recovered from all the preparations for John's farewell, it was a great pleasure to do it all again, this time



Revd Jane Robson

in reverse for Jane's induction service in April. Now she is busy stirring us all up – which is what we need.

As every year, we apologise to those of you we haven't seen or contacted but we send our greetings and wish you all a very happy Christmas and a blessed and peaceful new year.



Airlander 10 airship at Cardington

With love from Sheila and Sam

22 Westbury Close, HITCHIN, Herts, SG5 2NF. Phone: 01462 623174

Web site: <http://www.samhallas.co.uk/family/> e-mail: sheila.hallas@ntlworld.com & sam.hallas@ntlworld.com