



E-NEWS



The General Conference of the New Church **News**

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If you would like to donate to support this ongoing resource, please do so here:

<https://www.generalconference.org.uk/resources/donations>

Rise and Shine Radio Show

Our Spiritual Leader, Revd Jack Dunion, broadcasts his own online radio show every Sunday at 9am on River Radio (formerly Leven Radio):

<https://riverradio.uk/>

The link below now gives access to all backdated Rise & Shine programs:

<https://www.mixcloud.com/RevJack/>



Merry Christmas from E-News

Gemma McLean writes:

We have got quite a bumper issue in this, the last E-News before Christmas. I hope you enjoy it, and I would like to wish you all a very Merry Christmas and hope that you are able to enjoy yourselves, despite the current situation.

Thank you for reading and contributing to E-News and E-Read throughout the year. Here's hoping next year will feature news of lots of face to face meetings and events.

P.s. as promised in the last issue, here is a festive photo of my dog Mia.



Christingle at Bradford

Gwendolen Rowe reports:



On Sunday 13th December at Bradford New Church we were delighted that our Sunday School teacher, Dawn Nolan, offered to lead a Christingle service. This was the first time Dawn had ever taken a service and she led it beautifully.

At the beginning of the service Dawn had set up separate stations for each child to work from with their own items they would need to make the Christingle. This was to ensure that we were keeping each child safe.

After lighting the advent candles, where Dawn reminded us about Jesus coming as the light of the world, the children were invited to come to their work station ready to make a Christingle. She then explained what each of the elements of the Christingle represented and then there was a busy creative time as the children and young people got to work on their Christingles.

After a time of prayer we lit the Christingles and sang a final carol.

I would like to congratulate Dawn for taking this service and for creating a beautiful space. It was magical seeing the Christingles lit along with the many tealights dotted around the Church.



Divine Focus - Capturing The Sacred In The World Around Us

Revd Becky Jarratt reports:

Introducing a new Zoom programme using photography...

Would you like to be involved in a pilot? On Thursday 14th January from 10.30 - 11.30 we will have the first session of Divine Focus. You are invited to bring 6 photos you have taken that say something to you about hope. During this Zoom session we will have a short discussion on a passage from the Word, share prayers, and talk about our photos. Each person will talk through their photos, sharing something about each one. Numbers will be limited, so please express your interest as soon as possible.

If you would like to attend, please:

- Email Becky - becky.jarratt@gcnc.org.uk

- Take or find 6 of your own photos on the theme of hope
- Email them to Becky by 7th January
- Join us on Zoom on 14th January at 10.30 am to share with the group



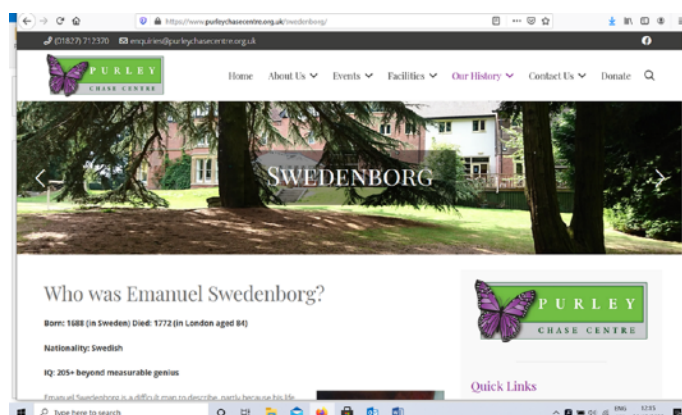
Purley Website Updated

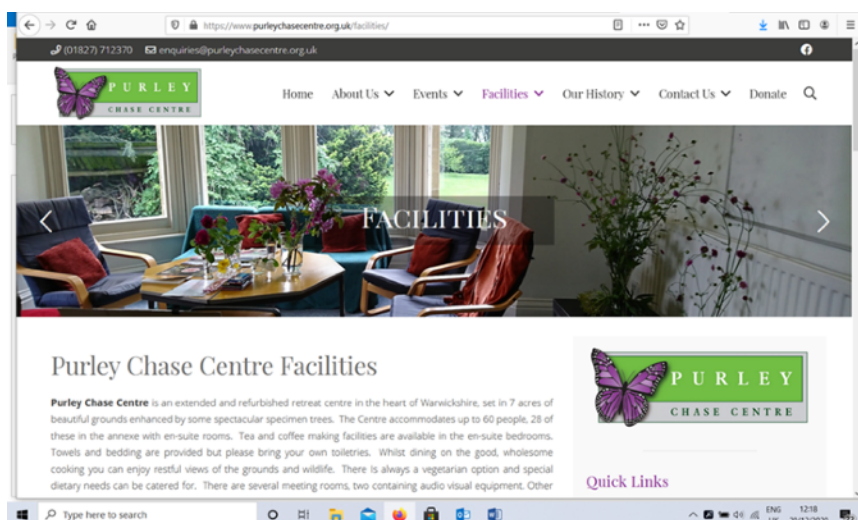
Revd Alison Southcombe reports:

The Purley team is pleased to let everyone know that the Purley website platform has been updated. The site had been utilising increasingly old software and plug-ins, as we think it was originally built in 2007/8; so it was time to make sure it remained robust with no loss of functionality.

purleychasecentre.org.uk

The great thing is that this has also given us the opportunity for a site-wide refresh, to include a lot more images, new sections and information about Purley and of course showcase why it's a great idea to visit!





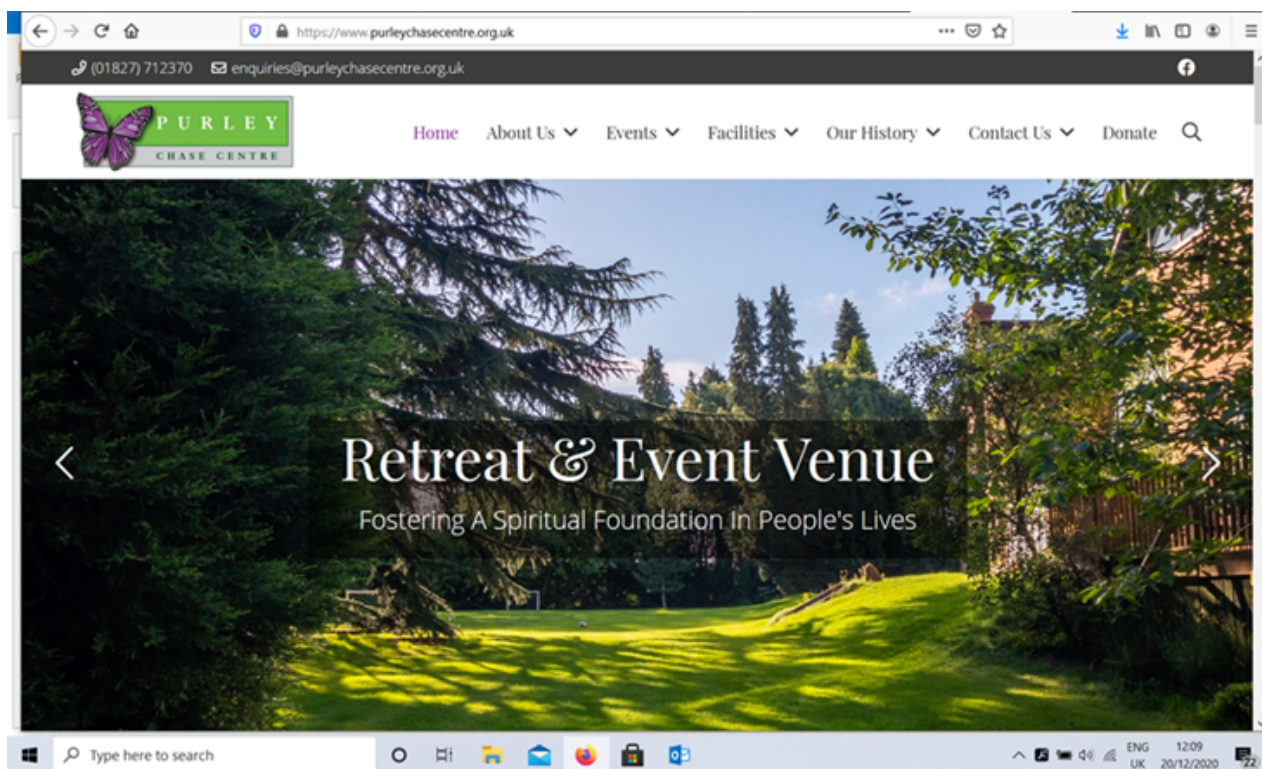
This is still something of a work in progress project, as we continue to check functionality and add new content, however we really hope you like the way we have presented Purley, as this is a very special place for many people.

We have already received suggestions for additional sections of content, please

feel free to share your own ideas by emailing: alison.southcombe@purleychasecentre.org.uk
Thank you.

Lastly, as you can imagine Purley has had a tough year with lockdowns, so please consider making a donation to the Centre as part of your Christmas gifting. There is now a new page on the website to make it even easier. Many thanks in advance, as every amount counts towards a strong Purley going forward.

Merry Christmas from The Purley Team



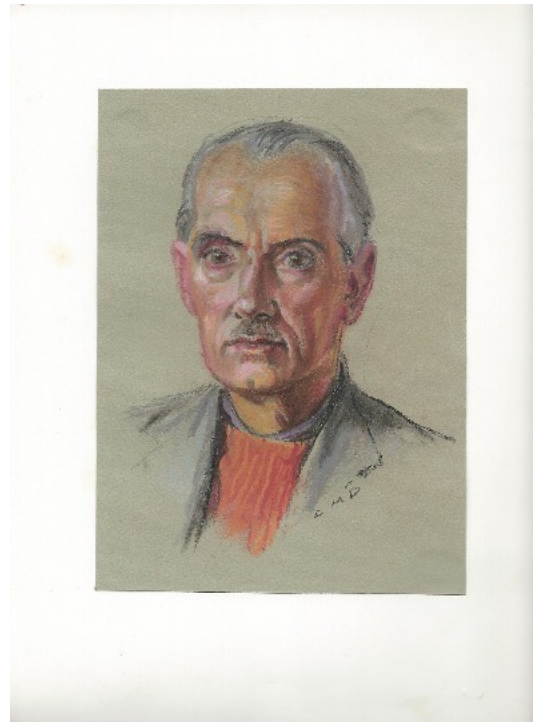
An Exciting Discovery

Revd Mary E Duckworth reports:

Last autumn my son, Micah, discovered a manuscript tucked away in a box in a corner of my late husband, Dennis Duckworth's old study. It was beautifully and neatly written and packaged. What could it be? The mystery intrigued us. As we examined the script, it appeared to be a memoir of the First World War. But whose?

We were astonished to discover that it had been written by Albert Clayton, Dennis's cousin. We knew his wife, Greta, was a writer as well as an artist, and that her mother and father, Lucie B and the Rev Joseph G Dufty [a N.C. minister] were both writers, but we knew Albert as an artist! We had no idea he had ever written anything.

Micah took the manuscript home to read it thoroughly. It was an extremely good read. So good that he felt it should be published. And he did just that! He explored various self-publishing options and in February this year he published it through Amazon under the title, **'Long Before Daybreak'**.



Albert's portrait by his wife Greta

I know a number of people in the New Church own paintings by Albert and Greta. We exhibited them at Swedenborg House and Greenhill New Church as well as at the churches in Clayton-le-Moors and Accrington, the Lancashire town where Albert was born. Other people will have known him both in the north as well as the London area, where he lived most of his life in Wanstead.



Albert in uniform

I'm not drawn to war-time books and films but I was fascinated by Albert's account. It was so personal giving a glimpse of everyday life in a battle zone, the camaraderie between the soldiers keeping up each other's spirits, the constant battle with lice infesting their clothes which they wore day and night, the itching driving them mad.

Albert served from July 1916 – May 1917 in north-east France around Arras and the Somme. He went over the

top several times. He does describe life on the front line, as well as the danger and fear felt when, as a runner, he took messages from his commander to headquarters, along the trenches and across open ground with shells exploding.

In the breaks between fighting they might be billeted in villages usually in barns and have some modicum of 'normal' life, as well as the odd raid on a neighbour's wine cellar and somehow managing to avoid the gendarmes. His artist's eye paints the scenes so vividly that you are right there with him seeing as he sees.

If you wish, you can join him in a tiny French village to see how he spent Christmas 1916 by downloading the extra PDF here: <https://www.generalconference.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/daybreak.pdf> where you'll find a short extract from his memoir.

Albert Clayton 1895-1981 was born in the Lancashire mill town of Accrington. As a teenager he moved to Leeds with his family and studied at the Leeds School of Art and after the war at the Royal College of Art. He became an art teacher and exhibiting artist in London and Essex.

'Long Before Daybreak' - Albert Clayton

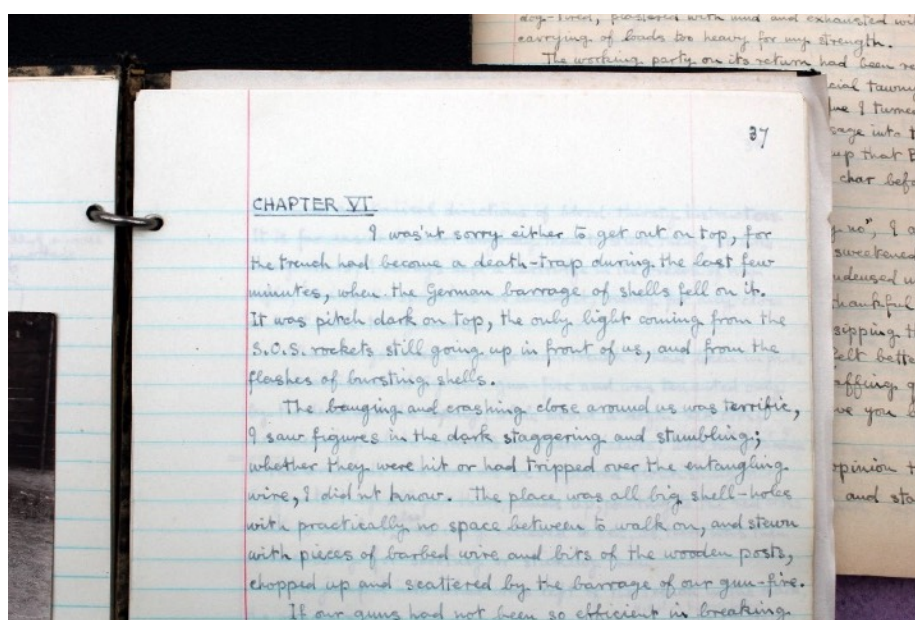
The rediscovered WWI memoir of an art student's survival in the trenches

218 pages

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Available from Amazon



The original manuscript

Having covered his initial costs Micah will be donating further proceeds to Combat Stress to help survivors of PTSD: <https://www.combatstress.org.uk/get-help/how-we-help/art-therapy>