



**DIocese OF TRURO**  
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# Rural Ramblings

**August 2009**

## FIRST THINGS FIRST....



You may read elsewhere that I'm due to move Parish in October, from Stoke Climsland and Linkinhorne to Wadebridge. **I shall, though, continue to be the Rural Link Officer.** The only part of the role that I'll be relinquishing is the Chaplaincy to

Duchy College, and arrangements are being made for someone to take that over from me. Please do, therefore, continue to contact me as before. My email address will remain the same. I'll advise my change of telephone number and postal address in the October Ramblings.

## COMPUTERS FOR RURAL PEOPLE...

*... an offer too good to miss, this scheme is being relaunched. Who do you know who could take advantage of it?*

If you live in a rural area, whether on a farm miles from anywhere, or even in a country town, you have to spend time travelling about to get things done or find things out. Email and Internet provide enormous opportunities when you can't just pop round the corner to the shop or library. Yet computers are usually expensive, and few people want to buy one "just to see if it might be useful".



The Arthur Rank Centre is committed to supporting the rural community, and has set up the "Computers for Rural People" scheme to provide computers at very low cost to encourage people to take the first step. So if you think a computer might be useful, but can't afford several hundred pounds just to try, we can help you. At a really low price we can provide a computer of your own, pre-loaded with Microsoft software, and delivered to your door with 3 months warranty, to get you started. A fully functioning computer costs as little as £99.

**Community Projects.** If you need more than one computer; E.g. for a Drop-in centre, School etc. the prices are even lower!

[http://www.arthurrankcentre.org.uk/projects/computers\\_for\\_rural\\_people/Computers\\_for\\_Rural\\_People.pdf](http://www.arthurrankcentre.org.uk/projects/computers_for_rural_people/Computers_for_Rural_People.pdf)

## RURAL LIFE and FAITH

**£180,000 'Rural Life and Faith' programme to strengthen rural churches**

The Arthur Rank Centre has launched a £180,000 training project to strengthen churches in the countryside in response to an urgent call from church leaders. 'Rural Life and Faith' could benefit 13,000 rural churches of all denominations, and will equip them for a modern role in villages and the countryside. The first part of the work (research to map the existing provision of training for mission and ministry across England) will begin immediately, and the first training modules will become available to churches in 2010.

## "The Changing Face of the Countryside"

**Friday October 23<sup>rd</sup> at Duchy College, Stoke Climsland- 10.00am to 4.00pm**

**A major Day Conference for Clergy, Readers, Lay Ministers and all who are interested in the Churches' response to Rural issues.**

### Speakers include:

The Bishop of Truro, the Bishop of Plymouth, the Chairs of the Cornwall and Devon Methodist Districts and Andrew Counsell (Principal of Duchy College)

*There will be the opportunity to tour parts of the College and the Agri-food Centre*

**Cost: £10 per person (to include coffee, tea and a buffet lunch of locally sourced food).**

*Please complete the application slip below, and return with a cheque for £10 payable to "WR Stuart-White (fees a/c)". **NB Clergy and Readers may claim as a CME expense – please contact Revd Paul Arthur***

*A full programme and travel details will be sent to all applicants.*

I would like to book a place at: **"The Changing Face of the Countryside"**  
 Friday October 23<sup>rd</sup> at Duchy College, Stoke Climsland 10.00am to 4.00pm

Name:..... Email:.....

Address..... Tel: .....

Special dietary requirements.....

\*I enclose a cheque for £10/ I have contacted Paul Arthur and my fee will be paid from the CME budget (\*delete one)  
 Please complete and send to: The Revd Bill Stuart-White, The Rectory, Stoke Climsland, Callington PL17 8NZ  
 (or email if no cheque to wstuartwhi@aol.com)

## AGRICULTURAL PASTORAL MINISTRY

I've had a couple of approaches from people, one an Anglican Reader and the other a Methodist Local Preacher, who are interested in offering some kind of pastoral ministry to the farming community local to where they live. I wonder if there's any future in trying to set up a network of such people – not as a “crisis response” ministry, that already exists through FCN and others – but as a “listening ear” where required and an informal link between farmers and the Churches. If you might be interested in such a ministry, or know someone who might be, perhaps you'd contact me. I'll be talking to my Methodist colleague, Roger Greene, who is based in the west of the county, to see if we can draw such a group together and provide adequate training and resources.

## VOTING FOR RURAL PRIORITIES

***What difference might a change of Government make to those of us who live in Rural areas? Two documents published on the same day (July 7<sup>th</sup> – the first day of last ever Royal Show) give contrasting answers! (Reports condensed from the Rural Services Network – [www.rsonline.org.uk](http://www.rsonline.org.uk))***

1) **The Conservative Party** has launched its Manifesto for Rural Communities. Shadow rural affairs secretary Nick Herbert unveiled the Rural Action policy paper

The document contains four key pledges:

- Respect rural people
- Power to rural communities
- Protect rural services
- Revive the rural economy

Under the plans:

- communities would be given the power to resist school closures and could start new village schools.
- Villages would be given the right to build their own affordable homes.
- The Rural Action document also sets out how a Conservative government would scrap top-down housing targets and allow councils to oppose development planned for green belt land.
- To help improve access to public services, the Conservatives would pilot new rural transport solutions.

- To revive the rural economy, the Conservatives would cut tax rates for small businesses to encourage growth and protect jobs.
- They would also allow councils to offer rural business rate discounts and simplify the planning system to improve accountability.

Mr Herbert said:

"We will return power and decision-making to individuals and communities, so that people have a genuine say over the matters that affect them locally."

2) A **State of the Countryside conference** held by the **Commission for Rural Communities** in Birmingham reaches very different conclusions. It concludes:

RURAL support would change little under a Tory government. Pressures on public spending will prevent any dramatic increase in support for rural issues from any change in government.

Experts say it matters little who governs. At best, the Conservatives might allocate a few more civil servants for the enforcement of rural proofing, said Professor Neil Ward.

Prof Ward concluded his talk by calling upon rural agencies to "tease out the challenges and opportunities as a result of the economic downturn."

***You pays your money and you takes your choice!***



## LAMMAS (1<sup>st</sup> August)

The ancient agricultural festival of Lammastide is enjoying something of a revival. It corresponds to the Hebrew “Feast of Weeks”, when a sheaf of the

first of the barley harvest was offered. The word Lammas is thought to be derived from the early English “Loaf Mass”; the tradition is to consecrate bread made from the first ripe corn in anticipation and thanksgiving for the harvest to come.

Churches today celebrate by bringing in and offering a sheaf of corn and a loaf baked from local flour. A full liturgy is included in “Seasonal Worship in the Countryside” (SPCK) and can usually be downloaded from the Rural Worship resources section of the Arthur Rank Centre website. Why not give it a go, if you don't already?

**Bill Stuart-White**