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**WEST LEIGH:** Cyclist Philip Taylor helped to raise more than £4,000 with a marathon bike ride.

Philip, from St Mary Magdalen, Sheet, cycled from northern France to Gibraltar to raise money for Cancer Research UK. He and a friend, Michael Reynolds, managed to cover the 1,350 miles in three weeks.

Their trip included crossing the Loire, Dordogne and Garonne rivers, cycling up and down the Pyrenees, and visiting the cathedrals of Siguenza, Toledo and Cordoba.

"Every day was different and interesting," said Philip. "France was flatter and, not surprisingly, notable for large areas of farming and vineyards.

"The Pyrenees were steep and breath-taking, and freewheeling down the far side was exhilarating. The Spain we saw was full of history. We arrived in Gibraltar fitter and thoroughly enriched after our venture across Europe.

"As a result of many kind donations, I was able to send Cancer Research UK £4,053. That sum will be increased when they have reclaimed tax through the gift aid scheme."

**BEMBRIDGE:**

Villagers in Bembridge will enjoy a ceremony that includes the switching on of the Christmas lights on December 9.



Mike Reynolds and Philip Taylor

**news from the pews**

The Lights of Love event starts from 5pm at the Lane End shops, when children can meet and talk to Father Christmas.

They will all then head for the village centre, where the vicar, the Rev Andrew Menness, will lead an open-air carol service by the monument and officiate the switching-on of the lights. Mulled wine and mince pies will be served in the village hall afterwards.

**SOUTHWICK:** The first military memorial church to be built in decades has been dedicated at the Defence College of Policing and

Guarding in Southwick Park.

Around 200 soldiers, sailors and airmen attended the service, including 50 members of the various service police associations.

Southwick Park - formerly HMS Dryad - is the home of the military police training schools of the army, navy and air force. They combined in 2004 and moved to Southwick Park in 2005.

The new church includes a stained glass window from the former regimental chapel of the Royal Military Police in Chichester, and other windows are being prepared to represent the

Royal Naval Police and Royal Air Force Police.

**COWPLAIN:** A copy of a famous Monet painting will hang in a Southampton hospital - thanks to the efforts of Cowplain worshippers.

The painting, which was done by 32 different artists, took place at the festival weekend at St Wilfrid's and Westbrook Churches.

There were seven events over the weekend, including bands, arts and crafts and a festival service on the Sunday.

Worshipper Val Strutt said: "It was wonderful to see Kairos in action, with so many people of different ages who do not normally come to church, but were drawn there by the differing events. The atmosphere was one of great friendship, where people felt welcomed."

Around £1,600 was also raised for the BBC Radio Solent Daisy Appeal over the weekend, including the sponsorship for those painting the Monet.

**SHANKLIN:** St Blasius Church will hold their first ever crib festival this month.

The festival, which happens on December 2 and 3, involves the church being open for visitors to see nativity scenes and art from local schoolchildren.

The church will be open from 10am until 4pm on the Saturday, and from 11.30am until 4pm on the Sunday.

**UPHAM:** The Friends of Upham School decided to sponsor a performance of *Charlotte's Web* at Upham C of E Primary School.

Class 3 helped to advertise the event, and used their IT skills to produce eye-catching posters. And, following in the style of the author, EB White, the children each created a chapter of the story themselves.

The show, by M & M Theatre Company, was a great success - the children enjoyed

themselves and learnt a lot at the same time.

• The school has also started work on a school travel plan with parents and Hampshire County Council. This is part of a national initiative to support schools in finding ways to improve the travel situation for pupils and the local community. Parents have taken

part in a survey that covered the methods of transport currently used, and the residents of the village have also been asked to contribute. The results of these questionnaires will be analysed and an action plan formulated.

**PORTSMOUTH:** The headteacher of St Luke's

C of E Church in Portsmouth has been given a national role.

Krysia Butwilowska was chosen as one of 67 headteachers for the National College of School Leadership's prestigious national leader of education and national support scheme.

Krysia took over at the school in 1999 and has overseen real improvement at the inner-city comprehensive. The new role means she'll be helping struggling schools around the UK.

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