



Great Totham Parish Magazine

sent to every home in Great Totham
December 2020 - January 2021



Christmas Services at St Peter's Church

10am, Sunday, 20th December:
Nine Lessons and Carols

10pm, Christmas Eve: Midnight Mass

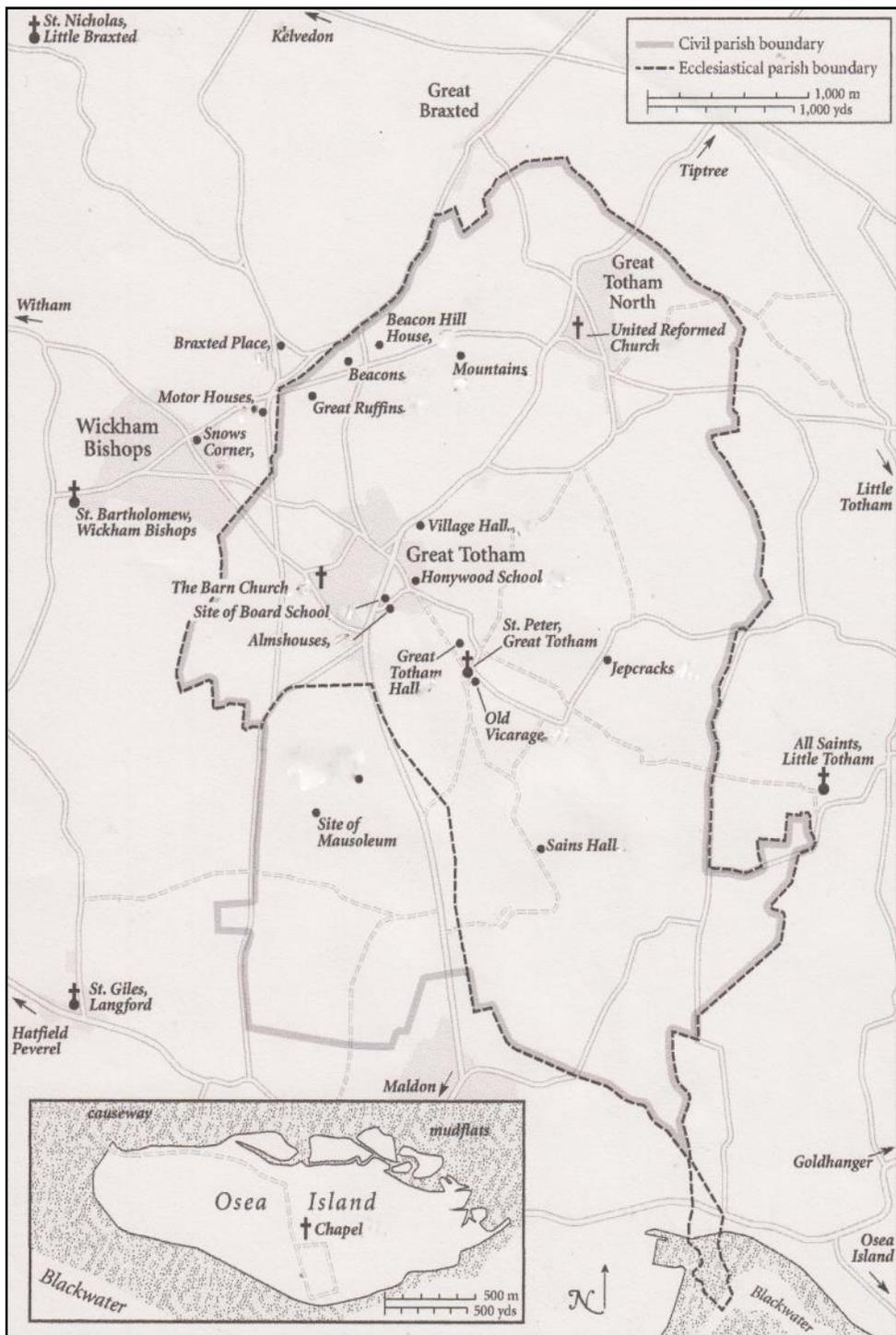
10am, Christmas Day: Family Communion Service

Please contact Karin Mann
phone: 891215

email: karinmann@hotmail.co.uk

if you are planning to attend one of the Christmas services

Inside this Edition - Great Totham Neighbourhood Plan
Great Totham Almshouses



St Peter's Church Contact Details



Blackwater
Benefice



Blackwater
Benefice

Parish Contacts:

Priest in Charge

Rev. Tracey Caswell
07742 999633

Email: revtlcaswell@gmail.com



Associate Priest

Rev. Sue Godsmark
01621 891513

Email : suegodsmark@aol.com



If you are unable to contact the Priest or Associate Priest please speak to the Churchwarden:

Churchwarden

Karen Tarpey: 01621 892122

Services

Details of services can be found on page 6.

Baptisms

For enquiries about baptisms, please contact Rev'd Sue Godsmark.

Magazine:

Enquiries: Helen Mutton: 01621 891067

Adverts: Pauline Stebbing: 01621 892059

Email: parishmagazinetotham@yahoo.co.uk

Website:

www.achurchnearyou.com/church/6657



How to make your Christingle

YOU WILL NEED:

- An orange
- A small candle
- A piece of red tape or ribbon
- 4 cocktail sticks
- A few sweets and some dried fruit
- A small piece of foil
- A pencil to make a hole in the orange

1. First fix the red tape around the middle of your orange (around the fattest part)
2. Carefully push a pencil into the top of the orange to make a small hole
3. Put your sweets and dried fruit onto the cocktail sticks
4. Push the cocktail sticks into the orange in four different directions slightly above the fattest part of the orange and pointing slightly upwards.
5. Take the foil and wrap it around the bottom, now put the candle into the hole that you have made
6. You have now finished your Christingle!

IMPORTANT : children will need to be supervised especially with the cocktail sticks.

Each element of a Christingle has a special meaning and helps to tell the Christian story:

THE ORANGE

represents the world.

THE RED RIBBON

the love of Christ reaching all around the world, the colour representing the blood he shed on the cross.

THE LIT CANDLE

represents Jesus's light in the world, bringing hope to people living in darkness.

THE COCKTAIL STICKS

are for the four points of the compass and the four seasons of the year.

THE SWEETS AND DRIED FRUIT

is for the food he provides us daily and for the way he blesses us beyond what we deserve.



Church News

Christmas Reindeer

You will need

- a knitted square: using double knitting wool and size 4mm needles cast on 40 stitches and knit in garter stitch until you have a square (or you can use a face cloth).
- a bar of soap, small gift or chocolates
- 2 googly eyes
- 1 red pompom
- 2 brown pipe cleaners
- 1 elastic band
- red/coloured ribbon
- small bells
- glue



Directions:

1. Open square/face cloth and place it on a flat surface with one corner facing towards you – making a diamond shape.
2. Place the soap or gift in the centre.
3. Bring the corner facing you and the back corner up together. Roll the two corners backwards down to the top of the soap or gift.
4. Take the two side corners in your hands and bring together at the top this will form the ears. Secure them together with an elastic band next to the soap or gift. Shape to resemble ears.
5. Fold one pipe cleaner in half and push it between the ears and through the elastic band.
6. Cut another pipe cleaner in half and twist it around to make the antlers. Do this on both sides.
7. Attach the tiny jingle bells through the ends of the antlers. Fold the pipe cleaners back to secure them.
8. Tie a decorative ribbon or bow around the bottom of the ears. You can add a small bell or other embellishment.
9. Glue on a pompom nose and googly eyes.

*Sandra Smith
Knit & Natter*

Church News

Planned Services at St Peter's Church

Please let Karin Mann know if you are planning to attend services: email: karinmann@hotmail.co.uk or phone: 891215. This is particularly crucial for the Christmas services.

We regret that we won't be able to hold the Christingle services this year; see page 4 for instructions on how to make your own .

For details of Evensong by Zoom contact Rev Sue on 891513.

Visit the website for up to date information on whether services are going ahead, or contact Rev Sue, Karin Mann or Karen Tarpey (892122).

6th December	8am	Holy Communion
The Second Sunday of Advent	10am	Morning Service of the Word
	6pm	Evensong (by Zoom)
13th December	8am	Morning Prayer
The Third Sunday of Advent	10am	Family Communion
	6pm	Evensong (by Zoom)
20th December	8am	Morning Prayer
The Fourth Sunday of Advent	10am	Nine Lessons and Carols
	6pm	Evensong (by Zoom)
24th December	10pm	Midnight Mass
Christmas Eve		
25th December	10am	Morning Service of the Word
Christmas Day		
27th December	8am	Morning Prayer
The First Sunday of Christmas	10am	Morning Service of the Word
		No Evensong

Please visit the website for details of services in January

In your prayers at home this month, please include:

Our 'Friendship Church' - Bragernes Kirke, Drammen, Norway;
Adam, Keith, Mick, John, Pat, Sylvia, Dennis and, Laura .

Church News



Online Worship at St Peter's Church

Rev. Tracey and others within the Blackwater Benefice are regularly broadcasting 'Morning Prayer' on our Facebook page. Follow the link from



our website under the heading 'Morning Prayer for Today':

<https://www.achurchnearyou.com/church/6657/>

 <https://www.facebook.com/StPetersChurchGreatTotham/>

North Blackwater Parishes have produced pages specifically for young children, found by downloading their page on our website.

In addition, the Church of England is providing a 'Daily Hope' line which offers music, prayers and reflections, as well as full worship services, at the end of a telephone line. This may be found at:

<https://www.churchofengland.org/more/media-centre/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-parishes/daily-hope-phone-line>

Photographs

On many occasions, photographs are taken of adults and children for the Parish Magazine, Church Website and Church Facebook page to record the life and work of the church in Great Totham. If at any time you would prefer that a photograph was neither kept nor used, please indicate this to the photographer who will delete the image.

If you are considering baptism for yourself or your children, confirmation, weddings, funeral arrangements, Holy Communion at home, or you would just like a visit, please get in touch with **Rev. Tracey Caswell** **Rev. Sue Godsmark** or the **Churchwarden** (see page 3 for contact details).

200+ Club Draw Winners

October

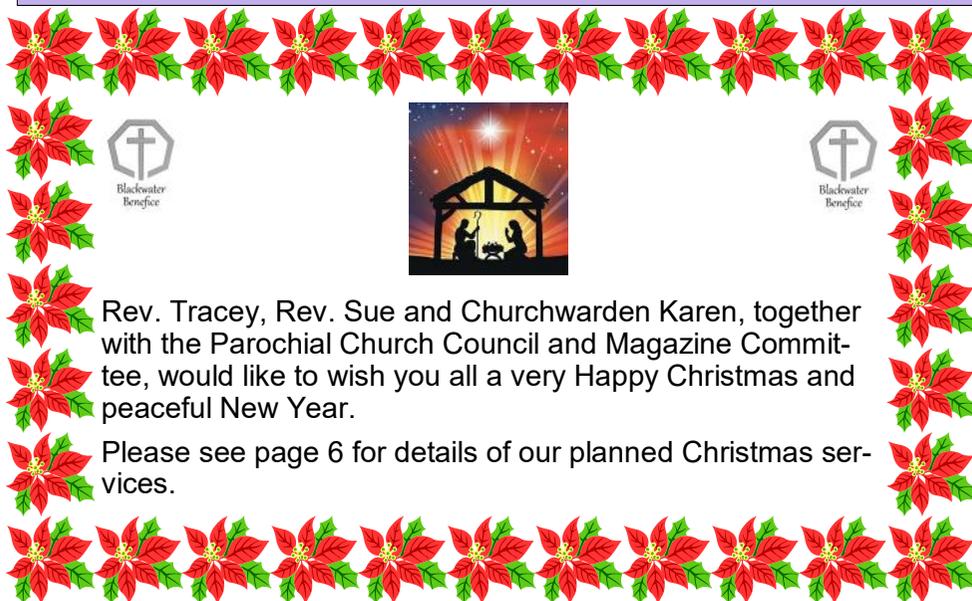
1st Prize: Stephen Rotheram

2nd Prize: Julian Mann

3rd Prize: Mary Owers

If you would like to join the scheme, whose proceeds benefit the church, please contact Roger Allen on 892334.

Church News



Rev. Tracey, Rev. Sue and Churchwarden Karen, together with the Parochial Church Council and Magazine Committee, would like to wish you all a very Happy Christmas and peaceful New Year.

Please see page 6 for details of our planned Christmas services.

Contact details

For anyone self-isolating, we would love you to chat to us between 4pm - 8pm:

Bob Tarpey	01621 892122 (after 6 o'clock)
Sheila Allen	01621 892334
Isobel Doubleday	01621 891329 (try at any reasonable time)
Mary Owes	01621 892885
Paul Smith	01621 893153
Sandra Smith	01621 893153
Janet Gleghorn	01621 892746
Philippa Hardy-King	01621 892387
Martyn Hardy-King	01621 892387
Janice Spalding	01621 892197
Sue Keyes	01621 891220
Vanessa Ellams	01621 893148
June Eaton	01621 891315
Karin Mann	01621 891215
Nick Scholey	01621 891172
Rev'd Sue Godsmark	01621 891513 (try at any reasonable time)

Magazine Delivery

If you are one of our deliverers and are unable to assist due to holiday or illness, please contact Karen Tarpey on 892122 for us to make other arrangements.

Church News

News from the Belfry

Bells, especially church bells, have traditionally been associated with Christmas. Ringing bells can be traced back to pagan winter celebrations and announce the coming or arrival of an event, activity, or occasion. They are rung during Christmas to announce the arrival of the season and to proclaim the birth of Christ. In the Anglican and Catholic churches, the church day starts at sunset, so any service after that is the first service of the day. So a service on Christmas Eve after sunset is traditionally the first service of Christmas Day. In churches that have a single bell or bells, these are often rung to signal the start of this service. In some churches in the United Kingdom it is traditional that the largest bell in the church is rung four times in the hour before midnight, and then at midnight all the bells are rung in celebration.

In the Catholic Church, Christmas and Easter are the only times that Mass is allowed to be held at midnight. It is traditional that at both midnight Masses the church and altar bells are rung while the Priest says the "Gloria". Having a Christmas Midnight Mass dates back to the early church, when it was believed that Jesus was born at midnight, although there has never been any proof of this. A lot of churches have midnight services on Christmas Eve, although not every church will have a mass or communion as part of the service.

In Victorian times, it was fashionable to go carol singing with small handbells to play the tune of the carol. Sometimes there would only be the bells and no singing. Handbell ringing is still popular today. We are fortunate to have a band of handbell ringers at St Peter's.

Sleigh bells or jingle bells are a type of bell that produces a distinctive jingle sound. Centuries ago, sleigh bells were fastened to horses to signal the approach of someone important, or to warn pedestrians of an approaching vehicle. Sleighs were unable to stop quickly so they needed a warning sound!

Perhaps the most famous bells at Christmas are those featured in the song 'Jingle Bells'. However, the song was first called "One Horse Open Sleigh". It was originally published in the USA in September 1857 to be sung at Thanksgiving and not at Christmas. However, it soon became associated with Christmas because of the 'snowy' lyrics and many choirs were singing it at Christmas in the 1860s and 1870s. It was first recorded in 1889. Often only the first verse and chorus are now sung. 'Jingle Bells' was also the first song to be broadcast from space in December 1965 when astronauts Tom Stafford and Wally Schirra said they had spotted a sleigh in space! They then took out a harmonica and sleigh bells which they had smuggled onto the Gemini 6 space craft and played and sang the song to Mission Control.

Once again ringing had to stop on Sunday 17th October with the introduction of Tier 2 restrictions. We wait to see if there will be any bell ringing this Christmas. On behalf of all the bell ringers, I wish you a Happy Christmas and peaceful New Year and hope that next year will be a better one for us all.

Andrew Hood

The Tradition of Advent

No one is really sure when Advent was first celebrated, but it dates back to at least 567, probably from 480 when monks were ordered to fast during December leading up to Christmas. In the Anglican and Lutheran churches, this fasting rule was later relaxed. The Roman Catholic Church abolished the precept of fasting later, but kept Advent as a season of penitence.

Advent is the beginning of the Western liturgical year and covers the period of four Sundays and weeks before Christmas. Advent Sunday can be between 27th November and 3rd December and only starts on 1st December when Christmas Day is on a Wednesday. Advent means 'coming' in Latin; this is the coming of Jesus into the world. Christians use the four Sundays and weeks to prepare and remember the real meaning of Christmas. There are three meanings of 'coming' that Christians describe in Advent: the first, and most thought of, happened about 2000 years ago when Jesus came into the world as a baby to live as a man and die for us. The second can happen now as Jesus wants to come into our lives. And the third will happen in the future when Jesus comes back to the world as King and Judge.

In medieval times, particularly in northern parts of England, there was an early form of nativity scenes called 'Advent Images'. Poor women would carry two dolls in a box dressed to represent baby Jesus and Virgin Mary around from door to door. It was thought to be very unlucky if you hadn't seen the box before Christmas Eve and people paid a halfpenny to see it.

There are several ways that Advent is counted down, but the most common is by a calendar or candles. In the 19th century, German protestant Christians counted down to Christmas by marking 24 chalk lines on a door and rubbing one off every day in December. Paper calendars were popular in Germany in the early 1900s, although people made their own from around 1850 onwards. The first calendars with doors were made in the 1920s, but during World War II, the production of advent calendars stopped due to shortage of cardboard.

The first calendar containing chocolate was made by Cadbury's in 1958. However, very few were sold to start with and chocolate calendars really only became popular in the 1980s. The world's largest advent calendar was made in 2007 at London's St Pancras train station. 71m tall and 23m wide, it celebrated the refurbishment of the station. The most expensive advent calendar ever was made in 2010 by a jewellers in Belgium; made of 24 glass tubes each containing diamonds and silver, it was worth about £2.1 million!

The keeping of an Advent wreath is common practice in homes and churches. In 1839, a protestant pastor in Germany made a ring of wood with 19 small candles and four large candles. Every morning, a small candle was lit and every Sunday a large candle. Custom has only retained the large candles, usually

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Church News

The Tradition of Advent

/continued from page 11

three purple and one pink, a sign of joy and representing Mary on the third Sunday. Different churches have given the candles different meanings. For example, the first represents Isaiah and other prophets who predicted the coming of Jesus; the second represents the Bible; the third represents Mary, the mother of Jesus; the fourth represents John the Baptist, Jesus' cousin, who told the people in Israel to get ready for Jesus' teaching. Some add a fifth candle (white), known as the Christ Candle in the middle of the wreath, to be lit on Christmas Eve or Christmas Day.

Since approximately the 13th century, the usual liturgical colour in Western Christianity for Advent has been violet or purple. In some Christian denominations, blue, representing hope, is an alternative colour. There is an increasing trend in Protestant churches to supplant purple with blue, as it is a hopeful season of preparation. The Advent Star which symbolises the Star of Bethlehem is often hung high in a window on the first Sunday in Advent.

Karin Mann

Church News

Bible Readings: December

6th December
Second Sunday of Advent

Isa. 40. 1-11
2 Pet. 3. 8-15
(Gospel) Mark 1. 1-8

13th December
Third Sunday of Advent

Ps. 126
1 Thess. 5. 16-24
(Gospel) John 1. 6-8, 19-28

20th December
Fourth Sunday of Advent

Ps. 89. 1-4, 19-26
Rom. 16. 25-end
(Gospel) Luke 1. 26-38

24th December
Christmas Eve

Isa. 52. 7-10
Heb. 1. 1-4 (5-12)
(Gospel) John 1. 1-14

25th December
Christmas Day

Isa 52. 7-10
Heb. 1. 1-4 (5-12)
(Gospel) John 1. 1-14

27th December
First Sunday of Christmas

Ps. 148
Gal. 4. 4-7
(Gospel) Luke 2. 15-21

Bible Readings: January

3rd January
Epiphany

Ps. 72. 1, 10-13
1John 4. 11-18
(Gospel) Mark 6. 45-52

10th January

Gen. 1. 1-5
Acts. 19. 1-7
(Gospel) Mark 1. 4-11

17th January

1 Sam. 3. 1-10
Rev. 5. 1-10
(Gospel) John 1. 43-end

24th January

Ps. 128
Rev. 19. 6-10
(Gospel) John 2. 1-11

31st January

Ps. 111
Rev. 12. 1-5
(Gospel) Mark 1. 21-28

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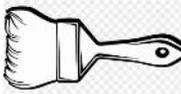


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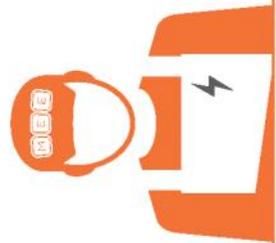
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Village News

Great Totham in November...and a Christmas past



Photos courtesy of Vicky Heaviside



Yoga Classes

Due to the latest Government guidelines, all in-person classes have been suspended during lockdown

Please join me on Zoom
9.30am every Saturday morning
commencing 7 November
(until further notice)

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Church News

All You Need Is Love



“Love, love, love all you need is love”, was a popular song from the days when the Beatles ruled the pop charts.

The casual way the word “love” can be used, such as “I love ice-cream” and then perhaps “I love my wife” can betray its limitations in English. The Greeks wisely had four words that translate into love. These are:

Storgi - Affection = Love between family
Philia - Friendship = Love between friends
Eros - Eroticism = Love between lovers / partners
Agape - Unconditional love = Love of God

and of course these definitions can cross over somewhat.

CS Lewis, the great 20th century Christian writer and scholar, published a book in 1960 entitled “The Four Loves”, which is still available. Whilst written from a Christian viewpoint, it is considered suitable to the general reader who wishes to dig deeper. A quote, “Is it easy to love God?” asks the old author. “It is easy,” he replies, “to those who do it”.

The most beautiful expression of love is found in the New Testament and quoted widely:

*“Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It does not dishonour others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrong.
.... it always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.
And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love”.*

Extracted from the letter of St Paul to the Christian believers in Corinth.

One component of love is compassion, which comes from the Latin “compati” to “suffer with” and hence we have the compassion of Christ expressed for His children whenever they are in difficulty.

“Love Hurts” according to the Everly Brothers song, a recognition that those who love deeply will find heartbreak when that love is lost or rejected in some way. But “better to have loved and lost than to have never loved at all” - Lord Tennyson.

Perhaps the best known and cherished words about love come from Saint John the Beloved from his Gospel: “For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that whoever believes in Him will not perish but have everlasting life”. What better time to celebrate that love, revealed in the Christ child of Bethlehem, than now.

Paul Smith

Village News

News from Great Totham Primary School

www.greattotham.essex.sch.uk



School News

Remembrance Day 2020



Each year group bubble held their own remembrance assembly and observed two minutes silence to remember those who have fought and died at war.



New Intake September 2021

We are sad not to be able to offer face to face tours of the school this year. If your child is due to start school in September, please view our video and look for details of how to book a telephone call on the 'New Intake' page of the website.

Wonderful Work

The autumn term topics are well underway and the school is filling up with the children's amazing work.

Year 2 have been practising their weaving skills and enjoyed making their own planes after studying The Wright Brothers.



Year 5 – *All our watercolour artwork has been placed on a display wall just outside our classrooms so people walking past have an opportunity to admire it. We have been using watercolour pencils over the past few weeks, and we've been working on our skills and techniques which have been improving by the minute! It took us three lessons to perfect*

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Village News

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our artwork before it was ready to go up on display. We have been really excited for people to see our art as we worked really hard on it. Our deputy head teacher came up and complimented us on it, and so have all the teachers and pupils! We are really proud of our final pieces and were inspired by everyone's work. We hope you are too!

Written by Lilia and Annabelle, Year 5



Observational drawing: In Year 6, the children have learnt how to use geometric shapes to help them sketch and

learn more about how to add shading and texture to their work.

Wall Art

We are constantly investing in the site to create an exciting and stimulating environment for our children. Over the October half term, we had three amazing pieces of wall art installed around the school – the scene from the Red Sea is a favourite of many of the children (and staff)!



continued on next page

Village News

News from Great Totham Primary School cont'd

/continued from previous page



Children's Quiz

1. What type of pie is usually left for Father Christmas on Christmas Eve?
2. What name is given to the day after Christmas Day?
3. What do you get if you cross Santa with a duck?
4. Who is the cold-hearted miser who despises Christmas in a famous book by Charles Dickens?
5. What guided the Three Wise Men to visit baby Jesus in Bethlehem?
6. Almonds wrapped in tissue paper gave Victorian Tom Smith the idea to invent which Christmas item?
7. Which family has a pet dog called Santa's Little Helper?
8. Where does Santa send unfit elves?
9. What name is given to an empty sock or sock-shaped bag that is hung on Christmas Eve?
10. What do we call the metallic garland used for Christmas decoration?
11. What do we call a large rectangular card with windows, one for each day of December leading up to Christmas, which open to reveal a chocolate or image?
12. What has been given to the people of Britain by the city of Oslo in Norway each year since 1947?

Sourced by June Eaton

Village News

The Willie Almshouses



The Willie Almshouses in School Road were founded by William and Louisa Gooday to provide dwellings for '3 widows and 3 married couples all of whom had resided in the parish for 20 years'. A connection with Great Totham has remained a vital qualification in becoming a resident but, increasingly, younger people have found themselves in need of housing and today a wider age range is represented.

The charity is administered by voluntary trustees who are advised by an experienced Clerk. They are responsible for the practicalities of repairs and decoration, and oversee necessary updating. In 2008 the Chapel was converted into a dwelling and the trustees are committed to exploring opportunities of providing further affordable housing for local people.

There are, of course, rules associated with the properties although, nowadays, they are not painted on boards and prominently displayed – except as an item of historical interest in the Honeywood Hall! For example, the Almshouses cannot be registered as a business address, visitors are not permitted to stay overnight, cats or dogs may not be kept as pets etc. and it is appreciated these restrictions may not be appropriate for everyone. Generally, however, the rules serve to underline the need for considerate, lawful, neighbourly behaviour.

Although, the main function of the charity is to provide homes, whether long term for older residents or as a stepping stone for younger people, there is also a duty of care. Sadly, the present situation has rather curtailed interaction between trustees and residents – a considerable amount of 'over the garden hedge consultation' has taken place in the past – but help and advice can always be obtained by contacting the Clerk's office.

Vicky Heaviside

Christmas in Norway

Christmas in Norwegian is called Jul; this is not associated with the name Christ, which in Norwegian is 'Kristus'. Joululid dates back to pre-Christian times and was the name for a huge Norse pagan feast celebrated all over northern Europe to mark midwinter, the darkest time of the year. Originally celebrated from December 13th to January 13th, it was linked to a good harvest and to welcome the return of the sun at winter solstice. The working year was over and the days were short, so Joululid was a perfect time for eating, drinking, merry-making and resting. A special Youletime Beer dedicated to the gods was brewed on the farms early in the season, the stronger the better, made from the best of the harvest grain. The Christmas Beer tradition survived the country's conversion to Christianity simply because the people refused to give it up; the rulers wisely chose to give it a new symbolic meaning, calling it a Holiday Beer, rather than abolish it. In modern times a Youle Beer is produced by all the major breweries.

Like in other northern European countries Norway celebrates Christmas Eve on 24th December, although this day was strictly not part of the religious tradition. As in England, the church in Norway originally celebrated the start of the festivities with a Midnight service on Christmas Eve, however, this proved to be extremely difficult for people who lived in the far north where it was dark and very cold, the temperature easily dropping to -30. The church had to be flexible and the celebration was moved to 25th December to coincide with the birth of Jesus. Spirits were introduced from Germany after the Middle Ages and it was not uncommon to have a drink in church on Christmas Day to keep the cold out.

On the first Sunday in Advent, a Christmas Tree is lit in every town, usually organised by the Salvation Army, who, accompanied by their band, invite people to a carol sing-along with a crib under the tree for donations to needy causes.

In the olden days, Norwegians kept the season bright with a huge Yule log, which extended out from the fireplace into the centre of the room. As it burned, it would be pushed farther into the fire to provide light and warmth throughout the holiday season.

The traditional meal on Christmas Eve varies according to where you live and, years ago, people would eat what was available. The coastal districts in the south had fresh cod, the mountainous western region ate rib of mutton. Northern Norway would eat a specially-treated codfish (still very popular) and eastern Norway, which was more fertile and grain could be fed to the pigs, would eat rib of pork accompanied by meat balls and pork sausage. Christmas beer and aquavit (to aide the digestion) are also traditional.

Rice pudding is a favourite dessert and the person who finds the hidden almond wins a prize - usually a marzipan pig. Apart from the fish the food traditionally had to be rich and plenty of it. The turkey, however, is gaining popularity as a leaner alternative to the pork and mutton. At 4pm on Christmas Eve everything comes to a halt. At 5pm, the NRK (equivalent to BBC) broadcast the boys choir,

(continued on next page)

Village News

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The Silver Boys, singing Christmas in as church bells ring all over the country and people gather for dinner. Years ago the bells meant the start of the holiday with people given time off work and businesses closed. At midnight, Midnight Mass is broadcast from St Peter's church in the Vatican and this is becoming increasingly popular. Christmas Eve is the most important day of Christmas; churches large and small are packed with people for the family services, which start as early as 2pm and an estimated 20% of the Norwegian population will attend church. Before Christmas there are a large number of services for schools and nursery schools. Frankincense is the scent of Christmas and burnt freely as a reminder of the Three Kings.

Christmas Day is a quiet day spent with family. The main meal is Brunch with cold meats, herring dishes and cheeses; dinner is consumed late afternoon. Boxing Day, the second day of Christmas, is usually when families visit those who cannot get out, particularly people in nursing homes and hospital.

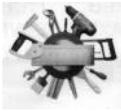
The period between Boxing Day and New Year's Day is called "Romjul", from a Norse name meaning "the time which does not have to be kept strictly holy". Romjul is very much part of the celebrations and during this period there are lots of children's "Christmas parties". Originally these were arranged by school teachers and vicars, but these have since developed to include nursery schools and Sunday schools. Many private companies and associations also arrange parties. The 13th day of Christmas, Epiphany, is called "Holy Three Kings Day" in Norway, in memory of Caspar, Melchior and Balthazar. Some people still light a candleholder on this day with three candles which symbolizes the three Kings.

Finally, Christmas departs on 13th January; this was the day when Christmas was over and visitors went home. The Christmas tree is thrown out and decorations taken down. It was absolutely the last day to finish the Christmas leftovers and drink the Christmas Beer. Christmas in Norway without snow would be a great disappointment; apart from adding to the magic, the whiteness also lights up the day at a time when there is very little sunshine.

The schools play an important part in passing on the Norwegian Christmas traditions. No other part of the school year is so rich in rituals and symbolism but many immigrant parents are concerned; is this just cosiness or a Christian celebration? Many immigrants find it difficult to differentiate between the two and the children are consequently uncertain to what extent they can take part. Some parents even keep the children away from school. The story about Jesus as the Son of God is heresy to Muslims. In Islam, Jesus is just one of the prophets and Muhammed is the most important person. The picture of baby Jesus lying in a manger in Bethlehem is taboo. Even in the schools with a high proportion of immigrant children (in one instance 90%) was the recognition of **their** culture and traditions very poor. Perhaps if **their** holy days were better recognised they would easier accept the Norwegian traditions.

Karin Mann

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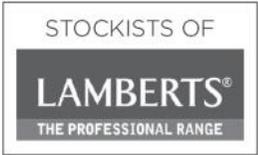
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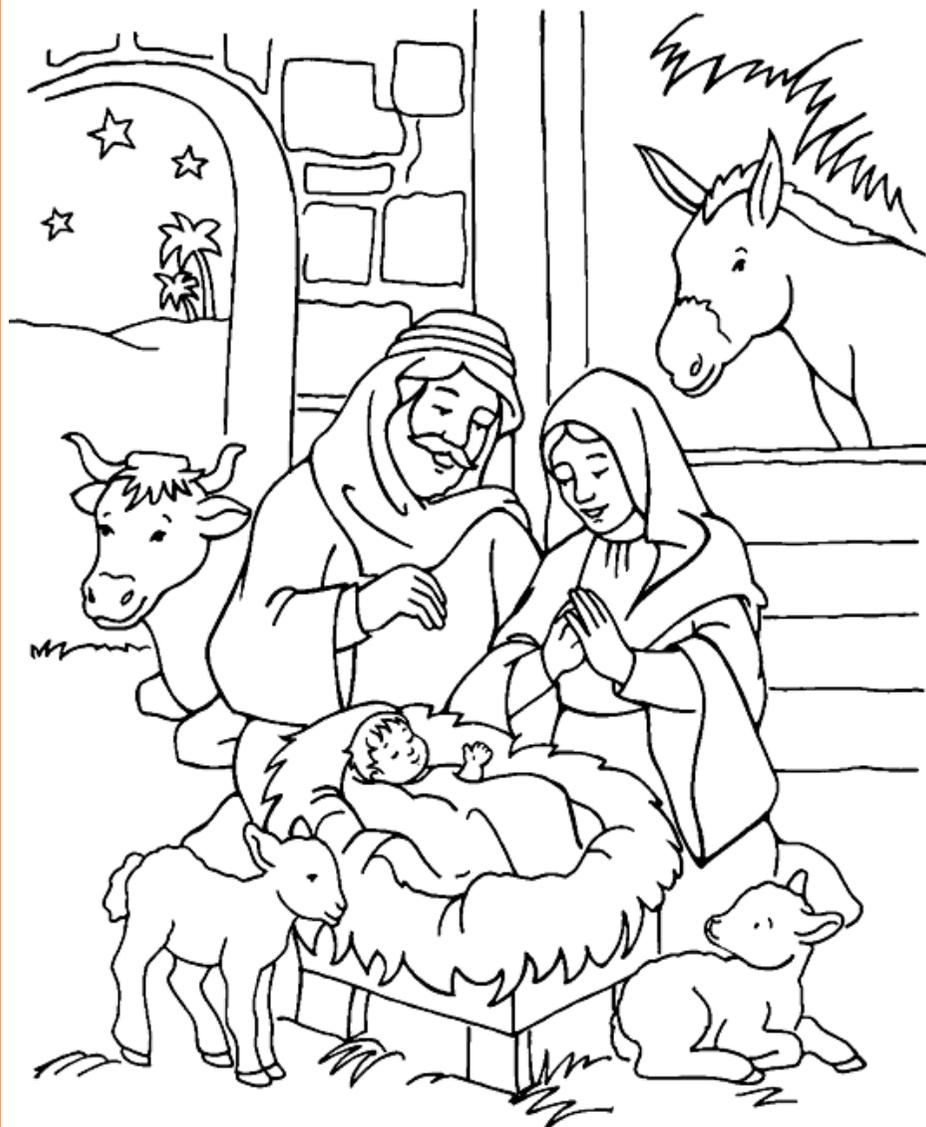


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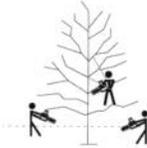
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Village News

Great Totham Parish Council Report

November



Updates regarding coronavirus continue to proliferate. The Leader of Essex County Council is keen to stress that, although the situation is distressing, the focus is still on supporting businesses and vulnerable people and coming out of the lockdown 'as strongly as possible', adding *'To this end everyone needs to play their part and follow guidance'*.

Nearer to home, Maldon District Council offices remain closed to walk-in visitors, however, residents are able to seek help and support on their website. For those unable to access the internet, the customer service team will take calls from 10am to 4pm each weekday on 01621 854477 and, in exceptional circumstances, face to face appointments may be arranged. Council services, for example refuse collection, are operating normally and information specific to coronavirus can be obtained by phoning 01621 851997. The Council also has a presence on Facebook (@maldondc) and Twitter (@Maldon DC).

Last month, vandalism at 'The Pit' was reported and residents were asked to be vigilant. Thanks to so many people sharing information on Totham Online and, with the support of the school, those responsible have been identified. The nets have now been repaired and are, once more, available for all to enjoy. On the matter of responsibility, may we also request that residents are alert to littering. We were unable to organise the annual litter pick, although many individuals have undertaken their own 'clean-up', for which we thank them. There has recently been a build-up of take-away food and drink wrappers in hedgerows and lay-bys. Dog fouling has also been reported, particularly along the paths around the church. Whether on or off the lead, a dog is the responsibility of the owner or dog-walker.

Unfortunately, the vandalism at the recreation ground was followed by reports of a different type of anti-social behaviour, the breaking and entering of cars parked on driveways and the theft of money and other personal property. CCTV footage was uploaded, from which it would appear there are two people involved, one male, one female. I have been advised that anyone who has been affected should contact the Chelmsford and Maldon Community Policing Team on <https://www.essex.police.uk/advice/advice-and-information/>. There is a tab labelled 'Tell Us About' where reports may be filed. There is also a

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Village News

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designated officer, PC Weavers, who can be contacted at ryan.weavers@essex.police.uk.

Under the new lockdown rules, the annual Remembrance Service was unable to take place at St Peter's Church but, through the not inconsiderable efforts of Bob Tarpey, a recording was made in which the readings were provided by members of the Parish Council and other local residents, and the names of local people killed in the conflict read out. This year, Cllr Atkinson placed a 'Solitary Soldier' on the greens at both Totham North and Totham South and, after the service, the Chairman, Vice Chairman and Clerk, travelling separately, placed wreaths at both sites. In view of many favourable responses to this departure from tradition, it might be repeated in future years although, hopefully, with more residents able to attend.

As a village, we have fared well compared to other areas of the country. In part, this is due to our geographical location; our rural setting and a relatively low density of housing. It is also because, from the outbreak of the virus, individuals and groups stepped in to assist their neighbours and ensure that, as far as possible, the life of the village continued. Sadly, we have not been able to enjoy the large gatherings – the Flower Festival, the village Fete and the public meetings – but ingenious solutions have been employed. VE Day celebrations, although socially distanced, were most entertaining and, in October, Halloween trails were arranged for the children to enjoy. I suspect many technological skills have also been honed!

Traditionally, those attending the December Parish Council meeting, both Councillors and residents, raise a celebratory glass in appreciation of all the contributions made to village life and recognition of another year successfully completed. Let us hope 2021 will see this, and other local events and traditions, safely restored.

Vicky Heaviside

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Village News

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Visit Maldon District Neighbourhood Watch website for up to date local crime reports, non-urgent news and links to the police and national NHW websites: <http://www.maldondistrictnhw.co.uk/index.htm>

For Totham Hill Green, phone Neighbourhood Watch Coordinator, Ian Barratt, on 891949, email: ianpb3@gmail.com

For local crime reports, visit <https://www.police.uk/essex/28/crime/>



Message from the District Councillor



As you may be aware, for the first time in its history, the Council is now being run by the independent group, whose councillors represent all areas of the district, from the furthest north in Great Braxted, through to the Crouch in Burnham. I, along with the other independent councillors, will continue to work hard for your needs in the Totham ward.

We need to ensure that we keep delivering for the community in these very challenging times. The Covid-19 crisis has put financial strain on the Council's resources, which means we have to make careful monetary decisions. We need to ensure that we focus on delivering both the key services and a clear future strategy for the council.

In this very difficult year, a battle against an invisible enemy has been fought, which can bring out the best and worst in people. As members of our community, we can be proud of our villages. I would like to thank everyone who has supported and aided their fellow residents, during these troubling times.

I wish you all a very Merry Christmas, hoping you will be able to have time with your family and those you love. I hope that 2021 will be a very good year for us all and that we can resume some form of normality. Stay safe and well.

Please contact me at any time either by email clr.richard.siddall@maldon.gov.uk or telephone 01621 890809.

Richard

Village News



Great Totham Neighbourhood Plan Consultation 1st December – 31st January 2021

After over three years of work, the Plan is now ready for you to read and comment on. You will by now have received a letter from our Parish Council describing the background, as well as how you can access the Plan and Village Design Statement (VDS). The Plan has a number of policies derived from our 2018 village questionnaire, the September 2019 open weekend and the Housing Needs Survey conducted in November 2019. The results of these surveys and events, plus your comments and ideas, have all been fed into the Plan.

The Village Design Statement (VDS) supports the Plan. It informs the planners on what new houses should look like; size, position, market houses or affordable homes, where they are built and our preferences for hedges, gates and fences.

We urge you to read and tell us what you think. **This really is your last chance to have your say.**

The consultation closes at the end of January 2021. After that, the Plan will be redrafted and your comments incorporated or added to the information pack to be reviewed by a Government Planning Inspector. Providing the Inspector agrees with our findings and consultation processes, the Plan and VDS will go forward to a village referendum. Assuming the referendum supports the Plan, it will carry the same legal weight as Maldon District Council's Local Development Plan.

To have your say, visit:

[https://www.maldon.gov.uk/info/20048/planning_policy/8112/
community_led_planning_and_neighbourhood_plans/5](https://www.maldon.gov.uk/info/20048/planning_policy/8112/community_led_planning_and_neighbourhood_plans/5)

www.greattothamparishcouncil.com

If you can't access the internet, you can borrow paper copies from Clive (Gt Totham North: 891434) or Paul (Gt Totham South / surrounding areas: 891067).



A really big thank you to everyone who has already contributed to our Plan so far, as well as to all who take part in the consultation.

Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

Village News

The 'Virtual' London Marathon 2020

The London Marathon, as with many events this year, fell victim to the coronavirus pandemic disruption. Rearranged from April for Sunday, 4th October, by the summer it was becoming apparent that it would be in "virtual" form with runners being given 24 hours to complete their own 26.2 mile course.

I had never intended to do it. I used to enjoy running but, after having one side of my pelvis removed at the beginning of 2018, I have been left unable to run and actually had to relearn how to walk two years ago on my unsupported leg. My partner, Stu, had signed up to do the marathon in aid of one of the hospitals that looked after me while I was being treated for osteosarcoma. Many of you in the village so kindly sponsored Stu, and we thank all of you for doing this. Stu continued training through the summer for the October marathon, however, in late August, he picked up an injury which prevented him from being able to run. Still keen to go ahead, and having undertaken some lengthy walks during lockdown, we decided that we would both walk it, which also gave me an opportunity to do my bit for the fundraising effort as well.

Waking early on the Sunday morning I heard the rain lashing at the window and the weather app showed there would be heavy rain until 2pm, improving to light rain later. Despite the unappealing prospect of heading out in those conditions, at 7:15am, with dawn breaking and rain pouring down, we set off.

The route was relatively simple. As we live near South Wimbledon station we turned left towards central London along the A24. Almost two hours later we had walked through Tooting, Balham, Clapham, Oval, Elephant and Castle and were in Waterloo. During that time we had only seen a few intrepid marathon runners and dog walkers. The next part of the walk in the south-westerly wind took us across Waterloo bridge and onto the Embankment, through Westminster into Kensington and Chelsea and down the King's Road to Putney Bridge, which was around 15 miles in. Putney was the busiest stretch but the rain was keeping the crowds away. For the final part we were south of the river again, following the Thames from Putney to Barnes, heading towards 20 miles. Energy levels were now low, combined with a challenging long hill up from Barnes Common to Putney Heath and Wimbledon Common. Arriving on Wimbledon Common at 21 miles (often known as the "wall" for marathon runners) meant that those last 5 and a bit miles were tough but the rain began to ease. Just as we headed into Wimbledon village the app notified us that we had finished those 26.2 miles. It had taken us just over 8 hours to complete with a finish time at 3:30pm.

We would like to thank everyone who has sponsored us, it really did get us through and Stu will still be running doing the marathon as he intended in April 2022. For anyone who would like to know more about our marathon in aid of UCH Cancer Fund, please visit Stu's sponsorship page:

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Katrina Hardy-King

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At Maldon & District Citizens Advice, we can help you find a way forward, by giving free, confidential advice in all subject areas.

Consumer

A lot of us have suffered from 'buyer's remorse' but is there anything we can do about it? Unless a shop has its own returns policy, you don't have a right to return an item you bought in a shop just because you have changed your mind, but if you bought something on-line, with just a few exceptions, you have an automatic 14-day 'cooling-off period'. The cooling-off period starts the day after you receive your order, and there doesn't need to be anything wrong with the item for you to get a refund. Examples of exceptions to this rule include items that are made to measure or bespoke, or items that you bought from a private individual rather than a business.

There is more information about your consumer rights on our website, including what to do when you are refused a refund and template letters for making a complaint.

Case Study:

I bought my mum a Christmas present from an online store. I paid extra for next day delivery, but it hasn't arrived. I tried to contact the delivery company, but wasn't able to speak with anyone. The online store has said my parcel is with the delivery company and should arrive soon. If it doesn't arrive soon, I won't be able to send it to Spain in time for Christmas. What can I do?

You paid for next day delivery so your goods should be delivered on the agreed date. Because you bought something from a business to be delivered to you, it's the seller's responsibility to make sure the item is delivered. As the seller used a courier, they should chase the courier to find out what's happened to your order - it's not your responsibility.

If you want the item:

Under the Consumer Rights Act, you can ask the seller to deliver the item again if the item wasn't delivered by the agreed date.

Other steps to take if you want the item could be:

- Cancel your original order and reorder it again from the same or a new online store.
- Check if a local store stocks the item(s).
- Keep trying to contact the delivery company via tracking tools/ phone/email

If you want to cancel your order:

You can cancel and ask for your money back because you haven't received your

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goods on the agreed date. Tell the seller that what has happened to your order is "a breach of contract under the Consumer Rights Act 2015" - as the delivery date was essential and they didn't meet it.

Our website has a great deal of relevant information including:

Home Improvements:

<https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/consumer/getting-home-improvements-done/problem-with-home-improvements/>

Solve an Ongoing Problem:

<https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/consumer/get-more-help/Solve-an-ongoing-consumer-problem/>

Please contact us for advice on any subject by:

- Phoning 01621 875774: leave a message and an adviser will return your call that day; or
- Emailing bureau@maldoncab.cabinet.org.uk

Sally Babbage

Soggy Doggies



Once upon a soggy day,
Betty and Merlin 'go out' no way!
Seeing beautiful Betty on her drive
My old boy would suddenly come alive
Round the village they did pace
Merlin being bossy and Betty with grace
Merlin barked at a lovely calm dog and squirrel
Betty listens on and thinks is he for real!
Homeward bound we did go
Towel rub down
Oh they do love each other so

Lyndsey Phillips

Do You Remember?

It was often said that everyone remembers where they were when they heard the news that President John F Kennedy had been assassinated. This phrase has, to a certain extent, been superseded by a similar question - "do you remember where you were when you heard the news that John Lennon had died?"

I'm afraid I cannot remember where I was when JFK was shot as I was only 21 months old in 1963 but I do remember exactly where I was when I heard about John Lennon. I was at university in Cardiff and was just leaving my flat when another student stopped me and said "have I heard the news?" It was 40 years ago on 8 December 1980 when, at around 5pm New York time, an obsessed fan stopped John Lennon outside the Dakota Building in New York and had asked him for his autograph. John signed a copy of his latest album, *Double Fantasy*, for him then left to go to a recording session with his wife, Yoko Ono.

The man who had asked for the autograph was Mark David Chapman who had planned to kill John Lennon. At the time his reasons were that he was upset by some of John Lennon's lyrics and also his remark that The Beatles were "more popular than Jesus". This remark however was just a throwaway comment made by a cheeky John Lennon trying to wind people up. It was also made way back on 4 March 1966 in an article in the *London Evening Standard*. Mark Chapman also said that he was inspired by Holden Caulfield; a fictional character in the novel by JD Salinger called *The Catcher in the Rye*. In fact more recently, Chapman stated that he murdered John Lennon purely for self-glory!

In 1980, Mark Chapman was a 25-year old former security guard from Hawaii. He had waited most of the day to meet John Lennon who was apparently very friendly towards Chapman and, having signed his album, asked him if he wanted anything else. A local photographer, Paul Goresh, took a picture of the meeting. Chapman then hung around the archway entrance of the Dakota Building until Lennon returned from his recording session. At 10.50pm, Lennon and Yoko arrived back and were walking towards the entrance when Chapman fired 5 hollow-point bullets at his back from a Charter Arms .38 Special revolver, of which four hit Lennon. He was tended to immediately by the concierge and help was called. The police, realising just how bad the situation was, decided that waiting for an ambulance would take too long, so they rushed Lennon to

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the hospital in their squad car. Unfortunately the wounds were too severe and John Lennon passed away on his journey to the Roosevelt Hospital.

Strangely, Mark Chapman merely took off his jacket and waited to be arrested. Psychiatrists later attempted to get Mark Chapman to plead insanity as they described him as a 'borderline psychotic'. However, Chapman refused and pleaded guilty to murder. At his trial, he was sentenced to serve 20 years to life and has since been refused parole. He remains in prison.

Whatever you may have thought about John Lennon and his (sometimes controversial) views and politics, there is no doubt that he was an amazing songwriter and lyricist and his songs, with or without Paul McCartney, formed the basis of much of the following trends in popular music. Who knows what he would have gone on to achieve.

Chris Bingham

Great Totham Evening WI



Our committee has held two meetings on Zoom, which have proved very successful. This is thanks, in the main, to the expertise of Tina Finch who has taken the time to talk us through all the technicalities with great patience. Seeing each other face to face has been a much better experience than e-mailing.

Following the success of our first goody bag, we have been working hard to provide our members with a festive one with a Christmas theme. At the time of writing, we are also hoping to try Zooming with more of our members for our main Christmas meeting.

We are still unsure as to how soon we may be able to have a meeting in the village hall, but, with more encouraging news on the vaccine front, we hope it won't be too long before we can!

For more information please consult our website:

www.greattothamwi.weebly.com

or email greattothamwi@gmail.com

Sue Pulford

Children's Quiz Answers

1. Mince Pie
2. Boxing day
3. A Christmas quacker (ah! ah!)
4. Ebenezer Scrooge
5. A star
6. Christmas crackers
7. The Simpsons
8. To an Elf Farm
9. Christmas stocking
10. Tinsel
11. Advent calendar
12. Christmas tree (displayed in Trafalgar Square)



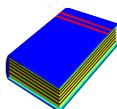
Covers created by
Purple Rabbit Designer



Rotas	Church Flowers	Church Cleaning
6 December	Mary Owers	Mr and Mrs Campbell
13 December	Christmas	-
20 December	Christmas	Mr and Mrs Kemsley
27 December	Christmas	-
3 January	Jenny Barclay	Jenny Barclay/Anja Schmalfluss
10 January	Lucy Bettley	-
17 January	Karin Mann	Mr and Mrs Stebbing
24 January	Melanie Scholey	-
31 January	Ian Nicholson	Mrs Potter and Mrs Thake

Church Kitchen Cleaning December: Sandra Smith
January: Philippa Hardy-King

Wickham Bishops Library



Monday	2pm-6pm
Wednesday	2pm-6pm
Saturday	9am-1pm

COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES (See page 3 for church activities)

Rainbows, Brownies, Guides, Rangers		www.girlguiding.org.uk	
Scouts, Cubs, Beavers at Prances	Brenda Heal	bjheal@btinternet.com	
Great Totham Cricket Club Colts	Paul Marks	07709 793958	
Nursery Group Village Hall	Tracey Bezant	07960 947931	
Edward Bear Club (Toddler Group)	St Peter's Church	Sue Godsmark	891513
Gardening Club	Village Hall	Fred Steptoe	891808
W.I. GT Evening 2nd Thurs. 8pm	Village Hall	Sue Pulford	892063
GT & WB last Thurs. 2pm	St.B Church Hall	Di Mellor	892247
St Peter's Lunch Club Tues.	Honywood Hall	Sheila Allen	892334
Day Centre Weds.	URC	Jean Johnstone	892293
Carpet Bowls Tue & Thur 7.30pm	Village Hall	Jean Cloughton	892286
Tollesbury Table Tennis Club	T'bury Parish Rms	Paul Freeman	862510
	mobile 07855 204505, email: freemans21@hotmail.com		
Maldon Croquet Club	Forrester Park	Philippa Hardy-King	892387
Wickham Bishops Drama Club		www.wickhambishopsdrama.co.uk	
Great Totham Community Choir	Colin Heaviside	heavicol@aol.com	893067
Knit and Natter, Friday Mornings	Sandra Smith (Honywood Hall)		893153

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS:

Honywood Hall Hire		Karin Mann	891215
St Peter's Church Extension Hire		Karin Mann	891215
Village Hall hire	Sue Pulford		892063
URC hall hire	Janet Davies		819419
St Peter's—Interment of Ashes and Iron Crosses		Chris Munton	891817
Great Totham Parish Council	Clerk: Clive Potter		891474
District Councillors	John Keyes		891388
	Richard Siddall	07979 853947 /	890809
County Councillor	Mark Durham	01245 227249	mobile: 07850 967239
Great Totham Primary School			891091
Maldon District Council			854477
Maldon Citizens Advice Bureau			875774
Police Community Support Officer			101
Water			01245 491234
Electricity			0845 6014516
Frank (Drugs Helpline) (free)			0300 1236600
Childline Helpline for children			0800 1111 (free)
Maldon District Health / Wellbeing advice		emily.fallon@maldon.gov.uk	
NSPCC 24 hr helpline for children			0800 800 500 (free)
The Samaritans			116 123
DIAL UK (Disability Information & Advice Line)			www.dialuk.info
Church of England, St. Peter's	Rev'd Sue Godsmark		891513
Totham Barn Free Evangelical Church	Elder Bob Bell		893085
United Reformed Church	Vacant		
Wickham Bishops Church	Rev'd Hilary Le Sève		892867
Maldon Methodist Church Office	Rev'd Clifford Newman		853423
Maldon Roman Catholic Church	Parish Priest - Fr. James Joseph		852259
Society of Friends (Quakers)	Clerk to the meeting - Sue Smith		854056
Salvation Army			853942
Christian Growth Centre (CGC), Maldon	Rob & Jeannie Saggs Pastors		855855

Consultation on the Great Totham Neighbourhood Plan and Village Design Statement opens 1st December 2020 – 31st January 2021

To have your say, visit

https://www.maldon.gov.uk/info/20048/planning_policy/8112/community_led_planning_and_neighbourhood_plans/5

or

www.greattothamparishcouncil.com

See page 39 for full details.



Great Totham Parish Magazine is published by The Parish Church to help everyone feel part of the community, recognising people's achievements and the value of community activity, and to encourage support of local businesses. Please contribute by sending us your good news, suggestions and details of any events and advertisements for the February edition by 3rd January.

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