

WHEATLAND NEWS

December 2021 and January 2022



'It is more blessed to give than to receive'

Acts 20:35

***News from the Diocese of Hereford and the 17
Parishes around Stottesdon, Ditton Priors and
Highley***

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Editorial

First and foremost – Christmas greetings to all WN readers! May you all have a warm and peaceful time over the festive season!

There is no Wheatland diary this month – everyone is properly focused on events in or around the churches, and it has been wonderful to put together the long lists of services in this magazine. Such a contrast to last year. As we go to press, though, news has come through of the Omicron variant, and the reintroduction of requirements to wear masks to protect ourselves and others. David Poyner's article on page 18 about the Booster Jabs is very timely: he explains so simply why they are important. Hope and prayer are vital, but the practical actions of wearing masks, distancing, and getting the jab if we can are also part of our armoury against losing the simple joys of family and social life.

So this is a BUMPER edition of Wheatland News! The committee, chaired by the Revd Mark Daborn, agreed that we should concentrate on delivering a good read over Christmas and New Year, rather than rushing to produce a separate January edition. And at the end of January it will be good to have a packed Wheatland diary for the February edition!

Another balancing act is the question of making WN available as hard copy or the online version: how do we make it easily accessible to everyone, whilst recognising the environmental impact of printing – whether by our professional printer, or on our own machines at home. Until Covid, WN was all black and white hard copy. Since March 2020 we have been only online and in colour, hoping that some distribution at least was taking place safely at local level. This December / January edition is being printed in colour for those who want or need to read it in that way, and will continue to be online for everyone.

So – Happy Christmas everyone!

Ed

February edition deadline!

Please would you send all contributions for the FEBRUARY 2022 edition of WN to your contact, as below, no later than TUESDAY 25th JANUARY.

Brown Clee and Ditton Priors	Jutta Langham, 01746-712551 - rll.langham@btinternet.com
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Chetton	Pam Downing - pamdowning61@gmail.com
Highley	Revd Val Smith – revval14@gmail.com
Glazeley & Deuxhill	Marion Corfield - marion.corfield@talktalk.net Revd David Poyner - D.R.Poyner@aston.ac.uk
Billingsley	Revd David Poyner - D.R.Poyner@aston.ac.uk
Stottesdon Benefice – Farlow, Sidbury, Middleton Scriven, Cleeton St Mary, and Silvington	Chris Tibbits - Chris@stottystores.co.uk

Diocese of Hereford



December message from the Bishop of Hereford

In his letter to the Philippians, St Paul said that Jesus Christ was God in very nature.

In the recent COP26 Conference run-up, some of us have been planting trees as part of the Queen's Green Canopy Project. It is a fitting way of marking Her Majesty's 70years as sovereign, and the tree-planting project acquires an urgent relevance in the light of the climate crisis. Gardeners will have collected seeds to multiply their stocks. It is a longer-term view and cheaper way than buying established plants from our suppliers.

Seeds are remarkable things. There is little correlation between their size and the size of the plant that emerges. What is more extraordinary is that the complete blueprint for the established plant resides in such a small package. Every detail is written in the DNA, ready to emerge when the conditions are suitable for germination. The seed is as much the plant as the tree is, despite their very different appearance.

All metaphors have their limitations. But when we contemplate the events of Christmas and the reality of God's incarnation in Christ, the seed to plant metaphor can be helpful. In his letter to the Philippians, St Paul said that Jesus Christ was God in very nature. In Jesus, God reveals himself not just as the creative hand behind all that is but also as personal. The human (albeit extraordinary) attributes of personality we see in Jesus are the characteristics of God himself. Paul is essentially saying that because Jesus was God, he took the lowest place, showed humility, and gave himself up for others. Appearing in human form, born as the infant Jesus was not a disguise for God, but God in his very essence.

The humble familiarity of the Christmas story reminds us that we can know God. The good news is that knowledge can be transformative as we enter into a relationship with him. I pray that we all enter afresh into this reality and prepare to celebrate his coming to us.

+ Richard



The Bishop's weekly video message

In his message for 25th November, Bishop Richard talks about Advent hope, and the language of the spiritual world.

This message, and all his earlier messages can be seen, and read:

On the [Diocese of Hereford website](#), together with a full transcript of his message

And on [YouTube](#)

Information for all Parishes and their Churchwardens

Message from the Rural Dean



To celebrate the Wheatland News coming back into print again this is a bumper issue for December and January. We hope to find the best way of getting this publication to everybody and that will mean producing paper copies for those who need them. But we do urge anyone who can get hold of this on a computer (or other techno-device!) to continue to do so. Herford Diocese is an Eco-diocese, and many of our seventeen churches are registered as Eco-churches, so we must save on paper and printing where we can to show a good example of living well with the world around us. It is also, of course, much cheaper sending and receiving this by e-mail.

If you would like to go on the email list for distribution, please get in touch with your local Wheatland News contact – you will find all their names and e-mail addresses in this edition.

Finally, as we continue to go through the processes of finding the right parish priest for those churches in vacancy, do please feel free to contact me if you need to. My job is to have pastoral oversight of parishes in vacancy and I take that as a very real responsibility – and privilege!

May you have a joyous and blessed Christmas season, and God's peace as we come into the New Year.

Mark Daborn, Rural Dean

Readings for December 2021

December 5th – Second Sunday in Advent (Purple)

Malachi 3:1-4; Benedictus; Philippians 1:3-11; Luke 3:1-6

December 12th – Third Sunday in Advent (Purple)

Zephaniah 3:14-end; Psalm 146:4-end; Philippians 4:4-7; Luke 3:7-18

December 19th – Fourth Sunday in Advent (Purple)

Micah 5:2-5a; Magnificat; Hebrews 10:5-10; Luke 1:39-45

December 25th – Christmas Day (White)

Isaiah 52:7-10; Psalm 98; Hebrews 1:1-4; John 1:1-14

December 26th – The Feast of Stephen (Red)

2 Chronicles 24:20-22; Psalm 119:161-168; Acts 7:51-end; Matthew 10:17-22

Readings for January 2022

January 2nd – The Second Sunday of Christmas (White)

Jeremiah 31:7-14; Psalm 147:13-end; Ephesians 1:3-14; John 1:10-18

January 9th – The Baptism of Christ (First of Epiphany) (White)

Isaiah 43:1-7; Psalm 29; Acts 8:14-17; Luke 3:15-17, 21-22

January 16th – Second of Epiphany

Isaiah 62:1-5; Psalm 36:5-10; I Corinthians 12:1-11; John 2:1-11

January 23rd – Third of Epiphany

Nehemiah 8:1-3, 5-6, 8-10; Psalm 19; I Corinthians 12:12-31a; Luke 4:14-21

January 30th – Fourth of Epiphany

Ezekiel 43:27-44:4; Psalm 48; I Corinthians 13; Luke 2:22-40

Saint of the Month – Saint Stephen

By the Revd Mark Daborn

‘Good King Wenceslas looked out on the feast of Stephen...’

December 26th, the second day of Christmas (turtle doves, as you will recall) and Boxing Day (when the Christmas Box was opened to be shared with the poor) is also the feast of Stephen. Wenceslas, incidentally, was king of Bohemia in the early years of the tenth century, which is why there is a Wenceslas Square in Prague.

All of this you know, of course. But what about Stephen?

Stephen was one the first seven deacons to be appointed in the early Christian Church in Jerusalem. The disciples were having trouble maintaining their tasks of preaching and evangelism in the face of increasing administration (some things don't change!) required by the ever-growing community of Christians. They appointed seven deacons to help with the admin – deacon comes from a Greek word meaning servant. Stephen was one of these.

But Stephen did not confine himself to administration; he also preached, and disputed with the learned in Jerusalem on the truth of the Christian gospel – that Jesus of Nazareth was the Christ, God's chosen one, had suffered on the cross for the forgiveness of the sins of humanity, and had risen on the third day as evidence of his lordship of the world.

Stephen was so good at this that he ran into trouble with the authorities, and was taken before the Sanhedrin, the council of the High Priests. He was accused of blasphemy, provided the evidence by his own words in court (just as Jesus had done) and was rushed out by a furious mob, taken outside the city, and stoned to death. His last words were of forgiveness for those who put him to death (again, just as Jesus had done).

This story, apart from being the first Christian martyrdom, is also the first appearance of a young man named Saul of Tarsus in the story of the early Church. This was the man who, after a dramatic revelation of the risen Christ on the road to Damascus, turned from being an avid persecutor of Christians to become the man we know as St. Paul, the Apostle to the Gentiles.

This year, the Feast of Stephen falls on a Sunday, so there will be services in our churches to mark the occasion – an occasion which often gets forgotten in the Christmas Festivities!

MD



The United Benefice of Brown Clee

Rector: vacant <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Please contact your Churchwarden, as below. In emergency, contact Revd Mark Daborn, Rural Dean, on 01746-718127</i></p>		
St John the Baptist, Ditton Priors, and Holy Trinity, Wheathill & Loughton CHURCHWARDENS Carole Smith: 01746-712474 Mark Smith: 01746-712394		St Michael & All Angels, Aston Botterell CHURCHWARDEN Anne Preece: 01746-787237
St Giles, Chetton CHURCHWARDEN Sheila Millington: 01746-789443	SS Peter & Paul, Cleobury North CHURCHWARDENS Mike Bradbury: 01746-787676 Jane Bufton: 01746-787298	All Saints, Neenton CHURCHWARDEN Bobbie Jarvis: 01746-787093

Brown Clee Group News

Christmas Services in Brown Clee Churches

We would love to see you at our Christmas Services.

Children especially enjoy our Crib service.

All are welcome.

Sunday December 5th 11:30 Aston Botterell - Carol Service

Saturday December 11th 18:00 Cleobury North - Carol Service

Sunday December 12th 16:00 Chetton - Carol Service

Saturday December 18th 18:00 Loughton - Carol Service

Sunday December 19th 11:30 Ditton Priors - Carol Service

Sunday December 19th 16:00 Neenton - Carol Service

Friday December 24th: Christmas Eve

16:00 Ditton Priors - Crib Service

19:00 Wheathill - Christmas Eve Communion with Carols

23:00 Ditton Priors - Christmas Eve Communion with Carols

Saturday December 25th: Christmas Day 10:00 Chetton - Christmas Day Communion

Toys are welcome!

We are asking those who wish to come to church without face coverings to sit in the front pews, and to wear coverings to enter and leave the building.

Ditton Priors News

Marjorie Jones writes:

Carol Service - A service of carols will take place on Sunday 19th December at 11.30 am. We shall be joined by the Group Choir.

Let's Go to Bethlehem! - Our Crib Service will be on Christmas Eve, Friday 24th December at 4pm. Hear the Christmas Story and then go home and prepare for Father Christmas.

Christmas Communion – Friday 24th December at 11pm.

Sunday December 26th - Communion Group service at 10.00 am.

Wherever you may be celebrating we wish you all A HAPPY AND BLESSED CHRISTMAS.

From the Register

Interment of ashes:

Friday 5th November Mrs. Frances Gallagher (nee Pugh).

Sunday 7th November Mrs. Sylvia Hodnett.

Cleaning Rota for December:

- Sunday 5th Mr & Mrs Dennis Griffiths
- Sunday 12th Mr & Mrs John Ballard
- Sunday 19th Mr & Mrs Tony Brown
- Sunday 26th Mrs Jutta Langham & Mr Steve Allen
- Sunday 2nd January Mrs Carole Hancox & Mrs Maureen Lloyd

St John the Baptist 100 Club results for November

- £ 20 Mary Rowlands
- £ 10 George Parker
- £ 5 each to: Pam Gennard, Elizabeth Mathews, Pam Thomson.



A Church Near You

Don't forget to look at the Benefice website – A Church Near You, on the [Ditton Priors Church and Benefice Information Hub](#) page, to see what is going on in all the parishes too.

Wheathill & Loughton News

Services at Wheathill and Loughton

We have no news, at time of going to press, apart from the Christmas Service list on page 7. Please contact the Ditton Priors Churchwardens, or look on the **Benefice website**, for times of services at [Wheathill](#) and [Loughton](#), especially in January.

Burwarton and Cleobury North News

Church Services

We have no news, at time of going to press, apart from the Christmas Service list on page 7. Please contact your Churchwardens, or look on the [Cleobury North](#) page of the Benefice website, for times of services, especially in January.

Cleobury North & District Village Hall

CNVH remains open and available for hire, subject to any Government guidelines and Covid restrictions. For enquiries about booking and using the hall, please call 01746-787093.

Aston Botterell News

Church Services

Christmas services are shown on the Benefice list on page 7. Please look on the [Aston Botterell](#) page of the Benefice website, or contact your Churchwarden, for services in January.

Daddy's Hat Concerts

A report of the concert held on 30 October, and more information about Daddy's Hat, is on page 12.

Chetton News

From Pam Downing

St Giles's Church and Parish

Services for December

- ✝ Sunday 12th, 4.00pm, Carol Service
- ✝ Christmas Day, 25th, 10.00am Holy Communion.

For **January services**, please contact your Churchwarden, or look on the [Chetton](#) page of the Benefice website.

Flowers and cleaning

- Volunteers welcome!!

Hundred Club for November

- £15.00 Hugo and Flossie – no 8, £10.00 Michael Millington – no 31.

Yet another year drawing to a close, but we still have celebrations and get-togethers to look forward to a d much to be thankful for. Thank you to all our helpers and supporters for their time and efforts in 2021: we couldn't manage without you. All the flower and cleaning ladies (gentlemen are always welcome!), Joe for his tireless work in the Churchyard and Phil, Charles and Lisa for always being on hand and quietly looking after everything. Anyone who has helped in any way to keep our lovely Church and Churchyard tidy.

A special thank you to Mike, not only for bringing the choir and music to our services, but also for the many jobs that he does for the benefice.

We have our **annual Christmas meal** back on track after missing it last year. This will be at Church House on Friday December 10th, 7.30pm, as usual with Charles and Lisa hosting again. This is always a great evening with a three-course meal plus wine, finishing off with Carols. It's not too late to book so do contact Sheila or Lisa if you wish to join us.

Our Carol service is on Sunday 12th December, 4pm. We look forward to seeing you there. We welcome anyone who would like to help decorate the Church for Christmas.

Chetton Village Hall

Thank you to everyone who has supported the hall. It is heartening that so many have felt confident to come along in these very uncertain times and join the various activities.

We have started a **craft afternoon** that takes place once a fortnight, dates for December will be 2nd and 16th, 2-4pm. Come along and bring something you would like to work on or maybe try something new. There is no charge, just a donation of £1.00 for tea or coffee.

Exercise Classes

Pam's Pilates 9.30 am on Monday.

Chetton Active Friends, 2pm on Monday.

Zumba with a period of mindfulness, 2.30 pm on Tuesday

For any information please telephone Sue on 789239.



Wishing you all a very Merry Christmas and Happy New Year

From the Editor, Pam Downing

Neenton News

Bobbie Jarvis writes:

All Saints' service in December and January

✝ Carol Service – 19th December at 4.00pm

✝ Sunday 16th January at 11.30 am

The Carol Service is on Sunday 19th December at 4pm followed by mulled wine and mince pies in The Pheasant. All are welcome to join in the traditional "set-the-scene" for the festivities in the week to follow.

Our services for the foreseeable future will be taken by visiting vicars. Please contact Bobbie Jarvis, Churchwarden for details or if you are in need of a visit from a member of the clergy. 01746 787093.

Thank you

.....To all the people who have helped to clean and prepare the church and churchyard during the year.

Remembrance

There was no official service on 11th November in the church, but the great grand-daughter of Henry Yapp visited and laid a poppy cross on the altar in memory of her great-grandfather. The sun shone through onto the stained-glass window making this a very moving and emotional moment. We remembered Henry, Frank Amies, and John Leath, the three young men who lost their lives during the 1914/18 war.

The history of the rebuilding of the church and the memorial window remains on show at the back of the church. Contact Bobbie Jarvis if you would like to visit the church.

Firework Display

Neenton came alive again on the evening of Thursday 4th November when a stunning display of fireworks lit up the sky and could be seen by many for miles around. The Pheasant opened its doors and the crowds of people of all ages enjoyed the food on offer, chilli and rice, stew and dumplings, BBQ sausages and beefburgers. Feedback has said it was the best evening ever!

A huge thankyou to Ian for setting up the scene, firing up the fireworks and making sure the wood was available for the cauldrons! We missed Mark stoking up the fires but guess he watched from his house as the spectacular display took place?? And many thanks to Mark, Sarah and Andy and all the staff at The Pheasant for maintaining a safe and enjoyable evening and to Alan and Liz who served the delicious BBQ food.

Little Explorers Christmas Fair – 27th November

Wende Lloyd writes:

We have had a very successful Christmas Fair, especially as I didn't think we would due to the weather conditions, however as the morning went on the hall filled with people and a wonderful time was had. When the money is counted we will let you know the total raised.

The Pheasant at Neenton.

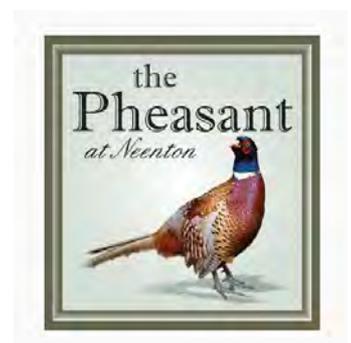
Opening times:

December - Wednesday to Sunday – our Festive Menu starts 1st December.

New Year's Day – 1st January 2022 – Live music - Innocent Criminals – 5pm.

To discuss times and your requirements please email

info@pheasantatneenton.co.uk, telephone 01746-787955 or book direct on the website.



Please note – we shall be closed from Monday 3rd January until Wednesday 12th January 2022

We wish all our customers a very Merry Christmas and A Happy New Year

Mark, Sarah and The Team

Daddy's Hat Music and Poetry

Daddy's Hat – Sally's Daddy's hat, to be precise - a new and very local initiative, spearheaded by a group of



churchwardens and friends from across the area, including such familiar names as Jim Hurford, Ruby Edwards, Sally Russell, and Anne Preece to name but a few, whose shared vision is to unite performance arts and musical souls in the perfect acoustics and beautiful surroundings of our ancient Wheatland churches.

The inaugural Daddy's Hat concert, entitled "Swans' Wings under Yew", took place on Saturday 30 October. The artists each chose their own short programmes to play and sing – but the themes of love, joy, grief and bereavement melded into an extraordinary whole that resonated strongly with their audiences.

The original plan was for the audience to visit three separate venues, finishing at Loughton

Church, but a failure of the floor meant that the church could not be open. So, on a beautiful, clear autumn afternoon, people came first to Wheathill Church, where Nagisa Munday gave a melodious, impromptu, al fresco performance on her recorder. Then, after an introduction by Nagisa's husband, the Revd Clive Munday, Malcolm and Mandy (on guitar) sang a short medley of folk songs.



The Wheathill audience of 12 then upped sticks and were thankful for help in navigating to Aston Botterell Church. Here, we joined another 12 already assembled, for more beautiful music. Ragni played acoustic guitar and, with husband Bob, sang folk well-loved folk songs. Suzanne, accompanied by Richard Fox, then sang four operatic love songs, and finally Patricia and John of Belaria, also accompanied by Richard, sang of love, grief and bereavement.

Donations were invited only to cover the cost of heating the churches, but a small surplus resulted which was carried forward to the next events. Warm mulled wine, delicious nibbles and lots of chat with friends old and new brought the afternoon to a close.



Daddy's Hat – dates for your diary

The Daddy's Hat group hope that you will want to come and join them at their future events!

5th December at Aston Botterell Church

"Advent Adventure", with Ragni and Bob, Suzanne, and Malcolm and Mandy, will be a lunchtime event at Aston Botterell church. The Aston Botterell Carol Service will start at 11.30am, and be followed after only a very short break by the concert and a free buffet lunch!! Please let Sally Russell on 01746-787419 know if you are coming, simply so that she can arrange the catering.

February – At a "Wheatland News" church, details to be announced.

"Valentine's Musical Afternoon" – full details will be announced in January, on posters and in the FEBRUARY edition of WHEATLAND NEWS. Please contact Sally Russell on 01746-787419 nearer the time to confirm numbers and buy your ticket.



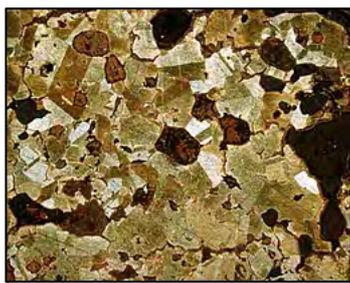
Gold, Frankincense, and Myrrh

Molecules for Epiphany, from David Poyner

As Matthew's Gospel tells us, the Wise Men brought Jesus gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh. As they were wise, they doubtless conducted risk assessments on all three of these to comply with the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH) regulations and so would have been able to brief Mary and Joseph on their chemical properties. But since Matthew didn't bother to record that, I have reconstructed the notes they no doubt handed over.

Gold

This is a metallic element (in simple language, a metal), long valued for its physical properties and relative rarity, hence its value in jewellery. Chemically it is rather unreactive; most metals react chemically with



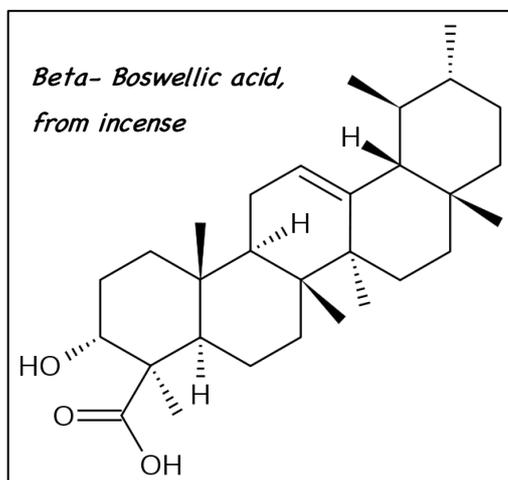
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oxygen so they are found in nature chemically combined with this substance to form oxides. However, the structure of the individual gold atom means that it is very stable; as a result, when it occurs as an ore in rocks, it is usually in the form of pure gold particles. All atoms have positively charged particles called protons at their centre (the nucleus) surrounded by negatively charged particles called electrons, which orbit the nucleus. In metals such as gold, some of the electrons in the outer orbitals can be "shared" between adjacent atoms; this forms the glue that keeps the atoms together. In gold, this electronic glue is particularly strong; it means that gold can be beaten into

sheets only 1 atom thick, or wired only 1 atom wide, without breaking. The goldsmith uses this to make very fine gold wires and sheets. The way these outer electrons interact with light waves results in the yellow colour of gold. The very thinnest sheets of gold are transparent but absorb harmful infra-red light; this makes them useful in visors.

Frankincense

This is a resin extracted from *Boswellia* trees. The main source was from the Arabian Peninsula; it was traded with spices into the Near East and Europe. When burnt, it produces a white, pungent smoke with mildly hallucinogenic properties. The active ingredients are a group of "aromatic" oils such as the forms of Boswellic acid (Fig 1); these are vapourised when the incense is burnt, enter the body via the nose and then are carried in the blood to the brain. As they are oils, they can then dissolve in the outer coverings of nerve cells (the cell membranes) and interact with the proteins in the membranes that allow charged atoms (ions) to enter or leave the cells. It is these charged atoms that allow nerve cells to conduct electricity;

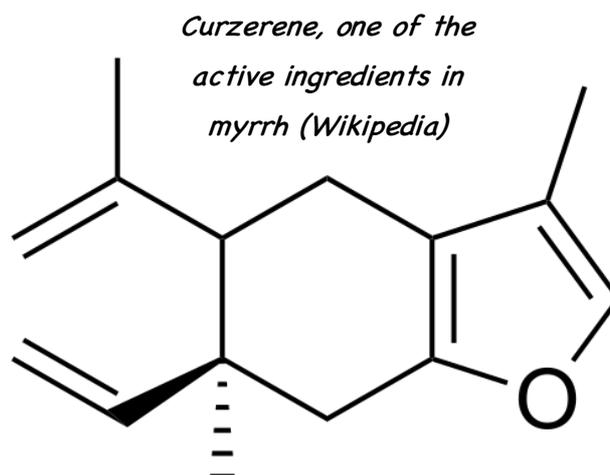


by interacting with the proteins that control the movement of the atoms, the electrical properties of the nerve cells themselves are changed. As a result, the nerves change their behaviour and so the brain itself begins to work in a slightly different way. Not that any of this would have concerned the priests who burnt incense in shrines in Biblical times; just as in modern worship, it would have been the clouds of white smoke ascending up with their prayers that would have had symbolic value. Possibly the smoke may also have had added value in the days before personal deodorants... The smoke also contains a cocktail of chemicals similar to those found in cigarette smoke, leading some to be concerned about the health effects of excessive incense burning.

Myrrh

Myrrh is another tree-derived resin, this time from *Commiphora*. The main ingredients are furanoeudesma-1,3-diene and Curzerene (Fig 2); like Boswellic acid, these are also oily substances. In these cases, the compound can activate the same proteins in the brain as morphine uses to deaden pain, thus it can act as an analgesic.

Myrrh was used historically in medicines; it also has antiseptic properties. The ability to kill microbes may be one of the reasons why it was also used by embalmers, to stop the decay of dead bodies. The name "myrrh", comes from a root meaning "bitter", hence the "bitter perfume" of "We three kings".



DRP

[Happy memories of my childhood – my grandfather was a great believer in the pain-killing properties of myrrh, and the smell and taste of it stays with me pleasantly even now. Thank you David – Ed]

Severn Valley Group of Parishes

Rector: Revd Mike Harris The Rectory, Highley, Day off – THURSDAY	Revd David Poyner, Curate Tel 01562 68638 (home) or 0121 204 3997 (work); email D.R.Poyner@aston.ac.uk
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St Mary, Billingsley CHURCHWARDEN Vacant	St Peter, Chelmarsh CHURCHWARDEN Derek Arnold: 07956-844854	St Bartholomew, Glazeley CHURCHWARDENS Vacant
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Benefice news and services

Church services for December and January:

Sunday December 5th	10:00am	Holy Communion	Highley
Sunday December 12th	11:00am	Group Service	Highley
Wednesday December 15th	7:00pm	Carol Service	St Mary's Highley
Saturday December 18th	4:00pm	Crib Service	Chelmarsh
Sunday December 19th	10:00am	Christmas Communion and Carols	Glazeley
	7:00pm	Carols	Chelmarsh
Monday December 20th	7.00pm	Carols	Billingsley – Lincoln Fields
Friday December 24th - Christmas Eve	4:00pm	Crib Service	Highley
	11.00pm	Communion	Highley
Saturday December 25th - Christmas Day	?	Christmas Day Family Service	Highley
	10:00am	Christmas Communion	Chelmarsh
	10:00am	Christmas Communion	Billingsley
Sunday January 2nd	10:00am	Holy Communion	Highley
Sunday January 9th	10:00am	Holy Communion	Chelmarsh
	11:00am	Family Worship	Highley
Sunday January 16th	10:00am	Holy Communion	Glazeley
Sunday January 23rd	08:00am	Holy Communion	Billingsley
	10:00am	Morning Prayer	Chelmarsh
	11:00am	Family Worship	Highley
Sunday January 30th	10:00am	Benefice Service – Holy Communion led by Mark Daborn	Chelmarsh

Glazeley

The Revd David Poyner and Marion Corfield write:

We would like to welcome our new neighbours, Andrew and Laura Jones and their daughter, who have just moved into The Old Rectory next to the church. It was lovely to introduce them to some of the congregation at the Remembrance Service at the Memorial which was very well attended and led by Richard Laws. I should apologise to all who expected a service in church rather than just the act of remembrance at the War Memorial; this was an oversight on my part and nothing to do with Richard. The names of the men who died in WW1 and WW2 were read out by Eileen Reynolds and also the five men who sadly died when their aircraft crashed at Eudon Mill.

WE WILL REMEMBER THEM....

We remember, too, David Arnold, our architect, who recently lost his father.

I am delighted that we have resumed the monthly breakfasts at The Down in aid of church funds; these had to be put aside due to Covid. Many thanks to Marion Corfield for organising them again. At the first event on November 20th, we had representatives from Glazeley, Chetton, Middleton Scriven, Billingsley and Chelmarsh; it is great how all the communities come together to support each other and is a wonderful of the rural church in action! We raised **£150** for Glazeley church funds.

In December, our carol service will be on Sunday 19th December at 10am and there will also be Holy Communion for those who wish to take it, but all our welcome, whether communicants or not. The service will be taken by Val and Keith Smith. In January our 10am Holy Communion will be on Sunday 16th January, again at 10am.

David Poyner Tel 01562 68638; email
D.R.Poyner@aston.ac.uk

Marion Corfield - 01746-764585
marion.corfield@talktalk.net

Billingsley News

The Revd David Poyner writes:

At Billingsley, Amanda and Dave Prescott led a short act of Remembrance for the fallen of our parish. A video of this is available on our [Facebook page](#).

Our carol service will take place on Monday 20th December. As last year, we will hold it outdoors in Lincoln Fields, beneath a convenient lamp post, starting at 7pm. Bring a torch and wrap up well...

On Christmas Day we will have a service of words and music for Christmas, starting at 10am.

In January we have an 8.00am Holy Communion scheduled for 23rd January.

The **book exchange** scheme based in church seems to be working well; at least we have a lot of books available for people to take! Please come along and see if there is anything there you would like to read over the winter evenings.

And a reminder that we continue to hold draws for the 100 Club every month; following a recent visit from our architect we aim to use some of the money this has raised to carry out maintenance of the building. This is the first time in five years we have had enough cash to even think about repair work, so we are very grateful for all those who are supporting the 100 Club, it is really making a difference to us!

<https://www.facebook.com/BillingsleyChurch/> , <http://www.stmarys-billingsley.org.uk> , and <https://www.achurchnearyou.com/church/10415/>

David Poyner – Assistant Curate

Tel 01562-68638; email D.R.Poyner@aston.ac.uk

Chelmarsh News

Eleanor Haddon writes:

With the month of December and the start of Advent, comes one of the busiest times of the church's year. Here are the arranged services for this year in Chelmarsh:

Crib Service - Saturday - 18th December at 4pm

This will be a short (approx. half an hour, 40 mins,) interactive service with singing, story reading and carrying figures of people and animals up to the altar. Do bring your children / grandchildren to church to hear and see the Christmas story brought to life with their help to dress the crib and to finish the preparation of the church for Christmas. All welcome!

Carol Service - Sunday 19th December at 7pm

This year we are able to sing without masks as long as we stay 3ft apart for social distancing and we will praise and thank God for His greatest gift of His son Jesus, who brought love into the world. See you all there to share a mince pie and a drink afterwards.

Christmas Morning - Saturday 25th December at 10am

A service of Holy Communion in celebration of Christ's birth.

Group Service - Sunday 12th December at 10am in Highley to which all are invited.

The service has been arranged at the request of the new Archdeacon of Ludlow, Rev. Fiona Gibson, who is keen to familiarise herself with services at all the churches in the Ludlow area. It will be an informal service of Holy Communion and will be a good opportunity to meet Fiona and hear her vision for our area.

Church Decorating for Christmas

Wednesday 15th December at 10.30 approx.

Church Cleaning

Thursday 6th January 2022.



December Molecule of the Month – the Covid Booster Jab

By David Poyner

As I write, Covid is back.

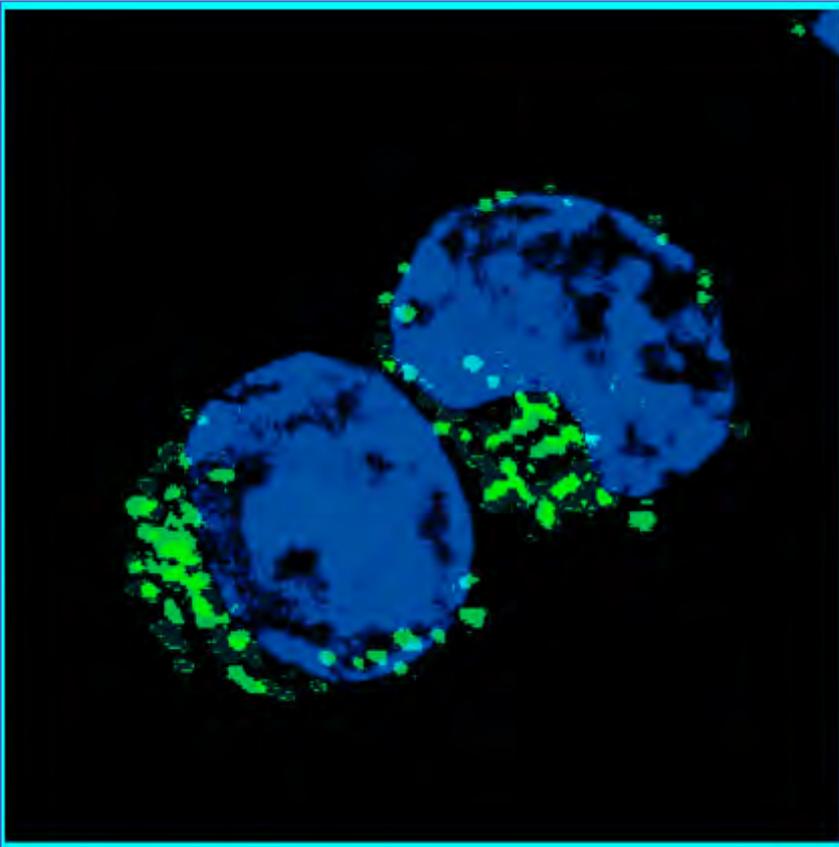
I currently know more people who have the infection than at any time since it started.

But, whilst they are experiencing the symptoms of a nasty cough, the vaccines seem to be doing their work; the statistics show that very few people who have been vaccinated are being admitted to hospital. But at the same time, we are all being urged to take up the booster vaccines as soon as they become available, as well as the influenza vaccine.

There are two major concerns. Firstly, there is always the possibility of a new version of the virus developing. Almost certainly the current vaccines will have some effect against this, but they might not as effective as against the existing strains of the virus. Coupled to this is the problem that the effects of any vaccine tend to be reduced over time; even if the virus stays the same, the vaccination will slowly offer less protection as the months go on.

All vaccines work by stimulating blood cells known as “B-lymphocytes”. The main job of these is to produce antibodies which can bind and neutralise harmful proteins, such as those which allow Covid to infect cells. The vaccines initially stimulate the production of a large number of “B” cells which make antibodies, but most of these eventually die. Fortunately, a small number of “B” cells are what are known as “memory B cells”; these do not die but lie dormant and spring back into life if they recognise the harmful protein. They at once start producing antibodies to neutralise it. The snag is that after a few months, there are only a few of these cells about. The job of the booster vaccine is to mimic the effect of the Covid virus; it re-energises the memory “B” cells and permanently increases their number. The actual nature of the vaccine really does not matter as they all work to present the body with the same protein; part of the coat of the virus that the virus uses to infect other cells (the spike protein). That is why any of the currently approved vaccines can be used for the boosters.

One interesting finding has emerged; people who have already had Covid and have subsequently had the two normal vaccine shots seem to produce a much stronger antibody response to the booster than those who have not had the disease. Not only do they produce more antibodies, the antibodies are better at neutralising the spike protein and so are likely to be better at fighting new versions of the virus. Nobody is quite sure why this happens, but it may be that the prior exposure to Covid in these people meant that when they had the second of their routine injections, this was much more effective at boosting the memory B cells. If this is correct, it may be that the booster will have the same effect amongst those who never have had Covid and produce particularly effective protection.



Memory B cells in action.

The B cells “eat” the virus particles, as process known as autophagy.

In this picture, the virus particles, in **green** have been engulfed by the “B” cells. The blue blobs are the nuclei (the control centres) of the “B” cells.

(Image of the Month: Memory B Cells - Baylor College of Medicine Blog Network (bcm.edu))

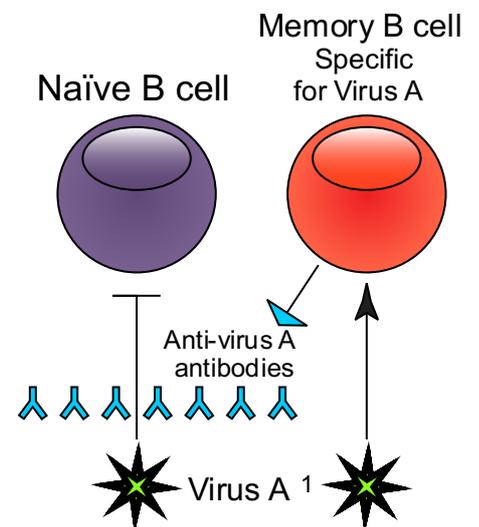
“B” cells produce antibodies.

A “B” cell that has not been exposed to a virus is called a *naïve cell*.

After the naïve cells have seen the virus, a number “remember” this event and form the “memory B” cells.

Memory “B” cells become reactivated if the virus returns and they produce antibodies to fight the virus.

(Original_antigenic_sin.png: User:DO11.10derivative work: Rehua (talk) - This file was derived from: https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=18126012)



DRP

The Stottesdon Group of Parishes

Rector: Revd Mark Daborn

The Rectory, Stottesdon, Shropshire, DY14 8UE

Telephone 01746-718127. Email mark.daborn@hotmail.co.uk

Day off – THURSDAY

December and January Message

'It is more blessed to give than to receive'

Acts 20:35

Santa Claus, illustrated nonchalantly on our cover this month, is based on the story of St Nicholas. He was an early Christian bishop in Asia Minor who gave, secretly, gifts of bags of gold so that three sisters could have a dowry and be married respectably. The bags of gold are, incidentally, the basis of the traditional pawnbrokers' sign but that's another story!

There are lots of lovely saints' stories associated with the Christmas season, including Wenceslas, who features in the Christmas Carol (and briefly in this month's 'Saint of the Month'!) along with his page. But the central story is, of course, of the child laid in a manger in Bethlehem, as told by Matthew and Luke in their Gospels.

The Christmas season, and Advent which prepares us for it, are times when we step outside our usual routines of services in the churches, and push the boat out a bit. Celebrations include Carol Services and Christingle Services and Crib Services. It's good to explore different ways of worship every so often, and we've actually started this in November. For the four Sundays in November in Stottesdon we have had an Evensong from the Book of Common Prayer; a Service of Remembrance; Informal Worship including singing in parts; and Holy Communion. That just about goes across the whole scope of permitted services in the Church of England – it's good to ring the changes!

But the high seasons of the Church calendar do require us to do something a bit different, because that helps us to mark them out as important, and occasions like Carol Services encourage folks to come into the churches who might not do so on a regular basis, but who see something special going on in this old, oft-repeated, and eternally new story of the first Christmas.

And at the heart of Christmas is the story of that child in the manger: God giving Jesus to reveal something of his love for us, something of his will for us, something of his glory. Giving, as an example for us at this giving time of year. A time when we are truly blessed by what we receive in our hearts.

Mark Daborn

Stottesdon Benefice Group News

St Mary, Stottesdon CHURCHWARDEN Clare Tibbits: 01746-718007	St Giles, Farlow CHURCHWARDENS Joan Evans - 01746-718619 Nigel Savage-Bailey - 07989-308599	Holy Trinity, Sidbury CHURCHWARDEN Andrew Sierakowski - 07934-714149
St Mary, Cleeton St Mary CHURCHWARDEN Sue Dolphin: - 01584 890583	St John, Middleton Scriven CHURCHWARDEN vacant – so your contact is Revd Mark Daborn - 01746-718127	St Michael, Silvington CHURCHWARDEN Annette Metcalfe: - 01584 890161

Churches in December

The Revd Mark Daborn writes:

We hope that our churches will be able to remain fully open through these celebratory months, and that our Carol Services will give us all an opportunity for a good sing!

Online services will continue to be recorded that you can pick up where and when may be convenient for you, either on the Stottesdon Benefice website, on the Stottesdon Benefice Facebook page, or on You Tube, which you can find on this link: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCGgHa2CCJs8k9gfRwzkYrtg>

The churches remain open for private prayer during the day.

Services in Churches

The full list of Stottesdon Benefice services for December and January is on page 22.

We are asking those who wish to come to church without face coverings to sit in the front pews, and to wear coverings to enter and leave the building.

From the Stottesdon Benefice Registers

30th October: FARLOW: Holy Matrimony: Matthew Carey and Gemma (Maxwell)

20th November: CLEETON St Mary: Holy Matrimony: Andrew Malpas and Amy (Munnelly)

If you, or someone you know, is in need of prayer or a visit, or Communion at home or elsewhere, then please contact Mark direct, or ask your churchwarden to help you to arrange this.

The **deadline for the February 2022 edition** (Stottesdon Benefice and Parishes) is to get copy to Chris by first thing **Wednesday 19th January**. Thanks!

Services in Churches – December and January

Services in Churches for December		
Sunday December 5th: Second of Advent		
09:00	EHC	Farlow
10:30	MP	Middleton Scriven
16:30	Christingle	Stottesdon
Sunday December 12th: Third of Advent		
09:00	HC	Cleeton St Mary
10:30	HC	Stottesdon
18:30	Carols	Silvington
Tuesday December 14th		
19:00	Carols	Stottesdon
Wednesday December 15th		
19:00	Carols	Cleeton St Mary
Thursday December 16th		
19:00	Carols	Farlow
Sunday December 19th - Fourth of Advent		
10:30	IW	Stottesdon
16:00	Carols	Sidbury
Friday December 24th - Christmas Eve		
16:00	Christingle	Cleeton St Mary
18:30	Carols	Middleton Scriven
23:30	HC	Stottesdon
Saturday December 25th - Christmas Day		
09:00	HC	Farlow
10:30	HC	Silvington
10:30	EHC	Sidbury
Sunday December 26th - First of Christmas		
10:30	HC	Stottesdon

Services in Churches for January		
Sunday January 2nd - Christmas 2		
09:00	EHC	Farlow
10:30	EHC	Middleton Scriven
16:30	ES	Stottesdon
Sunday January 9th: Baptism of Christ		
10.30	GpHC	Cleeton St Mary
Sunday January 16th: Epiphany 2		
10:30	IW	Stottesdon
16:00	HC	Sidbury
Sunday January 23rd: Epiphany 3		
09:00	MP	Silvington
10:30	HC	Stottesdon
16:00	EP	Cleeton St Mary
Sunday January 30th: Epiphany 4		
10:30	GpHC	Stottesdon

Carols	Carols
Christingle	Christingle
EHC	Extended Holy Communion
EP	Evening Prayer
GpHC	Group Holy Communion
HC	Holy Communion
IW	Informal Worship
MP	Morning Prayer

Stottesdon News

Clare Tibbits writes:

A huge 'thank you' to everyone for all your support through what has been a pretty dreary year – and particular thanks to Derek Overton and his dedicated, and growing bellringing team for keeping up the centuries old tradition of proclaiming the call to worship on Sundays, High Days and Holy Days!

And thanks also to Alex for this lovely contribution.

Called to cleaning ...?

After so long with the church stripped back under Covid restrictions it was glorious once again to see the flower rota come alive, and the wonders of seasonal colour once again lighting up the church – so glorious that that I thought Why not seize the moment and see if anyone might like to join a cleaning group?

Now, cleaning isn't perhaps the world's most exciting activity. However, sticking my neck out one Sunday, I asked if anyone in the congregation might perhaps feel called to cleaning ...

And the response was amazing. We now have an embryo group of generous people, offering their time to help to keep our church looking loved and cared for. Some people have time for a little every so often; some prefer a regular slot; some prefer gathering occasionally as a larger group for a seasonal blitz; some will simply join us when they can. Some like to sweep and dust; some love old wood; I'm even hoping to find someone passionate about polishing brass! We are so grateful to all who have offered – thank you.

As an Eco-Church we will move towards using only natural, sustainable materials – gradually replacing plastic implements with wood, using natural bees' wax, working sustainably in the old way. We will work in pairs or groups – to make sure everyone is kept safe.

I have to say that I love pottering in the church with a broom! Whether putting on some music or enjoying the deep silence – that beautiful building speaks to me of the roots of our community. It tells the old, old story of this village. It wraps itself around those who come to it for that deep silence, for their own quiet conversations, for time to ponder, to offer their help, as well as for services. To help look after this building in our time is to play our part in cherishing something important.

Do you have to be a churchgoer? No.

Did we perhaps chat as much as clean in our first sessions? Probably!

Was it satisfying and worth doing? Yes.

And if there's anyone else who would like to join us, just get in touch (01746 718127) – all are very welcome!

St Mary's 100 Club:

Congratulations to the winners in the November draw – Rachel Tibbits, Pat Home and Judith Smout.

Renewal letters will be landing on doormats soon – so please look out for yours and be sure to get them back to The Old Stores in good time to be entered into the **Christmas Double Money draw** (see your letter for more details!!). There are a few 'spare numbers' so if you'd like to join this fundraising effort, and have a chance to win prizes, then please ask Clare or Chris (01746 718007) for a membership form!

As we reported last month, the **HSBC ended 'free' banking for small charities last month** - with a £5 monthly charge for each account and 40p every time we deposit a cheque – and a % charge for cash paid-in as well !

Please help us workaroud this – by making a great **New Year resolution**: avoiding payments to the church by cheque or cash if you can, and instead sign-up to our Parish Giving Scheme or use on-line Banking transfers (BACS) direct to St Mary's account.

For further details, please ask Clare or Chris (01746 718007) – it is very easy to set up and it is safe from risk of fraud because it is protected under the national Direct Debit Guarantee. Please do think about it!

Talking about Banks

.... here's news of a very different one – helping people on our doorstep: **Bridgnorth Food Bank** continues to accept monetary gifts via Internet Banking and this a very easy way of getting a donation direct to those in desperate need of help.

To give online, please use the following details – Bridgnorth Community Trust, sort code 20-85-46, account 73700445, and quote 'Food Bank' as the reference.

And finally –

To everyone in the parish, and friends, neighbours and readers around and about – here's hoping we all have a happy and joy-full Christmas and a peace-full and enjoyable New Year.

Best wishes to all, from Clare and everyone at St Mary's!!

Middleton Scriven News

Ann Constable writes:

Community events:

Thank you to all who supported our November coffee morning and to Andy and Elizabeth for hosting.

Community Coffee mornings. Come and meet up with friends, all are most welcome. Produce and homemade items for bring and buy stall.

- Saturday December 11th 10-12: Join us for our Christmas coffee morning.
- Saturday January 8th 10-12. First coffee morning for 2022.



Happy Christmas and best wishes for the New Year.

Thank you to all who have supported our church and community in 2021 in any way. In our rural communities the sense of supporting each other has developed even further over the difficult times this year. Over the coming dark and challenging winter months ahead, let us remember and pray for our sense of community to continue to grow, as we strive to create a better world.

As 2021 comes to a close and we look forward to 2022 , here is a Prayer for a better world

“For the people whose lives have touched ours,
for the love they show,
the burdens they lift,
the hopes we share.

Compassionate God, we ask you:
to fill us with your love,
to place in our hearts a spirit of courage,
to move us to reach out to others in need.

And lead us to play our part,
so that now and in generations to come
all your children may share
in our hope for a better world.

We ask this through Christ our Lord”

Amen

Catherine Gorman, (written for the Your Catholic Legacy consortium)



[And if there is one species whose members are relentlessly cheerful, endlessly optimistic, and never shrink from the challenges of their world, it has to be the birds – also beautifully captured here by Ann – Ed]



Silvington News

Annette Metcalfe writes:

Everyone that I speak with is saying: "It's nearly the end of November... how's that happened?!" What a twelve months to look back on... and to come to terms with... all the ups and downs of the past year to try to put into some sort of perspective.

We all have our own reflections on 2021, and I dare say we'll be seeing a lot of "reviews of 2021" in the media, at the close of the year.

What can I say about what has happened in Silvington in the past twelve months? I think of the caring and friendship of neighbours, of new neighbours who have become friends, the joy of welcoming a baby, through Baptism, into the family of the church, the celebration of a Golden Wedding. These are events that have been bright gleams in our lives... the Light of Christ is shining in our little community.

We have so much to look back on and to be thankful for. Our thoughts and prayers are for all who have encountered and continue to experience difficulties, anxiety, loss and grief. May they find hope, strength and comfort and feel the loving power of God's presence with them.

From the parishioners of St Michael and All Angels, Silvington.... our very good wishes to everyone, in all the parishes, for health, happiness, peace, joy and hope at Christmastide and throughout the coming year.

Farlow News

Once again there is no report for Farlow St Giles this month but from next door, Ruth Downes writes:

Forthcoming events and services at Melville Chapel

- 8th December 12.30pm - 2.00pm Christmas Soup Lunch
- ✝ 19th December 6.30pm Carol Service
- ✝ 25th December 10.30am Christmas day family worship

Cleeton St Mary News

Gill Jordan writes:

November 100 Club results:

- £20 – Stephen Broome No 120;
- £10 each to Tom & Julie Bradford No 65, and Mark Daborn No 46
- £5 each to Linda Jones No 9, and Pam Phillips No 106.

Sidbury News

Sadly there is again no report from Sidbury this month.

Useful Community Contacts

Brown Clew Walkers	Meeting Place for walks - Ditton Priors Church. 01746-712662
Burwarton & District WI	Meets in Cleobury North Village Hall. The 2nd Tuesday of each month at 2.30pm. Contact 01746-712466
Little Explorers Pre-School, Ditton Priors	Open Monday to Friday 9.00am – 3.00pm. Contact Wendy Lloyd 01746-712506 / 787549
Burwarton & District Garden Club	Meets on the 2 nd Thursday of each month at 8.00 pm. Contact 01584-823723 for details of topic and venue
Burwarton & District Wives Group	Meeting 8pm 1st Wednesday of the month. Contact Debbie Jones 01746-712421 or Gill Severn 01746-712231
Chelmarsh Crown Green Bowling Club	Welcomes old and new members. Contact Sue Jackman 01746-862850
Chelmarsh Indoor Short Mat Bowling	Welcomes old and new members. The sessions are every Tuesday evening from 7.30-10.00pm. Further details Sue Jackman 01746-862850
Chelmarsh Parish Hall	Available for hire - booking@chelmarshparishhall.co.uk
Chelmarsh Jubilee Club	Parish Hall 01746-86525 Jean Davis
Chelmarsh Walking for Health	Monday 10.00am except Bank Holidays. Parish Hall. Eleanor Haddon 01746-862884. 2 levels of walking available
Chelmarsh Friends	Meet every 2nd Wednesday 7.30pm Chelmarsh Parish Hall. Jenny Green 01746-862191
Cleobury North Village Hall	Enquiries to 01746-787093 please
Tae kwon-do	Chelmarsh Parish Hall Tuesday evening. Suitable for children & Adults. Neil Morris Thursday 5.45pm. 07969-996055
Chelmarsh Parent & Toddler Group	Every Tuesday during term time 9.30 – 11.30 Chelmarsh Parish Hall. Contact Pam Baker 07846-692323
Chetton & Gazeley WI	Meets in Chetton Village Hall on the 2nd Wednesday of the month 7.30pm Sam O'Sullivan 01746-868225
Chetton Folk Dance Club	Meets Chetton Village Hall, last Wednesday of month except August Tel. Janice Burton 01584-823802
Chorley Village Hall	Available for Hire (fully equipped kitchen, digital projection equipment and large screen) contact Jenny or Charlie on 01746-718437
Short Mat Bowling	Every Monday & Thursday 2.30 – 4.30pm at Cleeton & Silvington Village Hall, October to end of April. Pam 01584-89261
Cleeton & Silvington V H	Zumba - Thursdays 6.30pm 7.30pm all year Ula 01584-890200
Fun & Fitness for 50+	Cleobury North Village Hall - low impact fitness programme working the whole body every Tuesday 10.00 – 11.15am. Contact 01584-823640
Ditton Priors Art Group	Village Hall Wednesday morning (except Christmas) 9.30 – 12.30pm all welcome Various visual art forms eg Water Colour, Oils & Acrylics. Mrs Denise Davies 01746-712521
Short Mat Bowling	Ditton Priors Village Hall Every Tuesday afternoon 2.00 - 4.00pm Wednesday 7.30-10.00pm except the second Wednesday in the month when it will be Thursday at 8.00 – 10.00pm. Everyone is welcome - try at no charge. Contact 01746-712157
Ditton Priors WI	Meets in Ditton Priors Village Hall on 2nd Wednesday each month at 7.15pm 01746-712473
Ditton Priors Local History Group	The Local History Centre, next to the Willows Café, opens 12.00-2.00 on Saturdays, and at other times by arrangement. Contact 01746-712850
Ditton Priors Parent & Toddlers Group	Meet in the Pavilion, Playing Fields, Ditton Priors Thursday 9.30 -11.30 am everyone welcome for a coffee and play.
Ditton Priors Book Club	Jenny -01746-712665
Knowle Sports Club	Second hand sales held every first Saturday of the month, 7.30am – 11am proceeds to Children's Football Field 01584-890644
Stottesdon Gateway Nursery	Pre-school, holiday club and wraparound sessions. An integral part of Stottesdon Primary School, Contact 01746-718769
Stottesdon & District W.I.	Meets in various venues on the 3rd Wednesday in each month details from Helena Hale 01746 718012 or Clare Tibbits 01746-718007
Stoke St Milborough Dance	Mike 01746-712774 - Betty 01746-77515
Domestic Abuse Hotline	Telephone Number 08448-044999



Thank you to Jutta for sharing another selection of her excellent pictures of the Brown Clee and Corvedale, resplendent in the late autumn sunshine.

