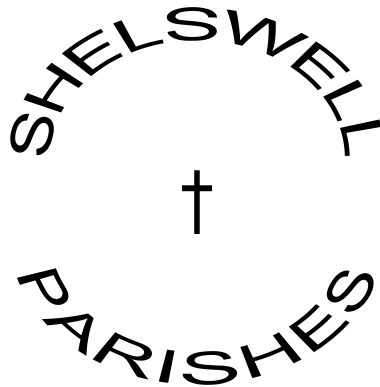


# Shelswell News

The magazine of the Shelswell Group of Churches

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Cottisford  
Fringford  
Hardwick  
Mixbury  
Stoke Lyne



Finnmere  
Godington  
Hethe  
Newton Purcell  
Stratton Audley



*Psalm 51: verse 10*

## SHELLOWELL BENEFICE MISSION STATEMENT

The Shelswell Family of Churches aims to bring people closer to God and to show the love of Jesus Christ and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit to everyone.

### MINISTRY TEAM

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**THE PARISHES ARE PART OF THE DEANERY OF BICESTER AND ISLIP AND THE DORCHESTER  
EPISCOPAL AREA OF THE DIOCESE OF OXFORD**

### **HOLY TRINITY ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH, HETHE,**

Mass: 8 am on Sunday. Occasional 12 noon Traditional Latin Mass.

Weekday Mass: 9.30 am Monday and Friday

Priest: Very Rev. Canon John Batthula, Henley House, 12 The Causeway, Bicester, OX26 6AW.

Telephone: 01869 253277

Website: <http://www.holytrinityheth.co.uk/>

### **SHELLOWELL NEWS**

Published monthly. To subscribe, contact Mrs Becky Adams, Benefice Administrator, The Rectory, Water Stratford Road, Finmere, Buckingham MK18 4AT Tel 01280 848192 Email [admin@shelswellparishes.info](mailto:admin@shelswellparishes.info)

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Deadlines for the **March 2021** edition of Shelswell News

To Magazine Correspondents: **Tuesday 9 February 2021**

Correspondents to Editor: **Thursday 11 February 2021** at [editor@shelswellparishes.info](mailto:editor@shelswellparishes.info)

**All articles must be submitted in WORD in a format that can be copied and pasted PLEASE**

[www.shelswellparishes.info](http://www.shelswellparishes.info)

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/ShelswellNews/>

## Minister's Letter

'I will give thanks to you, Lord, with my whole heart; I will tell of all your marvellous works.  
I will be glad and rejoice in you; I will make music to your name, O most high'

Thus started this morning's psalm (Psalm 9: 1 – 2). If only.

And the latest missive sent out from the Diocesan Bishops urges us to turn:

from the bitterness of thinking about what  
we can't have at this time

to thankfulness for these things and a deeper  
commitment to treasure them

from the misery that comes from our hopes  
being repeatedly deferred by the pandemic

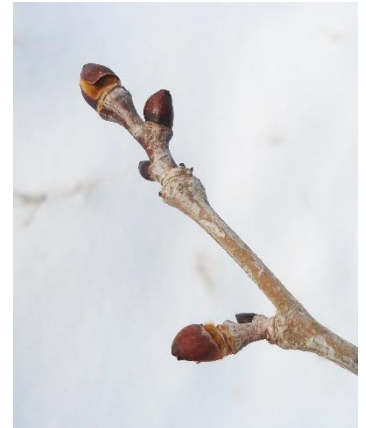
to a deeper hope that rests in God and God's promises

from a focus on the life-threatening troubles  
that surround us

to a focus on joy, 'a witness to eternal realities in the  
midst of earthbound despair'.

But that is very hard. Perhaps like me you feel your resources are low. Perhaps you too are finding the days to be dark, dreary and drab. And perhaps you also long for a hug from those you love but can't see at the moment. I wish I was one of those people who are naturally optimistic, joyful, able to find light in the midst of any darkness. I have a friend like that. She had an abusive first marriage. She lost her first husband and her eldest son to suicide, and has faced numerous challenges since. But still she counts her blessings, effervesces with joy, and looks for things to be thankful for. She's even written a book about her experiences (Choosing Eros – Julie Hagerty). But I'm not like Julie and I guess that is just how it is.

But although they may be personality traits, I guess that thankfulness and joy are also partly disciplines. There are loads of websites devoted to the practice of both. They tend to stress that although we cannot make ourselves feel joyful, we can become more open to the experience of joy. We can do things like being still, like practising being really present during the day, looking and listening inquisitively. trying to savour each moment – savour all the simple joys of life - the ability to see, to hear, to feel, to taste, and to touch, the beauty that is all around us, the miracle of our existence.



It is often when we stop, when we are still, that we notice things. In November, I noticed that amidst the black stubs of bygone blackberries and the few ragged leaves still clinging onto otherwise bare branches was one shrub that seemed to have large buds on it. A search on Google and I learnt that most trees have buds on them all through the winter. They protect the branches through winter and are there, ready to burst into growth in the spring. Everything we know witnesses to the fact that there will be better times in store. Winter leads to spring, the night to the morning, and as the psalmist puts it, 'heaviness may endure for a night, but joy comes in the morning' (Psalm 30.5).

I came across a poem on the internet – it had been written collaboratively on 5<sup>th</sup> April last year on Facebook by the Federation of Writers (Scotland) – people could only post one line, and 59 comments later, the poem emerged. I was going to just include an excerpt, but couldn't decide which bit was best, so here is it all. I wonder that your recipe for joy would contain? And can you prepare some parts of it now?

Alice Goodall



### Recipe for Joy – a collaborative poem

In a large bowl, add one cup of fresh cherry blossom to 500mls of friends' laughter and stir well. Leave to marinade for the length of time it takes to sing your favourite song.

Strain the mixture through a fine sieve to obtain the pink essence of friendship.

Flour a board with absent smiles, knead gently and allow time to rest. Cover with primrose petals, placing each with a goodwill wish.

The flour was stirred into the kindness of humanity; add a teaspoon of spicy wit, and a generous handful of wisdom. Bring into the mix, a cup of empathy, and let the ingredients fix. Blend in a rainbow of hope.

Season well; a pinch of experience, a gentle of time, joy to taste. Whip up some happiness. As you spin round the block three times, wave to your neighbours two metres apart. Season to your own taste as everyone's dish is their own. The joy of life's recipe is there is no set ingredients.

Gently fold in friends' laughter as this will ensure a lightness to your day. Add expectation little by little, or the mixture will curdle. Knead gently, set aside to prove.

Say thanks to the ones making the cake. Sprinkle with hope and Love and Joy. Serve at once, or store for later; Joy lasts eternal.

Let the compassion rise for an hour bake and then serve first to self and then to others and consume joyfully.

Then do it all over again! Fold in full notes and phrases of dawn chorus and good dashes of springtime sun. Stir well and add as much hope as you have to hand. Rub your techie ignorance into your need for connection, season well with native wit...and bake a delicious cake of new video chat.

Kneading birdsong into your day, add a pinch of hope, a sprinkle of goodness and essence of kind. This will truly be a delightful treat for all to find. Spread far and wide, to bus drivers, posties, neighbours, and nurses, on doorsteps, windowsills, homeless shelters, empty park benches. Stirring up memories of how you looked in a Spring cotton dress, remember to share equally.

Mix in some essence of nature, cherry blossom and petals of spring flowers, ten drops each of Sense, Rhythm and Blues for balance...first whisking to a froth. Allow the mixture to rest for a few moments...then add a few drops of essence of pure love .. stirring gently.... Enjoy.

Finally, spread it thick and far around the world, add cat purrs and baby laughs to sprinkle over everyone like fairy dust. Discard seeds of hurt, soak sadness in strong, grateful spirit, cover with cloth of certain hope and leave overnight. Consume with a mindful relish and plentiful gratitude. Allow the ingredients of generosity and love to penetrate your senses in order to share them bountifully.

Serve broken into a praline of bite-sized pieces, dusted with the sweet passing of time...

This is your recipe for joy.



## LENT 2021



So Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> February is **Shrove Tuesday**, and I guess you have your plans for that day already sorted – pancakes, lots of them, with lemon and sugar! But what about for Lent itself?

Here are some suggestions:

**Ash Wednesday**, Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> February – get Lent off to a good start by joining our online service of Holy Communion at 10 am or later.

### Lent resources

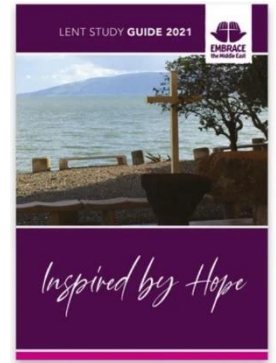
#### Inspired by hope

Study guide for individual study / Zoom Lent group

'Inspired by hope' is a Lent Study Guide produced by EMBRACE the Middle East, a **Christian charity which works to bring lasting change to the Middle East through healthcare, education and community development projects.** A series of weekly reflections and stories from the Middle East help us to reflect on different aspects of hope, a theme very relevant to living in a pandemic! Study the course on your own, or join others in a weekly Zoom session to share our thoughts.



Let us know now: if you would like a copy of the guide  
if you would like to join the 'Embrace' Zoom group.



### Come and See!

#### An Oxford Diocese initiative

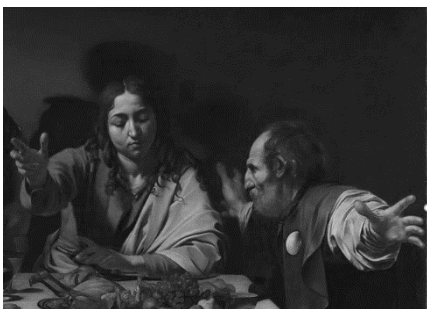
At the beginning of John's gospel two disciples begin to follow Jesus. Jesus begins with a question: "What are you looking for?". The disciples ask: "Where are you staying?". Jesus says: "Come and see" and they walk with him...

Perhaps you have found yourself asking questions about the Christian faith over the past year. This initiative will provide a range of ways of exploring things a little further, including:

- listening to Bishop Steven talk about different aspects of what Christians believe in five short films
- following a course of daily reflections throughout Lent
- joining the 'Come and See' Zoom group that we will be running one evening a week throughout Lent to reflect on Bishop Steven's talks
- being put in touch with someone from one of our churches to talk about your spiritual journey



Let us know now if you would like to join the 'Come and See' Zoom group



#### Inspired to Follow: Art and the Bible Story

Produced by St Martin in the Fields and The National Gallery, this group will explore the theme of 'Who is my neighbour?' through reflecting on different paintings from the National Gallery. We have much appreciated the 'Inspired to Follow' material in the past, and can't see why this wouldn't work well by Zoom! Penny will be leading this group.



Let us know now if you are up for joining a Zoom 'Inspired to Follow' group.

**PLEASE REGISTER YOUR INTEREST NOW** - once we know who is interested in what, we will do our best to arrange days and times for groups to suit! Phone the Benefice Office on 01280 848192 / email [admin@shelswellparishes.info](mailto:admin@shelswellparishes.info)

## 'Count your blessings' calendar

Although they have not yet put the information about it on their website, we are hopeful that Christian Aid will produce another 'Count your blessings' Calendar. This calendar covers every day in Lent, encouraging us to give a little each day - it suggests a simple action, for example, "count how many taps there are in your house - give 20P for each tap", or there's a prayer, or a fact to think about.

If we are able to celebrate our Easter services in our church buildings, then you could bring along all you have saved for **Christian Aid**, we could collect it all together and send it off to them.

Let us know if you would like a calendar.

## More Snippets from the FOOD, GLORIOUS FOOD Course

### 3. EATING WELL

In this session we heard from three local individuals with different diets: a vegan, a pescatarian and a vegetarian. This gave insight into why people eat what they eat. It might be for various reasons, habit, medicinal, ethical and many more. We considered how, or could our Christian faith affect what we consume and how we consume it. We questioned whether we respect another's choice enough and how we can learn from each other.

#### *Did you know?*

- 71% of the total food and drink binned in the UK comes from households.
- 20 million slices of bread go to waste every day from UK homes. If lined up, they would go up Mount Everest 22 times!
- Growing avocados uses large quantities of water. On average, the water consumption associated with the UK's intake of avocados from Peru, South Africa, Chile, Israel and Spain is estimated to be over 25 million cubic metres annually – equivalent to 10,000 Olympic-sized swimming pools.



There are many stories in the Bible where Jesus eats with others. Sharing food is a way of extending our lives and breaking down the barriers that separate us. And just as Jesus transforms lives that are broken and empty into ones that are rebuilt and complete, so should the choices we make over what we eat and how we eat. Food is a gift and a blessing to be shared.

- ❖ Try to be informed eaters.
- ❖ Listen to the cries of creation and commit to doing something to make things better.
- ❖ Think about how we prepare to eat – check out the Slow Food movement.
- ❖ Give thanks before we eat.
- ❖ Eat mindfully, being aware of what we eat, and of those who have given of themselves to give us food.
- ❖ Consider how we can be hospitable and share food.

### 4. BUYING WELL

We looked at our individual considerations when we shop, for instance, cost, convenience, locally produced, Fairtrade, organic. How has this all been changing through the pandemic? It was a revelation for some about where our food sometimes come from. How food's total carbon footprint - including production, processing, transporting, storing, cooking and disposal - is affecting climate change was considered.

We looked at the major food providers and how they had subsumed the smaller organisations. We also considered a number of logos to look for when choosing food, e.g. RSPCA Assured, MSC. A video about cocoa farmers in West Africa showed how Fairtrade cooperatives benefit the whole community.

#### *Did you know?*

- 33% of bananas bought in the UK are Fairtrade.
- In Britain we eat an estimated 660,900 tonnes of chocolate a year, an average of around 11kg per person per year. (A tonne = 1000kg)
- Fairtrade tea is popular in the UK, with Brits buying 80% of the total supply.



- ❖ When shopping, buy locally, buy seasonally, buy 'wonky' fruit and veg, purchase only what you need.
- ❖ Look out for Eco-Friendly labels, and for Fairtrade labels when buying globally.

*“Now listen, you rich people..... Look! The wages you failed to pay the workers who mowed your fields are crying out against you. The cries of the harvesters have reached the ears of the Lord Almighty.” James 5.1, 4*

Lord God, we pray for responsible stewardship in our using of your world.  
For sustainable consumption as well as production. For care for creation and compassion for each other.  
Lord, may your Kingdom come, Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Amen.

At the end of the course, we considered how we might share such information across the Benefice so that we might all just take a little more time to think. Recordings of some sessions are available – please contact Yvonne or Alice for details. Alice will be happy to lend her copy of Norman Wirzba’s book, *Food and Faith: a theology of eating* - a challenging but good and thought provoking read.

## Where can I get help with shopping etc?

If you need help with shopping, collecting prescriptions, getting stamps from the Post Office or whatever, whether during lockdown or over the coming months, then please email or phone one of us.  
We will do our best to assist!

**Cottisford:** Jane Birnage 01280 847455 / 07770 220605 [janebirnage@icloud.com](mailto:janebirnage@icloud.com)  
Sally Evans 01280 847250 / 07803 952940 [sally334@btinternet.com](mailto:sally334@btinternet.com)

**Finmere:** Alice Goodall 01280 848192 [alicegoodall313@gmail.com](mailto:alicegoodall313@gmail.com)  
Anne Hughes 01280 847014 [bronygraig12@hotmail.com](mailto:bronygraig12@hotmail.com)  
Illa Moss 07749 692476. [mosski@msn.com](mailto:mosski@msn.com)  
with the help of a large pool of volunteers!

**Fringford: Friends Neighbourhood Support Group** 07704 756840 [neighbourhoodsupport@fringford.info](mailto:neighbourhoodsupport@fringford.info)  
You can also use the **What’s App Mutual Support Group** – details of this via the Fringford Friends as above.

**Godington:** Helen List [list.helen@gmail.com](mailto:list.helen@gmail.com) (or phone via the Benefice Office 01280 848192)

**Hardwick:** David Barnes (Churchwarden) 01869 277690 [david.l.barnes@outlook.com](mailto:david.l.barnes@outlook.com)

**Hethe:** Flora Skinner 01896 277366 [fskinner@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:fskinner@hotmail.co.uk)

**Juniper:** Meryl Daniell: 01869 811017 [meryldaniell@hotmail.com](mailto:meryldaniell@hotmail.com)

**Mixbury:** Tanya Howroyd 01280 847521  
Eryl Tobin 01280 848466

**Newton Purcell:** Angela Cross 01280 847471 / 07803 721754 [angela5258@btinternet.com](mailto:angela5258@btinternet.com)  
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**Stratton Audley:** John Honsinger 01869 278000 [jhonsinger@btconnect.com](mailto:jhonsinger@btconnect.com)

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Kelly Holden-White 01869 345211 [Kholdenwhite@aol.com](mailto:Kholdenwhite@aol.com)

## ZOOM SOCIAL

At present during lockdown we continue the **Coffee Morning on Tuesdays at 10.45 am**, and the quiz session on **Wednesdays, 1.30 pm a bit of a chat and a light hearted quiz**

Anyone is welcome to join in the sessions, A lovely way to keep connected and have a bit of a catch up!  
For details of how to join, please contact Alice, Yvonne or Liz – we will send you the link to the meeting and if needs be, talk you through how to get onto Zoom.

And the good news is, we can have loads more people than 6 on Zoom, from as many households as you like!!





## Muddy Church Wondering while Wandering

**“Nothing is impossible for God”**

Joshua 6

**Come and join our fun with Muddy Church Online,  
3pm Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> February 2021 on  
Shelswell Funday Club Facebook page.**

Let's face the Israelites together, and remember that  
Nothing is Impossible for God.... perhaps this is what we  
apply to our current battle with Covid.

We will have crafts to make, reflections and prayers.  
Email me if you would like a mini resource pack

Due to ongoing COVID restrictions, we will not be able to meet in the Churchyard on  
Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> February, but we are able to send out a small resource pack to anyone who  
would like to join us in the fun!

So please email me with your postal address if you would like to receive a mini resource pack  
– [jeniddoncfw@gmail.com](mailto:jeniddoncfw@gmail.com)

### **The Promised Land**

Martin Greenwood's new book **'The Promised Land'** has just been published. It tells the story of Emigration from Oxfordshire and three neighbouring Shires, 1815-1914.

The story begins with the voyages of Captain Cook, which led to the provision of new places for penal colonies in Australia. Free emigration gathered steam in the 1830s, followed by the Great Exodus from 1850. The story evokes the bustle and confusion of migrants at Liverpool and the emotions of departure. It looks at their shipping, health problems, costs and shipwrecks, and at their experience on arrival. It also examines the political changes, particularly to the Poor Laws and Corn Laws.

The origin of the book lay in the author's chance meeting with members of the Butler family. Four Butler brothers, born in Fringford, emigrated to Northern Queensland c.1870 and he has gathered a wealth of information about their experiences. The book's price is £9.95 and it can be obtained from Martin at [martinwgreenwood@btinternet.com](mailto:martinwgreenwood@btinternet.com) or from Coles Books.



## SHELLOWELL NEWS SUBSCRIPTIONS

Thank you to all Shelswell News subscribers who have renewed their subscriptions. For those of you who have had a busy January and have overlooked payment, direct payment to the bank is the preferred method. Please send me an email or a phone call so that I can give you the appropriate numbers. My details are on the inside front cover.

Thank you

Phillip Rushforth – Tel: 01280 848534 – [prfinmere@btinternet.com](mailto:prfinmere@btinternet.com)

## Making a donation to the Benefice or one of our churches

### QR Codes

The Shelswell Benefice now has a QR code. This will enable you to make a donation to the Benefice or one of our churches via your smart phone!

Social distancing makes it more and more important to find ways of doing things without direct contact. For example, in church the traditional collection is not possible during the pandemic. Yet parishes and churches still need donations to survive and provide that essential bit of our heritage whether or not we are church goers. The QR Code allows donations to be given or collections to be taken using smart phones but avoiding physical contact.

### What is a QR Code?

A QR code is a machine-readable code consisting of an array of black and white squares, typically used for storing URLs or other information for reading by the camera on a smartphone. Below is one for the Shelswell Benefice:

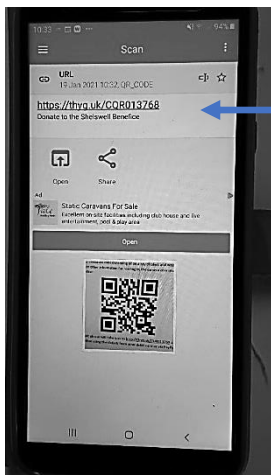


Using it on your smart phone will take you to the screen below – click on the link <http://thyg.uk/CUR013769>, which will then enable you to make a donation, either using the details from your debit card or via PayPal.

Future developments in the Benefice will see QR codes rolled out to cover particular causes whether your local church, the South Sudan Ox Plough project or other issues as well as the Benefice. But at the moment, if you make a donation and would like it forwarded to a particular church or project, please drop an email to our Benefice Treasurer, Jeremy Coke Smyth on [jcs@pcsd.co.uk](mailto:jcs@pcsd.co.uk)

WikiHow [wikiHow: How-to instructions you can trust](https://www.wikihow.com/How-to-use-a-QR-code) is extremely helpful and provides a video and detailed help on using QR codes whatever phone you may have.

**Of course you can still help by more conventional means as well like a cheque or Just Giving.**



**click here! (the blue line half way down that says 'Open' will take you to an unrelated advert)**

## Finmere C E Primary School

### Primary school admissions – September 2021

Whilst we are unable to hold any Open Days at the moment, we can still welcome visitors, in a planned and safe way. If you are interested in joining our school we'd love to hear from you. Please contact the school office on 01280 848459 or via [office.3090@finmere.oxon.sch.uk](mailto:office.3090@finmere.oxon.sch.uk)



## Finmere C.E Primary School

*Challenging all to Shine*



- Village school setting with strong links to the wider community
  - Small class sizes
  - Wide ranging curriculum
- Wonderful outdoor surroundings
  - Wraparound care
  - Ofsted Good 2018
  - SIAMS Outstanding 2016
- Part of The Warriner Multi-Academy Trust
  - Welcoming children from Bicester, Buckingham and Brackley

**Please contact us to arrange a visit.**

**We look forward to welcoming you soon.**

📧 [office.3090@finmere.oxon.sch.uk](mailto:office.3090@finmere.oxon.sch.uk)

☎ 01280 848459

🌐 [www.finmere.oxon.sch.uk](http://www.finmere.oxon.sch.uk)

📍 Mere Road, Finmere, MK18 4AR

📱 @FinmereCEPrimary





Fringford C of E  
Primary School

## Open Mornings

If you are considering our school for your child next September - why not drop in and see us.

Please call or email the school office for more information and to book your visit.

**Ofsted Good 2017**  
**SIAMS Outstanding 2018**

Small Reception class

Beautiful outside space

Dedicated staff and well behaved pupils

Children welcome from all surrounding areas

01869 277397

office.3083@fringford.oxon.sch.uk

www.fringford.oxon.sch.uk





## REGISTRY

This section will announce any baptisms, marriages and funerals that have recently taken place within the Shelswell benefice

### Christenings

If you would like to talk about a christening, please do get in touch.

Alice (01280 848192 / [rector@shelswellparishes.info](mailto:rector@shelswellparishes.info))

### Obituaries

**Ted Flaxman** – Please see the Tribute in Cottisford and Juniper Hill Section.

## CLUB NEWS

**Due to the current Coronavirus protective restrictions many events are cancelled for the time being:  
Please watch this space.**

### KNIT FOR PEACE



The photo shows a very small selection of the items knitted for knit for peace. The charity would like to say a big thank you to everyone who made a contribution. The amount of knitting that Marion passed on was fantastic.

Any further contributions to be left at 2 Church Close, Fringford. Please ring Marion Crowther on 01869 277404 prior to dropping anything off.



### SHELLOW WALKERS

Please take your daily exercise but keep safe and keep recommended distances from others especially on 'busy' footpaths and rights of way.



### SHELLOW GARDEN CLUB



We held the first meeting of 2021 on Tuesday 12 January via Zoom. Our speaker was Pip Bensley. Pip worked for Hilliers Nurseries for 27 years, where she became an integral part of their Chelsea Flower Show Team. She is an experienced horticulturalist, florist, author, teacher and Chelsea Flower Show judge. In this talk, 'Chelsea Secrets', she took us behind the scenes of the world's most prestigious flower show.

Preparation for Chelsea starts in the January before the May Show. Sponsors, themes and teams are chosen and plans made. Press releases are written and press visits take place. Orders for a huge number of items are placed, for example, for a Hilliers garden exhibit in the Marquee, 4000 plants might be ordered along with trees and shrubs, wooden planks to stabilise trees, hundreds of black bags containing straw for infilling gaps, bags of chipped bark, landscaping material such as sand, cement, paving stones, slabs, pebbles, rocks, labels, readymade features and even their own forklift truck. Not forgetting bottles of champagne and elderflower cordial for special guests!



About 3 weeks before the show the teams go on site to lay the foundations, followed by the planting team. These highly skilled experts use their plant knowledge and their eyes to position the plants in just the right place. Every plant is correctly labelled. The exhibits are judged on 3 criteria; quality (of plant material) impact of the garden design and endeavour (how complex and difficult was the garden to build). Hilliers is the most successful exhibitor at Chelsea having won 74 consecutive gold medals.

Pip also told us that gnomes are banned from the show, every year a blackbird takes up residence in the Hillier's Chelsea garden and how scary it is when the bell is rung on the last day when visitors compete to buy the plants. It was a vibrant, interesting and beautifully illustrated talk.

Our next Zoom meeting will take place on **Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> February at 7.30 pm**. Tamsin Westhorpe will talk about **Stockton Bury gardens through the seasons**, where she works as curator and gardener. The garden in Herefordshire is listed in The Times top 20 gardens to visit.

An email will be sent out before the meeting to give you the Zoom link, so if you do not receive the club emails, please give Corrine a call on 01869 247411 to be added to the email list.

## SHELLOW POETRY APPRECIATION GROUP

Here are the titles of some poems focused on the month of February, as recommended by members of the group and readers of Shellow News:

*A Shepherd's Calendar : February* by John Clare; *February Evening in New York* by Denise Levertov; *Lines on Observing a Blossom on the First Day of February* by Samuel Taylor Coleridge; *Candlemas Eve* by Robert Herrick; *Candlemas Day* by Frances Ridley Havergal; *February* by Margaret Atwood; *February : The Boy Breughel* by Norman Dubie; *Sylvia Plath Writing in her Journal, 23 Fitzroy Road, London, February 1963* by Peter Bakowski ; *2<sup>nd</sup> February* by Neela Nath Das ; *February by Algernon Charles Swinburne*; *Atlas by U.A.Fanthorpe*; *A Robin by Walter de la Mare*; *She Walks in Beauty* by Lord Byron; *Mad Girl's Love Song* by Sylvia Plath; *February 12<sup>th</sup> 1963* by Jaqueline Woodson. If you have a poem to recommend to do with the month of March, please send the title and poet's name to me by email or phone before the 12th of February.

Judith Harvey 01869 811994 or at

[judith.harvey@live.co.uk](mailto:judith.harvey@live.co.uk)

## SHELLOW READING GROUP

Our January book was *Circe* by Madeline Miller. The author based the story on Homer's *Odyssey*, in which the enchantress Circe turned Odysseus' sailors into swine. Here we see events from Circe's point of view just as in *The Silence of the Girls* by Pat Barker we read about events in the Trojan War from the viewpoint of Briseis, Achilles' war prize, in detail missing from Homer's *Iliad*. Circe becomes a believable character, despite her magical birth and powers and many of the situations and dilemmas she faces are very human. This is not just a novel which classicists will enjoy as so many of its issues are universal.

As we were still subject to the regulations imposed by the worsening situation caused by the virus and its mutation, the meeting was not held in person but by email and Zoom. As this magazine goes to press the book for February has not yet been chosen but, in the meantime, here are some recommendations of book recently read and enjoyed by individual members of the Reading Group:

*The Miniaturist* by Jessie Burton; *Us* by David Nicholls; *City of Lies*, by Michael Russell; *The Mirror and the Light* by Hilary Mantel; *The Giver of Stars* by JoJo Moyes; *A Single Thread* by Tracey Chevalier; *This is Shakespeare* by Emma Smith.

Judith Harvey 01869 811994

[judith.harvey@live.co.uk](mailto:judith.harvey@live.co.uk)



## SHELLOW WI

As we head into the New Year, are you looking to widen your friendship circle, learn some new skills and be entertained by a range of interesting speakers? Then make 2021 the year you consider joining the Women's Institute. **Shelswell is a modern and forward thinking WI, our friendly members encompass a wide range of ages and professional backgrounds.**

Our meetings are held on the **first Thursday of the month at 8 pm**. We hope at some stage to be able to resume our usual meetings in the lovely venue of Fringford Village Hall, when some of the pandemic restrictions have eased. For now though, our monthly meetings will continue to be virtual ones.

With the Covid vaccination being rolled out, there is some hope of meetings recommencing in Fringford Village Hall later in the year. The Committee, with our amazing and supportive members, are zooming until such time.

Shelswell started the new year Playing the Spoons. We had a very talented percussionist, Jo May, helping us to hold the spoons in a certain way. Then we were able to make a sound and eventually a tune. The members and guests had much fun playing a tune together.

**Thursday, 4 February, our Zoom Meeting at 8pm is the AGM.** We have as our Guest Speaker, Richard Mould, Bicester East Ward Councillor, who is on the Town's Centre Task/Steering Group. He'll be really well informed, so this should give great insight into the future plans for Bicester.

The Committee will be changing, with Jane our President, Lesley our Treasure and Hazel stepping down. We thank them for all their hard work in this challenging time. Sylvia, Elaine, Meryl and Nicky are remaining on the Committee and will be joined by others; details to follow. Members please Zoom in and find out what's happening.

The Committee is committed in keeping things going until we are able to meet in person again.

For more information on Shelswell WI, please contact President, Jane Lyons on 07761030276 or Committee Member, Nicky Lane on 07814796171.



### Nai's House

#### Suicide prevention and holistic mental health - for up to 30 year olds

Enormous thanks to Tanya Bezuidenhout for her kindness and generosity, who is letting us use KidzZone, [15/16 Crown Walk, Bicester, OX26 6HY](#), till they can once again open for business.

We will be open on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday for those with appointments and available for appointments outside these hours. Please contact us on 07437 497697 or contact email is [hello@naishouse.co.uk](mailto:hello@naishouse.co.uk) and appointments can be made via our Facebook page @naishousebicester.

Sadly we cannot offer a drop in service at the moment and parent support is now offered remotely.

In line with covid-19 guidance we would ask that all guests wear masks when visiting, we have masks, gloves and hand sanitiser if needed.

Nai's House is a Community Interest Company registered with Companies House: 11158730

Nai's House is a certified member of Social Enterprise UK

Registered Address: Stable Yard, Vicarage Road, Stony Stratford, MK11 1BN

## REPORTS FROM THE PARISHES

### Cottisford and Juniper Hill St Mary the Virgin

CHURCHWARDEN: Charles Jackson, Cottisford House, Cottisford

Tel 01280 848247

TREASURER David Barnes, Honeysuckle Cottage, 11 Hardwick

Tel 01869 277690

MAGAZINE CORRESPONDENT: Judith Harvey, Lark Rise Cottage, Juniper Hill Email: [judith.harvey@live.co.uk](mailto:judith.harvey@live.co.uk)

### THE FRIENDS OF COTTISFORD CHURCH

In January we received the sad news that Ted Flaxman, the founder of our charity, passed away in December. He and Joan, who predeceased him, were much loved and appreciated in Cottisford and Juniper Hill, and they played a huge part in village and church life.

In creating The Friends, Ted provided a lasting legacy and ensured that our lovely church will be well maintained and cared for in the years to come.

The Committee and members of The Friends are honoured to be entrusted with the responsibility for continuing his work. We hope that he would be happy to see our plans for improving facilities in the church (see below) making good progress.

Ted was laid to rest in the churchyard of Saint Mary the Virgin, Cottisford, next to his beloved wife.

Thank you to all the people who support the work of The Friends. Your continued interest and financial contributions are very much appreciated – especially in a year like 2020.

Despite the problems posed by the Coronavirus, we have made good progress during the past year with our proposals to install a toilet, piped water, a servery and a gathering area in Saint Mary's. We believe that these improvements will ensure that the church remains at the heart of the village, both in terms of worship and as a community space.

We welcome new members to our organisation, and if you would like to become a member of The Friends of Cottisford Church, please contact me on 01280 847455 or at [janebirnage@icloud.com](mailto:janebirnage@icloud.com)

### COTTISFORD AND JUNIPER HILL SOCIAL COMMITTEE

We would like to pay tribute to the work done by Ted Flaxman (and his wife Joan) to the social life of the village of Cottisford and its hamlet, Juniper Hill, for so many years. Flower Festivals, village fetes, quiz nights, coffee mornings, boules matches, Snowdrop Sundays – all were either initiated by them or had their full and energetic support. They were both enthusiastic and knowledgeable local historians and brought Flora Thompson's connections with the area to a wide audience. Ted was always willing to talk to and lead groups of people walking the 'Lark Rise Trail' and wrote, with Joan, several books on the world of Flora Thompson's literary works and the history of this area. For many years he was Chair of the Parish Meeting, and always kept a weather eye on the good of the community, and on maintaining links between its two components. Even in retirement in Leamington Spa he kept up longstanding local friendships and was always interested to hear news of the work of the Social Committee

## Finmere St Michael and All Angels

CHURCHWARDEN: Vacancy

TREASURER: Jacqueline Chelin, 19 Valley Road, Finmere, Buckingham MK18 4BG

MAGAZINE CORRESPONDENT: Paul Nash Email: paan63@yahoo.co.uk

Tel 01280 847782

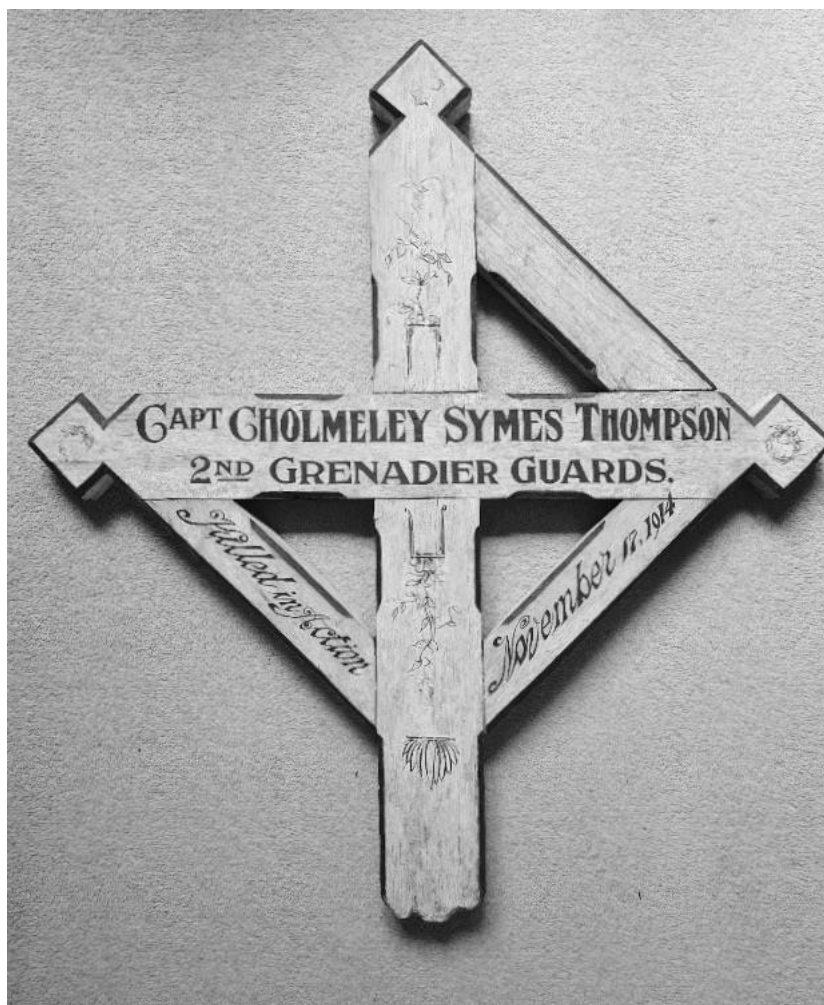
Tel 01280 848268

### The Symes Thompson Grave Marker

We have just received the final Restoration Report from Matthew Beesley, ACR, who carried out the restoration/conservation work on the Symes-Thompson Grave Marker for St. Michael's in Finmere.

Matthew felt that the cross is an extraordinary object in it's own right, made all the more fascinating with the biographical information, and was delighted to have the opportunity to work on it. The great surprise was that there were traces of gilding on the lettering, leading him to surmise that there were highly skilled tradespeople collaborating; coach-painters, artisans, gilders, sign writers and so on out at the Front, utilising their skills in such terrible circumstances.

In a very small way our fundraising efforts and aspiration to conserve this important artefact reflect the collective efforts of those who originally gave their skills and endeavours at the time. Our great thanks to Matthew and to the people of Finmere who generously supported the project. The full technical report can be obtained by emailing [cindy.jansz@btinternet.com](mailto:cindy.jansz@btinternet.com)





## FINMERE CHRISTMAS CAROLS

Just as it seemed the start of the Finmere Christmas season with the traditional and much loved switching on of lights on the Cross Tree and carols in church would fall prey to the current regulations, a small group headed by Joanne Brooks, together with the Church and the Village Hall Management Committee took the initiative to organise an event.

Friday, 11<sup>th</sup> December we were invited to a celebration in the Village Hall car park – outdoors so as to conform with current guidelines and social distancing requirements. The car park and surrounding fenced area and trees were bedecked with lights which all helped to get us into the Christmas spirit. About 70 people attended the event and the Rev. Alice Goodall conducted a short service and we sang carols – such a treat to be allowed to sing again with some carols being chosen by popular demand!

Thankfully, the evening was dry and reasonably mild, made all the better as we were served mulled wine, hot chocolate and mince pies.

A lovely start to the Christmas season and an opportunity to hope that our way of life can improve in 2021.

Once again, thanks to Joanne and her family and their band of associates for their hard work in organising at such short notice a truly enjoyable village event.

John Cunningham

### Village Hall

Unfortunately, the Village Hall is now closed for the duration of the lockdown. We hope to be open again in the spring, or when government guidelines allow.



### Allotments

Get planning for your new growing season. The Poor's Plot now has a waiting list for allotment plots in the village. There is a possibility that a few plots may become available shortly, so any aspiring allotment users should visit [www.myfinmere.com/poorsplot](http://www.myfinmere.com/poorsplot)



Need some local help

<http://www.shelswellparishes.info/documents/corona/communitynetworks.pdf>

Village facebook page

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/finmereandlittlettingewick/>

Shelswell Parishes website at – [www.shelswellparishes.info/finmere](http://www.shelswellparishes.info/finmere)  
 Finmere Parish Council website at – [www.finmerepc.org](http://www.finmerepc.org)  
 Village hall news at – [www.myfinmere.com](http://www.myfinmere.com)  
 Finmere Primary School - [www.finmere.oxon.sch.uk](http://www.finmere.oxon.sch.uk)

## Fringford St Michael and All Angels

CHURCHWARDEN: John Mayo, 10 Church Close, Fringford

Tel 01869 278873

TREASURER: Christina McCullagh, 5 Crosslands, Fringford

Tel 07867 515207

MAGAZINE CORRESPONDENT: Penny Wood, 8 Crosslands, Fringford

Tel 01869 277310

VILLAGE HALL CORRESPONDENT: Christine Underwood

Tel 01869 278949

WEBSITE [www.fringford.info](http://www.fringford.info)

### ST MICHAEL & ALL ANGELS, SERVICES & EVENTS

St Michael and All Angels is closed at present. The Benefice continues to live stream the Sunday 10.00am service onto Facebook (Shelswell News Group), and then uploading onto YouTube (Shelswell Parishes). We are also live streaming a short reflective service every week day at 12 noon.

### Muddy Church

For all ages. Contact Revd Yvonne Mullins to find out what is happening in February: ring 01869-278090 or email: [curate@shelswellparishes.info](mailto:curate@shelswellparishes.info)

### ZOOM Socials

Coffee & Chat – Tuesdays at 10.45am

Quiz time - Wednesdays at 1.30pm.

You would be most welcome to join in; to get the 'zoom' details contact the Rector on 01280-848192, or email [alicegoodall313@gmail.com](mailto:alicegoodall313@gmail.com)

### Fund-raising Initiatives

#### For Sale – Bags of Kindling



5 Kilos - £5.00    3 kilos - £3.00

In aid of Fringford Church Restoration Fund.

Contact Simon Knight (email address: [simon.knight2@btinternet.com](mailto:simon.knight2@btinternet.com)  
or mobile: 07598 104444).

#### Greetings Cards

Packs of greeting cards (6 cards for £3) available for purchase. They feature 6 photographs of the church both in and outside. Ring Christina McCullagh on 07867 515207.

**All being well**, the PCC is planning to hold **Open Gardens** on the weekend beginning Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> May, and a **Beer Festival** on 19 June 2021. [If you'd be willing to open your garden, please contact Penny on 01869-277310 or email: [penelope.wood@btopenworld.com](mailto:penelope.wood@btopenworld.com) ]

### Fringford Church Book Exchange

The box for book exchange is in the porch [Leave one, take one, please don't overload!]. But remember the virus can stay on items such as books or games for 72 hours, so please put the book you donate into a plastic bag and write on the bag the date you put it into the box. That way, anyone wanting to read the book knows when the 72 hours is up and the book can be read. Thank you.

Penny Wood

### Fringford 100 Club

In the spirit of cooperation and good sense, the plan is now for Fringford PCC and the Friends of Fringford School to combine their efforts to run a 100 Club. The profits would be shared equally between them. By joining the 100 Club you would help towards improving facilities in both the church and the school as well as having a chance to win money prizes every month. If we are able to recruit 100 members (50 from the village

and 50 from the school) paying £3 per month (£36 annually) , the income for that month would be £300. 50% could be used for prize money (£75, £50 and £25) , 25% would go to the church and 25% to the school. We are thinking about starting as soon as possible in 2021.

The school will begin advertising in January. I have already had 16 expressions of interest from villagers and plan to start canvassing in the New Year. Any queries or if you would like to put your name down, **please contact Christina McCullagh on 07867 515207.**

## **SUPPORT DURING THE TIME OF CORONAVIRUS**

On-going support is still available. If you need some help, please don't hesitate to contact **Fringford Friends, Neighbourhood Support Group :**

- Telephone: 07704 756840
- Email [neighbourhoodsupport@fringford.info](mailto:neighbourhoodsupport@fringford.info)

To join the **What's App Mutual Support Group** ring or email 'Fringford Friends' use the contact details above.

## **FRINGFORD VILLAGE COFFEE MORNING**

Still not able to meet. Sorry! Soon, hopefully.

Penny Wood

## **THE BUTCHER'S ARMS**

To find out the latest news at the Butcher's Arms contact Simon via email: [syeborg2009@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:syeborg2009@yahoo.co.uk) or mobile; 07850 415189. Alternatively, contact Stuart on 07952 445468.

## **Hardwick St Mary the Virgin**

CHURCHWARDENS: John Curtis, Sycamore House, Hardwick

David Barnes, Honeysuckle Cottage, 11 Hardwick

TREASURER: David Barnes, Honeysuckle Cottage, 11 Hardwick

MAGAZINE CORRESPONDENT: Veronica Barnes, Honeysuckle Cottage, 11 Hardwick

WEBSITE: <http://hardwickvillage.btck.co.uk>

Tel 01869 277984

Tel 01869 277690

Tel 01869 277690

Tel 01869 277690

## **CORONAVIRUS COMMUNITY SUPPORT FROM ST MARY'S CHURCH, HARDWICK**

The Rector, Ministry Team and church members in Hardwick are concerned to offer whatever help and support they can to those facing an anxious and difficult time in the continuing weeks ahead.

We are unable to offer medical advice or come into your home if this involves risk of infection to you or others, but otherwise we will do whatever we can to help.

Please call or email:

David Barnes (Churchwarden) 01869 277690 [david.l.barnes@outlook.com](mailto:david.l.barnes@outlook.com)

Rev'd Alice Goodall (Rector) 01280 848192 [rector@shelswellparishes.info](mailto:rector@shelswellparishes.info)

## **Pre-Reformation vestiges of Hardwick church**

This month, our short articles describing features of Hardwick church, looks at some of the vestiges of the pre-reformation era. The Protestant Reformation in England, started by Henry VIII in the mid-sixteenth century, led to the creation of a separate Church of England. Before this, all Christians in England, like the rest of Western Europe, belonged to the same church, the Catholic Church, headed by the Pope, the Bishop of Rome. All church services were in Latin, including the most important service, the Mass. So, wherever you were in Europe, all aspects of worship were similar, if not identical.

So, church buildings constructed before the Reformation tended to incorporate the same features, which reflected the beliefs and practices dictated by the Roman Church. Over time, the various reforms undertaken by the Church of England led to the abandonment of many of the practices of the mediaeval church, leaving many architectural features redundant. In Hardwick church, you can see:

### The Stoup

A stoup is a small stone vessel originally designed to hold holy water for use by those, who on entering the church would dip their finger in the water and then make the sign of the cross. This gesture reminds one both of one's baptism and that one has entered the presence of God. In Hardwick, the stoup is built into the wall immediately behind the door at the south entrance. It was placed into this position during the rebuilding works of 1878-79, having been re-discovered amongst the masonry at that time.



The Stoup



The Piscina

### The Piscina

A piscina, is a shallow stone basin, intended for washing the vessels used in the communion service, the Mass. As such, in most mediaeval churches it would normally have been located near to the altar for easy access by the Priest. In Hardwick, the piscina remains in its original place, built into the south wall of the chancel adjacent to the altar. The drain from a piscina empties directly into the earth to enable any remains of bread and wine washed from the communion vessels to be returned to the ground, as, according to catholic doctrine they had become the body and blood of our Lord at the point of consecration in the Mass.

### The Ambry

An ambry (or aumbry) is a recess in the wall of a church for storing sacred vessels (e.g. the communion chalice) and vestments. This recess would typically be covered with a cloth-hanging, coloured according to the liturgical season, to match the altar frontal and other hangings. In mediaeval times, the ambry would also have housed the "reserved sacrament", that is bread and wine that had been consecrated during the Mass. These would have been available for distribution to those who could not attend the Mass, usually the sick or dying.



(Nowadays, the Roman Catholic church requires the reserved sacrament to be stored in a tabernacle or hanging pyx.) Ambries would also be used to house the oil for the Anointing of the Sick. Although, the Church of England abandoned the use of the reserved sacrament after the Reformation, the practice has been reintroduced in cathedrals and some parish churches. In Hardwick, an ambry recess can be seen on the north side of the altar, on the chancel arc wall that faces back towards the east.



**The Ambry**



**A Rood Screen would have filled the Chancel Arch**

### **The Rood Screen**

A significant feature of virtually all mediaeval churches was the rood screen, a wooden partition spanning the chancel arch dividing the chancel and the nave. Usually, there would be a carving of the crucifixion fixed on top of the screen. The purpose of the rood screen was to cordon off an area, the chancel, reserved for those performing sacred tasks, separate from the congregation in the nave. Priests were usually provided with a separate door offering them direct access to the chancel. (The priest's door in Hardwick church is on the north wall. It is now rarely used.) The priest would perform that part of the Mass leading up to the consecration of the bread and wine, entirely at the altar. He would then take this to the chancel steps for distribution to the people. Hardwick's rood screen has long since been removed. Indeed, the whole area around the chancel arch was completely remodelled as part of the 1878-79 renovations. This included creating a raised plinth with pews, that extends some six feet or so into the nave, meaning the step up into the chancel is now firmly inside the nave. However, at one time, there would have been a rood screen filling the chancel arch. Recesses in the walls on either side of the chancel arch, indicate the position of the supports for this. Further wall recesses can be seen in the vicinity of the ambry. Maybe these also formed part of the supports for the rood screen or maybe there was some kind of surround providing storage for priestly vestments, candles, vessels and other requirements for the Mass.

### **The Bell**

Church bells have always been used to call the faithful to prayer, alerting people within earshot that a church service is about to start. However, during a mediaeval Mass, the bell would also be rung at the singing of the Sanctus (i.e. the Holy, Holy, Holy) and again when the consecrated host (the body of Christ) was shown to the congregation by being held aloft by the priest.

Sounding the bell would indicate to those outside the church building that the moment of consecration had been reached. Ringing the Sanctus bell remains a practice in today's Roman Catholic Mass and also in some high church Anglican communion services. However, it is more typically done using a small hand bell beside the altar. In pre-Reformation times, there were three bells hanging inside Hardwick church, including a Sanctus bell. Today, there is but one remaining, now housed in the open turret added as part of the 1878-79 restoration. This bell does, however, offer something of the literal sound of church life before the Reformation, as it was originally cast in the early 14<sup>th</sup> century (although it was recast in 1873). It is inscribed with the opening words, in Latin, of the Hail Mary prayer, spoken as part of the Mass, *Ave Maria, Gracia Plena* (Hail Mary, full of grace).

As all of the churches in the Shelswell Benefice are pre-Reformation in origin, they are all likely to also have the same or very similar vestiges of religious life before the Reformation as those found at Hardwick. Next time you are in a church, you might make point of looking out for them and thinking about the religious practices of our forebears.

## Hethe St Edmund and St George

CHURCHWARDEN: Flora Skinner, Fox Hollow, 2 Hardwick Road, Hethe

TREASURER: Mike Green, Greenhill Cottage, Main Street, Hethe

MAGAZINE CORRESPONDENT: Mike Green as above

WEBSITE: [www.hethe.org](http://www.hethe.org)

Tel 01869 277366

Tel 01869 278166

Tel 01869 278166

### News from St Edmund & St George Church & Community Activity

If you have any news or a local event to publicise, please send the details to me, where possible with a photo, and if suitable I will add them to next month's news and include them on the village web site. The deadline for this publication is on Page 2.

Many thanks, Mike.

### ST EDMUND & ST GEORGE CHURCH



### Church Access

At the time of writing this article the church was closed due to the increasing rates of Covid infection. For the latest information about opening and services, please look at the village or Shelswell Benefice web site.

Thank you to Alice and Flora and anyone else who enabled the Christmas Day service to be held in the church. It was very welcome.

## Church Funds & Regular Giving

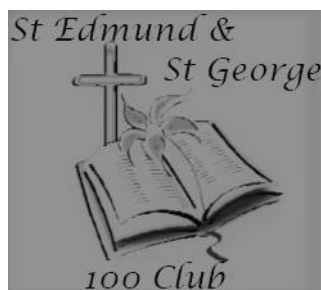
Thank you to everyone who contributed to PCC funds to meet the running costs of the church and helped to fund the porch repairs in 2020. This year we look forward to repairing the window in the west end of the nave and we will be discussing redecoration of the church. We have already received one very generous donation towards the cost of the window repairs. We will keep you informed of progress.

You may contribute regularly to general funds by direct debit through the Parish Giving Scheme - please phone 0333 002 1271. This line is open Monday to Friday, between 9.00am and 5.00pm. You will need to have your bank account details, our church/parish name (Hethe St Edmund & St George) and our PGS parish code (270627041) to hand.

For one-off and regular donations without setting up a direct debit we have an on-line giving page which can be accessed through our village web site under St Edmund & St George/Fund Raising.

For other ways of contributing to the running costs of the church, please contact [hethepccsecretary@outlook.com](mailto:hethepccsecretary@outlook.com).

## 100 Club



Draws are taking during the Shelswell Quiz on the second Wednesday of the month via Zoom. There are still plenty of numbers if you wish to join!

The results of the January draw:

- 1<sup>st</sup> Prize Alfred Mansfield
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Prize Robert Mansfield
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Prize Hamish McCorquodale

## Eco Church

The PCC have decided to delay a decision on an energy audit until later this year. In the meantime, both “Wild Oxfordshire” and BBOWT have indicated that they will visit the potentially wild areas to advise us on how best to proceed.

Our aim is to turn part of the churchyard into a natural, flowery space, to encourage wildlife and make it more attractive and interesting for visitors. Our long-term vision is to preserve the churchyard as a special, sacred place, remembering that if we turn it entirely over to nature, we forget the work of past generations who cared for it and we could impede access to graves and for on-going burials.

It would be good to involve Muddy Church and local families/children making bug hotels, etc. If you would like to be involved in any way (practical, guidance or funding) please let us know.

## Thank you to our Volunteers.

Many thanks to the volunteers who work so hard to make our church a special place in the community. They undertake varied roles from helping to maintain the churchyard, to church cleaning, to providing flowers, to being members of the PCC – all are thanked for their contributions.

## HETHE COMMUNITY ACTIVITY

### Village Hall

With restrictions changing so often, please contact the booking secretary on [fjskinner@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:fjskinner@hotmail.co.uk) for availability.

Remember to visit the village web site and Hethe Village Hall Facebook page to see the proposed changes to the hall.



 <div data-bbox="65 896 256 1099">  </div> <div data-bbox="328 947 740 976"> <a href="http://www.flowersdesignedbysteve.co.uk">www.flowersdesignedbysteve.co.uk</a> </div> <div data-bbox="450 994 616 1023">           07929 611 553         </div> <div data-bbox="328 1041 740 1070">           Facebook: <a href="https://www.facebook.com/Flowers.designedbySteve">Flowers.designedbySteve</a> </div>	 <div data-bbox="1011 898 1295 927"> <b>Orders Taken in Advance</b> </div> <div data-bbox="807 947 1501 976"> <b>Delivery from £5—Free Delivery Over £100 (within 10 miles)</b> </div> <div data-bbox="957 994 1353 1023"> <b>Pickup With Safe Social Distancing</b> </div> <div data-bbox="944 1041 1362 1070"> <b>Call for More Information and Prices</b> </div>
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## Adventure Playground

The playground on the village playing field off the Hardwick Road was open at the time of writing this article. Please follow the instructions on the gates concerning bringing your own wipes and taking litter home.

## Recycling

**The bottle bank is still open and is being monitored and emptied.**

There are three glass recycling banks available for clear, green and brown bottles on the driveway approaching the Village Hall.

Please dispose of your glass responsibly – DO NOT LITTER - take metal/plastic tops and plastic bags/cardboard boxes away with you to dispose of or to recycle at home. Thank you.



## SHELLOWELL NEWS SUBSCRIPTIONS

Thank you to all Shelswell News subscribers who have renewed their subscriptions. For those of you who have had a busy January and have overlooked payment, direct payment to the bank is the preferred method. Please contact the Magazine Treasurer for bank details (Phillip Rushforth Tel: 01280 848534 or email [prfinmere@btinternet.com](mailto:prfinmere@btinternet.com)) Alternatively, you can, of course, still pay by cash or cheque to your local distributor (Cheques payable to 'Shelswell News'). Thank you!



## Christmas Drive through....



An added attraction in December was the Christmas Carriage being driven through Hethe by Manger Equine who are based in Hardwick.

Manger Equine are a family run business who cater for carriage driver and horse riders' needs. They have over thirty years professional equestrian experience in the film and leisure industry, training horses to ride and drive as well as competing, jumping, driving trials and showing.

Photo reproduced with the permission of Manger Equine.

## Village Employment

The list below for 1841 shows how many villagers were employed locally in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century. This has changed drastically, although many villagers are working from home due to the pandemic and we do have a pub, farms and florists. At the time of writing this article, the Muddy Duck was closed (hopefully it will re-open in some form later this year). The village still has two working farms - Montague and Green Farms - and two Florists - Sandra at Lark Rise Flowers and Steve at Vine Cottage.

In 1841 Hethe had a population of 377 of which 147 were under sixteen. The population included some longstanding village families – Collingridge (5), Dagley (3), Fathers (9), Mansfield (8) and Morgan (4). The largest family were the Heydons with twenty-five members ranging from Jane at two months to Elizabeth at eighty years.

John Harrison of Shelswell Park was “Lord of the Manor” and principal landowner.

Employment:

- three farmers (Thomas Baylis, James Bonner and Thomas Collingridge)
- thirty-eight agricultural labourers (including John, Thomas, William and James Heydon)
- one gardener
- six general labourers
- seven making shoes (including William Mansfield)
- five tailors (including Thomas Morgan)
- one draper

- four bakers (including Elizabeth Dagley)
- four butchers
- one grocer
- two other shopkeepers
- one pig dealer
- four masons (Edward Fathers and John, George and Daniel Mansfield)
- one carpenter
- three sawyers
- two wheelwrights (one being Edmund Heydon)
- three grooms
- three blacksmiths
- one saddler
- two clerks
- one publican (William Haddocks)
- one maltster/beer maker (Robert Watts)
- one cooper
- a nurse
- one doing laundry
- six of “independent means”

In the 18<sup>th</sup> Century the following farms were listed:

- Nestleton (was Wesselden circa 1575)
- Mansfield (now Green Farm)
- Hospital – land owned by St Bartholomew’s Hospital (London) since the 12<sup>th</sup> Century
- Glebe – on the western boundary (land at Glebe farm was allotted to the Rector of Hethe in 1772 under the Enclosures Act)
- Willaston – on the eastern boundary

In 1960 St Bartholomew’s Hospital sold the last of their land in Hethe to the Squire of the Shelswell Estate, Mr John Dewar-Harrison. The farm, at the southeast corner of The Green, was absorbed into Montague Farm. The old farmhouse is now known as Hethe Cottage.

## Mixbury All Saints

CHURCHWARDENS: Martin Ayres, Northwell Farm, Finmere

Alec Howard, Middlestead, Mixbury

TREASURER: David Mitchell. 2 Town Farm, Mixbury

MAGAZINE CORRESPONDENT: Sue Goodman pasgoodman551@gmail.com

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## Church Services

The Church remains closed, but see details of on-line services on the back page of the magazine.

### Pop Up Pub Nights in Mixbury

Pop Up Pub Nights are suspended whilst the coronavirus pandemic is ongoing.

## The Elves of Mixbury Hall

Christmas Eve. Darkness falls. A waxing gibbous moon shines from a clear sky. The star of Bethlehem is visible to a lucky few. Beneath the trees, all is still and silent.

Then the silence is broken by the sound of many walking feet and low excited voices. The Mortals of Mixbury have been summoned by the Head Elves to visit Elves Hall !

On turning the corner, an unearthly, silver light can be seen, rising from the ground to greet us., together with Mr and Mrs Head Elf offering warming potions and pies. The upward light throws the trees into ghostly shapes, turning their trunks and branches white. We pass smiling, brilliant silver icicles on stilts, an enormous friendly polar bear with fairy attendant, and run the gauntlet of the scary forest where the trees grunt and shuffle in on us as we pass (well, 2 at least!). Dodging a snow storm, we listen to buskers and watch dancing flame-jugglers against the backdrop of Elves Hall, lit up in red, white and blue.

We greet friends and neighbours at suitable distances. As we leave Mr Head Elf gives each party a magic lantern to light our way home, so Mixbury becomes a procession of coloured lights and laughing voices.

It was lovely- surreal, sparkling, magical, joyful.

Thank you Mr and Mrs Head Elf for your warm welcome, your generosity and for allowing us all to be children for a special hour.

### Mixbury Covid Response Team

In light of the latest lockdown news, we just wanted to remind everyone that our Covid-19 Mixbury Reponse Team is still set up to help anyone in the village. We know many of you have your shopping slots booked which is great, but please do not hesitate to ask if you need anything picking up. The same goes for any medications and prescriptions.

We are in the depths of winter too so if you need help shovelling snow (if we get any), moving in firewood or you have an emergency then please ask for help.

Please just ask either by sending me an email or phoning one of the numbers below. The people listed are just the first point of contact - we have a happy team of people up and down the village who are there to help.

Tanya Howroyd 01280 847521

Siusai McCarthy-Wyper 01280 847035

Eryl Tobin 01280 848466

Alice Goodall 01280 848192

If you don't get a response from the first person you try, then please try one of the others.

from: Tanya Howroyd



A very warm Mixbury welcome to Wendell and Carol who have recently moved to the village. We hope you will be very happy here.

### All Our Yesterdays (by Bruce Epps)

The A421: A Turnpike /Toll Road: 1743-1871

The history group, in piecing together information relevant to the village and surrounding areas, obtains this information either by direct research or by coming unexpectedly across facts, which in turn, lead to more research - - - and suddenly the jigsaw pieces start to fit together. We realised that our 2018 catalogue of Mixbury's history and archaeology made brief reference to the A421 as a Turnpike or Toll road, but it was only at the end of last year that we became significantly more interested in the road when starting to research the history of the 'great coney (rabbit) warren' at Warren Farm. This is mentioned in records as far back as the C13th, and we have found it marked on a C17th map. Subsequently, a member of the history group came across a map of the 1950s which clearly shows 3 milestones on 'our' stretch of road – one at Mixbury, one at Warren Farm and one at Fimmere. As a result, we started doing more research on Turnpike/ Toll Roads and in particular the one that is now called the A421 which runs through the south of the parish.

A large network of roads and pathways was created in Britain during the Roman period and in the Middle Ages: by the mid C16th this network was called The Kings' Highway. Responsibility for maintaining roads was placed on parishes, who obliged residents to work without pay for up to 6 days a year in accordance with a 1555 Statute: when significant work required additional resources, these were met by levying property taxes in parishes. This public and local method of financing roads was satisfactory in Britain's pre-industrial economy. Road improvement and maintenance costs were low and largely internal to the parish. In neighbouring Buckinghamshire, we understand that women collected stones from the fields to provide a surface for the roads (more a cottage industry approach than civil engineering) and we are fairly sure that this was a common practise in rural areas generally.

Conditions changed during the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries when wages increased, and regional and inter-regional trade and travel began to grow. Food, fuel and consumer products were all moved about on roads, and there was a growing use of large wagons and carriages, which caused damage to the roads. As use of the roads increased and travel began to expand, it became necessary to find money to keep and improve highways. The result of this development was The Turnpike Act. The first Act was 1663, the second 1695, but it was not until the 1720s that the expansion of Turnpike roads was so marked. Throughout the country, there were 20,000 miles of Toll roads by 1840. The A421 was part of the Buckingham and Hanwell (Lower Division) Turnpike road and was nine miles long, with two main gates and two side gates. Turnpike roads were a source of great income: the now A421 is credited with an average income per main gate (and there were two) of £596 in 1834: that is the equivalent of over £70,000 per gate in current value. This road became a Turnpike road in 1743, until it ceased to be valid in 1871.

Turnpike roads were so called because the men who staffed them laid down their turnpikes across the road to prevent passage until a toll had been levied. Turnpike toll houses were erected on major roads, with gates at intervals, usually at bridges, crossroad, or where the adjoining ground constricted the road. The nearest to Mixbury was built at Finmere. Positioning was important to stop travellers evading the tolls. The gates were stout constructions, originally wood, then in the C19th they were made of wrought iron. Tolls were laid down according to the type of vehicle (coach, wagon, cart); the number of horses drawing the vehicles, and the type of livestock being transported. There is evidence that there were some toll exemptions for farmers transporting fertilizers, mail coaches, soldiers, voters on election days, those going to church on a Sunday, funerals and those visiting the sick.

Although Turnpike /Toll roads were affected by the newly built canal system, it was the arrival of the railways that ultimately caused their demise.

The milestones on our Turnpike/Toll Road are at Mixbury (on the far side of the road to the right as you join the A421 from the village); opposite Warren Farm entrance; and at Finmere, near the Red Lion, which was the old road before the bypass was built. The only one that is visible now, to our knowledge is the one at Mixbury.

## **MANAGEMENT AND ORGANIZATION OF MIXBURY HISTORY AND ARCHAEOLOGY PROJECT: NEXT STEPS 09/01/2021**

You may wonder what this piece had to do with All Our Yesterdays. After all, its about an event which is taking place now, in January 2021. I've included it for several reasons, but the most powerful one is that today's activities are tomorrow's yesterdays. On the scale of the significance of activities, Mixbury History Group taking charitable status is insignificant compared with the events in America's Capitol Building this week, but few people would deny now, or at the time the Capitol was invaded, that history was not then being made as the event unfolded. On a different scale, the creation of a history charity is an enormous step compared with the first display we mounted in All Saints church in 2017.

How we research and record our heritage, and what we do with the results, is important. The Institute of Advanced Legal Studies at the University of London is currently carrying out research into "undeposited records in Oxfordshire". Its first stage report found that "community archives are carrying out a vital role in preserving the history of their local area". So, a piece about the administration of our researches into Mixbury's past is judged to have some value, and establishment of a Charity to do this in our parish is history in itself.

We have made great progress over the last 4 years, in particular in researching and documenting the parish's history and archaeology. Adrienne Brunton, who is sadly missed, had given us a running start in many aspects of



our work: her guided walks around the village highlighted the importance of sharing information - and questions – with the community: and her cataloguing of the pottery sherds retrieved from the site of Beaumont Castle, and investigation of those from the Castle Field fieldwalk in 2017, showed the importance of “looking after” the parish’s heritage.

We have mounted successful displays on several occasions, drafted two books (the 2018 catalogue is in the Oxford History Centre Archives), and have recently created the [mixburyhistory.co.uk](http://mixburyhistory.co.uk) website. Individuals have networked through Archi UK, the Roman Road Association, ITHAS and, latterly, the Oxfordshire Local History Association (OLHA) and the British Association for Local History (BALH).

But we have reached the point where resources are needed to take forward some of our key aspirations, notably:

- Geophysics at key sites in the parish. Fusion, the organisation charged with preparatory work for HS2, have let us down by not fulfilling their agreement to survey those sites as a goodwill gesture to Mixbury.
- Publication of the 2018 catalogue, and the History of the Church in Mixbury before 1900. A further book, about the Church post-1900, is in draft but not yet ready to be published.
- A history display/archive facility in the church. Even the “simplest” display and storage cases are going to cost something, and we need to find a way of resourcing it which ideally is not in competition with the PCC’s arrangements for funding “improvements” at the church.

Whilst to date we have met all expenses – over £1000 on our achievements mentioned in the second paragraph above (mostly printing costs) - from our own resources it is beyond our personal means to find the funds needed to progress the three projects set out above. We have therefore looked at other sources.

- A direct appeal to the parish. Although the survey in October 2020 showed a high level of support for a history facility in the church, it seems improbable that an appeal would raise sufficient funds to progress the three projects. One point to consider here is the issue of “appeal overload”. The community has traditionally given money to support the Church in Mixbury and supported other good causes through initiatives such as soup kitchens and concerts in the church. But people only have so much disposable resource, and a “Funds for Mixbury’s History” campaign would be in competition with other needs. Perhaps this source could be kept in reserve if we find a small shortfall in fundraising.
- An application to the Community Fund managed by the Mixbury Association. Again, this could pitch the history project in competition with other needy causes identified in the parish. The Association’s resources are, at this stage also quite small (£6000?). Perhaps another reserve source.
- HS2 Community Fund. (£10 million available on a national basis, although at the end of November 2020 nearly £6 million had been allocated). Although the parish has already had £50,000 from this source, to contribute to the repair of the church, it is understood that other applications from the parish will be accepted if they are from different organisations which meet the eligibility criteria. The types of organisation able to apply include registered charities and fully constituted associations set up for a charitable purpose. As we do not have a track-record on a “constituted” basis the chances of making a successful application on this basis are diminished. As a registered charity we would stand a much better chance.
- Charities, e.g. Heritage Lottery Fund. In spite of recent reductions in funding available to many charities, including HLF, these remain the most likely source of funding for our projects, not least because several of them exist to support heritage work. I have been advised that the PCC is not bidding to the Heritage Lottery Fund to support the improvements it is planning to the church, which leaves the field clear for one or more bids for funds to support the three projects above. The various “outcome measures” which the HLF require when it makes grants - for example being able to show increased community involvement - may be onerous to achieve, but with the goodwill of the parish behind the projects we stand a good chance of being successful.
- Crowdfunding. As a last resort we could try crowdfunding. We are not familiar with this source of funding and need to research it further, but a preliminary look suggests it may be a possibility.

Access to the two most likely sources of funding, the HS2 Community Fund and Charities, require the History Group to become a registered charity and the Group has been exploring this over the last couple of months. The Charity Commission has all sorts of advice about different types of charity, the responsibilities of Trustees

of the charity, and the registration process. The model we have settled on is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO).

The Foundation model for a CIO is run by a small group of trustees. It must be registered with and make an annual report to the Charity Commission. This model seems to be exactly what is needed to take Mixbury's history and archaeology project forward. The Charity Commission document, "Constitution of a Charitable Incorporated Organisation whose only voting members are its charity trustees" sets out what we needed to do before we applied for recognition as a Charity. We are now waiting to hear from the Charity Commission about our application.

Although we have kept the number of Charity Trustees small (up to 7) for focus and ease of management, we have always said that Mixbury's history and heritage belongs to everyone. So, from the outset, the Trust will take on board the idea of creating "Associate Membership" for parishioners who want it. This will allow us to interact more frequently with those people who are particularly interested in Mixbury's history and archaeology. We will brief Associates regularly and use them as a sounding board as we go forward. Of course, from time to time we may still want to address the whole parish but not at the same level, or with the same frequency, as Associates. Anyone can approach us about our work, but Associates will be encouraged to contribute ideas and questions. Together the Trustees and Associates should make a good team with wider perspectives than if left to the "historians" alone.

When we have the Trust up and running we will send out further information to help the "joining" process. One benefit which some people might see from this arrangement is that we should be bothering less those folk who detested history at school and have continued to do so ever since! However, when we have the Trust up and running we will send out further information about the "joining" process for Associates to all parishioners. You will be entirely self-selecting about whether you want to be included in the Associate programme. The Trust will also explore at an early date the idea of associate membership for younger people – to date nearly all of what the history group has done has been aimed at adult audiences. Protecting heritage both in Mixbury and in other places will be more effective if we can encourage younger people to be involved now. More details about the Mixbury History Group Charity, in particular its Objects (purpose) can be found on the website, [mixburyhistory.co.uk](http://mixburyhistory.co.uk)

I hope that not only will this piece update Mixbury's Shelswell News readers, but that other parishes who are considering going down the same lines will find it useful. We are always willing to try and help.

Bruce Epps for the Mixbury History Group

[bruceepps49@gmail.com](mailto:bruceepps49@gmail.com)

## **Scammers target residents with the promise of Covid vaccine**

Residents are urged to be on their guard against scammers using the promise of a coronavirus vaccine to con them out of money.

Criminals across the country are contacting people out of the blue with offers of a coronavirus vaccination. These approaches have been made by text or from a recorded voice message on the telephone.

In each case, the recipient is required to respond by clicking a link in the text message or by pressing 1 when receiving the call. They are then asked to give personal information, as well as financial details to book their vaccination. However, these are scams, with criminals exploiting the pandemic to attempt to steal personal details and people's money.

The NHS is currently offering the COVID-19 vaccine free of charge to people most at risk from coronavirus. These people will be contacted by the NHS.

Other warning signs to watch out for include:

Scammers who try to get you to pay them money for 'early access' to the vaccine.

Scammers who ask for private information such as bank account details or your NHS number.

Scammers knocking on your door claiming they can get you early access to the COVID-19 vaccine.

Vaccine-themed phishing campaigns from suspicious email addresses with hyperlinks that contain misspelt domain names.

Highly emotive language designed to manipulate you; do not supply login credentials or personal information in response to an email.

People are urged to:

Monitor key financial accounts regularly.

Keep software and apps updated.

If you get a suspicious text asking you to click on a link this could be a scam. Do not click on the link.

If you receive a recorded voice message on your phone and are asked to press a number, this could be a scam.

Do not press any buttons and do not call the number back.

Report all scams to Citizens Advice Consumer Service on 0808 223 1133.

There has been a surge worldwide of vaccine-related 'phishing' email scams, and this is expected to increase in these in the coming days. Previous phishing emails have contained malicious files that installed malware, or links to bogus websites to obtain the victim's information.

Scams cost the UK economy £5-£10 billion a year and there is a scam out there for everybody. Before clicking on a link or providing your personal details, stop and 'take five'. Never be afraid to delete the text, put the phone down or close the door.

### **Things to do in lockdown:**

Sign up with the RSPB for the Big Garden Birdwatch (<https://www.rspb.org.uk/get-involved/activities/birdwatch/>), you don't have to leave home for this activity.

Go for a walk – plenty of lovely footpaths in the Shelswell Parish to explore, do a jigsaw puzzle or if looking for something to read the local Book Club have suggested several titles below, there should be something to suit all ages and interests in the following list.

Solo by Roald Dahl

Trio by William Boyd

At Hawthorn Time by Melissa Harrison

Watling Street by John Higgs

Spitfire by John Nicol

Cannery Row by John Steinbeck

The Woman in White by Wilkie Collins

My Favourite Wife by Tony Parsons

Cuckoo by Julie Crouch

Miss Garnet's Angel by Sally Vickers

The Giver of Stars by Jojo Moyes

### **Children's Books**

For 4 + years old Julia Donaldson, favourites: Tiddler and Room on the Broom

7 - 9 years David Walliams favourites: The Boy in a Dress and The Demon Dentist and Philip Pullman The Firework Maker's Daughter

8 years + Vote for Effie by Laura Wood - A Blue Peter recommendation and The Boy at the Back of the Class by Onjali Q Rauf

9 years + A Series of Unfortunate Events by Lemony Snicket -13 books in the series and The Ten Riddles of Eartha Quicksmith by Loris Owen

10 years + Scarlet Ibis by Gill Lewis and The Ten Riddles of Eartha Quicksmith by Loris Owen

## **Newton Purcell St Michael and All Angels**

CHURCHWARDENS: Ann von Maltzahn, Home Farm Shelswell Park

Sophie Crofton, South Lodge, Shelswell Park

TREASURER: Fai Li, 4 St. Peter's Close, Stoke Lyne, Bicester, OX27 8RB

MAGAZINE CORRESPONDENT: Ann von Maltzahn

Tel 01280 848680

Tel 01869 277232

Tel 07725 009838

Tel 01280 848680

### **Bethlehem to Nazareth Sponsored Walk-**

We would like to say a BIG thank you to all the walkers, those who very generously sponsored them AND to Will LeFevre who organised the whole event for us. The result exceeded all expectations and raised £750.00 which will help us hugely with the restoration of our special clock and bells.

For those of you who don't know, the clock was made in the nearby village of Tingewick by a Mr Packer in the early part of the 19th century and is considered to be extremely rare as it has two faces, one about five feet in diameter facing west and the other approximately two feet in diameter, facing south and at a higher level. There is a particular mention of it in 'Clockmaking in Oxfordshire 1400 - 1850' by C F Beeson. The Bells date from the middle of the 14th century and are thought to be of local manufacture.

### Bonus Ball Lotto -

Recent lucky winners were Ron & Sandra Ricks and Leslie Jones

### Welcome to Newton Purcell -

We would like to welcome to the village, Dee who has recently moved into No 1 Station Cottages, Carys & Philip who have moved into No 2 and Ashlea & Mark who have moved into No 3.

## Stoke Lyne St Peter's

CHURCHWARDEN:	Christopher Poole <a href="mailto:CTP@oxford-educational.co.uk">CTP@oxford-educational.co.uk</a>	Tel 01869 346020
	Ali Miller <a href="mailto:alisonjanemiller@icloud.com">alisonjanemiller@icloud.com</a>	Tel 07762 719198
TREASURER:	Janey Poole <a href="mailto:janey@oxford-educational.co.uk">janey@oxford-educational.co.uk</a>	Tel 07810 120457
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PARISH ROOM BOOKINGS :	Kelly and James Holden-White <a href="mailto:kholdenwhite@aol.com">kholdenwhite@aol.com</a>	Tel 01869345211
	WEBSITE <a href="http://www.stokelyne.org">www.stokelyne.org</a>	

### St Peter's Church Services

**Due to the latest Lockdown measures there will be no live services in church.  
Please see back page for details of services.**

### Church Organ

The December issue of the magazine had a piece by Brenda Hazel about the stained glass windows in the Chancel with lovely photos, also about the history of the organ, at the time she didn't have a photo of the organ, there are two photos of the organ below.

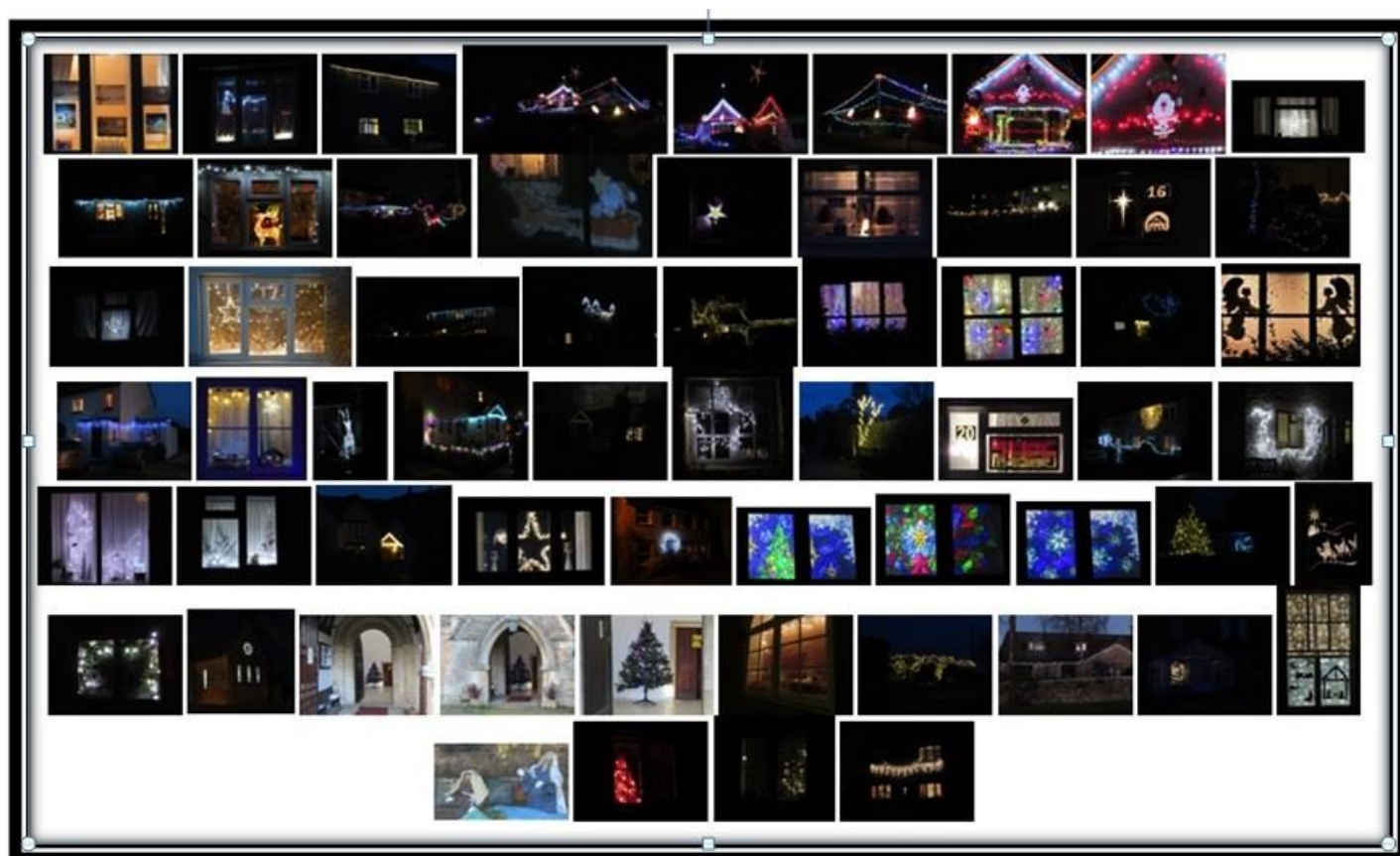






It was lovely to see all the Advent windows in the village and as you walked round in the dark there was a beautiful show of Christmas lights from the Green right down the village to the Street, every year Ron does a marvellous show, this year he surpassed himself, and it was better than ever, there were more houses decorated than ever before and I think it helped to take away the gloom of what is happening in the Country with this virus.

**This is a montage of all the Advent windows and lights.**



**The full versions of these photographs can be viewed at:**

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/0087ywoay3iur0i/AABLbBfU2CGOW9fUHhM814l8a?dl=0>



## Mary and Joseph

Mary and Joseph usually travel round the village but because of Covid restrictions they weren't allowed to travel so Pat Cherry looked after them until they found shelter in the stable where baby Jesus was born.

### General

This year 2021 hasn't got off to a good start so far. The one good thing that is happening is they have started to vaccinate locally now.

I had a walk round the Churchyard to see if there were any snowdrops out, we usually have lots out in January but there is no sign yet, by the left of the church gate opposite the bridleway we have daffodils in bud, but it looks like a lot of the daffodils on the other side of the gate seemed to have disappeared, perhaps they don't want to show their little heads because it has been so cold and will have a lovely show to report next month.

## A piece of village history and a record of when the Rectory was built The "Living" of Stoke Lyne

During the late 18th Century, the "living" of Stoke Lyne was in the gift of Joseph Bullock whose daughter, Amelia, inherited it upon the death of her father. Amelia married Canon Jacob Marsham who became the Vicar of Stoke Lyne from 1799 until 1812. Jacob and Amelia's youngest son, Charles, was gifted the "living" of Stoke Lyne by his elder brother, Robert, who had inherited the "advowson" (the right to dispense "livings") from his parents. Charles reigned as Vicar until 1867. Although Charles was respected by his parishioners, the Church authorities considered Stoke Lyne to be a "bad Parish" on account of Charles refusing to move with the times, his resistance to establishing a school in the village and the extremely limited programme of Church services he ran. Charles remained a bachelor all his life and was succeeded in the "living" of Stoke Lyne by his nephew, Cloudesley Marsham, son of Robert. In 1870, it was decided that Stoke Lyne Parish should merge with Caversfield Parish in consequence of which Bishop Wilberforce insisted that a new Rectory be built in Stoke Lyne. The new house, designed by the distinguished architect Henry Woodyer, was completed in 1872 at a cost of £2,500. Some of the original pipework survives on the house to this day and is engraved with the year 1871. Cloudesley, and his family, moved into the new house, becoming its first occupants.

Robert Hamilton became Vicar of Stoke Lyne at the end of Cloudesley Marsham's tenure and at some point, thereafter, it was decided to dis-unite the Parish of Stoke-cum-Caversfield, the Marshams having relinquished the patronage to Herbert Phillips of Caversfield House. The dis-unification eventually became law by order of "His Majesty in Council" in 1902 and it was around this time that the patronage of Stoke Lyne Benefice was taken on by Sir Algernon Peyton, 6th Baronet of Doddington, living at Swifts House

By this time, William Bryant had been Vicar of Stoke Lyne for 10 years, he, his wife, Emily, and four children having moved into the Rectory in 1892. Only one of the children, Emily Ermyntude, was fathered by William, the other three being the product of Emily's first marriage.

William was, by all accounts, a complicated character. Upon his arrival in Stoke Lyne he gave offence to some of his parishioners by refusing permission for the schoolroom, attached to the Church, to be used for so-called smoking concerts.

He remonstrated with a Church cleaner for sitting in his presence while he, himself, remained standing. He offended Sir Algernon and Lady Peyton by ordering their governess to stand during a recital, when she remained seated, after which the Peytons boycotted the Church and Sir Algernon resigned his Church Wardenship. Things went downhill from there.

First, his step-daughters left never to return

Four years later, his wife followed suit.

Apparently, this was all the fault of Stoke Lyne parishioners or so William lectured from his pulpit.

And so began a total boycott of his Church - organist, choir, parish clerk down to every single member of the congregation - with one exception, his daughter Emily Emyntrude who was 10 years old. Ever loyal to her father, Emily removed herself from any situation where she may hear criticism of him even refusing to attend school. Her world shrank to its just being her and William.

One evening, when aged 14, and having just received a Confirmation class from her father, Emily asked him whether, if she were to die before being confirmed, she would still be able to enter the Kingdom of Heaven. William replied that yes, she would. That evening Emily took some cyanide of potassium and, with it, her own life.

William was now entirely alone and required, by law, to continue to conduct services to which no-one came

In 1911, aged 57, William took a second wife who, apparently, found him as difficult as did the first. Three years later, William, irked about his wife visiting her relations, "smacked her four times on the shoulder fairly hard" and then fired a revolver through her bedroom window. Having done so he then went to conduct his Church Service (again, for the benefit of no-one but himself). For the "aggravated assault" on his wife he was fined £10 (with the option of two months imprisonment) and she was granted a separation order. William was alone again.

In October of that year, 1914, the revolver he had used to threaten his wife was pressed into service again when he turned it on himself.

I have never had it confirmed, but I have always assumed the suicide took place in what is now the Study.

After that, the Rectory remained in Church hands until, I presume, the 1950's when the Church, unable to afford the upkeep on the thousands of buildings in its ownership, sold it into private hands. We moved in in 2004 buying the place off Mrs. Jan Barstow (formerly Ewart). Mrs Jane Warde-Aldam, now of the Old Stables, Stoke Lyne, is a former owner.

I am indebted, for this information, to the book "Stoke Lyne: Portrait of a North Oxfordshire Village" by David L Woodhead and to the "British History Online" website.

Hugo Brown

## **Stoke Lyne W.I,**

We are still keeping in touch by telephone and sending birthday cards to members but because we can't meet they don't get their birthday posy. Some of our members have knitted hats for the Home and garden Craft competition, all our members voted for the Resolution and voted also for the changes in the constitution.

## **Fish and chips**

Stoke Lynians now have the pleasure of a monthly Fish and Chip supper, brought to them by van, which will park in St Peter's Close and is there from 4.15 pm. The next visit will be Saturday 6th February, for those of you wishing to place an order, you can telephone prior collection by telephoning 07483803475.

## Stratton Audley and Godington St Mary and St Edburga; Holy Trinity

CHURCHWARDENS: Jenny List    Email [jennyalto@gmail.com](mailto:jennyalto@gmail.com)  
Vacancy

TREASURER: Fai Li, 4 St. Peter's Close, Stoke Lyne, Bicester, OX27 8RB    Tel 07725 009838

MAGAZINE CORRESPONDENT: Vacant

**Services: Please see back page for details**

**Stratton Audley and Godington PCC** If you would like to know more please contact either Alice or Becky.

### **EWR Local Disruption**

An update from EWR was due today regarding road closures towards Marsh Gibbon and the safety audit of the Stratton Audley Park Road junction with the A4421 but these have been delayed and will be included in the village newsletter – please see village website or give our email address to John Honsinger for inclusion in his circulation list.

### **Stratton Audley Barn**

Richard and Sarah have decided that with the present situation in the country, they feel it is not the right time to open the takeaway café and so it will remain closed until further notice.

### **Village Bus Service**

As previously advised there is no longer to be a once-a-day bus service through Stratton Audley into Bicester. Under discussion for when lockdown is lifted is the introduction of a once-a-week Mini Bus scheduled service operated by Comet.

In the meantime Comet operate a dial-a-ride service for those that require transport for medical or essential shopping. There is a cost of 75p per mile which works out at under £5 for a round trip into Bicester, which is cheaper than a taxi both ways. The service operates Monday to Friday between the hours of 10am and 2pm. Should anyone require further information or wish to make a booking please contact the Comet team on 01865 323201.

### **Local Milk**

Will Lambourne and his wife Abi who run Townsend Farm in Marsh Gibbon (4<sup>th</sup> generation), have recently started a business selling fresh organic milk direct from their farm. Called The Milk Churn and situated just inside the farm gates in the village, there are two self-service vending machines, one dispensing one litre of organic milk and another allowing people to buy a one litre reusable glass bottle. They also have 12 flavoured milkshake syrups available some include chocolate, strawberry and butterscotch.

They are open 7 days a week; from 7am to 7pm. Both cash and contactless card payment is available. Their location is Townsend Farm, Townsend, Marsh Gibbon OX27 0EY. For more details see their Facebook Page 'The Milk Churn' or call them on 07369 236928.

Another company that delivers milk to your door that you might want to check out, is Milk & More :

[www.milkandmore.co.uk](http://www.milkandmore.co.uk) They offer a convenient service and already have several customers in the village.

### **Giving a Helping Hand to Spread Grit in the village**

Three yellow grit bins are located in the village, as shown below. These are not locked and are there to be used by residents as required. OCC does send a gritter lorry in severe weather conditions but it prioritises main routes so our roads can remain treacherous for longer. The Parish Council are keen to encourage everyone who is able to take a shovel and spread grit on the pavements or roads nearby or wherever you see slippery conditions.

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### **‘Shelswell News’ Advertising Rates**

If you would be interested in advertising in ‘Shelswell News’ please contact Becky Adams at the Benefice Office (01280 848192) on Tuesday, Thursday or Friday mornings between 9am and 1pm or email Becky on [admin@shelswellparishes.info](mailto:admin@shelswellparishes.info)

The current rates for advertisements are given below:

Size of Ad	Single Insertion	3 Editions	6 Editions	12 Editions
Whole Page	£32	£82	£150	£288
Half Page	£20	£46	£82	£150
¼ Page	£13	£36	£52	£92
⅛ Page	£9	£22	£36	£56

The approximate sizes of the adverts are:  
 1/8 page - landscape - 3.4" wide x 2.3" high  
 1/4 page - portrait - 3.4" wide x 4.8" high  
 1/2 page - landscape - 7" wide x 4.8" high  
 full page - portrait - 7" wide x 10" high

We do not reserve special positions within the advertising pages, but otherwise try to accommodate the needs of individual advertisers as far as possible.

The circulation of the magazine amounts to approximately 575 copies around the villages within our benefice.

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# VICTORIA PRENTIS MP

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### Meet Victoria:

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### Victoria Online:



@victoriaprentis



@victoria\_prentis



/victoriaprentis

[www.victoriaprentis.com](http://www.victoriaprentis.com)

### Contact Victoria:

#### Constituency:

01869 233685  
Orchard House  
Hopcraft Lane  
Deddington  
OX15 0TD

#### Westminster:

020 7219 8756  
House of Commons  
London  
SW1A 0AA

[victoria.prentis.mp](http://victoria.prentis.mp)  
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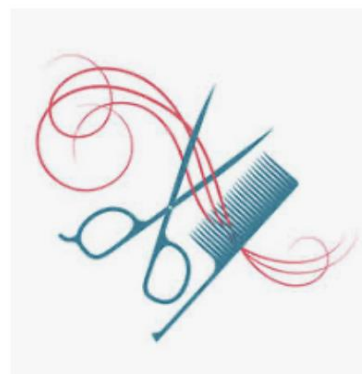
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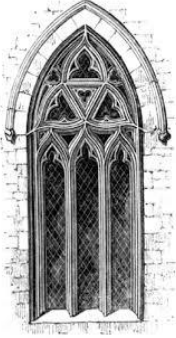
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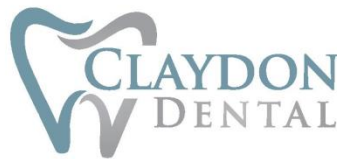
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## Worship during Lockdown 3.0

Once again, as I write this mid January, I am aware that the situation with the virus may well change before you get to read it!

The ministry team decided to close our churches and move our services online early in January after discussing our concerns about the increasing rates of Covid infection.

- When we first reopened our churches for services after Lockdown 1.0, there were very few cases in the vicinity. Our best memory is that it was between 50 and 150 per 100k in the Cherwell area, but on 3<sup>rd</sup> January, the number of cases in 'Caversfield, Ambrosden, Fringford' (which includes all the Shelswell villages but not Bicester) had risen to 88 cases (866 cases per 100k).  
<https://digital.nhs.uk/dashboards/coronavirus-in-your-area>
- As far as we understand it, it is not yet known why the new variant of the virus is more infectious, so whilst we have good procedures in place, we do not know if these are good enough.
- Most of the members of our congregations and indeed our ministry team fall into more vulnerable groups by virtue of age and / or health concerns.

The advice from the Diocese was that 'whilst it remains permissible for churches to continue to be open for their usual worship provision, we are encouraging parishes/benefices in the Diocese of Oxford to take a very cautious approach in the weeks ahead' and the other Benefices in our Deanery had either moved online only or were planning to do so for the following few weeks.

We will review the situation at the end of January, but until the rates of infection fall significantly, we will be offering:

1. **an online service of Holy Communion at 10 am each Sunday** (and whilst we are meeting only online, we are pre-recording these in an effort to avoid some of the technical glitches)
2. **live streamed reflections** Monday to Thursday at 12 noon
3. Zoom coffee morning on Tuesdays at 10.45 am – link from the Benefice office
4. Zoom quiz on Wednesdays at 1.30 pm.- link from the Benefice office

In addition, as well as the Zoom Lent Groups described elsewhere in the magazine, we are going to experiment with a couple of **Zoom services**:



Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> January – 6 pm – Compline by Zoom

Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> February – 4 pm (to be confirmed) – Evensong by Zoom

Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> February – 6 pm – Compline by Zoom

This will enable us to participate more directly in the service. If you would like to join, then you will need to contact the Benefice Office and Zoom link. If you would like to join, but haven't had experience of Zoom, then contact us and we will arrange to talk you through it.

We are continuing to monitor the situation and as soon as we consider it safe enough, we will reopen our churches for individual prayer and then get 'in person' services happening again! So let's keep sticking to those rules and hopefully it will be sooner rather than later!

Alice Goodall  
Rector

We look forward to reopening  
once rates are back down!

