

The Ampfield Messenger



The Parish Magazine of

September 2023

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The Parish Church of St Mark, Ampfield

Our vision: To be channels of God's love in the world

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DEADLINE: The third Friday of each calendar month.

Contributions to this magazine are always welcome, however it may be necessary to edit or shorten articles. Note that the views and opinions expressed in this publication are not necessarily those of the editor or the Parochial Church Council. Advertisements in this publication do not carry the endorsement of the editor or the Parochial Church Council.

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The sunflower on the cover was grown from a plant donated to St. Mark's Fete in June by Heather Claxton.



Letter from Vanessa

Dear Friends

I wonder when the last time was that you felt excluded from something? We are human beings, designed by God for relationship and connection, but we are also all broken humans - so inevitably we are going to misalign those connections sometimes! It happens to us all from time to time.

But churches are places where being excluded can feel particularly hard. Perhaps because faith is so intrinsic to our self identity - it is absolutely at the core of who we are. As Christians, we naturally want to show the love and compassion of God to everyone we meet, but sometimes we are all products of our traditions, our theological stance, or our cultural awareness. Over the centuries, many people have been excluded from the church for the colour of their skin, their gender, or their sexuality. People with disabilities have often been physically unable to get into the church. Single parents have felt frowned upon, parents of noisy children have been tutted at, those struggling with their mental health have found it hard to find a place of compassion.

We all want to welcome all who want to come to church. But we need to be honest and acknowledge that we don't always get it right! As a leadership team across our Benefice, we are working on a number of different areas of inclusion and welcome, and we would very much value your thoughts.. We are working on accessible entrances at St Mark's, and also thinking about the welcome we give to LBGTO+ people - look out for a survey coming soon in the newsletter! Please do get in touch and let us know your feelings about inclusion in our churches!

Vanessa



Weekly service pattern

Sunday Services

	All Saints	St Mark	St Denys	St John
1st Sunday	11:00 Messy Church	09:30 Tidy Church	09:30 BCP Matins or Communion	11:00 Communion or Morning Prayer
2nd Sunday	11:00 Communion	09:30 Communion		
3rd Sunday	11:00 Communion	09:30 Communion or Morning prayer	09:30 BCP Matins or Communion	
4th Sunday	11:00 Communion	09:30 Communion		
5th Sunday	11:00 Communion	09:30 Communion		

Midweek Services

When	Where	What
Tuesday, 10:30	St Mark, Ampfield	Small group Communion in St Mark's room, followed by coffee
Wednesday, 19:00	All Saints, North Baddesley	Communion in a peaceful candle lit space in the midst of your busy week

We are pleased to add a new service at St Denys to the monthly pattern of services. On the Second Sunday of the month there will be an informal service of Morning Prayer at 9.30am at St. Denys Church, Chilworth.



Benefice News

Friends for Lunch - Next date Wednesday 18th October

We hope all our diners are enjoying the summer break. We will be back in October if you would like to book a place, please telephone Kate: 07738467350



Ampfield Market - St. Mark's Stall

We will be back at the market in October, selling Christmas decorations and gifts. Thank you to everyone who has donated to our stall and made it such a great success.

Lunchtime Recitals at St. Denys Tues 12th Sept. 1pm

These will be starting again in St. Denys Church with Chilworth WI Choir performing. The recitals are free and there will be tea/coffee and cake. No need to book but donations welcome.

Wine Tasting at St. Mark: Friday 6th October 7.30pm

Join us for a fun, informal wine tasting event exploring the delights of half a dozen familiar wines. No experience necessary, enjoy getting to know some of the wines you like to drink. See p.8 for details of how to book.



Ride and Stride - 9th September

This is an annual event organised by the Hampshire and the Islands Historic Trust. It is a great opportunity for us to raise money for our churches as well as helping out the Trust, who in the past have given grants to our churches for various repairs. Please read all about the event using this [link](#). In the past a group of us have walked visiting local churches, whilst Francois from Chilworth rides his bike visiting all the churches in the Deanery! Would anyone like to take part in a walk? Please contact Sally for more details. If you can't manage the walk, why not join us for lunch in the White Horse?

Benefice News

Romsey Foodbank

Thank you to all who have been so generous with their donations of food and toiletries over the Summer Holidays. If you are able to buy a little extra on your next food shop for the foodbank that would be amazing. Items can be left in any of our churches, thank you.

Mission and Pastoral Measure 2011

Please can you read [this Notice](#) that we have been asked to publish as widely as possible. Briefly it is to transfer part of All Saints Church complex (the church hall) which was originally consecrated to the Winchester Diocesan Board of Finance, in order for it to become deconsecrated.

Sunshine Saints

Is a toddler and baby group which meets every Friday in term time from **10:00am to 11:30am** in All Saints Church.



Welcome Café at All Saints Church now every Thursday 10am—12 noon -

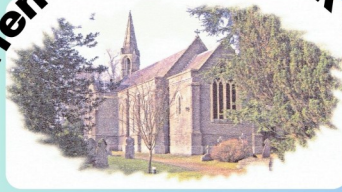
Social Hub at All Saints Wednesdays 9.30 - 12pm

Social Hub is a place to chat, have a drink, do a jigsaw and meet the Memory Box Foundation. You can relax with a book that has been borrowed from the Community Library (also open on a Wednesday morning) or just sit and chat. There are free drinks and biscuits and sometimes other treats!

New Sung Gloria at St Mark

On Sunday 27th August our organist Clive conducted us through a new and rousing version of The Gloria. The Peruvian Gloria rang out beautifully on a sunny Sunday morning.

The Friends of St. Mark's Church



**Invite you to
A Fun Wine Tasting Evening
Plus a Wine Raffle**

**St. Mark's Church Room, SO51 9BU
on Friday 6th October 7.30pm**



Tickets £10.00 each in advance £12 on the door
(over 18 only) including nibbles
available on line bit.ly/44nRFug
(or call 07799 435715)



Website: acnb-church.org

The Ampfield Market

**(Established in 2000, now in its 23rd year !)
will take place on**

Saturday 2nd September

**From 10am to 12noon
in Ampfield Village Hall
(SO51 9BJ)**

Our Market has a great reputation, we regularly sell fresh fruit and veg supplied by Hansards in Awbridge and delicious bread and cakes supplied by Matts Bakery. Honey, preserves, plants and fresh flowers. Cards, wrapping paper and books. Collectables, unusual crafts and jewellery. Clothes, toys and puzzles. Bric a brac, seasonal treats and much much more !

**We serve fresh coffee and a wonderful selection of
cakes throughout the morning.
Come along with friends and family to enjoy this special
monthly community event.**

Parking and admission are always FREE.

All proceeds support the Village Hall. Registered charity no.
1057353

Contact Julie on 023 80254587 for table bookings and
information.

Next date. Saturday 7th October 2023

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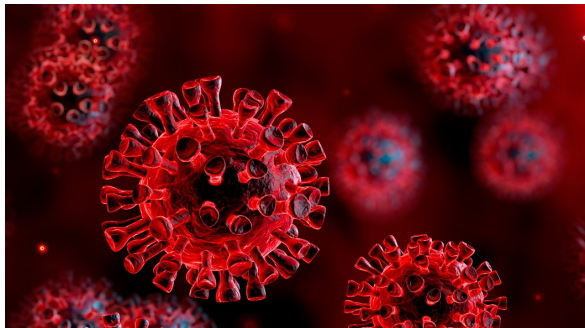
My journey as a GP through Covid

by Cathy

Covid was an experience unlike anything I had ever encountered before, as is true for most of us. It certainly turned my working life upside down. This is a brief account of how I worked through the pandemic, and how its aftermath continues to affect our lives.

At the time I was working as a GP in the practice near Cambridge where I had been a partner for almost 30 years. I had continued working there despite moving to Ampfield, doing a weekly commute. Although I had moved here to be near family in readiness for retirement, I found that I loved my job so much I was finding it difficult to fully retire! I continued going back to the practice in Cambridge for three days a week for almost two years after moving here. Ridiculous, I know, but I have always felt that I was so lucky to have a job I loved, and to work in general practice is itself such a joy and privilege.

I was actually off sick with covid myself when the announcement of a lockdown was introduced, so I missed all the frantic preparations the practice had to make to adapt. I was not really aware of the chaos developing in the country (world) at large, but I'm told it was fairly frightening. I had one daughter 'trapped' in the house with me, and the other unable to visit, both fairly frantic as they were watching the news unfold and worrying about me. I was lucky enough to recover without any serious complications, but missed the early chaos of the country locking down. I went back to work two weeks later to find the surgery changed beyond recognition and our usual working practices completely upended.



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The waiting room, usually so crowded, was empty, just a few socially distanced chairs around the room. Screens had been erected to protect receptionists and everywhere were masks, gloves, aprons and cleaning wipes to clean chairs and couches between each patient. The waiting room may have been empty but the phones were frantic. We had moved immediately to a system of 'telephone triage', assessing each patient on the phone and only asking those patients who needed to be seen to come to the surgery. This was important as we could not have patients, particularly vulnerable patients, in a crowded space.

Triage is actually very time consuming and stressful. It is certainly not an easier or quicker way of working. Some things are straightforward and easy to deal with on a simple phone call, but many consultations are far more complex. Many of the clues of a consultation are missed on a phone. It is always so reassuring to see a child playing in a waiting room rather than sitting still and quiet on a parent's lap; likewise, it is so helpful watching how someone gets up from a chair and walks, and so often body language will tell you that someone actually has some other worry on their mind and are building up courage to talk about it. Then, some of the telephone calls resulted in asking the patient to come to surgery to be seen and, in effect, those patients would be assessed twice thus taking more time, first on the phone and a second time in surgery. And as for the pictures of rashes and lumps and bumps that came via email - again, you can't beat seeing something up close and some of the pictures were very puzzling!

I think younger doctors adapted more easily than oldies like me. I probably asked more patients to come to surgery, and then had the difficulty of making sure I wasn't bringing too many people down at once as we needed to limit the number of people in the waiting room at the same time. Juggling telephone and face to face appointments - who ever would have envisaged our life changing to this overnight! I personally never mastered the art of video consultation.



Cont. ...

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Probably the biggest difficulty for me was changing my mindset, changing my pattern of work and the usual working practices I had built up over so many years. Who would ever have thought that I would issue a prescription for antibiotics simply on the basis of a phone call or a picture sent by email! Previously, I would rarely prescribe antibiotics without seeing and assessing a patient.

They might not need antibiotics at all for a viral infection, or they may be so poorly they needed hospital admission. None of this is easy to assess with a phone call - but that was what we had to do, and I personally found it uncomfortable and it took me some time to adapt.

It is said that the art of general practice is balancing risk. Illness evolves with time and we are seeing a snapshot and making a judgement based on the information available at that time. We don't want to miss anything serious, but we're also aware that too many 'false positives', i.e. cases where you think something might be serious but it actually isn't, also cause problems. For example, a poorly child could be in the early stages of meningitis or they could have a 'normal' viral infection that will clear up by itself. This may only become clear later on, so the art is looking for the subtle signals that something serious might be developing. Removing many of the clues that we had been trained to rely on certainly made me much more anxious and uncomfortable

So, we still saw patients, our surgery was never 'closed', and we had more daily consultations than before as many people needed both a phone call and a face to face appointment. We still did home visits, with everybody masked up, and still brought babies down to surgery for their childhood vaccinations but nevertheless it seemed that overnight our normal working lives had changed totally in ways we could never have envisaged. Although the waiting room was quiet, we had rapidly changed our way of working to cope with the environment in which we then found ourselves. Despite some of the negative press, we were all working probably harder than ever before!



Cont. ...

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Obviously I needed remedial teaching to even set it up - but seeing a picture of myself on the top of the screen (horrors) as well as various family members and children popping into the picture all the time was very disconcerting and I decided to give that one a miss.

We still had staff meetings, socially distanced in the waiting room wearing masks, in order to plan and evolve, but these were necessarily much smaller than before the pandemic and involved far fewer staff. We had always prided ourselves that we had regular meetings with all staff: doctors, nurses, receptionists and administrative staff. I think this gave everyone a chance to feel fully invested in the practice, their views, difficulties and ideas fully shared. Suddenly all this stopped. I think this took a toll on everyone's mental health.

Receptionists, I think, have one of the most difficult jobs in the surgery but the change in working practice meant everyone was far more isolated in their role and communication between us all, previously so healthy, became much more fractured and difficult. Our village surgery had always felt like a family, we supported each other, we had fun, we socialised both at work and outside and of course this had to stop. In addition to feeling more isolated at work, many staff felt fearful from the interactions they necessarily had to have with patients



We, the partners of the practice, had a duty of care towards our staff as well as our patients. We tried to support them as best we could but I think everyone felt the strain. Interestingly, we were later offered a blood test to see who, if anyone, had had covid - even the asymptomatic cases. I was the only member of staff who tested positive!

Cathy



Ron and Stella's Quiz Night

1. On a dartboard, what number is directly opposite No. 1?
2. How many colours are there in a rainbow?
3. What is Cynophobia a fear of?
4. Who is the author of Jurassic Park?
5. What item is the Werewolf most afraid of?
6. What alcoholic drink is mainly made from Juniper Berries?
7. What is the last letter of the Greek Alphabet?
8. When did the website "Facebook" launch?
9. How many notes are there on a standard Grand Piano?
10. On what Japanese City was the first atomic bomb dropped?



Answers on p. 37

AWAY WITH THE FURRIES

The sea whipcurdles cream top waves
that fling themselves on soaking sand
gulls swerve the skies to screech their
eerie cries above the roaring sea
dogs of every shape and size
their owners bring four legged friends
to socialise unsanitised or hindered
by unnecessary rules
from snuffling pugs to Afghan hounds
and all the sizes in between

Children dabble in the surf
protesting terror at the waves
but going back for more
and we, the mere spectators as the
carnival rolls on, admiring this
aghast at that, consuming large ice creams

With fresh caught fish and wine-tipped evenings
time passes like a honeyed breeze
until the marmalade skies of evening
promise another summer's day



Lyn Smith

An Encounter in St Mark's Churchyard

By Ian Case

On a summer morning last year I was doing one of my St Mark's church opening rotas. As I approached the church door I encountered a fine looking man near the bench. His bearing was noble; his stance was upright, his eyes were clear and enquiring, his skin was a beautiful shiny ebony, his hair was of short well trimmed tight curls going slightly grey and his nose was aquiline not in keeping with what was clearly an African heritage of some pedigree. He wore hiking boots and by his side was large rucksack with a sleeping bag rolled up on top. Before he spoke I perceived an intelligent person who wanted to engage with me.

"Are you camping?" I asked.

He smiled. *"Yes, I am. I'm walking the Monarch's Way."*

"That's no easy task."

And he proceeded to tell me in some detail about his adventure so far and the history of the Monarch's Way. He was well spoken and clearly well educated. I saw an opportunity.

"That's a most interesting story and it would make a great subject for an article in our St Mark's Parish Magazine," I said. *"May I take your picture and you can tell me more and I'll write it up?"*

As soon as I reached into my pocket to get out my phone for a photo, he scuttled off towards the hedge with his back to me.

"No, no. No photographs. I won't have that," he protested.

I put my phone away.

"Ok I understand. Here's a card with my name and address. Please write to me and tell me about your adventure and I'll publish it without a photo, if that's ok."

He agreed and came back and sat on the bench.

"I am about to open the church" I told him. *"You can go in and have a look around if you like."*

"Oh, yes please. I'd like that and I will say a Rosary when I'm in there."

With that, I opened the door and bid him good walking.

Cont. ...

...Cont.

Six months later I received a handwritten letter and handwritten enclosure from James Kibukamusoke from Brighton. They were written in pencil.

Dear Ian

Artical (sic) for your parish magazine

You may remember Me. (sic) I was hoping to say a Rosary in your church, whilst walking the Monarch's Way.

The Lord has forbidden me to respond to your request until I've heard that you've responded to the enclosure.

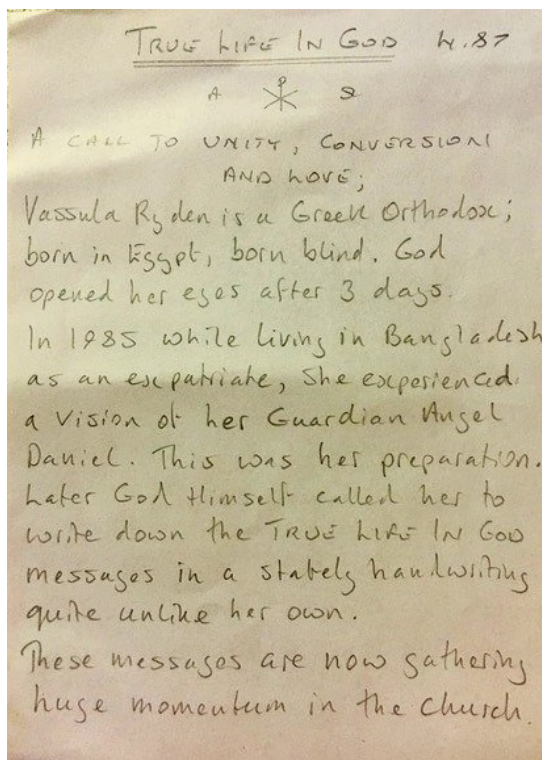
God Bless!

Yours in Christs (sic) love the Marg (indecipherable)

JH Musk T.... (Unreadable)

JAMES KIBUKAMUSOKE

TRUE LIFE IN GOD (sic) CHURCHES Enc: THG 4.87



TRUE LIFE IN GOD H.87

A ✕ S

A CALL TO UNITY, CONVERSION
AND LOVE;

Vassula Ryden is a Greek Orthodox;
born in Egypt, born blind. God
opened her eyes after 3 days.

In 1985 while living in Bangladesh
as an expatriate, She experienced
a vision of her Guardian Angel
Daniel. This was her preparation.
Later God Himself called her to
write down the TRUE LIFE IN GOD
messages in a stately handwriting
quite unlike her own.

These messages are now gathering
huge momentum in the Church.

... Cont.

The enclosure was an A5 handwritten list of four publications either for free, £1, £5 or £15, cash only to an address near Milton Keynes. On the back was a handwritten call to unity.

I have not responded but feel somewhat guilty at not doing so. The small amount of money involved indicates that there is no attempt at material gain and Googling the True Life in God Churches brings up a variety of different organisations. Some are in the USA and others in England.

Keep a look out for James. He's a lovely, engaging chap and he puzzled me but he brightened my day.

ORDER INFO
Non DIGITAL
(This must be stated on the order)

① COMPLETE MESSAGE	£
BOOK (p.p £3)	15
② MY ANGER DANGER	
THIS EARLY DAWN	5
TYPESET EDITION	
(p.p £1)	
③ PRAYER MEETING	
GUIDELINES (p.p. 50p)	1
④ ALL DOCUMENTS BY	
JAMES KIBUKAMUSOKI	FREE
(p.p £3.50)	

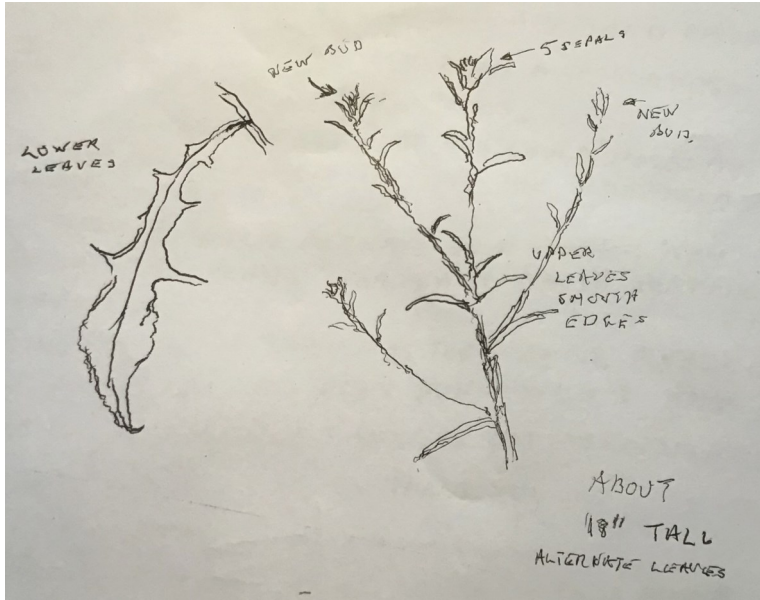
PAYMENT : CASH ONLY

ORDER TO: THE BUCKINGHAM
WHITE HOUSE COTTAGE
LIMINGSTONE DAYRELL
MK18 5AH



Ian Case

CAN YOU IDENTIFY THIS PLANT GROWING IN ST. MARK'S CHURCHYARD?



HINT ON P. 23

"Earth provides enough to satisfy every man's need, but not for every man's greed." Mahatma Gandhi.

Tick Off!

Living in a semi-rural woodland area, or being a gardener, you are probably already aware of the hazard of becoming a host for a blood sucking tick.

Some of these ticks can infect you with Lyme Disease. Symptoms range from a spreading red rash, to fever, headache muscle and joint pain, arthritis and even death. I believe Lyme Disease can be detected by a blood test but only *after* about six weeks from the initial tick bite.

It is said that you can lessen your chances of Lyme Disease if the tick is removed quickly after it has begun sucking your blood. One of the most successful ways of removing the tick (it is important that its head is removed) is by using a **Tick Lasso**. These are available online. Tick Lassos have an action similar to a spring loaded propelling pen. It is important that you then make sure that you kill the tick by squashing it very firmly between two very hard smooth surfaces, otherwise ticks are capable of making a quick 'get-away'.

To add to our gardening and woodland/meadow wanderings is news that tick-borne encephalitis (TBE) has been found in the U.K. for the first time - in the Yorkshire area and in ticks on deer in Hampshire and Norfolk. TBE can cause symptoms similar to Lyme Disease also paralysis, convulsions, loss of balance loss of sight and death. A vaccine is available and if you go abroad on a camping/walking holiday it might be wise to get vaccinated.



...Cont.

Prevention hints:

- Don't walk through long grass
- Don't wear long floating garments or bell-bottomed trousers
- Don't wear open-toed/sided sandals or walk barefooted.
- Tuck trousers into socks (socks should not be made of wool from sheep).
- Treat socks and trouser legs with Permethrin-containing insecticide. (First read its label for safe use).
- Wear light coloured clothes so you can spot more easily an invading tick.
- Do a daily body tick-search as they can wander about for some time until they find a tasty spot!

More information is available from the British Medical Association:

[Tick bite | The BMJ](#) ;

[Lyme disease - Symptoms, diagnosis and treatment | BMJ Best Practice](#)

And from the UK Health Security Agency:

[Tick-borne encephalitis: epidemiology, diagnosis and prevention - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

[Lyme disease: signs and symptoms - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

[Tick awareness and the Tick Surveillance Scheme - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

Finally, if you put long grass/garden waste in your car, make sure the bag is well sealed. I know of two cases where ticks have been found wandering around the inside of the car after a visit to the council tip.

Anon.

Where is the life we have lost in living?
Where is the wisdom we have lost in knowledge?
Where is the knowledge we have lost in information?

T.S. Eliot "Choruses from "The Rock"

Pyramids in Hampshire and Sussex

by Liz Hallett

Let's go out into a couple of churchyards this month for a change, and learn about the eighteenth century family which had quite a craze for building pyramids in the South. Have you visited the church of St Andrew at Nether Wallop? It is a fascinating place, but as well as the treasures inside, you will also have noticed a large pyramid in the churchyard. This was built by Francis Douce, a benefactor to the parish and a great eccentric. Before his death he had the pyramid constructed, topped by a stone flame, and in the course of time, in 1760, was buried inside it.



Nether Wallop pyramid



Farley Mount monument

It was his cousin, Paulet St John, who built the pyramid on Farley Mount, a landmark seen from miles around. This was not for his own burial, however, but for that of his horse, re-named 'Beware Chalkpit' after he had 'leapt into a chalk pit twenty-five feet deep while foxhunting, with his master on his back'.

Cont. ...

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The horse had survived and the following year had won the Hunter's Plate on Worthy Down, and was clearly a much-loved animal. The most memorable member of the same family, perhaps, was 'Mad Jack' Fuller of Brightling in East Sussex, member of Parliament for Lewes and weighing 22 stone. He spent much of his life building a variety of follies on his estate including a pyramid-shaped mausoleum, in which he in his turn was buried after his death in 1810. Tradition had it that he was buried sitting upright at a table in full evening dress with a bottle of port in front of him. Alas, when the wooden door had to be replaced in 1938, this was found to be untrue and he had been buried much more conventionally beneath the floor of the tomb.



Brightling Pyramid



Liz Hallett

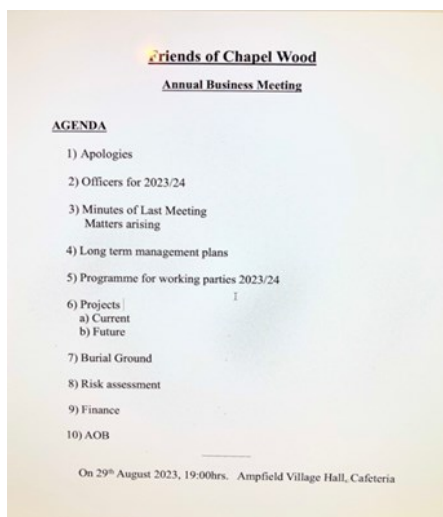
IDENTIFY THE PLANT ON P. 19– HERE 'S A CLUE:

“It is a hard question”

Go to p. 37 for the answer

Friends of Chapel Wood

With the onset of Autumn comes the realisation that, for the Friends of Chapel Wood, September also marks the start of a new year in the woodland. Last week, we held our Annual Business Meeting, which pulls together the events of the past year and sets out our plans and aspirations for the year ahead. Although the past year has been challenging, largely due to events outside of our control, most notably the weather, the prospects for the year ahead look good and we hope to enjoy good progress with our twin longer term aims of maintaining a healthy, natural community woodland, whilst continuing to remove the invasive rhododendron.



One very good thing is that over the past year our membership has increased, and, more importantly, we have attracted some new younger members to the group (well, everything is relative!). This means that, as well as the routine tasks such as keeping the footpaths clear and removing bracken from the open glade areas, we can now plan to take on some bigger jobs, for example, the removal of rhododendron roots in certain key areas. We can also resume coppicing the holly to re-establish bushier plants.

Cont. ...

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In terms of our existing projects, our contractor is scheduled to clear the slope to the west of St. Mark's Church and to install the long-awaited pathway later this month. Once complete, the Friends will begin a planting programme to reintroduce woodland flowers and understory shrubs in the area. The Hampshire Biodiversity Information Centre has kindly given us a record of plants that traditionally inhabited Ampfield Wood, and this will form the basis of our planting list. We plan to begin this process over the winter months.

In the burial ground, many of the box plants forming the cruciform in the centre of the burial ground look as if they will not survive another winter. A combination of blight and caterpillars have taken a heavy toll. We are waiting to see whether any of the plants will show signs of regrowth allowing them to survive but, unfortunately, we are not optimistic. If we need to, we will replant the hedge over the winter, using yew.

The Friends of Chapel Wood is a group of keen volunteers who look after Chapel Wood, the Ampfield community wood that surrounds St.

Mark's church. New recruits are always welcomed, so if you fancy the idea of joining some neighbours for a few hours once a month, just turn up in the St. Mark's car

park at 09:45 on the second Saturday of every month.

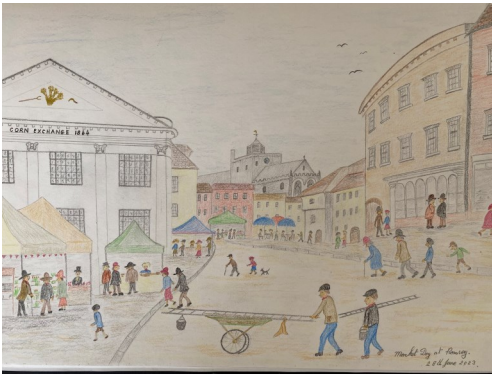


Graham Roads

Ampfield Art Class Gallery



Karen painting Iris: acrylics



Old Romsey: Nick,
watercolour

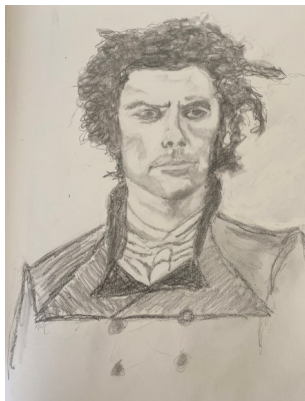


London Skyline at night
Karen: acrylics



Napes Needle Cumbria
Graham: inks

Ampfield Art Class Gallery



Poldark: Frank, pencil



Rame Peninsular, Cornwall
Diana, acrylics



Ruby 1 & 2
Andy, watercolour pencils



Julie Trotter's Art Class takes place on
Thursday afternoons
from
2-4pm at the Village Hall

Thought for the Month

Procrastination is the thief of time (and sleep). I will hold my hand up to being guilty of procrastination. I try so hard to do things on time, but often find myself rushing that little job I have agreed to do and consequently lie awake in the night worrying about it. This is a trait I have had since my school days, that piece of homework that had to be handed in the next day, Would I have got a better mark if I had got it done and not had to rush it?

We all have very busy lives and we talk about how much we have to do, with so little time to do it. It can seem to others that we are lazy if we haven't done a particular task by the deadline. We can be lazy in so many ways; our relationships with others, disciplining our children – it's sometimes easier to tidy up/clean their rooms ourselves rather than have a confrontation with them! There are times when I put off doing something I have agreed to do until the very last minute because it is something I don't really enjoy. It's so easy to make excuses for inaction. I have recently been reading Proverbs and there is one verse which describes this.

“There's a lion in the road! There's an angry lion roaming in the streets!” (Proverbs 26.13).

Get on and do something about it then! I try very hard not to procrastinate; perhaps I will achieve perfection before I die, but probably not!



What I like the most
is swimming in the oceans
but along the English coast
I'm just going through the motions
Henry Normal



Silversurfers

Still on Mental Parole?

by Paul Oliver

Lockdown ended a while ago with most people returning to a normal life. But life isn't the normal it was, is it? Well not quite, some people have good reason to remain vigilant and to take precautions against what may be lurking out there. Others may have suffered personal tragedies while in lockdown. Lockdown is not over for everyone.

Like most people I seemed to have coped with both lockdowns well enough, finding new things to do, appreciating a level of unpressured time at home to get things done I had put off for years. I amused myself finding new pursuits, to read more, watched too much TV and listened to music I had left lurking in record collections. This old dog learned a few new tricks along the way too. I tell myself I have emerged from lockdown unscathed, almost. Now, two years later I am back to my normal behaviour, venturing out to restaurants, the cinema, shops, visiting friends and family and going to places of interest; except places of interest, which I have developed an almost unconscious tendency to avoid.

There is something within the shadows of my consciousness which makes me wary. I tend to steer away from crowded places and feel a greater comfort being at home more often. I ask myself, "is my behaviour back to normal, or an adjusted behaviour which has become my new norm, post lockdown." I doubt if I am alone in feeling just a little different than before.

Nostalgia is not what it used to be either, because it has had to adapt to fond remembrances of life before the Coronavirus pandemic. Never mind, at least I have become a little more thoughtful and considerate of others. A meagre improvement, but a welcome one nonetheless. Not that I would expect anyone to notice. Not noticing things, I suspect may have been on the increase while we navigated our ways through the hazards of Covid towards safer waters. While focussing on individual struggles, have we failed to notice those around us who may still be struggling?

Cont. ...

...Cont.

Has Covid made us a little more insular in our thinking? It may not only be how we go about our daily activities which has changed. I have been reflecting upon what may need a little adjustment in my consciousness. Am I thinking enough of others? Is there more I should do?

However, in contemplating life, I realise there is still a world of difference out there and life is not really as it was. The hospitality and travel industries suffer from a lack of the level of custom they once enjoyed. And when we do go out there are more precautions and different systems in place to protect customers and staff, although these now appear to be easing. There is a noticeable lack of people out and about at times.

The world has experienced a traumatic event with consequences we had not previously needed to contemplate. When people experience a traumatic event, they often claim that the experience has been life changing. I have been through those experiences myself, so know it to be true. What my experiences have also taught me is that as those traumatic experiences fade into the past, the life changing effect fades with it, if not completely. We are creatures of habit. This encourages me to believe that, while there may be further health pandemics around the corner, we may get back to normal, or at least a new one we can cope with and enjoy. Meanwhile if you feel uneasy when you go out, thinking that you are on parole and not yet free to enjoy life as you once did, that a mental electronic tag encircles your once free spirit, it will eventually release you. If you want it to. Be your own parole officer. Life is there to be enjoyed and I have decided to do just that, responsibly of course, well almost. The shackles are off and I am feeling footloose and fancy free. I hope that if you have not already, you get to feel the same quite soon.

Meanwhile if your coping strategies could do with a pint and a chat down the pub, coping responsibly of course, I am easily tempted. A cup of tea or coffee works equally as well, although being responsible with the biscuit tin is another matter entirely.

Paul Oliver





‘Better Days’ **by Henry Normal**

Midwinter we yearn for spring
Midnight we look to the dawn
We hope for better days

We make plans for when we are stronger
When infection has passed
When the fracture has healed

We ready ourself for the longest of roads
We study to stand in good stead
We strive so at some stage we can rest

And even on the sunniest day
We prepare for the coming storm

We bide our time
We watch our step
We correct our course

We pray for someone or something to take us somewhere
Somewhere better
We spend our whole lives searching for better days

And when we look back
There they were

We are the someone we prayed for
We are the something
This is the somewhere better

These are the better days
These are the better days

Henry Normal kindly allowed us to print this poem. Check out his Website — inspiring! [HENRY NORMAL | Writer / Poet / Film Producer](#)

From the Messenger Archives

September 1975

CREDIT CARD

Thanks to the S.P.C.K. and to the Magazine of St. Mary's Davyhulme, Manchester and to Mrs. Coatsman, the advice below may help if you are visited by people selling cheap 'Watch-tower' books and tracts.

WHAT TO SAY TO A JEHOVAH'S WITNESS. I admire your zeal in trying to forward your beliefs. I am sure you are sincere. But I do not want your literature. You preach a cruel and unreasonable god who is going to sweep most of his children away in a horrible battle called Armageddon, while you witnesses stand and look on. I don't believe that you will really like to look at such a wicked thing. You are too kind for that. Yet you make out that God is not good and kind. He destroys his own children, not because they are evil, but because they do not join Jehovah's Witnesses. You would not treat your own children like that. So that you are better than the god you preach. For ages he has known, according to you, that he was going to have this horrible battle of Armageddon, and yet he has gone on making more children to be destroyed. I want nothing to do with such a god. If you go on preaching him, cruel and unreasonable, you will get to be a little like him. You Witnesses consider this world hopeless and so leave it to perish. You make no effort to help the suffering by supporting hospitals, orphanages or other works of mercy. You take no part in seeing that we have good, honest Government. I believe in the true God, the God of love. Not in a strange god of hate. I believe in the Gospel, that means the good news, that God loves us and cares for us. I do not believe your message of bad news. I know what the true God is like. Jesus is the true picture of what God is like. Your God is not one bit like Jesus who went about doing good, healing the sick, feeding the hungry and dying for us instead of destroying us. You are too good to be a Jehovah's Witness. Be a witness for Jesus and the God of Love. Spread his good news of the gift of eternal love here and hereafter. Thank you for calling and listening. I shall be pleased if you will read this. Good day, and God bless you and convert you.

HOLY BAPTISM

August 3rd Paul Andrew, son of Alan and Jennifer Edwards of 34, Porteous Crescent, Chandlers Ford

A Kitchen Garden (GFG)

by Graham Roads

Looking around the kitchen garden this morning, it is hard to accept that, for another year, autumn is close by. The beans are still producing wonderful crops each week, the kale and the Cavolo offers the kitchen many different options and the herbs just keep going. For a change, finding a good assortment of dishes from the garden has been relatively straightforward this summer. Everything has contributed.



We rediscovered the versatility of flatbreads for everyday suppers. Made from simple flour and olive oil, the bought variety weighs in at c. 230 calories per flatbread. Even with the tastiest of topping, it is unlikely to exceed 600 cal. per flatbread. Try them with a base of pesto, made with a combination of flat-leafed parsley and rocket, on top place some sliced tomato or some very thin slices of courgette. Top it off with feta cheese or ham or both (!) and bake for about 6 minutes. This is definitely not a pizza but it is superb.

Cont. ...

Cont. ...

The main issues we have experienced this summer seem to have been self-inflicted and centre on the green house. There is a suspicion our watering regime did not combine well with the June temperatures. As a result, the tomatoes developed signs of physiological disorders, e.g. blossom end rot, splitting and russetting. Each of these is a symptom of irregular or poor watering, this might also have been exacerbated by the use of a different brand of compost, which, once dry, proved very difficult to rewet. There is always something to learn!



On the subject of learning, we discovered something we have not experienced before. From July onward, the cabbage white butterfly is a prevalent visitor in the kale bed.. Their little caterpillars can prove to be a nuisance as they search for food, normally the bits of the plant we like to eat! We noticed that blue tits and robins like caterpillars as

much as the caterpillars like leaves. It has been very entertaining watching them all play hide and seek but certainly we seem to have very few problems and those caterpillars that have been missed we have been able to pick off by hand.

As usual, all the information needed for growing vegetables successfully can be found on the RHS website:

<https://www.rhs.org.uk/advice/grow-your-own>

This also provides a great summary and good ideas on what to do now as well as recipes. It would be great if we could all put together a collection of recipes, focusing on stuff that we have grown ourselves. Send all thoughts, ideas and contributions to Chris. They are most welcome.

Graham Roads

*A Prayer for children facing a new
school year*

Lord give our children a thirst for
knowledge,

wisdom and understanding.

May their hearts be ready to learn this year,
at home, school and church.

Open their ears,
may they crave knowledge and seek it out.

AMEN



Lauren Gaines

Answers to Ron & Stella's Quiz Night

1. 19
2. 7
3. Dogs
4. Michael Crichton
5. Silver
6. Gin
7. Omega
8. 2004
9. 88
10. Hiroshima

ANSWER TO 'CAN YOU IDENTIFY THIS PLANT GROWING IN THE CHURCHYARD?'

*Hard Heads: A member of the knapweed family —
Centura Nigra. The flower is purple when it
opens.*

Anon.



Rotas for St. Mark in September

Date	1 st Reading	2 nd Reading	Intercessions	Sides	Coffee	Music
3rd Sept.	Tidy Church				Jean	Mark & Abbie
10th Sept.	Ron Ezekiel 33: 7-11	Robyn Romans 13: 8 - 14	Rob	Jean Sally C	Heather C	Organist
17th Sept.	Jennie E Genesis 50: 15-21	Heather S Romans 8: 1 - 11	Jean	Chris Jennie E	Jennie E	Nick
24th Sept.	Rob Jonah 3: 10-4;11	Mark B Phillipians 1: 21-30	Sally	Heather C Ron	Stella	Organist

Flowers: Chris

Coffee after Communion:

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