

The Heron

Community Magazine

Delivered to homes in Christchurch, Euximoor and Tipps End

January 2023

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Wicken Fen in Winter
See article on Page 27

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WILDLIFE WATCHING IN JANUARY

The sparse coverage and food in January mean that our birds are easily spotted when they are searching for a meal. Previously, having lived in a city, many of our birds of prey were unfamiliar to me. So, this winter, I've enjoyed finding out what we have around. The most frequent sight I've noticed is the common kestrel. These birds are very easily spotted because of their distinctive hunting method. They can often be spotted hovering almost stationary over verges, watching for voles. When doing this, they use the winds and small movements of their wings and tail to remain in the same space. Although their body might move a bit, they use their neck to keep their heads entirely stationary to keep a good watch on the ground below. Needing 4 to 8 voles a day, they are busy birds!



Of course, I have to talk about Herons! Late winter is a great time to spot them.



Herons will often appear wherever there is water. Ponds, rivers, and even flooded fields. They aren't picky eaters and eat frogs, water voles, and won't say no to most fish – including ornamental fish. Their breeding season is coming up, and if our water doesn't freeze over, there should be lots of nest building towards the end of the month. Herons build their nests in trees and, as they are social, there can be up to 10 nests in any one tree. However, I wouldn't go looking too close as Herons have the

habit of vomiting up their food out of the nest if they are disturbed. Certainly an effective deterrent!

Snowdrops should appear towards the end of January if we have good weather. These are one of my favourite flowers as they're often the first flower of the year we see and a sign of Spring coming. They are said to symbolise new beginnings and hope. Interestingly, they contain a substance called Galantamine which is used to treat the symptoms of Alzheimer's Disease. Still, the plant is poisonous on its own. Although a beautiful and well-known sight in the UK, they aren't actually a native plant! The first record we have of them in the wild is 1778 and they were later very popular with the Victorians.



Hollie Dorward

Community Information

Mobile Post Office:

Visits Monday to Thursday in the lay-by on Upwell Road Monday and Thursday - 16.30 to 17:00
Tuesday and Wednesday - 16.10 to 17:00
Fridays - no service.

ANYONE WISHING THEIR ITEMS TO BE POSTED, ON THE DAY, WILL NEED TO GET THEIR POST TO THE VAN BY 4.40PM - WHICH IS WHEN IT IS COLLECTED.

Use it or lose it!

Mobile Library:

OUR MOBILE LIBRARY COMES ONCE A MONTH, ON THE FIRST TUESDAY, AT 12.15-1.00PM.

The van parks in the lay-by on Upwell Road, opposite to the entrance of Fen View. **USE IT OR LOSE IT?**

The Mobile Library visits March, Christchurch and Manea:

March Elliot Lodge 9:30 - 10:10
March Shaftesbury Lodge 10:20 - 10:50
March Upwell Park 10:55 - 11:15
March Fleming Court 11:30 - 11:45
Christchurch Layby 12:15 - 1pm
Manea Festival Close 2pm - 3pm
Manea High Street 3:10 - 4:30pm

As well as a large range of library books, you can get your NHS hearing batteries, replacement walking stick ferrules and you can dispose of old household batteries.

You can use the Select and Collect service online, or by calling 0345 045 5225.

https://cambridgeshire-self.achieveservice.com/service/Select_and_Collect

Please support your local Library Service, right in the heart of your community.



FACT

DIAL-A-RIDE CAMBS:

This is a pre-bookable scheduled service throughout the Fenland area currently 5 days a week, providing a door-to-door service for individual people unable to utilise conventional public transport services. **YOU MUST BE A MEMBER OF FACT TO USE THIS SERVICE.** This service is based on a timetable/route and those holding a valid Cambridge CC Bus Pass can travel for free. <http://www.fact-cambs.co.uk/> **01354 661234.**

Useful Telephone Numbers

Age UK Cambridgeshire	0300 666 9860
Alzheimer's Society (Fenland)	01945 580480
Churchwarden - Mrs Helen Chappell	01354 638092
Citizens' Advice Bureau, Wisbech	03442 451292
Community Centre Bookings (Bryan Burfield)	07918 664402
Community Fire Safety Officer	07717 858166
District Councillor - Will Sutton	01354 638025
District Councillor - Michelle Tanfield	07908 707129
Electricity Faults - UK Power Networks	105
FACT Dial-A-Ride	01354 661234
Fenland District Council	01354 654321
Floodline	0845 988 1188
Library - March	0354 045 5225
MIND (Mental Health Crisis Line)	116 123
National Debtline	0808 808 4000
NHS	111
Norfolk Dial-a-Ride	01553 770310
Parish Clerk - David Gibbs	07932 191050
Parish Councillor - Jill Bliss	01354 638343
Parish Councillor - Sharon Pomeroy	07837 407536
Parish Councillor - Roger Gladwin	01354 638538
Parish Councillor - James Hughes (Chair)	01354 638310
Parish Councillor - Kay Miller	01354 638232
Parish Councillor - Peter Owen	01354 638847
Parish Councillor - Andrew Sparrow	01354 638020
Police - Emergency	999
Police - Non Emergency	101
Samaritans	116 123
Telephone Preference Service	0345 070 0707
Townley School	01354 638229
Trading Standards	03454 040506
Train Information	03457 484950
Upwell Health Centre (and out of hours)	01945 773671
Upwell Health Centre - Pharmacy	01945 774934
Veterinary Centre - The Crossings (D'Mkt)	01366 382219
Water Emergencies	03457 145145
Club Contacts	
Art Club - Jan Clifford	01354 638217
Book Club - Pat Rigby	07776 142642
Gardening Club - Marion Hawthorn	01354 638230
Short Mat Bowls Club - Janet Harper	01354 638681
WI - Margaret Hayes	01354 653240
Jazz Club - Cat Johnson	musiciancat@hotmail.co.uk
Christchurch Stargazers - Mark Andrews	07425 165415

Advertising in the Heron

Quarter Page (14cm High x 9.5cm Wide)

Portrait Format

6 x issues £50

12 x issues £90

Eighth Page (6.5cm High x 9.5cm Wide)

Landscape Format

6 x issues £34

12 x issues £64

Please contact adverts@theheron.info or phone Elaine on 01354 638310.

Advertisers - all our advert rates and conditions can be found on our website www.theheron.info. Business advertisers can book a series of 6 or 12 adverts, paid in advance. Adverts for village fundraising events, personal announcements, or small private ads are usually free.

Do you know someone who would like to receive a Heron each month, who doesn't live in the village? Contact us at adverts@theheron.info and we will send them a subscription form.

The cost is £25.00 per year (including P&P).

Diary Dates

DATE	EVENT	TIME	PLACE	PAGE
Tues 3 rd	Mobile Library	12.15	Lay-by (Fen View)	3
Sun 8 th	Welle Cinema	2pm	3 Holes V Hall	26
Mon 9 th	PC Meeting	7.30pm	CCC	8, 20
Tues 10 th	CC Art Group	1.30–3.30pm	CCC	19
Tues 10 th	WI	7pm	CCC	21
Weds 11 th	Lunch Break	12–2pm	CCC	21
Sun 15 th	Church H/C	10.30am	CCC	11
Sat 21 st	Afternoon Tea + Bingo	3 – 5.30pm	CCC	6
Tues 24 th	CC Art Group	1.30-3.30pm	CCC	19
Tues 25 th	Lunch Break Special	12-2pm	CCC	21
Sun 29 th	Church service: 6 Churches	10.30am	BENWICK	11
REGULAR WEEKLY EVENTS				
Every Mon	Short Mat Bowls	7-9pm	CCC	21
Every Weds	Chair-based exercise class Kathleen Henderson	10-10.50am 07880 543821	CCC	
Every Thurs	Coffee, Cake & Chat	2-3pm	CCC	11
M,T,W,TH	Mobile Post Office	Various	Lay-bye (Fen View)	3

At the time of going to press, all information is as accurate and up to date as we can make it. Changes and updates may be published subsequently. All information contributed by outside agencies, including dates etc., will be assumed to be correct.

NB as a matter of courtesy no content from the Heron should be used without prior permission.

Editorial

HAPPY NEW YEAR! Welcome to our January 2023 edition. How are you doing with the New Year's Resolutions? I think I might do the same as Granddad (p 9) this year. And check out Michael Brookes' news on p14 ...Happy 2023 to Wellie! I would like to record a very special 'thank you' to our Editorial Team member Hollie Dorward, who writes the "Wildlife watching" articles for us. Beautifully written.

I am off to buy some daylight bulbs for my hallway. (P 18). At least, by the time we receive our Heron, the days will be getting longer! Enjoy.

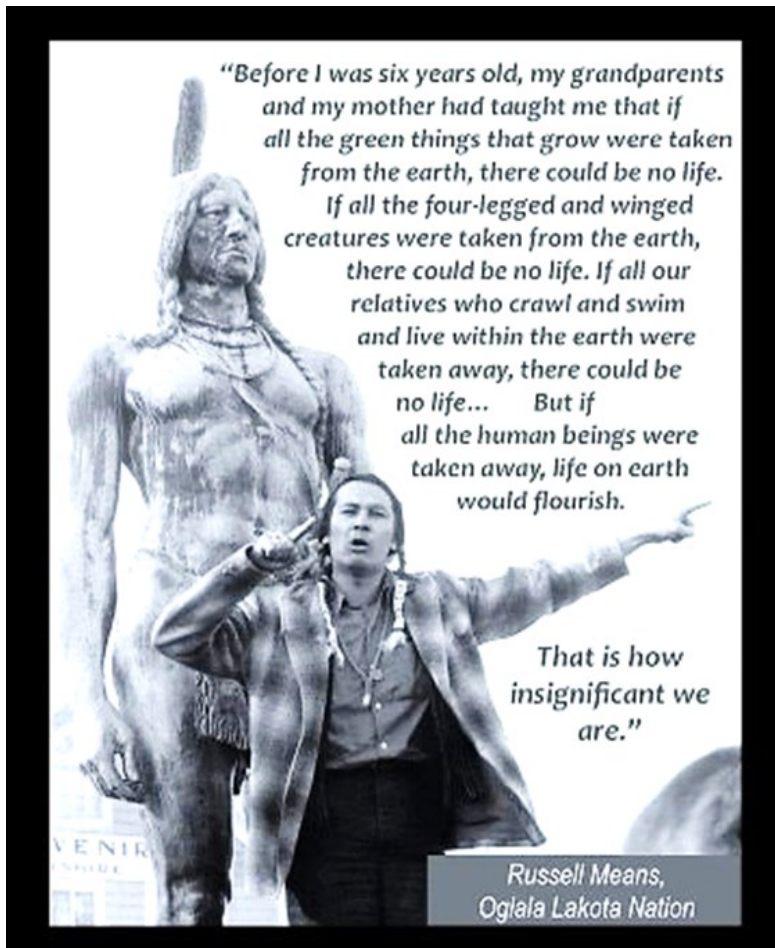
Annie Nason

Heron News

HAPPY NEW HERON YEAR! Looking forward to reading all the articles we hope will be written by different local people, particularly by you folks who are new to the village. This is our Village Magazine, so get your thinking caps on!

Our lovely Heron Christmas Cards have made almost £100 profit for the magazine. Thank you to everyone who contributed. And **SAVE THE DATE** for our next fundraising event; May 13th 2023. It is our ever-popular and excellent annual **PLANT SALE**, under the willows at the Pub. Details nearer the time.

Point of View



Copy Deadline - The deadline for copy for the **February** edition of the Heron is **25 January**.



The first Oxford word of the year 2022 to be chosen by public vote has been announced. The winning word, "**goblin mode**", is a slang term describing "unapologetically self-indulgent, lazy, slovenly, or greedy" behaviour, typically in a way that rejects social norms or expectations".

Now you know...

Letters to the Editorial Team

The Editorial team welcome letters from its readers. Please email letters to: editor@heron.info or post them to *The Editor of The Heron, Grasshopper Cottage, 5 Upwell Road, Christchurch, PE14 9LF.*

PLEASE NOTE: Letters will only be considered for publication if they are accompanied by name and contact details. The Heron will not share any contact details unless given permission.

The team look forward to hearing from you!

Afternoon Tea and Bingo!



What shall we do now Christmas and New Year are over?
Are you feeling a bit flat?

How about afternoon tea and a game of bingo?

Saturday 21st January 2023

3.00-5.30pm

Christchurch Community Centre

Tickets £10 per adult £5 per child

Includes a selection of sandwiches and cakes, tea or coffee
and one sheet of 6 games of bingo.

Additional sheets available to buy.

Tickets available from Helen 638092 or Karen 638781

All Profit to Church Funds



**CAMBRIDGESHIRE
FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE**
Working together to improve community safety

SAFETY ADVICE: USING CANDLES IN YOUR HOME

There have been reports of people using candles to cook, but the main risk is we expect an increase in the use of candles used for lighting. This could mean people lighting more candles in spaces as the primary source of light if people want to avoid turning lights on, particularly if media reports of potential enforced blackouts do happen. Whether you're using your candles to scent and decorate, or as a religious symbol, these popular home accessories can be dangerous, so reduce your risk of causing a fire by following our tips:

- Never leave candles unattended or go to sleep while they are lit.
- Leave plenty of space above and around the candle and its holder.
- Place candles in a draught-free area away from curtains, furniture and other flammable surfaces.
- Choose a suitable site for your candles that is flat and stable.
- Always use a proper candle-holder and fit the candle in firmly.
- Always use a heat-resistant surface to place the candle holder on – e.g. a ceramic plate, especially for small night-light candles.
- Never place candles directly on televisions or other polished surfaces.
- Keep candles out of reach of children and pets.
- Never attempt to move a candle once it is lit.
- Always use a candle-snuffer, or an upturned metal spoon to extinguish the candle, and allow cooling before moving it.

For more information: log on to www.cambsfire.gov.uk, follow us on social media or call 01480 444500.

Your Letters



Macmillan Coffee Morning

It seems an age ago since Friday September 30th, but at long last we have the total raised at the MacMillan Coffee Morning that Sandra Kay, Susan and I facilitated in the Community Centre. With generous donations of cakes, savouries, and plenty of cash too, this function raised a total of £587.55.

Well done to all concerned!

Paul Simpson

Dear Editor

Could you please publish, in the next edition of the Heron, a big thank you from the Community Centre Committee, to those in the village that donated their dole money towards funding our Centre.

This is very much appreciated.

Geoff Harper
Chairman, Recreation Ground Charity



Someone who remains anonymous put a note through my door with a very generous donation of money. They asked me to use it to buy things that

would be suitable for the Food Bank. Well, I have done better than that – I have given it to the March Food Bank organiser, and she has given me a receipt for the money. I have her signed receipt at my home, if the donor wishes to collect it. They were thrilled to have the money, as they do have to buy in a lot of things for the recipients as not all needs are catered for through donations of food - UHT Milk, amongst other things. Thank you so very much to the donor. What a great village we live in! If you would like to donate money or items to the March Food Bank, there is a box by my front door. Pop them in that at Grasshopper Cottage, 5, Upwell Road (at the lay-by up from the Pub). Or call me on 638088.

Annie Nason.



Please remember that no dogs are allowed on the playing field. Thank you. Your co-operation is much appreciated.



Dear Editor

I have been overwhelmed by the warm welcome and generosity of the people of Christchurch, Manea and surrounding areas during my first initial months of being your Poppy Appeal Organiser after taking over from dear Lesley Kennedy in the summer. A big thanks to Lesley for her commitment over the last 20+ years for the cause.

It has been a joy to re-familiarise myself with Christchurch and Manea and meet so many of you during the Poppy Appeal. You have all been so kind and helpful and accepting of me and I hope we can all build on this next year to continue to grow the Poppy Appeal fundraising in these villages. I have had more establishments coming forward to have a collecting tin next year and I have been able to get more All Year Round collecting boxes out in the community so people can donate 12 months of the year increasing our annual total all the time. Please do not hesitate to contact me for all your Poppy Appeal needs 12 months of the year. I keep wreath stock all year round. My contact details are Sally Fawkes 01945 351225 or 07884 478598 or salnrog@sky.com.

I am thrilled to say that this years' total banked is £2,660.23. As stated, the Poppy Appeal runs all year round and any further donations will only increase this wonderful amount. Thankyou to everyone who has contributed in any way towards this years total and I look forward to meeting more of you over the next 12 months.

Wishing you all a very Happy New Year.

Kind regards,

Sally Fawkes: PAO Manea & Christchurch & surrounding areas



CEILIDH-Barn dance Live band Take the Floor with caller

Includes Hog Roast Supper - Vegetarian Option available

Saturday 28th January - Stow Bridge Village Hall
Downham Road, Stow Bridge, PE34 3PE

7.30pm -11.00pm **Bring your own drinks**

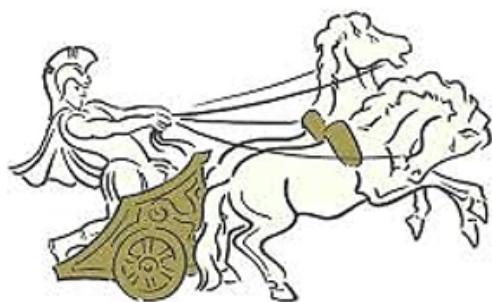
To book tickets @ £15.00 adults; £7.50 children,13 and under - Tel: 01760 337056 or email: suer2006@hotmail.co.uk

**All proceeds go to the Magpie Centre WNRDA
Charity No. 1143390 Company No. 7650610**

Not only the Railway enthusiasts in Christchurch will enjoy this – it's fascinating! Read on...

The US standard railroad gauge (distance between the rails) is 4 feet, 8.5 inches. That's an exceedingly odd number.

- **Why was that gauge used?** Well, because that's the way they built them in England, and English engineers designed the first US railroads.
- **Why did the English build them like that?** Because the first rail lines were built by the same people who built the wagon tramways, and that's the gauge they used.
- **So, why did 'they' use that gauge then?** Because the people who built the tramways used the same jigs and tools that they had used for building wagons, which used that same wheel spacing.
- **Why did the wagons have that particular odd wheel spacing?** Well, if they tried to use any other spacing, the wagon wheels would break more often on some of the old, long-distance roads in England. You see, that's the spacing of the wheel ruts.
- **So, who built those old rutted roads?** Imperial Rome built the first long distance roads in Europe (including England) for their legions. Those roads have been used ever since.



- **And what about the ruts in the roads?**

Roman war chariots formed the initial ruts, which everyone else had to match or run the risk of destroying their wagon wheels. Since the chariots were made for Imperial Rome, they were all alike in the matter of wheel spacing. Therefore, the United States standard railroad gauge of 4 feet, 8.5 inches is derived from the original specifications for an Imperial Roman war chariot.

- **Bureaucracies live forever.** Imperial Roman army chariots were made just wide enough to accommodate the rear ends of two war horses.
- **Now, the twist to the story** - When you saw a Space Shuttle sitting on its launch pad, there were two big booster rockets attached to the sides of the main fuel tank. These are solid rocket boosters, or SRBs. The SRBs are made by Thiokol at their factory in Utah. The engineers who designed the SRBs would have preferred to make them a bit fatter, but the SRBs had to be shipped by train from the factory to the launch site. The railroad line from the factory happens to run through a tunnel in the mountains, and the SRBs had to fit through that tunnel. The tunnel is slightly wider than the railroad track.
- **So, a major Space Shuttle design feature, of what is arguably the world's most advanced transportation system, was determined over two thousand years ago by the width of two horses' rear ends!**

Parish Council - Request for Village Projects to Support

It's the time of year when the Parish Council sets its budget for the forthcoming year (April 2023-March 2024). Each year we go through what money has been spent over the last year keeping the village running (for example, grass cutting, street lights etc) and what we need for the next year. We also look at what village projects may need funding, for example, in the past we have funded the war memorial refurbishment, extra tree cutting around the village etc.

During the PC meeting on Monday 12th, we decided to open up the choice of projects to fund, to the village and, to that end, we would be very interested to hear what village projects people think we should be funding. We cannot promise to fund everything, and our coffers are not limitless, but we would love to hear what our parishioners think.

If you have any ideas for projects that would benefit the village, please email:
projects@christchurchparishcouncil.org.uk

James Hughes

New Year's Resolution, then?

Young person: Granddad – what's your New Year's Resolution this year?

Granddad: My Dad used to always tell us to "mind our p's and q's" when we went to see Grandma at Christmas. I think I am going to make that my New Year's Resolution for 2023.

Young person: What? What are p's and q's? Weird.

Granddad: Well, it's a kind of shorthand for Good Manners. The p's stand for 'please', and the q's stand for 'thank you' ...as it sounds a bit like a letter q at the end when you say thank you.

Young person: You said it is shorthand for Good Manners? I always say please and thank you.

Granddad: Good Manners isn't just about that...it's also, um, not talking with your mouth full, not barging in front of people, letting older people have your seat on a bus, for example.

Younger person: Yikes. And not eating too fast and not slurping your soup there are so many rules!

Granddad: There's only one rule, actually.

Young person: Come off it! My Mum is always nagging at me to smile and look at people when they are speaking to me. Oh yes! And to turn off my 'phone when we have visitors. There are loads of rules. I can't remember them all! And then I get told off if I forget one.

Granddad: That's why it's important that we remember the ONE RULE. It's really much easier to remember one rule than loads.

Young person: What is that rule then?

Granddad: Always think of other people by respecting them and putting them at their ease. Think about it – it really isn't very pleasant to look at someone across the table who is chewing with their mouth open; ugh; you can see all the bits being chomped. Nor listening to you slurp your soup. Or - perish the thought - you licking the plate at the end.

Young person: OK. I get it. But if I am late for the train, I may need to hurry past people to get on it. What then, if they are in the way?

Granddad: You gain their attention by saying "Excuse me" first before explaining. Most folks are ok with that.

Young person: OK. I just need to put other people at their ease, then? Cool.

Maybe I will join you in that resolution for 2023. I will let you know how I get on.

Granddad: There is also something called "Etiquette" That certainly has rules.

Young person: Another time, Granddad, PLEASE... Anyhow, I can't even spell that word.

Granddad: Well, it's French, of course.

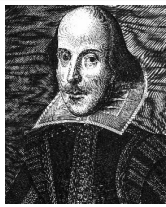
Young person: No more, PLEASE. THANK YOU. Think of me (the other person) and let me go and check my 'phone.

Mind your Ps and Qs is an English language expression meaning "mind your manners", "mind your language", "be on your best behaviour", "watch what you're doing".



Food & Drink Dingbats

Midday T	Key & t	ORANGE	h,i,j,k,l,m,n,o
007 Baltic	BAN ANA	CCRREEAAMM	PURR
MOTHER MAY	FA ST	EGGS EZ	UP UP UP UP UP UP



BARD ENTHUSIASTS - BEGIN THE NEW YEAR WITH A PUZZLE. [ANSWERS ON PAGE 21]

'O Romeo, Romeo, wherefore art thou Romeo?'

No points for guessing which of William Shakespeare's plays this quote comes from - the name rather gives it away. It is of course Romeo and Juliet, the tragic tale of star-crossed lovers. It's one of the most famous lines in English literature. But just how good are you at recognising some of Shakespeare's other well-known quotes? Do you know which play they feature in? It's time to put your Shakespeare knowledge to the test.

1. "BEWARE THE IDES OF MARCH". a) Antony and Cleopatra; b) Julius Caesar c) King Lear
2. "THAT WHICH WE CALL A ROSE, BY ANY OTHER NAME WOULD SMELL AS SWEET", a) Twelfth Night; b) Romeo and Juliet; c) Much ado about nothing
3. "DOUBLE, DOUBLE, TOIL AND TROUBLE; FIRE BURN AND CAULDRON BUBBLE", a) Othello; b) The Tempest; c) Macbeth.
4. "SOME CUPIDS KILL WITH ARROWS, SOME WITH TRAPS" a) The Comedy of Errors; b) Much ado about nothing; c) Love's labour's lost.
5. "ALL THE WORLD'S A STAGE AND ALL THE MEN AND WOMEN MERELY PLAYERS. THEY HAVE THEIR EXITS AND THEIR ENTRANCES; AND ONE MAN IN HIS TIME PLAYS MANY PARTS, HIS ACTS BEING SEVEN AGES". a) The Taming of The Shrew; b) All's well that ends well; c) As you like it.
6. "AND THOUGH SHE BE BUT LITTLE, SHE IS FIERCE", a) The Merry Wives of Windsor; b) A Midsummer Night's dream; c) Measure for Measure.
7. "A HORSE! A HORSE! MY KINGDOM FOR A HORSE!", a) Richard III; b) Henry VIII; c) Henry IV part 1.
8. "WE ARE SUCH STUFF AS DREAMS ARE MADE ON; AND OUR LITTLE LIFE IS ROUNDED WITH A SLEEP", a) The Tempest; b) Henry IV part 1; c) The Merchant of Venice.



Here are some tips for coping with the sub-zero temperatures this winter.

How can I keep my baby warm?

Babies and children under 5 are more at risk in cold weather. The NHS advises that children should wear several layers of clothing to keep warm. At night, it is

recommended to use a number of light weight blankets.

Importantly, babies do not need hot rooms at night – a room temperature of between 16-20C (61-68F) is ideal. Overheating is one of the potential causes of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome. Remember heads and hands during the winter, the NCT charity says. Keep your baby's head warm when going outside, and use mittens or gloves. In the car, you should keep thick jumpers and coats to a minimum, so there is not too much padding between your child and the car seat straps. If necessary, you can lay a blanket on top of them, once they are safely strapped in.

How warm should the house be?

Dr Raquel Nunes, Assistant Professor, University of Warwick writes:

Indoor temperatures should be about 21C (70F) in living rooms and 18C (64F) in bedrooms, for a minimum of nine hours a day, according to the World Health Organisation. Reducing the exposure to low indoor temperature is essential to reduce the health impacts of cold weather, which can range from illness to death.

What's the best way to de-ice your car?

It's not just a matter of pouring hot or boiling water on a frozen windscreen. In fact, that is exactly what you should NOT do. Pouring hot or boiling water on a frozen windscreen can crack the glass, or quickly freeze again on the screen. Instead, the advice from the AA is you should turn your car engine on – ensuring the wipers are turned OFF (to avoid damage), then turn on the warm air blower and blow it at the windscreen. You should also turn your rear windscreen heater on. Turn on the Aircn to avoid the windscreen fogging up on the inside. Only then should you take a soft brush and brush off any snow on the car, before moving on to using a scraper and de-icer on the car. The AA also advise drivers to steer clear of any hacks they might have heard of – including using half a potato on the inside of the windows to stop them steaming up!



Church News

Happy New Year 2023

What an eventful year

2022 was with the death of HM Queen Elizabeth II, three Prime Ministers, the war in Ukraine and a World Cup starting in November (just don't talk about penalties!). Additionally, the record high summer temperatures and the mild autumn followed by a very cold spell has proved to be very confusing for the plants and wildlife. Hopefully, 2023 will be less eventful as we deal with the economic challenges facing our country.

Having celebrated the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ over Christmas, we're now at the start of January and it's customary to make some New Year's resolutions. Now you might think that these are a modern invention, but there is some evidence to suggest that the Babylonians 4,000 years ago made resolutions at the start of the year.

Now, I wonder what your resolution might be, if any, for 2023? Is it to go on a diet, cut down on the booze, spend more time with family, or take more exercise? Having made that resolution, how many of us will find our willpower wavering and opt for plan B - let's visit this again next year! Well, there's no point in rushing into anything! However, when making a new resolution, perhaps we need to focus more on others rather than ourselves. We're very fortunate in Fenland to have a strong community feel within our villages with organisations run by volunteers who give their time to help others in all sorts of ways. So, maybe it's time now to think about how we can go that extra mile?

The Bible tells us to "love our neighbours as ourselves". So, at the start of 2023, perhaps our resolution should be to use the skills and talents given to us by God for the benefit and support of others.

Richard Holding: Licenced Lay Minister: Benefice of Six Fen Churches

Happy New Year!

It feels like it is going to be a busy one for the church. We are currently applying for a faculty from the Church of England to proceed with the repairs to the drainage in the churchyard. There is a notice about this on the church noticeboard.

On Saturday 21st January 2023 we are hoping to hold an afternoon tea and bingo event. Look out for more details.

Services this year at Christchurch will all be held at 10.30am and will take place on the first and third Sunday of the month. **We are not holding a service on Sunday 1st January, New Year's Day.**

Services elsewhere in the Benefice:

January 1 st	Doddington Holy Communion 10.30am
January 8 th	Manea Holy Communion 10.30am
	Wimblington Morning Prayer 10.30am
January 15 th	Christchurch Holy Communion 10.30am
	Doddington Morning Prayer 10.30am
January 22 nd	Manea Morning Prayer 10.30am
	Wimblington Holy Communion 10.30am
January 29 th	Benwick United Benefice Service 10.30am

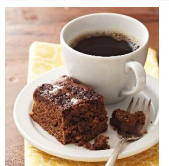


And finally, I would like to thank those people in the village who donated their Dole Charity Money to the church funds; it really is very gratefully received. Wishing us all a peaceful and happy 2023.

Helen

Coffee, Cake and Chat

Come along on Thursday afternoons from 2-3pm and catch up with friends and make new ones. Held in the Community Centre while repairs are made to the church ceiling.



FORTHCOMING CHURCH FUNDRAISING EVENTS:

11th February - Disco and Buffet
24th March - Quiz
April - Date TBC - Concert

£1026 was raised at the Church Christmas Fayre at the end of November. We would like to say a huge thank you to everyone who took part and who came along on the day.

AVIAN INFLUENZA IS STILL AROUND. DON'T SPREAD IT BY MISTAKE. FOLLOW THIS ADVICE FROM THE GOVERNMENT.

What to do if you come across dead birds.

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/avian-influenza-bird-flu#public>

REPORT DEAD WILD BIRDS Call Defra on 03459 33 55 77 if you find:

- one or more dead birds of prey
- 3 or more dead gulls or wild waterfowl (swans, geese and ducks)
- 5 or more dead birds of any species

Do not touch or pick up a dead or visibly sick wild bird.

You do not need to report any other found dead birds. Bird flu is not a notifiable disease in wild birds. If you do report a dead bird, DEFRA and APHA may arrange to collect it and test it. This is to help explain where bird flu is spreading in Great Britain and in which types of birds.

DISPOSAL OF DEAD WILD BIRDS IN A DOMESTIC SETTING.

After contacting the Defra helpline (03459 33 55 77) to report the dead wild birds, if the birds are not required for surveillance purposes, members of the public should follow the advice below for the disposal of dead garden birds.

DISPOSAL IN HOUSEHOLD OR MUNICIPAL WASTE REFUSE

- Wear disposable protective gloves when picking up and handling dead wild birds (if disposable gloves are not available, a plastic bag can be put over hands as a make-shift gloves). Put the dead bird in a plastic bag (if plastic bags were used over the hands, the bag can be turned back on itself and tied).
- Tie up your first bag.
- Put the first plastic bag, with the bird in, into a second plastic bag preferably leak proof. Care should be taken not to contaminate the outside of the bag.
- Remove gloves by turning them inside out and then place them in the second plastic bag.
- Tie second bag and disposed of it, in the normal household waste (outside).

OFFICIAL NOTICE OF FUTURE 16 FOOT ROAD WORKS

NOTICE is given that Cambridgeshire County Council has made an Order pursuant to the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, as amended by the Road Traffic (Temporary Restrictions) Act 1991, the effect of which is to stop any vehicle from proceeding along Sixteen Foot Bank, Christchurch as lies between the B1099 and B1094. Access will be maintained to properties affected by this order.

The alternative route for vehicles is via B1098 - Croft Road, Upwell - A1101 - B1101 - B1099 - B1098 and vice versa.

The Order is made to facilitate road relining and associated works which are being carried out on or near this highway and it will come into operation on 16 January 2023 and continue until these works have finished or on the 15 July 2024 whichever is the earlier.

It is anticipated that these works will be carried out between 08:00hrs and 16:00hrs 16 January to 27 January 2023."

Slow Cooker Turkey Curry

Ingredients

1 Onion Chopped
4 Garlic Cloves Crushed
Thumb sized piece of Ginger finely grated
1 Red Pepper
350g Sweet Potato, Carrot or Parsnip
700g Turkey cut into chunks
400g Chickpeas
2 tbsp Curry Paste/Powder
1 tbsp Tomato Puree
400g Can of Chopped Tomatoes
400g Can of Coconut Milk
120g Spinach
Coriander Leaves (separate stalks from leaves)



Rice to Serve.

Method

Tip the onion, garlic, ginger, red pepper, root vegetables, turkey and chick peas into the slow cooker. Stir in the curry paste/powder and tomato puree - ensuring everything is well coated. Pour in the tomatoes and coconut milk and scatter in the coriander stalks. Mix well. Cook on High for 3hrs 30mins or Low for 8 hrs. Add the spinach 15 mins before the end of cooking time. Season with salt and pepper to taste.

Serve with rice with chopped coriander leaves if you like.



Are we having a problem with our postal Service? Check this out ...

ROYAL NAVY DIGS OUT WORLD'S MOST REMOTE POST OFFICE FROM ANTARCTIC SNOW

The Royal Navy has come to the aid of four UK women working at an isolated Antarctic scientific base after its buildings were buried in heavy snow. Sailors and Royal Marines from HMS Protector spent two days digging out the Port Lockroy site. The damaged roof of Bransfield Hut - home to a museum, gift shop and world's most remote post office - was fixed. The women beat 6,000 applicants to manage the base and share the island with a colony of Gentoo penguins. Clare Ballantyne, Mairi Hilton, Natalie Corbett and Lucy Bruzzone accepted the task of reopening the site 9,000 miles from the UK in October after the coronavirus pandemic.

They were setting up, assisted by three other staff who are leaving shortly, ahead of the austral summer - which falls between November to February in the southern hemisphere - when heavy snowfall of between two and four metres (6-12ft) deep arrived. Nosey neighbours?

By Jasmine Andersson BBC News





HISTORY OF CHRISTCHURCH UPDATE

Progress on the History of Christchurch website has been slower than I would have liked. Work, and volunteering at the German Shepherd Dog Welfare Fund, have kept me busy in the run-up to Christmas. Although I have to say that designing next year's calendar and one of the Christmas Cards has been fun! This article will be too late for the cards, but feel free to treat yourself to a new calendar...

<http://www.gsdwelfarefund.co.uk/product/2023-calendar/>

Slow does not mean zero and I'm almost through creating the pages for the buildings mentioned in Susan Scott's Study of a Fenland Village – which is available on the website, and an excellent introduction to the village's history. I've also scanned the 1999 Village Report and will transcribe it as soon as possible for better use for reference. The results from the

survey are fascinating reading, and I'd like to conduct the survey again in 2023; although I'll no doubt need help from The Heron and Parish Council to make it happen. I'll announce details as plans come together.

I'd also like to thank the members of the Christchurch (Cambridgeshire) Pictures Old and New group on Facebook. They've provided excellent help as I discover questions I don't know the answers to. Andrew Sparrow has been especially helpful with information and photographs.

There's an old age saying that the more you know reveals even more that you don't know and that's certainly true here. So much so that I'm calling for help gathering and adding more to the website – with just a few of us even just an hour or two a week will help drive this forward.

One aspect, in particular, are the organisations in the village such as the WI, Football Club and the myriad of others that still exist, or once existed here. Anyone who can assist with this would be most welcome. I would also like to start gathering the Living History of the village and its residents and that will need people to organise.



Please make sure to check out the History of Christchurch if you haven't and a Happy New Year from Wellie and I!

<https://historyofchristchurch.uk/>

Michael Brookes



There's no Gardening Club this month. Instead, here's a bit about a famous plant discoverer of the 18th century. 1743 – 19 June 1820 - an English naturalist and botanist.

Sir Joseph Banks was an outstanding scholar and became probably the most influential scientist of his time. He had a lifelong passion for botany and discovery. He came into his inheritance early and became one of the richest young men in Britain. Soon after, he was appointed adviser to George III who requested that he support voyages of discovery. He was

able to sail with Captain Cook on the Endeavour to South America, New Zealand and Australia. In Brazil he discovered Bougainvillea, and in the South Seas he curated the first major plant collection. Some of the plants he is credited with introducing are New Zealand flax (*Phormium tenax*), Crimson bottlebrush (*Callistemon citrinus*) Eucalyptus, Acacia, and Mimosa.



Next Gardening club meeting is Feb 21st. All welcome.



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office@townley.cambs.sch.uk
Website: www.townley.cambs.sch.uk
01354 638229



Facebook—Townley School
and Pre-School

Remember that our website has
lots more information about
school.

December 2022

Emerald Class

On Friday 9th December, we concluded our history unit on the Anglo-Saxons by going on a fantastic trip to West Stow Anglo-Saxon village. The children loved discovering the reconstructed village with the weaving house, the farmer's house, the workshop, the living house or the craft shelters. They loved listening to the story telling of Beowulf while sat in the village hall. The afternoon was spent in the museum finding out more about how Anglo-Saxons lived, what they wore and their pagan burial practices.



Hawker Class

In PSHE the children have worked on responsibilities and were able to say what they are responsible for - both at school and at home; and what adults are responsible for at school and at home. In science the children have been learning about seasonal changes. We also learned how to stay safe on ice in assembly.

Emperor Class

In **English**: we have been studying poems which explore form. We have been looking at the structure of Haiku and Cinquain and poems and the class have had a go at writing their own as well as making comparisons. **Science** we learned about how light travels through water and how it refracts. We did several experiments to investigate this.

EYFS Class

Lost and Found has been our focus story, it is a story about a boy who finds a penguin on his doorstep. The boy decides the penguin must be lost so they set out in a boat on a journey to the South Pole. We have had lots of fun re-enacting the story outside with real ice. The children loved trying to break the ice to release the plastic animals trapped inside. Reception found out that an Emperor penguin is about the same height as them so they drew around themselves and created large collage penguins.



Answers on page 27

WINTER IS HERE! Wrap up warm, keep safe and enjoy!



The north wind doth blow,
And we shall have snow,
And what will the robin do then, Poor thing?
He'll sit in a barn,
And keep himself warm,
And hide his head under his wing, Poor thing!

The north wind doth blow,
And we shall have snow,
And what will the swallow do then, Poor thing?
Oh, do you not know
That he's off long ago,
To a country where he will find spring, Poor thing!



The north wind doth blow,
And we shall have snow,
And what will the dormouse do then, Poor thing?
Roll'd up like a ball
In his nest snug and small
He'll sleep till warm weather comes in, Poor thing!

The north wind doth blow,
And we shall have snow,
And what will the honey-bee do then, Poor thing?
In his hive he will stay
Till the cold is away
And then he'll come out in the spring, Poor thing!



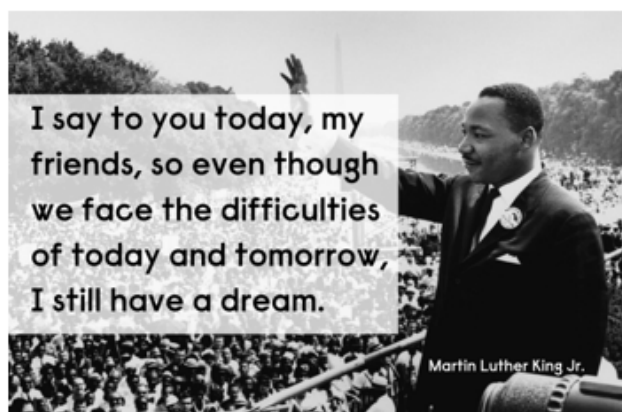
The north wind doth blow,
And we shall have snow,
And what will the children do then, Poor things?
When lessons are done
They will skip, jump and run,
Until they have made themselves warm, Poor things!
Anon

Monday January 16th 2023 is Martin Luther King Day in the United States. He had big dreams!

A QUARTER OF A MILLION PEOPLE AND A DREAM

On August 28th 1963, more than a quarter of a million people participated in the historic march on Washington DC for Jobs and Freedom, gathering near the Lincoln Memorial. More than 3,000 members of the press covered this historic march, where Rev Dr Martin Luther King, Jr delivered the exalted "I have a dream" speech.

Originally conceived by renowned workers leader A. Phillip Randolph, and Roy Wilkins, the march on Washington evolved into a collaborative effort amongst major Civil Rights groups and icons of the day.



up that day when all God's children, black men and white men, Jews and Gentiles, Protestants and Catholics, will be able to join hands and sing, in the words of the old

"I have a dream that one day this nation will rise up, live out the true meaning of its creed: 'We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal.'"

MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.



It stemmed from a tide of grassroots support and outrage over the US racial inequalities. Celebrated as one of the greatest – if not the greatest – speech of the 20th Century, Dr King's speech was carried live by television stations across the United States.

He ended his speech with these words: **"From every mountainside, let freedom ring. And when this happens...we will be able to speed**



"I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character."

Martin Luther King, Jr. (I have a Dream)

You can read the full text of the speech on the Web, and listen to it on U-tube.



What is SAD?

SAD stands for Seasonal Affective Disorder and is sometimes known as “winter depression”, as it describes a type of depression that comes and goes with the changing seasons. Most people with SAD feel low in the colder and darker months, but for some people, their depression comes in the summertime. The NHS estimates that 1 in 15 people suffer from this disorder. Despite this, only

about 12% of people are aware of SAD.

Depression comes in all shapes and sizes, but some common symptoms are:

- Persistent low mood
- Irritability
- Lacking energy
- Sleeping longer than normal and finding it hard to get out of bed
- Craving carbohydrates and gaining weight
- Difficulty concentrating

What causes SAD?

Winter SAD is primarily believed to be caused by reduced exposure to sunlight during the shorter days in autumn and winter. Reduced sunlight increases our melatonin, which makes us feel tired. It can also reduce serotonin which can cause low mood. It affects our body clock – we aren’t used to waking up in the dark or seeing the sunset in the afternoon. This can make us feel like it’s earlier or later than it actually is. However, SAD could also be caused by the fact that we tend to stay indoors more in cold weather. This means we see people less often and get bored of our usual four walls!

It is also possible that SAD is genetic to a degree as it has been shown to run in families.

Treatments for SAD

There are many different treatments available, some specific to SAD and some used to treat depression more generally.

- Lifestyle changes – Exercising regularly, following a healthy diet, identifying and reducing causes of stress, and getting as much natural light as possible.
- Light therapy – Light boxes, other lights and daylight bulbs can be purchased to simulate natural light. You can also get light alarm clocks that gradually brighten the room to wake you up more naturally.
- Therapy – The NHS offers various treatments such as CBT (Cognitive behavioural therapy) or counselling
- Antidepressants – The NHS can also offer medications which can improve mood



For any form of depression, it is important to have support. **If you are struggling to cope, please contact your GP**, and they can discuss a range of options to find something that works for you. If you need someone to talk to, the Samaritans number at the front of the magazine is a valuable resource.

Hollie Dorward

Main source – NHS Seasonal Affective Disorder



A new year brings HOPE for better things.

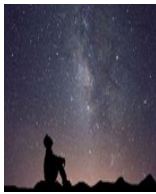
Remembering all Ukrainian people at the beginning of 2023.

This is an interesting quote from **Anne Frank**, a young Jewish girl whose family found themselves in an impossible situation during WW 2.

We more often say “Whilst there’s life, there’s hope”.

“Where there is hope there is life”.

Christchurch Stargazers



Hello Christchurch Stargazers!

This month I am going to continue talking about Bible Astronomy. As early as the fourth century BC, the Chaldeans made exact astronomical observations and knew the course of the stars, especially the planets. They could calculate the time of the appearance of the new moon and predict solar and lunar eclipses. Babylonian astronomy was interested mainly in meteorology, and their concept of the universe was basically mythological. The Greeks took over the Babylonian notion that the stars were gods, and Greek mythological names for the stars are used to this day.

The Bible sees a universe with the earth at its centre. This universe was divided into three: **The Vault of the Heavens**, containing the sun, the moon and the stars. **The Earth Beneath**, and **The Waters** under the earth (Exodus 20:4) and those above the heavens which are the source of rain. In the Bible, there seems to be no great distance between heaven and earth. Without much effort, birds fly into the "Vault of Heaven". The heavens are seen as superimposed vaults (Deuteronomy 10:14; 1 Kings 8:27; Psalms 148:4) in the highest of which God holds court. The sun and the moon follow their courses through the heavens independently, while the stars are directed by the divine will (Psalms 147:4; Isaiah 40:26; Judges 5:20).

Remember - never ever look at the sun without the correct protective equipment.

Mark Andrews

Christchurch Art Group



We meet on the 2nd and 4th Tuesday of the month 1.30 -3.30 in the Village Hall (term time).

- Our focus is to explore and experiment with the various painting and drawing media
- To enable participants to develop their own style
- Above all to have fun and enjoy the sessions
- The sessions are planned and adjusted to suit, depending on the experience and interests of the group
- The group leader is experienced in a wide range of media, and has some art materials for you to try out if they are new to you. *We have suitable paper for a reasonable cost to purchase and materials can be borrowed until you have your own*. Our group is friendly and relaxed and we love to welcome new folk.



If you would like a programme, please contact Jan and one will be sent with any further information.

Please contact Sandra 01354 638478 or Jan 01354 638217. (clifford.jjr5846@gmail.com)



Christchurch Book Club

Christchurch Book club was held on 6th December at Kay Miller's home, and we discussed our last book, "The Lantern Men" by Elly Griffiths.

Feedback from the group was that it was an enjoyable book, but some felt that as this book was the 12th book of the Ruth Galloway mysteries, it was slightly difficult to get into the characters and they would be best read in chronological order to see how they interact. Featuring Dr Ruth Galloway, a forensic archaeologist, who meets a convicted killer who will disclose where he has buried more bodies, but only if she excavates them, which puts her in danger. The book was set in an area bordering the Fens, said to be haunted by 'The Lantern Men', who are mysterious figures holding lights that lure travellers to their deaths.

The book we are now reading is "A Song for The Dark Times" by Ian Rankin, which is a detective novel featuring John Rebus, of which the TV series, Rebus, was mostly based on. There is no meeting in January, so the next meeting will take place on Tuesday 7th February at 7.30pm, at Sue Street's house in Crown Road, where we will discuss our latest book. The next book, in February, will be "The Burning Girls", by C. J. Tudor.

New members always welcome. For further details please contact Pat Rigby on 07776 142642.

The December meeting should have been our AGM, but the fog and the very icy roads prevented the WI observers who attend these events from coming. It has been postponed until our January meeting.

The numbers for the meeting were rather depleted, with several of our members unable to come because of illness. However, the rest of us enjoyed our Christmas Party. There was a large variety of tasty things to eat, supplied by the members.

We were given a particularly fiendish puzzle of lots of anagrams of bird names to solve. This was followed by Pass-The-Parcel with a difference – no forfeits! Instead, there was a nice gold wrapped ‘After Dinner Mint’ found, each time the wrapping was taken off. Susan Quail won the game when it stopped at her for the last time. A “Secret Santa” rounded off an entertaining evening.

Our next meeting, on January 10th, will be at the usual time of 7pm. The talk will be “Blood Bikers”, by Michael Parkinson. The AGM will need to happen. It will also be our “Resolutions” meeting. Please read them in the WI magazine before you come, and cut out the Resolutions Vote Box in the article and bring it with you.

Competition – something glitzy and sparkly. And don’t forget to bring your own mug!

Sue Norman



LUNCH BREAK

Lunch Break this month – 11th and 25th January from 12 noon – 2pm, in the Community Centre.

IT’S FREE!

BYO Lunch. Catch up with old friends, make new ones. Chat over lunch with Tea or Coffee and relax. Or just come for a cuppa.

Always the 2nd and 4th Wednesdays of the month.

Our Covid plan is to be cautious.

Contact: Annie on 01354-638088



Community Safety Event

Our Community Safety team will be joining the **Lunch Break** event in Christchurch later this month.

Residents will be able to ask for advice from officers and find out more about the support available to them from local organisations.

**Wednesday 25th January 2023
12.15 to 2pm
Christchurch Community Centre**



Indoor Short Mat Bowls

New club meeting every Monday 7-9pm at Christchurch Community Centre.

ALL WELCOME! (Spare bowls available to loan.)

For further details call Janet Harper on 07941 465319.

GOAL!



CHARITY FOOTBALL MATCH ... SIGN UP!

I have organised a charity football match at Welney playing field on the 15th January 2023 for a 1pm kick off, for the mental health charity **MIND**. As football is anyone’s game, I am welcoming anyone to come down and be part of the team. If interested, please leave a comment on my Facebook post, or private message me, or call me on +44 7562 928027. Looking forward to seeing as many of you as possible! All match fees and donations on the day will be sent straight to the charity.

Kieran Anthony

PC Snippets

Public Time: The December PC meeting got off to a good start with an interesting discussion. The topic was one that has come up several times before the trees on the playing field that overhang people's back gardens along Wayside. The trees are not getting smaller and a resident of Wayside wondered what can be done, as the trees obviously belong to the Parish Council – or perhaps the Recreation Ground Charity. The suggestion that the PC could have them “contained” by pollarding was considered. It was pointed out that this would cost the Parish Council about £500 per tree! It's a lot of money to spend on an individual household, rather than on benefitting the wider village community. However, the PC are open to the idea of some contribution to the cost by the residents concerned. The PC is going to look into it. Meanwhile, as the law stands, residents can cut back any branches which overhang their property. <https://www.problemneighbours.co.uk/rights-trees-and-overhanging-branches>.
www.problemneighbours.co.uk/rights-trees-and-overhanging-branches.html

Other matters of interest:

Affordable Housing: The large Housing Association ACCENT has expressed an interest in surveying our Parish's housing needs, with a view to building here. This is great news. Watch this space!
<https://www.accentgroup.org/>



16ft road repairs: Nobody had a good word to say for the recent repairs to the carriageway! Not up to the usual high standard, was how the authority put it. The answer from “on high” to the problem of speeding is wait for it to put up more UNEVEN ROAD signs. OK. Honestly?? Apparently, our MP Steve Barclay's office is now on the case. The Chair remarked that he was surprised that Steve Barclay had time to think of anything other than the nurses' strike. The Clerk observed that he probably wanted to think about ANYTHING OTHER than the nurses' strikes. Well.

What is life without a little humour?

Padgett's Road: Cllr Sutton (FDC) is chasing up road repair matters. Meanwhile, our PC will be putting in a bid to the Highways people to have a traffic island at the crossroads by the Farmer's Boy. This sounds to be a reasonably priced project and would, hopefully, deter speeding at that point. With any luck, it might also put off un-local large lorries from taking the short cut through the village, leaving via Ha'penny Toll.

Trucks coming through the village: It was observed that there seem to be more large lorries coming through the village these days. The PC is able to make a complaint and ask individual companies via a computer line to please take care and don't take the short cut; but only if they have some empirical evidence. The PC is encouraging us all to make a note of the name of the company on the lorry, and the time of day it drove through. Further instructions will probably be forth coming... and whilst we're at it, why not count the wheels! (And record the colour of the paintwork?).

Future projects: Elsewhere in this magazine, The PC Chair, James Hughes, has written about this, so check it out. It's on page 8.

Annie Nason

ANSWERS FROM PAGE 10:

1. Julius Caesar
2. Romeo and Juliet
3. Macbeth
4. Much ado about nothing
5. As you like it.
6. Midsummer night's dream
7. Richard III
8. The Tempest

Midday T	Key & t
1 Afternoon Tea	2 Chianti
007 Baltic	BAN ANA
4 Spicy	5 Banana Split
MOTHER MAY	FA ST
7 Marmite	8 Breakfast
ORANGE	h,i,j,k,l,m,n,o
10 Orange Squash	11 Water
CCRREEAAMM	PURR
13 Double Cream	14 Pernod
EGGS EZ	UP UP UP UP UP UP UP UP UP
16 Eggs Over Easy	17 Seven-Up

Answers
from Page 9

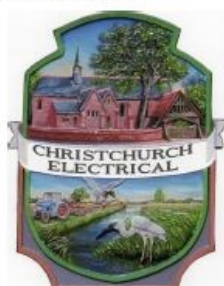
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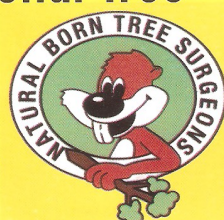
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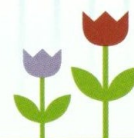
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Are you new to the village? Or perhaps you have never been to this wonderful Cambridgeshire jewel; resolve to visit here in 2023. You have a treat in store!



Wicken Fen: early history

The Fens were formed after sea levels rose at the end of the last Ice Age, 12,000 years ago. Drainage of the fenland basin deteriorated as ice moved northwards, and the remains of dead plants accumulated in the waterlogged ground as peat.

Human settlement in this marshy landscape was limited to 'isles' of clay, such as Ely. Very little is known about Wicken Fen's early history; however, we do know that there was activity in the area, as Stone Age flint tools, Bronze Age weapons and Roman coin hoards have all been found here over the years.

The National Trust acquires Wicken Fen



In the late 19th century, with the local sedge and peat industries collapsing, naturalists paid villagers to assist with collecting trips on the Fen, and also bought up land from them. Distinguished entomologist Herbert Goss suggested the National Trust should consider saving Wicken Fen as early as 1898, as it was 'the haunt of much wildlife'.

These naturalists then sold or gifted their land at Wicken to the newly-formed National Trust, including J C Moberley whose two acres were sold to the organisation for £10. Other notable donors included George Verrall, MP for Newmarket, who bequeathed 239 acres, on his death in 1911. Banker Charles Rothschild, an early influential figure in nature conservation donated parts of St Edmunds and Adventurers' Fens in 1901.

Answers from Page 16



**"If this life of ours
Be a good glad thing, why should we make us merry
Because a year of it is gone? but Hope
Smiles from the threshold of the year to come,
Whispering 'it will be happier'..."**

— Alfred, Lord Tennyson



ANCIENT YEW TREES

With lifespans of up to 3,000 years, the oldest living tree in the UK is easily a yew. Yews have witnessed some monumental moments in our history. A yew was said to have sheltered Robert the Bruce; it was under a yew that the Magna Carta was sealed, and the same yew was also believed to be a meeting place for Henry VIII and Anne Boleyn.

Yews are incredibly long lived - in fact they live for around 900 years before they become ancient. That's compared to around 400 years for an oak tree. Ancient yews can then expect to go on thriving for thousands of years.

The yew tree is another of our native trees which the Druids held sacred in pre-Christian times. They no doubt observed the tree's qualities of longevity and regeneration. Drooping branches of old yew trees can root and form new trunks where they touch the ground. Thus, the yew came to symbolise death and resurrection in Celtic culture. The themes of death and resurrection continued into the Christian era. People buried yew shoots with the deceased, and used boughs of yew as "palms" at Easter. In fact, very old specimens of yew trees are now rare outside of church grounds. No other type of ancient tree occurs so frequently inside church grounds.

Fortingall Yew

The oldest yew in the UK is said to be the Fortingall yew in Perthshire. It's estimated to be between 2,000 and 3,000 years old, although some believe it could be 5,000 years old. In 1769 the girth was recorded as 17 metres. Although smaller now, it's still thriving with new shoots growing.

It's set within a churchyard in Perthshire. In 1854 it was reported that funeral processions would pass through the arch formed by the split trunk.

Today the tree is protected by a wall. The trunk is now split into several parts and it no longer looks like one tree but many.



Crowhurst Yew, Surrey

Like so many of our ancient yews this one sits in a churchyard. This Surrey yew is famous for its door.



Alleged to be 4,000 years old, it's as famous for the wooden door that has been built into the tree. It is not known exactly when the door was attached to the tree, other than sometime after 1820. This was the date when villagers hollowed out the bole of the tree and discovered a cannonball. It's believed to be embedded in the tree after being fired by an errant cannon during the English Civil War between 1642–1651. The farm opposite the church was a staunch Royalist position and as such may have been a target for Cromwell's troops.

St Cynog Church Yew

Another tree vying for the title of oldest yew is in a churchyard in Defynnog. It's a similar age to the Fortingall yew, but some believe this tree could be 5,000 years old.

Trivia fact: The medieval Longbow was made of yew.



DID YOU KNOW?

EVERY PART OF A YEW TREE IS TOXIC. BEWARE!

How many yews can you find in our church grounds? They might well be pretty old.

Next month – ancient oaks.

Any views expressed in The Heron do not necessarily reflect the views of The Heron Editorial Team. The team aim to provide a balanced view of village opinions where such views are expressed. We reserve the right to edit any submissions where we feel this is appropriate.

