

## Hope and confusion, joy and sorrow . . .

Yesterday I met our new window cleaner. He came to have a look at our windows and as he introduced himself he extended his hand which I accepted. We exchanged names over an affirming handshake.



Seven months ago you would probably have wondered why on earth I was writing about a handshake, but in those interceding months a handshake has become a very rare occurrence.

In that moment with the window cleaner it was as if Covid had never been and life was normal; a friendly encounter, a promise for the future and a reminder of the past. It was also a meeting, something irreplaceable in the simple action of shaking hands as if not only my hand was touched but also my life, as if in the contact between us my story was briefly held.

And had the window cleaner been able to read the story that I offered he would have seen hope and confusion, joy and sorrow all in equal measure. For as we looked at the windows of our home I was reminded of our arrival at the Rectory and Barn late January of this year.

We were filled with so much hope and anticipation. Excitement about all that lay ahead for us as new leaders in these villages. We hoped to get to know you; to share food and fellowship, to observe and celebrate the forthcoming years with all their seasons and occasions.

Just a handful of weeks after our arrival Covid put an end to that. As government restrictions were set and our purpose became the prevention of the spread of Covid everything changed. My role as Hospital Chaplain has changed in ways I could never have dreamt of, our youngest daughter missed the chance to take her A levels, our family was touched tragically by the death of Nick's father and all that we hoped to do was condensed into the world of zoom meetings and video recordings.

It would be easy to become disheartened. But one of the great blessings of faith is that it puts a bigger meaning into the present picture. Although lockdown and social distancing have been so difficult they have also presented an opportunity to look more closely at the world which is around us, to value more dearly the companionship of those we have been able to see and perhaps to connect more closely with the seasons of the year.

Now as we move into autumn, a season which would traditionally be marked by Harvest, Remembrance, Advent and Christmas - powerful seasons of thankfulness, recollection and celebration - we will have to find new ways to mark and honour these times.



The countryside doesn't know about Covid- it will continue to delight us with seasonal fruits and as difficult as a socially distanced Christmas may look now, suggestions that Christmas will be cancelled could not be further from the truth. We need today, far more than ever before to cherish the hope that faith offers- to care for one another and as the sunlight recedes to keep the glow of friendship and community alight within our hearts and homes. If you have ideas about how we can support life and celebration within your community or family this season please be in touch- we would love to hear from you.

Revd Helen Garrard

## The History of the Harvest Festival

Take a look at a modern harvest festival and you'll no doubt see many 'urban' offerings of pre-packed cakes and tins of sweet corn. It's so easy to pop down to the supermarket these days we forget that until relatively recently in this country people's lives depended upon the success or failure of their crops. Harvest festivals were a way to say thank you for a good harvest while trying to guarantee the fortune of the next one.

Saxon farmers offered the first cut sheaf of corn to the gods of fertility in order to please them and ensure they were kind the following year. The last sheaf was used to make a Kern baby; a doll, dressed in white and trimmed with coloured ribbons to represent spring.

Most peasants were tenant farmers who farmed for a landowner. Harvest time meant weeks of back-breaking work, so it became a tradition for the landowner to host a harvest supper as a thank you to the whole community once the harvest was brought home safely.



There was no set date, but the celebrations generally took place around the time of the full Moon, known as the Harvest Moon.

Harvest festivals are closely associated with the church, but actually date back to Pagan times. It was 1843 before the Church became involved.

The Reverend Robert Hawker invited members of his parish to a service of harvest thanksgiving at his Cornish church. The practice spread rapidly and led to the custom of decorating churches with harvest produce.

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Following the lockdown due to the coronavirus, I have decided to call it a day and close my salon. I would like to thank all my clients for their support and custom over the years (some for 50 years!!). I feel I have been very lucky to have found so many friends within my work.

I would like to wish you all good health and the very best for the future.

Heather Lewin

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# Lockdown part two

Since I wrote part one in May, which featured in the online June/July edition, I am pleased to say that the plan is to distribute paper copies of the October/November edition.

Little did we know back in May what the impact of Covid-19 would continue to be. 12 months ago we had never even heard of Covid-19 and many, if not all of us, wish we never had.

I don't want to go on about it because you don't seem to be able to escape it. Instead I wish to say that my faith in our God is stronger than it was in May.

The church buildings have been off limits to most of us since March, but the real church, that is the people who trust in God, are still caring and loving to those around them.

Of course there are many other people in all walks of life who have been caring to levels beyond what was thought possible. The obvious people like NHS staff and other carers have gone above and beyond what is reasonable because they care. Standing in our Close on a Thursday night listening to people clapping and banging saucepans gave us a spine tingling moment. But there are many others who have carried on working, delivering things and meeting people along the way. We thank and salute you all.

Forgive me for including again some of the lines from the Bee Gees song entitled "How can you mend a broken heart".

How can you stop the rain from falling down?

How can you get your shopping when you are self-isolating?

How can you manage being stuck at home with little company for weeks on end?

How can you stop the dark night from coming?

How can you face another day?

How can you cope knowing it could be a long time before life gets back to normal?

How can you mend this broken man?

How can you overcome loneliness?

How can a loser ever win?

But while we have a loving God to turn to . . .

How can you stop the sun from shining?



How can you stop the spring flowers from blooming?

How can you stop the birds from singing?

How can you stop the moon from glowing in the night sky?

How can you stop the blossom appearing on the trees?

How can you stop the kindness of other folk?

A prayer offered is always heard, even if you are not sure you have "prayed". Ask and it will be given, seek and you will find, knock and the door will be opened to you. In God's kingdom you will never be a loser because He loves you too much.

O Lord, you are so good, so ready to forgive, so full of unfailing love for all who ask for your help

May these words from Psalm 86 (verse 5) bring you as much blessing as they have brought me.

Chris Limbach

## Celtic Daily Prayer



We are very pleased to announce that Celtic Daily Prayer will be recommencing at 10am on Tuesday September 22<sup>nd</sup> in Surlingham Church Porch, thereafter on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday of the month.

Everyone is very welcome to join the group for half an hour of reflection on some Bible verses, a psalm and the meditation set for the day.

Celtic worship is coming together, of being still, aware of the changing seasons, the weather and nature around us. Sometimes our words are not needed, when the birds sing so loudly, we listen in wonder, knowing that is simply enough.

We will of course wish to keep everyone safe, by observing all appropriate guidelines, with social distancing and wearing of face coverings.

A meditation by Samuel Moor Shoemaker taken from Celtic Daily Prayer

I stand by the door.

I neither go too far in, nor stay too far out.

The door is the most important door in the world,

It is the door through which folk walk when they find God.

There's no use my going way inside and staying there, when so many are still outside, and they, as much as I crave to know where the door is.

Revd Mandy Ansell





Some time ago I borrowed a book from the local library. When I opened it a piece of paper fluttered out and scribbled on it was the following moving poem. Its message is the same today. **Sheila Florance**

## A Soldier's Prayer

Stay with me God, the night is dark,  
The night is cold - my little spark  
Of courage dims. The night is long  
Be with me God and make me strong.

I love a game, I love a fight  
I love the dark, I love the light.  
I love my child, I love my wife,  
I am no coward, I love life.

Life with its change of mood and shade  
I want to live, I'm not afraid,  
But me and mine are hard to part.  
Oh unknown God, lift up my heart.

You stilled the waters at Dunkirk  
And saved your servants; all your work.  
It's wonderful. Dear God, you strode  
Before us down that dreadful road.

We were alone and hope had fled  
We loved our Country and our dead.  
And could not shame them so we stayed  
The course, and were not afraid.

Dear God, that nightmare road and then  
That sea! We got there, we were men.  
My eyes were blind, my feet were torn,  
My soul sang like a bird at dawn.

I knew that death is but a door;  
I knew what we were fighting for.  
Peace for the kids, our brothers freed,  
A kinder world, a cleaner deed.

I'm but the son my mother bore,  
A simple man and nothing more  
But God of strength and gentleness  
Be pleased to make me nothing less.

Help me again when death is near,  
To mock the haggard face of fear  
That when I fall, if fall I must,  
My soul may triumph in the dust.



## The Bramerton Group Thurton Benefice

### Thurton Benefice Update

**Church Opening:** The churches of the benefice are now open during the day for private prayer. Please observe the safety notices inside the church door. Face coverings must be worn, hand sanitiser must be used on arrival and departure, and social distancing maintained at all times.

**Daily Prayer** is said in the churches of the benefice at 9am on the following days:

Tuesday - St Andrew's, Framingham Pigot

Wednesday - St Ethelbert's, Thurton

Thursday - St Mary's, Yelverton

Friday - St Mary's, Ashby St Mary

Saturday - St Peter & St Paul's, Bergh Apton

All are welcome to this short, but special, beginning to the day.

**Harvest Services** will be taking place as normal in all five churches (please see the Service Rota on the back page for dates/times)



The churches will be decorated more simply but gifts of tinned/packaged/ bottled produce suitable for donating to the Norwich Foodbank will be gratefully received at the services on the day.

**Gift Days** have traditionally been held in some of our parishes on the weekend of the Harvest Services. This year we will not be encouraging parishioners to bring donations to the church on a specific day as it would be inappropriate to encourage people to gather unnecessarily. However, letters may still be circulated around the parishes giving details of how to make a gift to support the ministry and mission in the parishes and to help maintain our beautiful church buildings. Please consider making a gift as our financial situation has become perilous due to the suspension of services during lockdown and the prohibition on fund raising events.

**Remembrance Sunday** will be observed across the benefice (again, please see the Service Rota). Because of the limit on the numbers we can safely accommodate inside the church buildings, it may be necessary to hold the services outside. Please come appropriately dressed and furnished with an umbrella, just in case!

**Finally, thank you** for all you are doing to support the Church and our communities. We are still in very uncertain times and we must all be willing to adapt to changing circumstances. The clergy of the benefice are always available to offer support or answer any questions about church services or any other matters. Please contact us:  
Revd Chris Ellis: 01508 484174  
Revd Cate Turner: 01508 484026



## From the Registers

### BAPTISMA

Jack Robert COLE

Surlingham

### MARRIAGES

Daniel COOK and Laura WILKINSON

Yelverton

Chris WALTON and Olivia GORMLEY-PARKER

Framingham Pigot

### FUNERALS, BURIALS, CREMATIONS, INTERMENT OF ASHES

17/06/20 Paul Leonard COAN (70)  
(Interment of ashes)

Thurton

22/07/20 Audrey WILCOCKSON (95)

Thurton

28/07/20 Jean Morag SPRUCE (85)

Framingham Pigot

30/07/20 Ivan Frederick Howard SPOONER (70)

Ashby St Mary

30/07/20 Charles William THOROUGHGOOD

Rockland St Mary

03/08/20 Margaret Elsie MACKLEY (92)

Yelverton

26/08/20 Michael CHETTLEBURGH (83)

Bergh Apton

27/08/20 Samantha Hazel Emily STEVENSON (32)

Rockland St Mary

03/09/20 Ruth Evangeline MUTTON (99)

Yelverton

11/09/20 Gladys Marion DANIELS (87)

Ashby St Mary

## What's on in Rockland Benefice in October and November

- ❖ **Church services.** The pattern of having one benefice service per Sunday has been a great success. Celtic Prayer has also recommenced at Surlingham on the second and fourth Tuesdays of the month. In order to keep everyone safe and comfortable, we are following social distancing, wearing masks inside church and following all appropriate guidelines.
- ❖ **Harvest.** We're celebrating the harvest season with a Harvest Festival at Bramerton Church on **October 4<sup>th</sup>**. This will also be a celebration of the church's re-opening for worship. Across our parishes we're collecting long-life goods for Norwich Food Bank. Please let us know if you'd like to donate, and look out for details of any other harvest activities on Rockland Churches Face Book page and village websites.
- ❖ **Remembrance Sunday.** On **November 8<sup>th</sup>** we will be holding Acts of Remembrance in a number of our churches, as we once again honour the fallen from our parishes and re-commit ourselves to peace and justice today. Please see the service plan for details.
- ❖ **Sunday service videos.** We're continuing to film fifteen-minute video services which will be linked to the Rockland Churches Face Book page and posted on village websites. Please contact us if you wish to join the contact list, or if you know anyone who isn't online and would like to receive the service booklet.
- ❖ **Open Churches.** Five of our churches are open for visits and private prayer between 10am and 5pm. These are Claxton (daily), Kirby Bedon (daily), Rockland St. Mary (Tuesdays), Surlingham (Sundays and Wednesdays). You're welcome to come in - please follow the safety notices that help keep everyone safe and help build confidence.
- ❖ **Art Café.** The Café is meeting via Zoom on most Wednesdays at 10.30am, looking at works of arts or artists and talking about art and everything that inspires and intrigues us. Please contact Nick for your copy of *Barn Owl*, the monthly arts and spirituality mailing that includes the Café's programme.

With best wishes,

Nick and Helen



## Ordination of Cate Turner

I think it was in April when I began to wonder if my ordination would take place as planned. Ordinations in the Church of England traditionally take place at Petertide at the end of June, or Michaelmas at the end of September.

Ours was planned for June. We had been given the time and date about a year before the event so that we could make spiritual and practical preparations. Apart from completing the training and sending off all the necessary paperwork there are other things to consider.

It is normal for example to buy a special stole to wear on the day, to go on retreat before the service, to send out 'ember cards' alerting people to the event and requesting prayers for the candidate and their new benefice, to plan a bit of a 'do' afterwards to celebrate. Oh, and often moving to a new house too! As you can imagine, it does take some organisation.

However, by April I was starting to notice events that involved large groups of people were being cancelled and I began to get a little nervous. I was assured in mid-March it would all go ahead. Even when we went into lock down, the Diocese were hopeful, but they began making contingency plans. It was not long before churches were closed and it became clear that ordinations were not going to happen this Petertide.

In the end the Diocese of Norwich, anticipating that we might face a second wave of the virus in the Autumn, planned the service for 6<sup>th</sup> August, Transfigurationtide!

My friend Coryn and I were in fact the first of the first group of deacons, to be ordained in the Church of England this year. It was different. The normally packed cathedral had a few chairs dotted around in socially distanced groups to keep our ten guests safe, the choir was replaced by stunning solo singers and everyone, including the Bishop, wore masks. There was lots of hand sanitising and minimum physical contact to reduce risk of transmission, but it worked and it was, in its own way, beautiful.

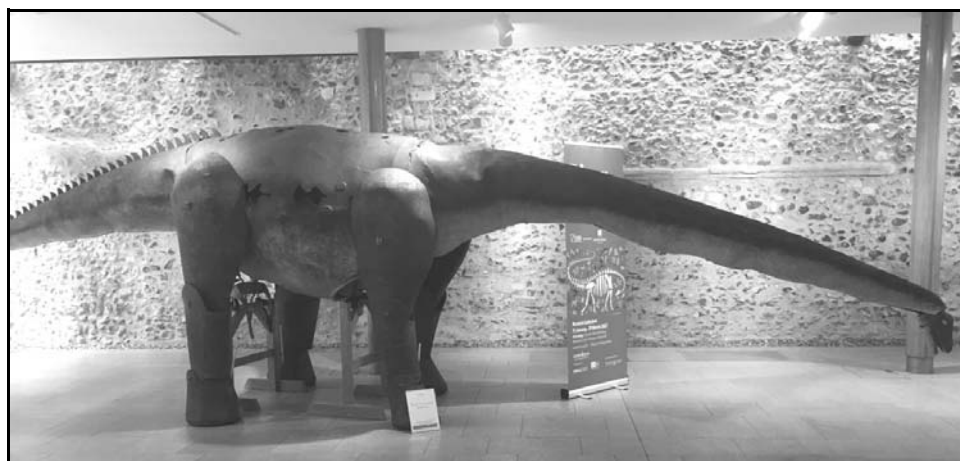
As the Bishop pointed out, people have been ordained in difficult times before, in many ways this was no different. I am sure we will forever be the 'Covid curates' with our out of sync ordination anniversaries but I think although it might appear we have lost out, we have gained.



There may not have been Ember cards, residential retreats, hundreds of witnesses and a big party but I do not feel I have missed a thing. Like the brides whose weddings have been pared back by the pandemic, it invites us to remember what is important about the ceremony that is taking place. It is the start of a new life in the service of God.

Revd Cate Turner

## DIPPY ON TOUR from 11th January - 21st March 2021



In case you haven't heard yet? DIPPY the DIPLODOCUS is coming to Norwich Cathedral, which completes a 3 year tour of cities all over the U.K.



Many of us will have seen him at the Natural History Museum in London, where he's been since 1905.

Dippy is huge, with a skeleton of 292 bones, with more than 70 bones in his tail alone! He originated in the Jurassic period, and belongs to the Sauropods Group meaning "lizard feet"

Ahead of Dippy's visit, a new dinosaur has been stomping around Norwich. It's Ploddy who is an 8.5 metre dinosaur puppet created by Ali Mackenzie and Matt Reave with the team from Tin House.

These photos are of Ploddy. He has taken part in the Lord Mayor's Procession and was at the Royal Norfolk Show of 2019. Now you can see him in the Hostelry which is by the Cathedral's main glass entry doors.



In preparation for Dippy's arrival, the cathedral's education department has been working with the City and County, as well as the Teacher Scientist Network, to develop a range of exciting activities and workshops for school children, plus opportunities for art work and reflection.

Already there have been a variety of dinosaur trails for youngsters to follow during the summer holidays, and it is hoped something similar will take place during this coming Autumn half term. It's a great fun way for families to spend time exploring and learning together.

ALL these activities and to see DIPPY and PLODDY are FREE! Hope you can come along to see them and also take the opportunity to explore our beautiful cathedral at the same time.

Revd Mandy Ansell



### One for the Rook

(The out of the ordinary is right under your nose)

SCRIPT READ THROUGH - 13 March 2021 - 2pm

Things are beginning to move on the 2021 BACAT event postponed from this year, for obvious reasons.

Please note in your Diaries: We shall be having a Read Through of the Script by Hugh Lupton and the Writers.

All those who would like to take part will be welcome - Actors, Readers, Singers, Rude Mechanicals, Musicians and Helpers

Saturday March 13 at 2pm, Bergh Apton Village Hall.

O4tR performances are planned for 25th September and 2nd, 9th, 16th October 2021.

If you are interested or would like to know more, please contact Christopher Meynell, [c.m.meynell@gmail.com](mailto:c.m.meynell@gmail.com) or (01508) 558440

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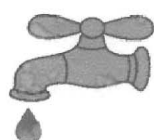
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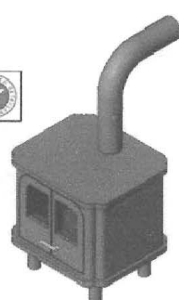
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# Village News

## Alpington & Yelverton

### Village Pond Project

The Village Pond Restoration Project was kicked off in October 2017 when long-standing resident of Yelverton, the late Ted Cullum, applied for a



grant from the Community Benefit. Ted was concerned that within a few years, if no action was taken, the Village Pond would become nothing more than "a soggy depression, devoid of water and covered in reeds, rushes, saplings and scrub".

Ted illustrated his application with watercolour sketches he had made of the Pond showing how it used to appear. This is one of his paintings on the right.



The Parish Council agreed that the Pond was an important amenity for the Villages and took on the restoration project. The intent is to restore the Pond to health and beauty by cutting back trees and scrub that have become overgrown, thus increasing light to the pond surface and cutting down on leaf litter accumulating below the surface. Also, the bulk of the reeds and rushes will be removed, and the sludgy mud that has built up dug out to the original Pond bottom.

Following advice from the Norfolk Wildlife Trust, the Project was broken down into stages, dealing with the two halves of the pond in consecutive years during Autumn and Winter to reduce the impact on wildlife.

**Stage 1** October 2018 - the trees forming the field hedge line on the half of the Pond bordering Slade Lane were cut back to hedge height, saplings and reeds encroaching the banks were cleared, the willow tree pollarded and the ash tree removed as it was diseased. In addition, volunteers repainted the bollards and rails on the road edge.

**Stage 2** October 2019 - the trees bordering the other half of the Pond were cut back to just below hedge height. Dead and diseased trees were also removed. Some of the cut wood was placed on the banks to provide refuges for bugs.

**Stage 3** - the digging out of the sludge from the Pond is scheduled for September 2020. In addition the overgrown bulrushes will be removed. The Parish Council have a contractor appointed to carry out this work and the owners of Hill House have kindly agreed to allow this mud to be spread on the neighbouring field.

**Stage 4** - tidying up and stabilising the banks. Options to improve accessibility for visitors and sanctuary areas for the wildfowl are being considered. Going forward we will regularly review the condition of the pond so that it does not get too overgrown with bulrushes and other vegetation in the future.

**Would you like to help?** We'd like a team to plan, develop and look after the planting biodiversity around the pond as we would like it to become a natural and attractive asset for the community to enjoy. If you are interested in volunteering please let a member of the Parish Council know. Contact us through the website, or please email: [clerk.alpington@gmail.com](mailto:clerk.alpington@gmail.com)

### St Mary's Church Gates Restored

The main gates of St Mary's Church, Yelverton, have been restored following a successful application to the

Community Benefit Fund, which is administered by the Parish Council.



Give them a look when you're on your way past, and if you're coming for a visit why not use the church's own guide book when you're having a look inside.

### Alpington & Yelverton History Society

October 14 - Clinks Care Farm

November 11 - Jan Edwards on The Victorians

Meetings are held in Bergh Apton village hall, NR15 1AA at 7.30pm. £3.00 per person.

## Ashby St Mary & Thurton

Ashby & Thurton Village Hall and Playing Field

**Ashby & Thurton Village Hall and Playing Field 100 Club**  
Thank you to all who support our 100 Club. This helps with much needed funds for Our Village Hall especially now at these unprecedented times.

We have been drawing the numbers each month with three committee members, socially distanced of course, and the winners were: July - 10, Y Jarvis, August - 80, C Powell. The winning amount each month is £40 with an extra £120 in November.

**AGM** - The committee AGM will take place on the 18<sup>th</sup> November 2020 at 7:30pm and the public are welcome.

**Community Café** - Unfortunately because of Government guidelines we could not run our community café and it's

*(Continued on page 9)*



# Village News

## Ashby & Thurton continued

*(Continued from page 8)*

still unsure when we will open again. Please keep a look out for news on the village hall notice board and notice boards around the villages.

**Short Mat Bowls** - Everyone will be informed when it is possible to play again at the village hall.

**Our Fund Raisers** - None planned for the moment because of Covid-19 Government guidelines.

**Bookings** - We hope it will not be too long before we can open up the village hall again for everyone. The Pre-School are back in the village hall from 7th September and despite the Village Hall remaining shut for the time being we can offer two exercise classes which are taking place on the playing field - Circuit Training on Wednesday evenings 6pm-7pm and Kettle Bells on Saturday mornings 8.30am - 9.30am with Keith Low. Further information can be found on Facebook @CollectiveUprisingPT or by contacting Keith on 07707048224. Our booking clerk is Laura Vaissiere 01508 480773 or at [ashbythurtonvillagehall@gmail.com](mailto:ashbythurtonvillagehall@gmail.com)

**Village Hall Survey** - We have started handing out a questionnaire to Thurton and Ashby residents to help us get funding for village hall projects including a new car park. Please help us, your feed back is very important; the village hall belongs to all in both villages so have your say.

**Treasurer Required** - A treasurer is required for Ashby & Thurton Village Hall Committee. Meetings are held once every other month. There will be a hand over from the previous treasurer. If you are interested please contact: Carol Powell 480089

**New Flat Roof** - A new flat roof with insulation is now complete. This should make it feel warmer in the winter and, most importantly, stop the rain from coming in.

**Wooded Area** - We have been advised that when it is very windy people should avoid going into the wooded area at the bottom of the playing field. Tree surgeons will be cutting back loose/broken branches and removing dead trees soon, some trees have grown too large for any coppicing.

## Bramerton

### Open Air Church Service at Bramerton

Because of the Covid 19 lockdown we have been unable to host a single Service in St Peter's Church, Bramerton since early in the New Year - until now!!

So the Church community here were delighted when our Rectors, Revd Nick and Revd Helen, suggested an open air service, to celebrate summer, be held in the churchyard, followed by a bring your own tea and surprise surprise the weather held up and was hot and sunny which was the icing on the cake!

## Bramerton continued



The Service was held in the afternoon of Sunday 16th August and we were delighted to welcome a congregation of twenty or more (including baby Grace who was impeccably behaved) from both of the Benefices which make up the Bramerton Group.

Revd Nick and Revd Helen devised a one off service with readings and hymns and prayers, and because we were in the open air with plenty of room to spare, observing social distancing was not a problem and we were able to sing the hymns - what a joy!

We are particularly grateful to Revd Nick and Revd Helen for helping us to kick start our worship once more especially as they should have been at home packing before taking a well-deserved break!

Our next Service will be a Benefice Harvest Festival on Sunday 4th October and we are inviting the congregation to bring gifts of tinned food rather than the more traditional gifts which may then be given to the Norwich Food Bank.

Christopher Hawes

Photo by David Fairbourn

## Carleton St Peter

### Enid Basey-Fisher

It is with great sadness that we have to report the death of Enid Basey-Fisher after a short illness.

Carleton St Peter will miss our stalwart very much, she was one of the main supports for the church and will leave a huge gap. Our thoughts are with the family at this time.



# Village News

## Claxton

### Golden Wedding Celebration

Sue and Robert Ellis, who live in Claxton, celebrated their Golden Wedding Anniversary on Saturday August 15th.

Surrounded by members of their family, the happy occasion was enjoyed by all.



## Thurton Church Holiday Club 2020 - BetterTogether

August would have normally seen 40 children descend on Ashby & Thurton Village Hall for four days to take part in a week of games and activities at Thurton Church Holiday Club. Due to Covid-19, this year we moved online and recorded four video sessions for everyone to enjoy from their own home.

We incorporated as many of the usual activities as we could, including Bible stories, puppets, a warm-up, challenges, a memory verse, craft and songs. Our focus was being 'Better Together'. We looked at how working with others can bring the best result, shared examples of this in the Bible and how we have seen key workers and communities demonstrate it during lockdown. A highlight on day four was a through-the-keyhole appearance from some very special guests, who ran Thurton Holiday Club for over 35 years!

Being online has surpassed our expectations. The videos have had 250 views between them so far. We have been able to reach many more than we would normally be able to, and even had an audience in Bedfordshire! The sessions were shown on YouTube and they are available indefinitely if anyone wishes to have a look - simply search 'Thurton Church Holiday Club' on YouTube.

A huge thank you goes to the whole team for taking on an unfamiliar task with such commitment and enthusiasm. It was really special to have our local teenagers involved too. We are really pleased that we could do something rather than have nothing at all. Thank you to everyone who has watched and supported us. We hope to be back together in the village hall next year!

Hannah Limbach

## Rockland St Mary

### Golden Wedding Celebration



June and Ernie Green of Rockland St Mary also celebrated their Golden Wedding Anniversary on Saturday August 15th.

They were joined by members of their family and really enjoyed their special day.

## Circular walks in Surlingham

Park outside Surlingham Church on Church Lane. This can be either a short walk around Surlingham Marsh (40 minutes) or a slightly longer version via Surlingham Ferry pub! The riverside part may be very wet at spring or autumn high tides or after heavy rain.

With the church on your right hand side as you face the river, walk to the track that runs around the church and turn right. Walk down the track and when it turns left you can see the ruins of an old church on your right. This is where Ted Ellis of the Wheatfen Trust is buried.

Continue along the track to an old farm that is now used as a gun club. There are often lots of rabbits here as the ground is very sandy. The track then becomes a footpath.

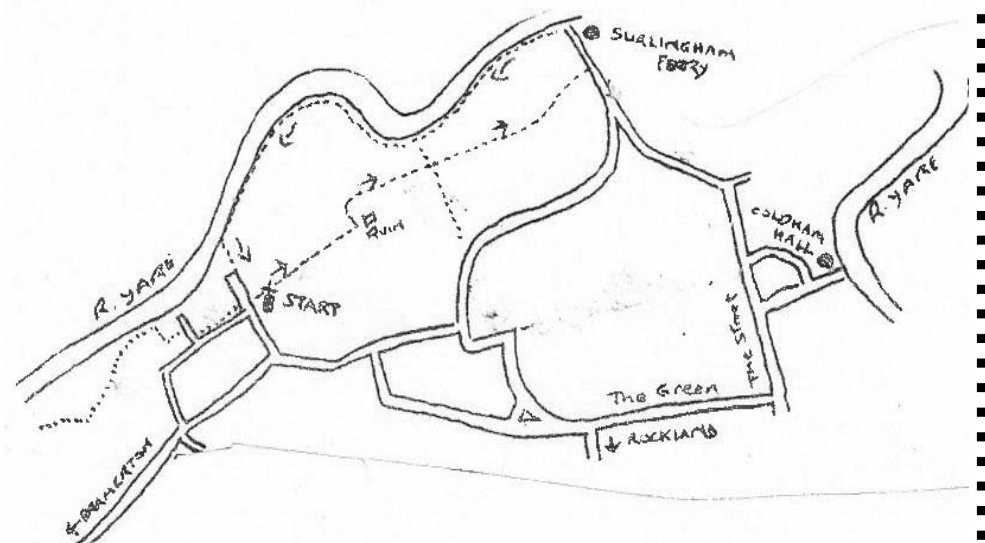
A couple of hundred yards after the farm the path divides and if you want the longer walk go straight on until you meet Surlingham Ferry road, turn left along the road to the pub and then left again along the river bank continuing on the path that joins from the shorter walk.

**Shorter walk** - Where the path divides turn left over a stile and walk to the river and then turn left.

After a couple of hundred yards there is a viewing area to look at birds on the marsh.

Continue on the river footpath until you reach a dyke. Turn left away from the river and follow the path back to the church.

**Variations!** -For a longer walk you can start at Bramerton Common and walk downstream along the river bank round a riverside property and reach Surlingham Church - again a wet walk during high tides and rainy weather.



# Village News

## The History of Conkers



With autumn comes the familiar sight of shiny brown conkers, the fruit of the horse chestnut tree, revealing themselves as their prickly green casings ripen and split open. These nuts' sheen and rich colour make them irresistible to children and they are still used for playing the traditional game of Conkers.

The game of Conkers has two players. Each player has a conker which has had a small hole drilled through the centre and been threaded onto a piece of string around 25cm long. The players then take turns to strike the other's conker until it breaks, earning a point each time. Scoring is accumulative, with the victor's conker additionally taking on the points of their opponent. A new conker is known as a noner and conkers can build up points to become sixers, tenners and beyond.

The first recorded game of Conkers took place on the Isle of Wight in 1848, around 200 years after the horse chestnut tree was introduced into Britain from eastern Europe. Before this, a similar game had been played using hazelnuts (also known as cobnuts) or snail shells.

It is not generally known where the name 'conker' - used to refer to both the game and the horse chestnut fruit - originates from. Some suggestions are that it comes from the French verb cogner which means 'to bump' or that it is perhaps a colloquial version of the word conquer (the original cobnut or snail shell game was referred to as Conquerors). However, in other regions of the UK, the game of Conkers is also known as Cheggers, Cobblers and Kingers.

Often found in parks, the horse chestnut tree displays flower spikes in spring known as candles. Unlike the sweet chestnut, its starch-rich fruit is extremely bitter and not edible to humans due to its high saponin content. However, in the Balkans, horse chestnuts were traditionally fed to horses to make their coats shiny. They can also be used as food for cattle by soaking them in lime water, boiling, grinding and adding them to fodder.

As well as being traditionally used as a horse food, the tree's name may be due to the appearance of the horseshoe-shaped leaf scars that occur on its branches.

Conkers become harder with age but there have always been tricks of the trade to ensure your conker is a champion. I can recall my father swearing by soaking them overnight in vinegar.

You can also do a test first to eliminate weaker conkers by placing them in a bowl of water. Those that are less dense (and so more easily smashed) will float, while the harder, denser conkers will sink.

The technique of drilling through the conker is vital too: the hole needs to be perfectly round and smooth with no cracks or fissures that could weaken the conker's structure.



Vinegar baths and other such underhand tactics are regarded as cheating and prevented in the annual World Conker Championships where all contestants are supplied with ready-threaded conkers. The World Conker Championships began in Northamptonshire in 1965.

A group of regulars at the pub in Ashton, whose green had an abundance of horse chestnut trees, decided one rainy day to have a game of Conkers with a small prize for the winner and the remaining money going to RNIB Talking Books, as one of the players had a blind relative.

The game grew to become an annual event with people coming from all over to take part. Today it is international with the first overseas title having been won by Mexican Jorge Ramirez in 1976 and the first ladies' title being awarded to Selma Becker from Austria in 2000. In addition, there are now junior competitions that attract schools with sponsorship and entertainment. Money is still given to the visually impaired with hundreds of thousands of pounds raised to date.

Conkers are not only interesting for their history as a playground game, it was once thought that they could help win us the war. In the autumn of 1917, the Ministry of Supply offered children money through their schools and the Scout movement to collect as many conkers as they could. Under the Official Secrets Act, they were not told why.

In fact, Lloyd George had asked a scientist called Professor Weizman to discover a way for Britain to manufacture cordite, which was needed for ammunition. At that time the country was experiencing a shortage due to a shipping blockade that prevented its import from America.

To make cordite, a large supply of acetone is required, and to produce it, the professor needed a good source of starch. This was readily available in horse chestnuts.

However, thanks to the enthusiasm of the children, the government ran into problems when it came to transporting and storing the huge amounts of conkers collected, which had to be taken and kept at secret factory locations. The plan was consequently abandoned.

Conkers are believed to have medicinal properties, helping in the treatment of haemorrhoids, varicose veins and rheumatism. It was once thought that carrying one in your pocket was enough to reap the benefits, although these days there are tinctures and ointments available which contain its extracts.

For arachnophobes, conkers are said to be a deterrent to spiders when placed around the home.

Although traditionally a child's game, many schools now ban conkers for health and safety reasons. And with the decline in the health of horse chestnut trees due to leaf miner moths and the bacterial disease bleeding canker, autumn conkers may become an increasingly rare sight.

By Catherine Rose





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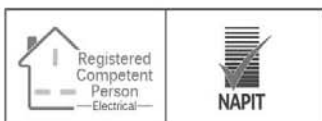
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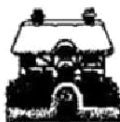
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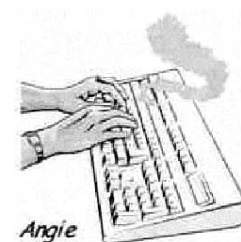
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**Claxton & Carleton St Peter** - Spacious, fully equipped hall. Ideal for functions and regular users. Disabled facilities. Fully fitted kitchen. Large car park. Bar available on request. £8 per hour or by session. Contact Jo Bissonnet, 484081 or Sarah Carter, 480555.

**Rockland St Mary - Margaret Mack Hall** available evenings and weekends for private parties, meetings and social activities. Rates per hour or per day. Contact after 4pm please, either Debs Sayles, 01508 537077, email: [debssayles@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:debssayles@yahoo.co.uk) or Daphne Howlett, 01508 538553.

**Rockland St Mary - The Parish Room** is available for hire. With kitchen facilities it is ideal for social functions, parties, clubs and meetings. Our hire rates are extremely reasonable. Please contact Jayne Regan, 01508 538087.

## Advent Lights In Rockland Benefice.

### Would you like to take part in a village wide Advent Calendar?

The idea is that different households are given a theme or character from the Christmas story for each day of December. You then decorate a window, which is visible from the street to reflect your theme or character. On your appointed date you light your display which then remains lit along with all the others until New Year. The idea is that we would create a trail around our village or villages which tells the Christmas Story and provides a lovely activity for families or individuals.

Depending on the response this may be in one or more of our villages. All I need at the moment is people to express an interest in finding out more and willing availability to explore further. If you are interested, please contact The Revd Helen Garrard; [broadsidecurate@aol.com](mailto:broadsidecurate@aol.com) or 01508 538014 or text 07920528282



Hellington Church. Photo courtesy of Tony Palframan

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	4th Oct Trinity 17 Green	11th Oct Trinity 18 Green	18th Oct St Luke Green/Red	25th Oct Bible Sunday Green	1st Nov All Saint's' Day White/Gold	8th Nov Remembrance Red/Green	15th Nov 2nd Before Advent Red/White	22nd Nov Christ The King White	29th Nov Advent Sunday purple
Ashby	10.00 HC		18.00 Harvest			10.50 Remembrance Service			10.00 HC
Bergh Apton	11.00 Harvest		10.00 HC			10.50 Remembrance Service	10.00 MP		
Bramerton	10.00 Harvest				10.00 HC	10.50 Act of Remembrance			10.00 HC and Service of Light
Carleton St Peter									
Claxton				10.00 HC		10.50 Act of Remembrance	10.00 HC		
Fram. Pigot				11.00 Harvest HC	10.00 HC	08.15 Act of Remembrance & HC(BCP)			
Kirby Bedon						10.50 Act of Remembrance			
Rockland St Mary			10.00 HC			09.30 Act of Remembrance			
Surlingham		10.00 HC				10.50 Act of Remembrance		10.00 HC	
Thurton			16.00 Harvest	10.00 MP		10.50 Remembrance Service		10.00 HC	
Yelverton		10.00 HC		16.00 Harvest	16.00 All Souls'	09.30 Act of Remembrance & HC			

CELTIC PRAYER SERVICES, 10am at Surlingham Church: 13th October, 27th October, 10th November, 24th November.

Bible Readings Sunday by Sunday: October & November 2020

Date	Old Testament	Epistle	Gospel	
04/10/20	Isaiah 5.1-7	Philippians 3.4b-14	Matthew 21.33-46	17 <sup>th</sup> Sun after Trinity
11/10/20	Isaiah 25.1-9	Philippians 4.1-9	Matthew 22.1-14	18 <sup>th</sup> Sun after Trinity
18/10/20	Isaiah 35.3-6	2 Timothy 4.5-17	Luke 10.1-9	Luke the Evangelist
25/10/20	Nehemiah 8.1-4a[5-6] 8-12	Colossians 3.12-17	Matthew 24.30-35	Bible Sunday
01/11/20	Revelation 7.9-17	1 John 3.1-3	Matthew 5.1-12	All Saints' Day
08/11/20	Wisdom of Solomon 6. 12-16	1 Thessalonians 4.13-18	Matthew 25.1-13	Remembrance Sunday
15/11/20	Zephaniah 1.7,12-18	1 Thessalonians 5.1-11	Matthew 25.14-30	2 <sup>nd</sup> Sun before Advent
22/11/20	Ezekiel 34.11-16,20-24	Ephesians 1.15-23	Matthew 25.31-46	Christ the King
29/11/20	Isaiah 64.1-9	1 Corinthians 1.3-9	Mark 13.24-37	Advent Sunday
06/12/20	Isaiah 40.1-11	2 Peter 3.8-15	Mark 1.1-8	Advent 2



Please note:

At Holy Communion, where only two readings are used, the first reading will usually be the Epistle, and the second will always be the Gospel reading. At other services where two readings are used, the first will usually be the Old Testament reading, and the second can be either the Epistle or the Gospel readings.

CLERGY OF THE BRAMERTON GROUP		ROMAN CATHOLIC PARISH OF PORINGLAND AND LODDON		ELEVEN SAYS EDITORIAL BOARD
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		<b>Times of Masses</b>		
		Saturday	6 pm Loddon	
		Sunday	9 am Poringland	
		Daily Mon-Fri	8 am Poringland	
		Saturday	9 am Poringland	
		<i>Staff days off.</i>		
Monday	Chris Ellis			
Thursday	Mandy Ansell			
Friday	Nick and Helen Garrard			
PLEASE NOTE: The next issue will be published and ready for distribution on Saturday 28th November .				