

Church & Village News

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October 2018



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Newsletter Team

Editor Michael McMahon
mjmcm25@gmail.com

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magic4@myself.com

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Treasurer Corinne Youngs 577263

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Parish Council Chairs

Baconthorpe Jonathan Cooper 577527

Edgefield John Seymour 587504

Hempstead Paul Sanders 713217

Matlaske & Barningham Sara Buxton 577207

Plumstead Nick Fulford 577433

Saxthorpe & Corpusty Imogen Waterson 587610

Village Correspondents

Baconthorpe Corinne Youngs 577263
corinne@avyoungs.com

Barningham Winter Sara Buxton 577207
s.m.buxton@hotmail.co.uk

Edgefield Richard Peaver 587486
rhpeaver@btinternet.com

Hempstead Sharon Hannah 711769
shazyhannah@yahoo.co.uk

Matlaske Marion Shepherd 577521
jim.shepherd123@btinternet.com

Plumstead Mary Lintott 577718
mary.lintott57@btinternet.com

Saxthorpe & Corpusty Sophia Hodgson 587510
saxthorpecastle@gmail.com

District Councillors

Baconthorpe, Corpusty, Edgefield, Hempstead,
Plumstead, Saxthorpe

Georgie Perry-Warnes 538344
georgie.perry-warnes@north-norfolk.gov.uk

Matlaske & Barningham
Michael Knowles 825995
mike.knowles@north-norfolk.gov.uk

Parish Council Websites or Email Addresses

Baconthorpe <http://baconsthorpepc.wixsite.com/baconsthorpepc>

Edgefield <http://edgefieldnorfolk.co.uk/theparishcouncil.shtml>

Hempstead hempsteadpc@gmail.com

Matlaske & Barningham <http://matlaskeparishcouncil.norfolkparishes.gov.uk>

Plumstead <http://plumsteadparishcouncil.norfolkparishes.gov.uk>

Saxthorpe & Corpusty <https://corpustyandsaxthorpeparishcouncil.wordpress.com>

Local MP

Rt Hon Norman Lamb MP

Unit 4, The Garden Centre

Nursery Drive, Norwich Road

North Walsham, NR28 0DR

norman.lamb.mp@parliament.uk

<http://www.normanlamb.org.uk/>

Office hours are Monday - Friday 9am – 5pm

01692 403752 daily between 10am – 1.30pm

County Councillor

Steffan Aquarone

steffan.aquarone.cllr@norfolk.gov.uk

01603 327827

Church People

Rev'd Canon David Longe 761757

djhlange@gmail.com 07881 950 294

Lay Minister Gill Peat 734226

Lay Minister Judy Rosser 587584

Church Wardens

Baconthorpe Tessa McCosh 577611

Barningham Winter Amelia Courtauld 577250

Edgefield Emma Cletheroe 587049

Angela Turner 587292

Hempstead Ann Udale 713656

Su Summers 710702

Matlaske Thomas Courtauld 577250

Plumstead Eleanor Faulkner 577868

Saxthorpe Merlin Waterson 587610

Heather Monks 587118

What's On

OCTOBER

Fri 5	7.00pm	Matlaske Quiz Night	Barningham Hall
Sat 6	7.30pm	Edgefield Quiz Night	Village Hall
Thur 11	5.00pm	Baconsthorpe Induction of Benefice Priest	Church
Sat 13	10.00am	Edgefield Craft Exhibition	Church
Sun 14	10.00am	Edgefield Craft Exhibition	Church
Fri 19	7.00pm	Hempstead Quiz Night	Village Hall
Wed 24	7.00pm	Baconsthorpe Prize Bingo	Village Hall

NOVEMBER

Mon 5	7.00pm	Baconsthorpe Parish Council Meeting	Village Hall
Wed 14	7.00pm	Baconsthorpe Quiz Night	Village Hall
Sat 17	7.00pm	Plumstead Keith Skipper Evening	Baconsthorpe Village Hall

Clash Diary

Dec 2	Matlaske Xmas Party
Dec 3	Plumstead Parish Council
Dec 7	Hempstead Xmas Party
Dec 8	Edgefield Festive Evening
Dec 9	Matlaske Sing-along
Dec 15	Baconsthorpe Xmas Sing-along
Dec 16	Baconsthorpe Xmas Party

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Regular Village Hall Events

BACONSTHORPE

Tuesday during term time	10.00am - 12noon	Diocesan Play Van - 07918 027092
Tuesday	7.30pm - 9.30pm	Carpet Bowls - 711320
Last Friday	6.00pm - 11.00pm	Pop-Up Pub

CORPUSTY

Second and fourth Monday	2.00pm - 4.00pm	Bure Valley Quilters & Stitchers
Second Tuesday	12.30pm - 3.00pm	Citizens Advice Bureau Outreach
Tuesdays during term time	5.45pm - 7.15pm	Brownies
Second Tuesday	10.00am - 12noon	North Norfolk Knitters Rita Taylor 587507 k2togp1@btinternet.com
First and third Thursday	10.00am - 12noon	Art Group Rita Taylor 587507 k2togp1@btinternet.com
Friday during term time	9.30am - 11.30am	Toddler Group

EDGEFIELD

Third Monday	7.00pm	Parish Council Meeting
First Tuesday	2.30pm	Tuesday Club
Second Wednesday	2.00pm	Ladies Club
Last Thursday	10.30am	Coffee Morning

HEMPSTEAD

First Monday alternate months	7.30pm	Parish Council Meeting
Tuesday	10.00am	Charcoal Drawing £4 - Mike Thody 711282
Third Wednesday	7.30pm	Film Club

Mobile Library Van

25 Oct / 22 Nov / 20 Dec / 17 Jan

Matlaske	12.30	NR11 7AQ	Old Post Office
Plumstead	1.15	NR11 7LG	Walnut Farm
Baconsthorpe	2.45	NR25 6LJ	Council Bungalows
	4.10	NR25 6LG	Old Post Office
Hempstead	3.20	NR25 6LE	Hare & Hounds
	3.40	NR25 6TL	Telephone kiosk

11 Oct / 8 Nov / 6 Dec / 3 Jan

Saxthorpe	11.50	NR11 7BL	Old Post Office
Corpusty	12.10	NR11 6QP	School
	12.40	NR11 7BU	Great Farm Cott's
	2.00	NR11 6QJ	Adams Lane
	2.15	NR11 6QL	3 Council Houses
	2.30	NR11 6QL	16 Council Houses
Edgefield	3.15	NR24 2AX	The Street
	3.40	NR24 2AL	The Memorial

Post Offices

Baconsthorpe Village Hall

Tuesdays	1.00pm - 4.00pm
Fridays	10.00am - 1.00pm
All services	

Corpusty Stores

Monday-Saturday	9.00am - 12.00noon	587202
All services including Euros		

Holt Library

9 Church Street, Holt NR25 6BB	712202
Mon Wed Sat 9.30am-1.00pm	
Fri 9.30am-6.00pm	

Disclaimer: The views expressed in this publication are not necessarily the views of the Church & Village News. Apologies if contributed material is not published due to space constraints. All facts are believed to be correct at the time of going to press.

Letter from the Rector, Revd David Longe

Tel 761757 (mobile 07881 950294)

Dear All

I write this three weeks before I am inducted as the Rector of the Benefice, and confess that I am both nervous and excited about what lies before us. We moved to Norfolk in late August so we could settle the children into school. We had hoped to move straight into the rectory at Matlaske only to find it was not ready, so we are temporarily living in the rectory in Erpingham.

I am hoping whether we are in Erpingham or Matlaske when I am inducted on 11 October, that I will be able to begin to meet all of you. When I was interviewed for this role I was asked a number of searching questions, but there was one that has stuck with me: "How do you plan to be visible in the Benefice when the traditional view of a vicar visiting no longer happens? That is, how do you plan to be visible other than on your bicycle?" I said that I thought it was still the role of the vicar to visit, whether on a bicycle or not and that as there are around 1,800 people living in the Benefice, I thought that I might - with a fair wind - be able to knock on most doors within the first six months to introduce myself.

Whether people attend the church on a regular basis or not, I feel passionately that everyone in the community should be able to express their views for what they think the church should be, and most importantly how we as a church can serve the local community. During this first year I would love to hear your views, to learn what the challenges and the delights are of living in your communities. I hope I can learn and I can listen. I have a rickety bike that we bought back from Jerusalem (it originally came from Bangkok), a raincoat, and a pair of old walking boots ready for this adventure around the Benefice.

So I hope very much that I might be able to meet as many of you as possible during the forthcoming months. And do please always feel free to drop in to see me in Erpingham (or Matlaske - I will let you know when we move) or send me an email or telephone me.

I know that the Church Wardens and the Rural Dean have been working incredibly hard to prepare for the induction service at St Mary's Baconsthorpe at 5pm on 11 October (this service marks the beginning of my ministry in the Benefice). The Bishop of Norwich will be preaching and it would be wonderful if you are able to come to this service.

I am aware that I am coming to the Benefice following the remarkable ministry of Revd Michael Cartwright. Michael, with his wonderful wife Jo, have provided invaluable service to the Benefice. When a priest enters a new church, she or he is always conscious that they walk on a path that has been prepared by extraordinary people. It is the same for me: it is a great privilege to come to serve in a place that has had such a run of fine Godly priests and has such a fine and lovely set of Church Wardens and Lay Readers.

Finally, I want to say thank you to all whom we have met since we arrived: your welcome has been second to none!

It will be truly an honour to be with you on 11 October, and I pray that our Lord may be able to equip me to serve you in a fitting and Godly manner,

With my prayers and my best wishes

David



The Benefice of Matlaske Church Services for October

7th Trinity 19 Only one service this week

11.00 Eucharist *CW TL* Edgefield

Thursday 11th

5.00 Institution and Induction of
Revd David Longe to the
Matlaske Benefice by the Bishop of
Norwich and the Archdeacon of Lynn Baconsthorpe

14th Trinity 20

10.00 **Benefice Eucharist** Saxthorpe

21st Trinity 21

9.30 Eucharist Plumstead
11.00 Matins *BCP* Hempstead

28th Bible Sunday

9.30 Eucharist *BCP* Matlaske
11.00 Matins *BCP* Baconsthorpe

4th ONov All Saints

9.30 Eucharist *CW* Saxthorpe
11.00 Matins *BCP* Barningham Winter
5.00 Patronal Choral Evensong Hempstead

CW = Common Worship *BCP* = Book of Common Prayer *TL* = Traditional Language

Holy Communion Services

Saxthorpe 9am Wednesdays 17th and 31st - please note none on 3rd

Matlaske 10am every Thursday - please note none on 4th or 11th

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Baconsthorpe

Pop-up Pub

This will be on Friday 26th October when supper will be Lancashire Hot Pot.

Broadband

I am reliably informed that the village now has Super-Fast Broadband. Obviously good news for those of you who know what this is!!!

Village Hall News

Karen Benton Worboys will be stepping down as Secretary of the Village Hall Committee at the end of this year. Unfortunately, due to work commitments and a new business venture, there just aren't enough hours in the day! Karen will however be staying on as a Trustee. With the departure of Karen, it goes without saying that the Village Hall Committee requires a new Secretary. Please contact Susan Belbin on 577 474 should you be interested in this voluntary role. Thank you.

PRIZE BINGO - 24 October at 7.00pm. Light refreshments provided. Bring your own drinks.

QUIZ NIGHT - 14 November at 7.00pm. Supper provided - bring your own drinks.

Table booking essential. Contact Kevin Delaney 07801 916769 - thank you

SING-ALONG - 15 December at 7pm - 9pm Carols and Christmas songs, mulled wine and great company.

CHRISTMAS PARTY - 16 December at 3pm - 6pm. Games, food and maybe even a visit from you know who ...

Lost & Found

A key was found outside the Village Hall two or three weeks ago. For further information please contact Susan Belbin on number above.

Susan Belbin



Corinne Youngs
577263

Barningham Winter

We send our best wishes to Dick and Debbie Fiddian and hope that they both are now on the road to recovery.

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Ben Radley
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b_radley@hotmail.co.uk



Sara Buxton
577207

James Boyd, the classical guitarist, played to a large gathering of people at St Mary's Church, Barningham Winter on 19 September. The church looked beautiful after its recent renovation, and the candlelight set the scene for the wonderful pieces James played. Unfortunately, Harriet Mackenzie, the violinist, couldn't be there due to illness, but James certainly made up for her absence by giving the audience a memorable evening which started with drinks at Barningham Hall.

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Edgefield

Church News

Very many thanks to Alison Mawson who nobly took part in the Norfolk Churches Trust Bike Ride on our behalf, and to the recorders whom she recruited to be on duty in the church itself. It would be so good if others would join Alison next year...? She did very well.



Richard Peaver
587486

The Harvest Festival service will be held on 30 September at 6.00 p.m.

The installation of our new Rector, the Rev David Longe, takes place at Baconsthorpe Church on October 11 closely followed by our Craft Exhibition in our church on 13 and 14 from 10am – 5 pm on Saturday and until 4pm on Sunday. We have been promised a fascinating and very varied range of exhibits, some of which are for sale. We will also sell any fruit, vegetables, plants, jams, etc., you could donate, there will be refreshments available all day and a raffle of a super hamper! Please come, and bring your family and friends. Entry £2, children free. All proceeds to church funds. Any queries, ring me on 587292, avoiding the answerphone if possible.

Angela Turner

Village Hall News

A reminder that the Village Hall Festive Evening is to be held on Saturday 8 December, starting at 6.30pm. Tickets are £6 from any member of the committee.

The August 200 Club draw was as follows: 1st prize - Bebe Mason (14); 2nd prize - Jeremy Goldney (87); 3rd prize - Michael Chadwick (1). The annual prize draw of £100 for 2017/18 was won by Alison Mawson (196).

Jim Frost

Hempstead

200 Club

£50 E Summers, £25 J Wood, £10 N Tyabji £5 D Sewell, R Matthews, A Inglis

Coffee & Gossip

This month will be in aid of Macmillan Cancer Support, on Friday 5 October, 10.30am to 12 noon in the Village Hall. If you can't come, but would like to make a donation, please ring Su 710702.



Sharon Hannah
711769

Play Reading Group

Will meet on October in Hempstead Village Hall. Refreshments from 7pm, reading starts promptly please at 7.30pm.

Quiz Night

Friday 19 October 7pm. Please contact Mike Thody to reserve your seat on 711282.

Thank you to William Mack and Jonathan Neville for cutting court green.

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Hempstead Arts

Hempstead Arts, now in its sixth year, has gone from strength to strength. This year it raised just over £2,500, and since it began has now achieved just over £10,000. This has contributed to the running of your church with some saved towards the re-thatching of the apse that is becoming urgent. The support that is freely given by all those who come and spend money is really appreciated. Those who help with the preparation, presentation and food over the weekend (most of which is donated, too) mean that expenses are minimal. Three artists, since its inception, have donated their artwork so that all proceeds are donated, so special thanks must be given to Mike Thody, Ann Udale and Su Summers. Looking ahead the small committee have a meeting to discuss what can be improved for next year; we would welcome suggestions info@hempsteadarts.co.uk. Please also use the same email address if you would like to help in any way next year. Thank you to ALL involved again,

Francis Feilden
Church Treasurer

Institution and Induction of Revd David Longe

Everyone is invited to this service on October 11, 5pm at Baconsthorpe Church and afterwards at the Village Hall. It begins a new chapter in the life of the churches in the Benefice, but more than that, the Rector is here for everyone and he and his family will be delighted to meet you.

Welcome

To Alexa and Steve who have moved into Thistledown. We hope they will be very happy here. It was lovely to meet Alexa at Coffee & Gossip last month.

Sponsored Bike Ride

Thank you to all who participated in the sponsored bike ride. More detail on this will be in next month's newsletter. Meanwhile, Matilda Hannah, aged 9, writes:

I cycled for the Norfolk churches this year with my dad and my brother, we cycled miles and miles. I really enjoy going from church to church and seeing all the fields on the way. My favourite lane was Chapel Lane in Hempstead where I saw two Shetland ponies and I told my dad I am keen to have two Shetland ponies one day. When you cycle in pretty countryside I think you really get time to think, and understand what makes you happy, for me it's Shetland ponies. I am also happy to raise money for All Saints church, Hempstead where my mum and dad were married.

Matlaske

100 Club

£25 Rob Whitwell, £10 Angela Gillard, £5 Andy Bere

Quiz Night

Everyone is welcome to our quiz night on Friday 5th October, 7pm in The Old Stables, Barningham Hall. Come along as a team or make one up on the night. £5 entrance fee which includes jacket potato supper. An evening of fun is guaranteed.



Marion Shepherd
577521

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Church Gates

A big thank you to Donny and Ruth March who have, between them, cleaned down and re-varnished our church gates. These gates were donated to St Peter's by Donny and Ruth in 2003 in memory of Clifford and Alice March, Donny's parents, and John March, his brother.

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Welcome

To David, Kate, Max and Claris who have moved into The Forge. We hope they will be very happy in Matlaske.

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Plumstead

It's mid-September, and I am writing this in gale force winds and temperatures of 25 degrees. It all seems very odd, and the challenges for gardeners and farmers still abound. Nevertheless, we are definitely moving towards autumn - ploughing seems to be the order of the day, but memories of the scorching Summer remain with us.



Mary Lintott
577718

It is good to know that there are some things that don't change, including fundraising events for the Church!

Keith Skipper Saturday 17 November 7 pm, Baconsthorpe Village Hall

To book tickets ring Mary Lintott 577718. £10 payable on the night. There will be a licensed bar and a finger buffet during the interval. Many of you will remember the popularity of our food at previous events held in the Village Hall. There will be a raffle. All in aid of Church and Benefice Funds. Please come and support us. Keith does very few of these events these days so it is not to be missed.

Eleanor was our sole biker raising funds for the Church Bike Ride. She went to 5 churches, cycled 10 miles, picked 1.75lbs of blackberries, and raised £175. Thank you, Eleanor. Thank you too to all those who manned the church during the day welcoming the bikers on their journeys.

Armistice Day

There will be a commemoration of our countrymen who lost their lives in WW1 on 11 November in Plumstead Church. Armistice Day this year is 100 years from the end of the Great War. Members of our parish who lost relatives in that war are asked if they would like to speak about them, irrespective of where they were living.

The three residents of Plumstead who lost their lives are Fredrick Fitt, Robert Hazelwood and Benjamin Newstead. If anyone has any information about these gentlemen or would be prepared to do some research, or speak on their lives, please contact our Parish Clerk, Carolyn Price clerkplumsteadparishcouncil@hotmail.com. We will raise a glass to them at the end. Further information will be in the November Newsletter.

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Please note that the Parish Council meeting on Monday 3 December will be held at Oak Tree Cottage.

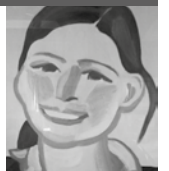
Finally, we have another Grandparent in the village, a first grandchild for Emma Stimpson, whose daughter Ellie and son-in-law Pete, who were married in Plumstead Church in 2016, have a daughter, Margot Rose, born in New York.

Saxthorpe with Corpusty

I am pleased to report that Father Michael, who was taken unwell during a wedding service on 1 September, has been restored to full health.

Neighbourhood Planning Update

The submitted draft plan is now being examined formally by the appointed Examiner, Mr Andrew Ashcroft. He met with Imogen Waterson and Tony Barnett on 18 September to explain the examination process. Having visited the villages, read the submitted draft plan and other associated documentation, he will now issue a Clarification Statement to advise us how to make any necessary revisions. It is envisaged that these will help us to achieve the intended community goals and aspirations.



Sophia Hodgson
587510

After those revisions he will make his recommendation. If the plan is passed, it will then go to a formal referendum of the registered voters of Corpusty and Saxthorpe within the next few months.

In addition to the above, Tony Barnett reports that publicly available information shows that very few submitted and revised drafts are actually rejected at examination. So - the Inspector has called! Look out for the referendum!

Planning application for 30m Telecoms Mast on Monks Lane

The Parish Council is conscious of the need for better signal quality for telecommunications, but has opposed the proposal for a 30m mast on the Anglian Water site, primarily because of the visual impact were a tower to be erected at that location.

The PC is keen that more suitable locations should be explored. A petition opposing the planned mast has been signed by 151 villagers. The proposal has also been opposed by our District Councillor.

Glass Recycling

I previously reported that the Parish Council has decided to donate to local causes or interest groups 50% of the income generated by the village bottle bank, requesting that any "bids" be notified to Kirsty Cotgrove.

Two groups have expressed interest, Friends of the Primary School and those supporting St Peters Church, Corpusty. The PC has decided that the first payment shall be shared equally between them.

Any further expressions of interest to Kirsty Cotgrove please: c.sparishclerk@gmail.com.

Lost Camera

When Abi Dennington, whose father lived in the village in the 1950s, visited Corpusty on the afternoon of Thursday 30 August, she lost her camera – a small black Panasonic Lumix. She thinks she might have dropped it on the grassed area opposite the craft/gift store, "close to the river, where the bullrushes are growing."

If anyone finds it, could they please telephone her on 01603 720527.

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The History of Trick-or-Treating

Trick-or-treating is a Halloween tradition that started in America and has gained popularity here past years. Children dress-up in Halloween themed costumes and go from house to house knocking on doors in the hope of being given treats.

Halloween has its roots in the ancient Celtic festival of Samhain, which was celebrated on the night of 31 October. The Celts, who lived 2,000 years ago in the area that is now Ireland, the United Kingdom and northern France, believed that the dead returned to earth on Samhain. People would gather to light bonfires, offer sacrifices and pay homage to the deceased.

During some Celtic celebrations of Samhain, villagers disguised themselves in costumes made of animal skins to drive away phantom visitors; banquet tables were prepared and edible offerings were left out to placate unwelcome spirits. In later centuries, people began dressing as ghosts, demons and other malevolent creatures, performing antics in exchange for food and drink. This custom, known as mumming, dates back to the Middle Ages and is thought to be an antecedent of trick-or-treating.

In 1000 AD the church designated 2 November as All Souls' Day, a time for honouring the dead. Celebrations in England resembled Celtic commemorations of Samhain, complete with bonfires and masquerades. Poor people would visit the houses of wealthier families and receive pastries called soul cakes in exchange for a promise to pray for the souls of the homeowners' dead relatives. Known as souling, the practice was later taken up by children, who would go from door to door asking for gifts such as food, money and ale.

In Scotland and Ireland, young people took part in a tradition called guising, dressing up in costume and accepting offerings from various households. Rather than pledging to pray for the dead, they would sing a song, recite a poem, tell a joke or perform another sort of 'trick' before collecting their treat, which typically consisted of fruit, nuts or coins.

Although it is unknown precisely where and when the phrase 'trick-or-treat' was coined, the custom had been firmly established in American popular culture by 1951, when trick-or-treating was depicted in the Peanuts comic strip. In 1952, Disney produced a cartoon called *Trick-or-Treat* featuring Donald Duck and his nephews Huey, Dewey and Louie.

Some American colonists celebrated Guy Fawkes Day and in the mid-19th century large numbers of new immigrants, especially those fleeing the Irish Potato Famine in the 1840s, helped popularise Halloween. In the early 20th century, Irish and Scottish communities revived the Old World traditions of souling and guising in the United States. By the 1920s, however, pranks had become the Halloween activity of choice for rowdy young people. The tradition grew in the 1930s only to be abruptly curtailed with the outbreak of World War II, when apart from anything else, children had to refrain from trick-or-treating because of sugar rationing.

At the height of the post-war baby-boom, trick-or-treating reclaimed its place among other Halloween customs, quickly becoming standard practice for millions of children across America. No longer constrained by sugar rationing, sweet companies capitalised on the lucrative ritual, launching national advertising campaigns specifically aimed at Halloween. Today, Americans spend an estimated \$6 billion annually on Halloween, making it the nation's second-largest commercial holiday.

AUTUMN BAKED PUMPKIN

Ingredients

Filling:

- 1½ lbs good quality minced beef
- 3 oz bacon/bacon off cuts - diced
- 4 - 5 oz onion - diced small
- 3 cloves garlic - crushed
- 1 med. carrot - diced small
- 2 sticks celery - diced small
- 1 x 480 gm tomato - tinned chopped
- 2 oz tomato puree
- 3 tsp basil
- 2 tsp sugar
- ½ pt meat stock or white wine
- 2 oz grated cheese

- Parsley for garnish
- salt and pepper to taste
- 1 ripe pumpkin
- 2 oz oil

Method

1. Fry onion in oil till soft, add garlic and continue to cook for 3 mins.
2. Add meat and bacon - seal
3. Add carrot, celery and cook for about 10 mins stirring well.
4. Add tomato and tomato puree, basil and cooking liquid.
5. Add a little salt and black pepper.
6. Leave to cook through for about 20 mins.
7. Meanwhile, prepare the pumpkin. Cut off the top and put to one side. Remove the pips and clean inside.
8. Place pumpkin on a large sheet of tin foil, fill with the prepared filling. Replace the top and seal up with tin foil.
9. Place in a roasting tray and bake in a moderate oven for 1½ - 2 hours, until the flesh is soft, but not too soft to be able to hold its shape. Test with a fork.

10. Remove from oven and carefully take off the tin foil, gently place pumpkin on a serving platter. (probably the tin foil at the base of the pumpkin will remain)

Cover the top of the pumpkin with grated cheese, so it melts down the sides, and decorate the base with parsley.

Serve with steamed vegetables with lemon vinaigrette dressing - or simply with slices of crusty lemon french bread (like garlic bread, but using lemon butter instead of garlic)



Recipe taken from
Recipes from the Baconsthorpe Newsletter

by Mike Strong and illustrated by Yvonne Law published in 2000

The Village Gardener

To Plant a Garden is to Believe in Tomorrow



If someone asked me to choose which season was my favourite, it would be a real toss-up between spring with its wonderful greens and promise and autumn with its beautiful colours and glorious sunrises and sunsets (as long as we are not in saucepan lid grey mode). At the moment, autumn is winning! This time of year always drags my attention away from grass and up into the trees.

One of the best things you can do at the moment is to choose and plant bare rooted trees – I'm a great believer in them. A fraction of the cost of larger root ball versions, the plucky bare root will repay your faith and a bit of hard work for years to come. If you do take the plunge then make sure that if we are in a bit of a dry patch you water them well. If you haven't the time, it's a good pocket money job for someone who has. It's also well worth keeping the surrounding area clear of grass and weeds, as you want all that moisture to go to those roots. After a few weeks, and preferably after a good rain or water, mulch that area well. When your trees finally take off you will be so pleased you had taken the trouble.

I'm often asked my favourite trees. The liquidambar tree has sensational colour, a real bonus for your garden, closely followed by the red oak which (as its name suggests) has gorgeous red leaves in the autumn. Finally, I have a real soft spot for the spindle tree, which has a lovely combination of yellow and red foliage and beautiful red fruits. So, if you have room any of those three they would be a lovely addition to your garden and your autumn.

Now we are off to the veg patch, where it's a bit quiet this time of year. If you are lucky enough to have pumpkins this year, make sure you put some straw or matting under the hopefully developing fruit. Also ensure you don't let all the fruits develop, so all the plants efforts go into a few good-sized pumpkins rather into a lot of disappointments! While the weather is still with us, take some time to have a good tidy up.

This month's question is from Tom Davies, who asks when the best time to sow grass seed is. Early October is a great time, as there is still some heat in the ground to help the seed germinate. Rake the seed into the ground when you sow it to help the seed find a bit moisture and to keep it safe from birds.

Do keep the questions coming in! Email me at redmaple@btinternet.net, and as ever the most interesting question will be published next month.


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Meet the Neighbours - Michael Westgate



Michael has been designing, making and restoring fine furniture at his workshop in Matlaske for over 20 years. All the furniture he makes is bespoke and he never makes the same thing twice. Using hardwoods and decorative veneers, he creates beautifully detailed furniture ranging from occasional tables to architecturally inspired cabinets. The largest piece he has made was a 22ft rosewood dining table for a client in Sussex. Today he works mostly in oak and walnut, but laments the decline in the number of timbers available for furniture making. "The number of timbers available has halved in the last 30 years, with most tropical timbers no longer obtainable," he says. "I wish I'd had the opportunity to work in Cuban mahogany which was last imported over 100 years ago, as no other timber comes even close to its combination of qualities."



Michael was born and brought up on the Suffolk coast and has no family connection with furniture making. His interest began while still at school when he got a Saturday job in an antique shop, where he learnt the basics of furniture restoration. Despite never having done any woodworking at school, he turned down a place at university in favour of a specialist furniture making and design course at Rycotewood College near Oxford. After spending a couple of years working for a restorer he set up his own business in south Norfolk. In the mid '90s, as the business moved more towards

making furniture, he began to look for somewhere to buy where he could both live and work. He was really looking for somewhere in Suffolk, but after a two year search, a chance phone call lead him to a derelict barn in Matlaske which was too good an opportunity to turn down.

"It was a daunting prospect as we were going to do most of the work ourselves and friends would say, rather disconcertingly, 'I'm sure you know what you're doing'. Which of course we didn't! It's still a bit of an ongoing project but we have been here for over 20 years now and don't regret a moment."



Emma Youngs