

Church & Village News

Baconsthorpe • Barningham Winter • Edgefield • Hempstead
Matlaske • Plumstead • Saxthorpe with Corpusty

March 2023



Chinook Helicopter flying over Baconsthorpe Church
Photograph by Norman Allen

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Matlaske & Barningham	Sara Buxton	577207
Plumstead	Nick Fulford	577433
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Parish Council Websites

Baconsthorpe
<http://baconsthorpepc.wixsite.com/baconsthorpepc>
Edgefield
<https://edgefieldparishcouncil.norfolkparishes.gov.uk>
Hempstead
<https://hempsteadpc.wixsite.com/hempsteadpc>
Matlaske & Barningham
<http://matlaskeparishcouncil.norfolkparishes.gov.uk>
Plumstead
<https://plumsteadpc.wixsite.com/plumsteadpc>
Saxthorpe & Corpusty
<https://corpustyandsaxthorpeparishcouncil.wordpress.com>

Village Websites

www.baconsthorpe.org
www.hempstead-norfolk.co.uk
www.plumstead.org.uk



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Authorised Worship Assistant Prof Alain Wolf 577292
Lay Minister Gill Peat 734226
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01263 577292 / trustlawrence@hotmail.com
Safeguarding concerns please contact the Police on 999 or Diocese of Norwich Safeguarding Team
safeguarding@dioceseofnorwich.org or 01603 882345

What's On

MARCH

Fri 3 10.30am	Hempstead Coffee & Catch-Up	Village Hall
Sat 4 10.00am	Baconsthorpe Church Yard Tidy + BBQ	St Mary's Church
Sat 4 10.00am	Baconsthorpe Craft Fair	Village Hall
Sun 5 11.00am	West Beckham Gardens Open	Chestnut Farm, NR25 6NX
Mon 6 2.00pm	Hempstead Crafty Creations	Village Hall
Thurs 9 3.45pm	Hempstead Music	Village Hall
Thurs 23 10.00am	Hempstead Crafty Creations	Village Hall
Fri 24 7.30pm	Baconsthorpe Murder Mystery Play	Village Hall
Sat 25 2.00pm	Hempstead Crafty Creations	Village Hall
Fri 31 6.00pm	Baconsthorpe Pop-Up Pub	Village Hall

Clash Diary

March 4	Baconsthorpe Craft Fair	May 8	Matlaske Coronation Tea
April 5	Plumstead Easter Garden	May 20/21	Edgefield Open Gardens
April 7	Plumstead Cake + Produce Sale	July 15	Edgefield Edgefest
April 10	Plumstead Bric-a-Brac + Garden Sale	July 22	Baconsthorpe Fete
April 15	Baconsthorpe Table Top Sale	July 29	Matlaske Fete
April 15	Edgefield Bingo Night	August 6	Hempstead Fete
April 23	Barningham Charity Run	Sept 2/3	Hempstead Arts
May 7	Baconsthorpe Coronation Tea		

Contact Corinne Youngs to add your event
577263 / corinne@avyoungs.com

Post Offices

Baconsthorpe Mobile Post Office Van
Wednesdays 9.40am – 10.40am Village Hall
Corpusty Stores 587726
Monday-Friday 9.00am – 12.00noon
Itteringham Shop 587325
Monday + Thursday 9.00am-1.00pm

Local MP

Duncan Baker MP
Tudor House, Grammar School Lane
North Walsham, NR28 9JH
duncan@duncanbaker.org.uk
<https://www.duncanbaker.org.uk/>
Monday - Friday 9am – 5pm 01692 557140

County Councillor

Steffan Aquarone
steffan.aquarone.cllr@norfolk.gov.uk / 01603 327827

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.

Mobile Library Van

16 March / April date tbc

Matlaske	12.30	NR11 7AQ	Old Post Office
Plumstead	12.50	NR11 7LG	Walnut Farm
Edgefield	2.15	NR24 2AL	The Memorial
	2.35	NR24 2AX	The Street
Corpusty	15.00	NR11 6QP	School
	15.40	NR11 7BU	Great Farm Cott's
Saxthorpe	4.10	NR11 7BL	Old Post Office
Corpusty	4.30	NR11 6QJ	Adams Lane

9 March / 6 April

Hempstead	3.40	NR25 6TL	Telephone kiosk
Baconsthorpe	4.05	NR25 6LE	Hare & Hounds
	4.25	NR25 6LJ	Council Bungalows

Times and dates sourced from Norfolk County website: <https://bit.ly/2AJdSGA>

For all enquiries please call 01603 222303

Holt Library

9 Church Street, Holt NR25 6BB 712202
Tues 10am-7pm / Wed 2pm-7pm
Fri 10am-7pm / Sat 1pm-4pm

Letter from the Rector - Reverend Canon David Longe

577252 / 07881 950294 / rector@matlaske.org.uk

Dear All

I want to tell you the story of Joe.

When I worked in London most Wednesdays at 8am I would attend a service of Holy Communion at the Church at the end of our street. Wednesday mornings were special, and when I introduced Sara to these services, she found them special too. In my hurry to get ready for work I was often late arriving after our parish priest had started the service. There were only ever a few of us, but invariably at the back there were three men – two called Joe, and another called Maurice.

Over the years, Sara and I grew very fond of both the Joes and Maurice – all three are all now safely with God.

When I plucked up the courage to speak to our priest about ordination, I needed a reference from the Church so I approached one of the Joe's. Joe kindly agreed. It was then I began to get to know him better. One day he told me some of his story.

Years before his marriage had broken down, miserable, he turned to the bottle and began living on the streets. One night, oblivious to all, he found a porch to sleep in - it happened to be a church porch. The next morning (it could have been Sunday, I don't know) people from the church came across him.

Joe told me how kind they were, how they fed him and helped him. He said their kindness transformed his life: he stopped drinking, he managed to make contact with his daughter. He got his life back together.

This remarkable turnaround was because some strangers sacrificed some of their time to help a man in trouble.

Joe thereafter faithfully served the Church, eventually becoming Church Warden. He went about quietly caring for the Church and those in the community. You wouldn't have thought twice if you passed him as he was unassuming and quiet. For me, he was a walking saint.

On 22nd February Lent began with Ash Wednesday. Right at the heart of our Lenten journey is the discipline of self-sacrifice. That morning when Joe awoke in the porch and those people began caring for him something remarkable happened – Joe was given a glimpse of something fantastic – a future, hope. Joe might have been unassuming, but if you looked carefully you would see the smile of a man of deep kindness who would help all whom he met without counting the cost. Was this because of those life-changing acts of kindness? He said he was forever thankful.

During this Lenten period I would urge us all into acts of generosity, whether it is giving to the earthquake appeal, praying for those who are suffering, or reaching out to someone like Joe and giving a little of your time. Lent, with Easter as its promises, is a journey teaching us that when we sacrifice some of what we have God bring abundance in ways we cannot imagine.

May God be with you this Lent

David



The Benefice of Matlaske Church Services for March

5th March 2nd Sunday Before Lent

8.30am	Eucharist	Edgefield
10.30am	Eucharist	Barningham Winter

12th 3rd Sunday Before Lent

8.30am	Eucharist	Matlaske
10.30am	Eucharist	Saxthorpe

19th 4th Sunday Before Lent & Mothering Sunday

8.30am	Eucharist	Plumstead
10.30am	Mothering Sunday Service	Hempstead
10.30am	With blessing of stained glass in memory of Su Summers previously Church Warden of Hempstead	Edgefield
10.30am	Mothering Sunday Service	Edgefield

26th Lent V

8.30am	Eucharist	Barningham Winter
10.30am	Eucharist	Matlaske
3.30pm	Children & Family	Edgefield

2nd April Palm Sunday

10.30am	Eucharist	Edgefield
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Please note there is no Wednesday service at Saxthorpe during March

MATLASKE BENEFICE CALENDAR

A small working group is looking at producing a Matlaske benefice wall calendar for about £3 to £4 each to buy. The theme would be the beauty of God's countryside and how local people live in it and care for it. Each of the twelve pages would feature a colour photograph of a local scene, taken by a local person, plus some Bible verses and lines of poetry relevant to the image. There would also be the usual date grid for making notes. If you would be interested in buying such a calendar, please drop a note to duncan.wood@cantab.net saying so. And perhaps how many you would buy. There is no commitment at this stage. We're just trying to work out how many calendars we would need to print.

FIVE-WEEK LENT COURSE & REFLECTIONS

Wednesday 1st March at 7 pm

Week 1: Judy Rosser's (venue tbc)

Weeks 2-5: Alain Wolf, Park View, The Street, Matlaske, NR11 7AQ

Free reading materials will either be emailed to participants or accessed online

For further details please contact Dr Alain Wolf

ajew2@hotmail.co.uk or 01263 577292

Baconsthorpe

200 Club

£50 R Gee, £25 K Rix, £10 Y Marra, £5 R Youngs, H Rix, M Rowe

There are numbers still available. It only costs £1 per month and you could be lucky. You can pay by bank debit. Account name: Baconsthorpe Village Hall; Sort code: 20-30-81; Account No; 90423106



Hazel Martin
07879 414577

Did You Know?

Did you know that Baconsthorpe once had a brick kiln? Arthur Pentney says that he has no idea where it was located and it is not shown on any old maps. However, his father once told him that the very last brick produced there was suitably annotated and used somewhere within the Ash Tree Farm complex of buildings. Perhaps it is still there? My thanks to Arthur for sharing this information.

Defibrillator Awareness Session

The parish council has arranged for a session to be held in the village hall on Saturday March 11th at 10.30am. It will last 1.5 to 2 hours. Although the defibrillator is designed to be used by members of the public with or without formal training, these sessions provide valuable training in CPR techniques and the use of the defibrillator. Above all it will create confidence in the community which could prove vital in saving precious minutes in the treatment of sudden cardiac arrest. You are encouraged to attend. Please advise Sarah Hayden on 570223 / baconsthorpeparishcouncil@gmail.com if you have not already signed the attendee list in the village hall.

Church Clear Up

This is another reminder that on March 4th at 10am volunteers will be hopefully gathering with rakes and other accoutrements at St Mary's Church to tidy up the churchyard. Corinne has ordered the burgers and sausages so with clement weather it should be a merry gathering. We also hope on that day to begin a plan of the headstones in the churchyard to provide more information for visitors. Do come and join us.

Murder At The Manor – Friday 24th

Rehearsals are now under way for what I hope will be a very enjoyable evening. The murder will take place in the village hall and I do hope lots of people will come, watch the play and then try and work out who was the guilty character! Price does include food. Do book your tickets – see poster for details. If this proves popular, I can organise another later in the year.

Would You Believe It?

It was a cold winter's night in January 2018 when two very small kittens were found wandering on the patio at 2 Tuppenny Grove where we live. Obviously feral and abandoned by their mother, we began feeding them and very soon they had moved into the house. Soon a visit to the vet was needed to prevent more kittens and this proved hugely traumatic. When a harassed husband eventually got them to the vet and was asked their names, he replied 'Cat 1 and Cat 2' so those names stuck! Two years passed and although they were brother and sister it was a very uneasy relationship and one day No 2 disappeared. Despite searches she was never found and No 1 was now in charge. Then suddenly last December No 1 disappeared and again we searched and called. Five days passed and one evening at 10pm as I made a cup of tea there was a miaow at the door. I looked out and there sat No 2! She had returned after two years confident that her brother was no longer in residence!! After 12 days he did return and the uneasy relationship has been resumed.



Murder at the Manor

Friday 24 March 7.30pm

Baconsthorpe Village Hall

Book a table of six or join a team
Prize for the winners!

£13 including Ploughman's Supper + Cake

Bar Open + Raffle / To book contact

villagehall@baconsthorpe.org / 07500 047732

Save the date - plans for the Coronation

On May 7th at 3pm the residents of Baconsthorpe are invited to a celebration tea at the village hall. Children will receive a coronation mug to mark the day and there will be a prize for the best decorated crown. More details will be in the next newsletter.

Village Hall News

The hall has just been redecorated and is now looking very smart inside with a newly painted entrance hall, loos, kitchen, main hall and bar. The outside of the front door and the large window nearby are the only outstanding items and will be repainted in the summer. It is thanks to your support that we have been able to undertake this work, so do come along and enjoy it at one of the events below.

Craft Fair – Saturday 4th 10am-2pm

Murder Mystery Evening – Friday 24th 7.30pm £13 including food

Pop-Up Pub – Friday 31st 6pm Sausage & Mash from 6.30pm

Table Top Sale – Sat April 15th 10am-1pm to book contact Jane on 07789 001094

We are looking for new members to join the Village Hall Committee. If you are interested, please call Piers on 07493 227591

Piers Warner

Barningham Winter

Little Lifts Trail Run

Sunday 23rd April 10am, Barningham Hall, Matlaske by kind permission of Mr & Mrs Courtauld and other generous land owners.

Calling all runners and any willing volunteers who would like to participate in the first ever trail run in aid of the small but mighty local breast cancer charity, Little Lifts (littlelifts.org.uk/). Entries are now open and with three distances to choose from (10km, 10mile and 15.5mile), there is something for everyone.

If you would like to volunteer on the day, we would love to hear from you! Please email Georgie at georgie@norfolkcordial.com for more information.

For more information and to enter, please visit: littlelifts.org.uk/event/little-lifts-trail-run-2023/ or totalracetiming.co.uk/race/420

We are lucky to have some lovely walks around here but please dog walkers can you flick their dog poo away from footpaths.



Sara Buxton
577207

Edgefield

Church News

A total of nearly 60 people, including approximately three dozen children, came to a children's event, organised once again by Kay Harvey and her team, in the church on St Valentine's Day. The morning was based around the themes of friendship, neighbourliness and kindness towards others and oneself. Activities included cake decorating, crafts, creating small gifts for neighbours, friendship bracelets and a play area for toddlers.

Village News

A new business addition to Edgefield is Norfolk Flower Farm, located next to Edgefield Nurseries. It launched last year and specialises in growing seasonal British flowers between April and November, with farm bunches available to the public on Fridays and Saturdays. Hand-tied gift bouquets and DIY flower buckets and bridal bouquets are also available to order. You can find out more by visiting www.norfolkflowerfarm.com or Instagram @norfolkflowerfarm.

Village Hall News

Tickets at £5 for Bingo on Saturday 15th April are on sale now. Contact Jim on 07946 854901. Tickets for Edgefest 6 on July 15th will be on sale from late April. This year there will be two acts, plus a hog roast. You can reserve tickets by contacting Jim on the above number. January winners of the 200 Club were: 1st John Hardiment (104), 2nd Tricia Maile (42) and 3rd Jane Harrison (122).

Jim Frost



Richard Peaver
587486

Hempstead

200 Club

£50 Nico Tyabji, £25 Mike Thody, £10 Jack Sanders, £5 I Bassett, A Loach

Diana Spalton Obituary



Diana Spalton née Watson-Cook died on 8th February 2023 at home, aged 93 years. Diana moved to Hempstead as a child when her grandfather bought Brownwood house and farm in the mid-1930s. She attended Miss Preston's private school in Holt and later New Hall in Essex, a Catholic boarding school for girls. After time spent in Sudan and Kenya in the 1950s, she married David Spalton in 1956 and settled first in Somerset and then Hampshire. Following the death of her mother, Joan Watson-Cook in 1974 and the subsequent sale of Brownwood house, the family bought the Old Schoolroom adjacent to All Saints Church, Hempstead, where after a number of years in Holland, she and David settled in the early 1990s.

Diana had a deep affection for the natural world and was a country girl at heart. Brownwood farm was a huge part of her



Jonathan Neville
07836 675369

life and as a young girl she walked the fields and meadows with her goat Flossie and rode Mousey, her favourite pony. In recent years she took every possible opportunity to spend time there gathering sloes and blackberries from the ancient hedgerows, collecting mushrooms or simply walking her dog. Her early adventures in Africa fuelled a passion for travel and with David she explored Europe and travelled even further afield to spend time with her sons and their families.



Following her mother's example Diana was active in the village and for many years served on the Parish Council and was chair for a number of years. Her long association with the village meant she was known to all and a great source of local history and local knowledge. She was Village Correspondent up until the time of her death, writing with characteristic understatement in the February issue 'I am not in such good health as when I took it over' and 'I am sorry to give it up'. She will be greatly missed by all.

Treasure Quest

Radio Norfolk's Treasure Quest came to the village hall to claim their Clue 3 on Sunday 15th January. Julie Reinger then talked to Lesley Lennox and Moira Ratcliffe about events taking place in the village hall including the recent Tabletop Sale and the New Crafty Creations meetings.



Church Cards

We have a new delivery of greeting cards for anyone who would like to buy some, that are available to take away from the back of the Church. Three of the new designs are taken from a selection of our wonderful kneelers, hand sewn by the ladies of Hempstead. The other new design is taken from a collage by resident Mike Thody, of Hempstead Church, which he has very generously donated to the Church. The original picture hangs on the wall in front of the Apse if anyone would like to view it and the kneelers are all on show along the pews.

As a church we rely entirely on the success of the 200 Club to raise money for the upkeep of the churchyard and we are struggling to raise enough funds. Currently it costs £900 a year to mow. This is 12 cuts between March and the end of November. We really need some more people to buy tickets, which gives everyone the chance to win £50 every month, as well as smaller monthly cash prizes. Each ticket is £12 for one year. Please contact Francis Feilden on selbriggpond@aol.com for standing order forms or they can be found in the Church.

Congratulations

Erin Daisy Sanders, born 7th February 2023, daughter of Nicholas and Ellie Sanders, a granddaughter for Joanne and Paul Sanders, and a great granddaughter for Pam Doy.



Crafty Creations

Hempstead Crafty Creations introductory meeting was held on Saturday 11th February. The village hall was resplendent with numerous displays of crafts made by ourselves and an array of informational craft books. We were very humbled by the response, with numerous attendees being inspired by the choice of crafts we

hope to have available across our new regular meetings. Each meeting will feature a different craft that will be available to try and have fun creating, as well as meeting new people. All meetings and details of topics will be listed on the Hempstead website: www.hempstead-norfolk.co.uk/village-hall/crafty-creations

If you require any further information about this new crafting group, please do contact us. Lesley Lennox: lesley.lennox@project21.ltd.uk; Moira Ratcliffe: grasshopper@fast-mail.net

Mon 6th 2-4pm Topic: Decoupage

Thurs 23rd 10-12noon

Sat 25th 2-4pm

Coffee & Catch-up Friday 3rd 10.30am to noon. Get together in the village hall warmth.

Music in Hempstead Thursday 9th 3.45pm refreshments for 4pm - hear Beethoven's masterful *Septet* in the village hall.

Plumstead

Village Website

Mike Ray-Jones has very kindly taken it upon himself to create a website for the village of Plumstead. This is an entirely separate entity to the Parish Council website and has as its aim a place where residents and anyone else with an interest in the village can find out about the history of the people and place, add content and interact. The address is <https://plumstead.org.uk>. Mike would really like as many people to be involved as possible. There is an option to register with the site and interact more fully, or you can just visit and see what is going on. It would be wonderful if people would add village events and special occasions so that it can become a real village hub for information. Mike would also welcome feedback on the site and ideas for what else could be included. His details are on the site: mike@ray-jones.org.uk. If you upload any copyrighted information you must ensure that you have the copyright holder's written permission for it to be uploaded here.



Harriet Rossi
577239

Sad Farewells

With great sadness we bring the news of the passing of two members of our community.

Keith List – Keith was a well-known figure in the village and long-standing member of the community. His working life was spent on the farm and he was a familiar figure driving the tractor through the village. Our thoughts and sympathies go to his wife Diane and family and he will be greatly missed.

Jill Fisher – Jill moved out of Plumstead a few years ago following the passing of her late husband Fred. They moved into Plumstead in the early 1990s and were both very active members of the community. Fred did the accounting for various village committees and Jill served on the PCC, they both were always keen to be involved in village fetes and other village activities. Eileen Gibbons remembers them both with great fondness and indeed knew them before they came to Plumstead. Eleanor Faulkner recounts that she got to know Jill more recently but became good friends. Sadly, Jill moved to a Lloyd Court nursing home around the start of the pandemic and therefore was rather isolated at the time. She will be remembered by all who knew her for her varied and interesting life and her talent as an artist.

Parish Clerk Vacancy

A vacancy has arisen for the position of Parish Clerk / Responsible Financial Officer for Plumstead. The role, in overview, involves:

On a part-time basis, average 1-2 hours per week, flexible work including attendance at meetings and working from home.

The Council meets four times a year in February, May, August and November, on a day that is mutually convenient. Salary is negotiable dependent on experience and qualifications. Duties include:

- Organising and attending council meetings, preparing agendas and writing minutes
- Maintaining/updating the village website and noticeboard
- Maintaining/updating files and documents
- Implementing the Council's decisions
- Attending to email correspondence
- Managing the finances, preparing the annual budget, requesting the precept and reporting finances to the Council
- Advise the Council
- Be the first point of contact for the public

Training will be funded if required. Written applications stating work experience also the qualities and skills you would bring to this post are welcome by email to the Chairman, Nick Fulford: nickfulford@hotmail.com / 577433

Plumstead in Flower

Once again, we plan to celebrate the glory of spring and the joy of Easter by decorating our little church, and by welcoming people from far and wide to enjoy the displays. An Easter garden will be created during Holy Week, on Wednesday 5th April, and we invite all who would like to take part on that day to contact our church person, Eleanor Faulkner, or Catherine McMahon (phone numbers at the start of this newsletter). Children will be particularly welcome.

There will be a sale of cakes and produce from midday on Saturday 7th and then on Easter Monday, a sale of plants, garden items, and other bric-a-brac and refreshments available all day. Keep watching this space as plans develop over the coming weeks, more details will be included in the next newsletter. If you can support Plumstead in Flower in other ways, please do let us know.

Get Well Soon

Our very best wishes to Suraj who unfortunately suffered an accident at home recently and has spent some time in hospital. He is now back at home and we all wish him a speedy recovery.

Matlaske

100 Club

£25 Mac Apostolides, £10 Poppy Norton, £5 Marjorie Wiseman

Date for Your Diary

We are starting to plan for the Matlaske & Barningham Annual Summer Event, it will be Saturday 29th July, 4pm onwards. To enable this to be another fun-filled event getting the community together, we would really like volunteers to run some stalls this year please. If you could help, please contact Marion by e-mail at: jim.shepherd123@btinternet.com or phone 577521.



Duncan Wood
570293

Work is under way in St Peter's churchyard to thin out the screen of fir trees along the western side. This will allow more warm sunlight to play on the church and in particular on the tower, which suffers from chronic dampness, while preserving the quiet and peaceful feeling of God's acre.

The church council is investigating drainage for blockages and looking at ways of improving air flow within and around the church to help tackle damp.

St Peter's has stood on this site since about 850AD, though it has enjoyed several medieval makeovers. It is a living monument to the Christian gospel of reconciliation after conflict.

In the summer, a Norfolk archaeologist plans to radar survey the area of our chancel (at the east end of the church) that fell down during a service in 1726. This should tell us how big the chancel was, and possibly whether there are any currently unknown graves in that area.

We are holding a picnic for the Coronation on Monday 8th May from 3pm just inside Barningham Park where the fete is held. There will be music. Please keep this date free. More info in next month's newsletter.

Saxthorpe with Corpusty

Challenges at St Andrew's

Last year's survey of residents found strong support for keeping St Andrew's Church, Saxthorpe, open and in use in a variety of ways - but the scale of the challenges became clear at the PCC annual meeting on 7th February. To allow for a greater range of uses the installation of a servery and WC have already been proposed, along with improvements to heating and lighting and other facilities. But, as with any ancient building, there are also major maintenance costs. The roof covering on the south aisle needs renewal, likely to cost close to £200,000, and the Queen Anne 'Peal Boards' on the north wall of the tower also require refurbishment. There are a number of other smaller items, and the crenellations around the top of the tower also need checking.

A grant of £10,000 has been offered by the Norfolk Churches Trust, but considerable fund-raising and further grants will be needed. These pressures come at a time when income has fallen, partly through fewer services. A card reader is being provided to make it easier for people to donate at the end of services. (Thanks to Heather and Brian Monks for this!)

IWD Coffee Morning

March 8th is International Women's Day, and this year the call is for everyone to 'embrace equity'. To find out more and show your support for a truly inclusive world, go along to a coffee morning



John Birchall
584290

at Bure Cottage, Monks Lane Saxthorpe on Wednesday March 8th from 10am-12noon. IWD encourages everyone to challenge gender stereotypes, call out discrimination, draw attention to bias, and seek out inclusion.

Village Hall

The coffee morning at Corpusty & Saxthorpe Village Hall on 4 February was much enjoyed by those who came along. Thanks to their generosity we raised £75 for village hall funds.

We hold coffee mornings on the first Saturday every other month, the next one being on 1 April. We look forward to seeing you there.

In Stitches!

Bure Valley Quilters & Stitchers meet 2pm-4pm at the Village Hall on the second and fourth Mondays of each month (13th & 27th March). New members welcome.



Fakenham Choral Society – Handel's 'Samson' Saturday 25th March

After their hugely successful Christmas concert, Fakenham Choral Society delves deep into the story of Samson, from his betrayal by Delilah to his dramatic demolition of the temple. Composed by Handel immediately after *Messiah*, *Samson* is just as compelling and lyrical, concluding with the scintillating aria *Let The Bright Seraphim*.

With orchestra and professional soloists, Rosamund Walton, Tabitha Reynolds, Dan Bartlette and Simon Crookall, this promises to be one of the choir's most memorable performances. Led by Musical Director, Mark Jones, the concert will take place at Fakenham Parish Church on Saturday 25th March at 7pm. Tickets are £12 (under 16s free), and can be purchased either by calling 01485 544335, via the website www.fakenhamchoralsociety.org or on the door. So do come along for an unforgettable evening.



Ploughing the fields in Baconsthorpe photograph by Norman Allen



Hempstead Church in the Snow - Drone photograph by Jonathan Neville

New Battery Recycling Service



North Norfolk District Council residents can now recycle used household batteries by placing them in a freezer bag, or similar sized clear bag, on top of either their black or green bin on their usual collection day for them to be recycled. It is important that the batteries are placed on top of the bins because if they are not separated, they will go into the body of the vehicle where they risk being crushed which can cause vehicle fires and fires at the processing facility.

The Village Gardener

To Plant a Garden is to Believe in Tomorrow



Hurrah for March! Whilst not always the easiest or most predictable of months (I think we can all recall the Beast from the East...fingers crossed we don't revisit that entity). March can be an utter joy. Firstly, and if we are fortunate there is a softening of the air, some warmth to the sun and the evenings also start to properly draw out giving us extra precious hours of daylight. What felt impossible in February now feels doable in March, the year is turning and there is an exciting number of projects to crack on with in the garden.

First up is the greenhouse, if like me you had all the good intentions in November to get the greenhouse cleaned and sorted for the next year and then your plans went pear-shaped. Then this where you need to start. So much is led from the greenhouse this time of year. Even if you are like

me (horribly) behind, if you start here you are on a much better footing going forward. I would suggest taking everything out of the greenhouse, giving the glass a gentle brush down first, then move on to washing it down, probably an obvious tip this one but do start at the top and work down just so you don't make more work for yourself. Once that is dried, I would remove any old border soil you need to refresh with new. Keep this new soil covered with black plastic to not only retain moisture but to also help warm the soil up. Another helpful tip is to bring any potting compost bags you have on the go into the greenhouse to warm up too. This just means when you are setting seeds, you are setting them into a much more conducive environment and they will get going that much better. Make sure all your potting trays/pots are clean whole and all set to go too. Then I would return any greenhouse staging so that now you are all set for what is probably the busiest seed growing time in the year. May I also suggest (if you don't already have one) you invest in a max min thermometer? It's good to get any idea of how your greenhouse behaves temperature-wise (when you're not in it) so that you know what to look out for. Peaks during the warmest parts of the day can be combated with opening a window, real drops in the night can be made easier with fleece or extra insulation. The aim with a greenhouse is consistency, we are after a steady good growing temperature, because that in turn will ensure everything thrives rather than struggles.

The list of what we need or can sow in March is pretty endless, but I would start with annuals and any perennials that need a good length of time to get going. Priority is tomatoes; if you're growing them inside then cucumber leeks beetroot and then courgettes. I feel courgettes don't like a stop start growing time so if March is looking on the colder side I would wait until there are warmer days in April. My other suggestion is to go through all your seeds and place them in order of when they need to be sown, it's so frustrating if you miss out anything that needs a long growing season (just because it had fallen to the bottom of your seed tin).

Finally, and happily, it is time to set any new dahlia tubers you might have invested in, it's always best to plant them in a good 3 litre sized pot when you start them off in the greenhouse as they are large plants and they won't thank you if you try to cram them into anything smaller. Do check over the tubers for any rot before setting them. The next tip is not to water them until they have strong shoots showing and then only in moderation. Dahlias are prone to rot so you don't want the tubers to sit in cold waterlogged compost. They just need warmth and soil at the start to get going rather than moisture.

Finally, this month's question, Sue Hall asks if March is too late to set a bare rooted hedge? The answer is yes and no! On the positive side this is a great time to buy bare root as the season for it is coming to an end so there might be a bargain or too, on the negative you might not have quite so much choice so do your homework first before you buy and perhaps come up with some alternatives if your first choices aren't available. Another positive is the soil is warming up so the bare root should just get going, the negative is with some of the very dry springs we have had just lately you might well need to ensure you have enough time to water them regularly if we hit another dry patch. So, make sure your water butts are full and Good Luck!

Do keep the questions coming in! Email us at redmaple@btinternet.com - as ever the most interesting question will be published next month.

Michelle and Mick McCarter



Drone photograph by Jonathan Neville

Yes, history and nature can be combined should you take a trip to nearby Warham Camp, so please read on...

Our family once visited Stonehenge – never again! What a disappointment. The stones were ring fenced: you couldn't get anywhere near them. The lay by/car park being chock full of visitors resembled a cross between a car boot sale and a rubbish dump!

Contrast this with a journey to our Warham Camp. Quiet and peaceful, no crowds here, no main road location, no stalls selling souvenirs and junk food, no rubbish, just a beautiful countryside location for all to enjoy. And enjoy it you can, for nature and history are together here, the area now being designated an SSSI (Site of Special Scientific Interest), due to those rare plants that can be found. No great big stones either, just deep ditches and high embankments dating back to the Iron Age, about 200 BC.

Even today, an excavation of this magnitude would be considered impressive if created using JCBs, so imagine digging all this out by hand using just deer antlers as picks. Back in pre-Roman times these excavations would have been two metres deeper than at present, a remarkable achievement, and all done to provide protection for any inhabitants who resided in that central area between the ditches.

Historians are convinced that Boudicca, queen of the Iceni tribe would have been at Warham at some point, probably before moving south to Colchester, there to take on and defeat the Romans.

The chalk grassland of this site gives rise to a rare selection of plants, insects and wildlife. Wild thyme and orchids grow here, chalk hill blue and argos butterflies flourish, and songbirds can be seen and heard in the springtime. Yes, this is indeed a magical place. Forget Stonehenge – our county beats that place hands down!



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