

Church & Village News

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

May 2022

Blossom + The Full Moon - Edgefield

Photograph by Sue Page

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Hempstead	Paul Sanders	713217
Matlaske & Barningham	Sara Buxton	577207
Plumstead	Nick Fulford	577433
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Village Websites

www.hempstead-norfolk.co.uk

www.baconthorpe.org



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What's On

MAY

Wed 4 6.00pm	Plumstead Parish AGM + PC AGM	St Michael's Church
Sat 14 10.00am	Hempstead Yard + Boot Sale	Throughout the village
Sat 14 6.00pm	Saxthorpe & Corpusty Barn Dance	Village Hall
Wed 18 7.30pm	Matlaske + Barningham PC AGM	Matlaske Church
Fri 27 6.00pm	Baconthorpe Pop-up Pub	Village Hall
Sat 28 10.30am	Plumstead Art Exhibition	St Michael's Church
Sun 29 10.30am	Plumstead Art Exhibition	St Michael's Church

Clash Diary

June 1	Baconthorpe Village Hall AGM	June 5	Plumstead Platinum Jubilee Celebration
June 3	Matlaske + Barningham Platinum Jubilee	July 1	Baconthorpe Cinema
June 4	Edgefield Platinum Jubilee Afternoon	July 23	Baconthorpe Fête
June 4	Hempstead Platinum Jubilee Lunch	Dec 10	Edgefield Festive Evening
June 5	Baconthorpe Platinum Jubilee Tea		

If you are arranging an event please check with Corinne Youngs that there is not already an event being held that day 577263 / corinne@avyoungs.com

Holt Library

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

Post Offices

Baconthorpe Mobile Post Office Van
Wednesdays 10.00am Village Hall

Corpusty Stores 587726
Monday-Friday 9.00am – 12.00noon

Itteringham Shop 587325
Monday + Thursday 9.00am-1.00pm

Mobile Library Van

12 May / 9 June / 7 July / 4 August

Matlaske	11.40	NR11 7AQ	Old Post Office
Plumstead	12.25	NR11 7LG	Walnut Farm
Edgefield	1.55	NR24 2AL	The Memorial
	2.15	NR24 2AX	The Street
Corpusty	2.45	NR11 6QP	School
	3.40	NR11 7BU	Great Farm Cott's
Saxthorpe	4.10	NR11 7BL	Old Post Office
Corpusty	4.30	NR11 6QJ	Adams Lane
	4.50	NR11 6QL	16 Council Houses

5 May / 30 June / 28 July / 25 August

Hempstead	3.40	NR25 6TL	Telephone kiosk
Baconthorpe	4.05	NR25 6LE	Hare & Hounds
	4.20	NR25 6LG	Old Post Office
	4.40	NR25 6LJ	Council Bungalows

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

Parish Council Websites

Baconthorpe	http://baconthorpepc.wixsite.com/baconthorpepc
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

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.

Easter Sermon Preached by Reverend Canon David Longe

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

Today we remember the Resurrection of Christ. It is a mystery: it is like looking into the sun – we cannot fully do it, so we cannot fully understand it. Yet endeavouring to understand this mystery is I believe the most important thing that we can do as humans.

Christ is Risen points to one thing - that is that love conquers death; that love triumphs all.

Everything we do must be distilled to this fundamental concept. If we can grasp that love is the ultimate goal of our existence, then not just our lives will be transformed, this world and creation itself will be transformed.

Hope will spring anew, and optimism will flourish.

This is the faith that the church preaches. It is what is revealed in the journey of Holy Week: from the triumph of Palm Sunday, to the mystery of the Last Supper, to the agony of the cross, and the discovery by Mary Magdalene on Easter morning that the tomb is empty.

I want to use two stories (which you may have heard before) to illustrate what I mean. These are stories of hope, of love conquering fear and evil.

The first story: A few weeks ago, the mayor of a village north of Kyiv was killed when his car was fired on. His body was left in the road. Sometime later, the local priest came to pick up the body, intending to bury it. But as he approached, a Russian soldier ran up and stopped him. The body had been booby-trapped. The soldier then disarmed the mine and helped the priest to load the body on to a wheelbarrow so the dead man could be given a proper burial.

The second story: In a field surrounded by the people he had been sent to fight, a teenage Russian prisoner of war hungrily gulped down the tea and bread they offered him. A Ukrainian woman calmed him, telling the soldier not to worry. Using her phone, she made a video call to his mother. As soon as his mother appeared on the screen, he burst into tears. "Everything is OK," his female captor said, while others stroked his back. "Natasha, God be with you. We will call you later. He is alive and healthy".¹

The phrase "Christ is Risen" sounds strange; it is strange. It is meant to be strange and to make us think. Christ leaves the tomb for one reason – and that reason is to show that love not just overcomes fear; it overcomes malice, anger, pride, spite; it overcomes and is more powerful than death. This essence of Easter is what we need to grasp. This is what will give us hope for Afghanistan, for North Korea, for Ukraine. It gives us hope that we can tackle climate change. Although it is a mystery, I think, instinctively we know it is real.

God's love for us, revealed in Christ's resurrection, knows no boundaries. It is a gift, that pours untold riches into our lives, if we can but just pause and allow God's way of love to be our way of life. AMEN

David

¹ I am grateful to R H Peaver TD and to Canon Chris Copsey for these two stories.



The Benefice of Matlaske Church Services for May

1 st	Easter III	
9.00am	Church Breakfast & Model Makers Exhibition	Corpusty Village Hall
5.00pm	Eucharist	Matlaske
8 th	Easter IV	
10.30am	Eucharist	Barningham Winter
	Preacher, The Revd Canon Sally Theakston, Chaplain to the Bishop of Norwich and Acting Archdeacon of Lynn	
15 th	Easter V	
10.30am	Eucharist	Edgefield
5.00pm	Evensong	Hempstead
22 nd	Easter VI	
8.30am	Eucharist	Plumstead
10.30am	Eucharist	Saxthorpe
26 th	Ascension Day	
10.00am	Eucharist	Saxthorpe
29 ^h	Easter VII	
8.30am	Eucharist	Baconsthorpe
10.30am	Church Walk	Matlaske
	Return to Rectory at 11.30am for refreshments. Those who don't want to walk are welcome to meet at the Rectory at 11.30am. Bring dogs, wellies and possibly a brolly.	
Wednesday 4 th May 9.00am Eucharist Saxthorpe		

HELP WITH ENERGY AND HOUSEHOLD COSTS

If you know anyone who need help with their energy costs do please contact Revd David Longe. There are two sources of help:

- Cromer Food Bank can help with both food provisions and with household bills including pre-paid meters and meters paid on receipt of bills, gas, coal, oil and wood
- The Matlaske Benefice Support Fund can also help with the above and other issues that household may face.

HELP WITH EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

If you or a family member are in education and need assistance with the purchase of any school equipment and live within the Benefice, please contact Revd David Longe.



Passion Play, St Mary's Church, Baconsthorpe

Baconsthorpe

April 200 Club

£50 J Cooper, £25 R Hall, £10 R Hall, £5 E Youngs, H Steel, S Arnold



Mothering Sunday Service

This was a delightful service with a typical 'on the hoof' re-enactment of a story from the Bible led by our enterprising vicar. Well done to the young people who took part and engaged enthusiastically. Beautiful posies were prepared by Tessa McCosh and presented to all the mums. I do hope all mothers in the village were spoiled thoroughly and enjoyed their special day.



Hazel Martin
07879 414577

Did You Know?

Baconsthorpe was once a village with two public houses. The Jolly Farmers was located in the centre of the village and existed as a public house from 1836. By 1954 it was in a dilapidated condition and was razed to the ground. Only two sheds/garages remain of the old building on the junction of The Street and Long Lane – still affectionately known by some as 'Jolly Corner'. The photo was taken in 1934 and shows how the building once looked. The young girl on the right is Francis Howell whom I remember very well as she cycled around the village.



Play Area

The parish council, who maintain the play area, are considering the addition of one or more items which are more suitable for younger children than the equipment currently provided. If you have any suggestions please email Sarah Hayden, the clerk at baconsthorpeparishcouncil@gmail.com, or contact Michael Day on 07768 816331.

Defibrillator

The parish council are intending to provide a defibrillator for the village. Two potential locations have been considered: either outside the Village Hall or by the bus shelter/post box. We would appreciate hearing from any residents with a view about which location is best or if there is another location we should consider. Please contact as for play area above.

A Gentle Reminder

Last month's issue included an invitation to our Afternoon Tea at the Village Hall on June 5th at 3pm to celebrate the Queen's Jubilee. Please remember to let Corinne know if you are able to attend.

Sad News

This month brings the sad news of the death of Bob Byford. Some may remember Bob and Liz who kept the village shop in Baconsthorpe for ten years. Bob was very involved with village life and always enjoyed a game of carpet bowls up at the Village Hall.

Welcome

I am pleased to welcome Leoni and Guy to Baconsthorpe. They have recently moved in to No 6 Stonefield Road. I hope they will be very happy and do look forward to meeting them at the Pop-Up pub which is the last Friday each month.

For your information

I have received an email from Norfolk Warm Home / North Norfolk District Council asking if anyone is aware of a resident or family in the village who could be eligible for a Home Upgrade Grant. Please do let them know.

Orsted Windfarm

People travelling from Holt to Baconsthorpe recently may have noticed long trenches which suddenly appeared in the field on the left. I am assured it is not a turbo-charged mole but is in fact an archeological survey being carried out to ensure that there are no Roman villas buried beneath the ground before a cable is laid which will run from Weybourne to Trowse.

Country Mice

Country Mice were pleased to welcome two new members into the group. Their Easter themed session included hot cross buns, gifts of daffodils, chocolate chicks and rabbits for the children to complete the half-term theme of farm animals.

Village Hall News

The Village Hall Committee Annual General Meeting will take place at 6.30pm on Wednesday 1 June, all are welcome.

The Village Fête will be held on 23 July this year, at the Village Hall. We are looking for bric-a-brac, books and cakes/buns for this event. Please let me know if you can help by supplying any of these items. Please contact Piers on 07493 227591.

Thanks to everyone who has attended the film nights over the last eight months. The new film season will start again on the first Friday in September. However we are planning a summer special on Friday 1 July. We will be showing the new *West Side Story*.

Pop-Up Pub Friday 27th 6pm-10pm On the menu is Macaroni Cheese. Our thanks to Michael and John who helped Jane out in the kitchen for the April pub night, washing-up volunteers are always welcome.

Piers Warner

Barningham Winter

Thank you to all those who helped with the Antiques Roadshow day on Saturday 9th April. Over £400 was made with the valuations, raffle, refreshments, plants and bric-a-brac. Special thanks to Richard and Sue Seaman who did so much to organise this event and to Thomas and Amelia Courtauld who provided the venue. Also to the valuers from Keys from Aylsham who amazed us all with their knowledge.

Matlaske and Barningham Parish Council are holding their General Annual meeting on Wednesday 18th May at 7.30pm in Matlaske Church. Please come along if you can as it is open to all residents of Matlaske, North Barningham and Barningham. Special thanks to Pat Chapman who has been the clerk to the Parish Council for years. Pat has now taken a well earned retirement and welcome to the new clerk Emma Childs.



Sara Buxton
577207

Edgefield

Church News

Congratulations to everyone, and especially Kay, for the Children's Play Morning. It was such a great success. There were 34 children, aged between two weeks to 14 years, from 16 families, and everyone greatly enjoyed the occasion. We had a wonderful congregation for our Benefice Service on Easter Day. It was so good to see lots of families arriving, and we had a full church! The children all trooped out on an Easter Egg Hunt half-way through the service. It was a lovely day for them out in the churchyard! We had a quiet church for the sermon and intercessions before some happy faces reappeared for the rest of the service. They all behaved beautifully and were very quiet. Thank you to everyone who took part in the service, and to Amy and Kay for help with the flowers beforehand. Well done to Suzanne for organising the sale of daffodils around the village, and to the pickers. Such a clever idea. A total of £153.50 was made for the church.



Richard Peaver
587486

Angela Turner

Village Hall News

Just a reminder to get the date in your diary: Saturday 4th June from 2–6pm is our Jubilee event. Live music, licensed bar, cream teas and a bring your own community picnic. Should be a lovely get-together for the village!

March 200 Club winners: 1st Chloe Hagon; 2nd Kari Santos; 3rd Philip Sands

Jim Frost

Toad Patrol Update

A fantastic team of dedicated patrollers ventured out after dusk from mid-February and throughout March to ensure the safety of the annual migration of amphibians to the village pond. Rescuing the amphibians from the main road and lane adjacent to the pond, particularly at dusk when there are many vehicles about, is crucial for the survival of the creatures and maintenance of our ecosystems.

Toad numbers actually 'saved' to the pond show a slight increase on the prior year; frog numbers were down and newts significantly higher. Something for us to monitor in the future. Once again, the vast majority of frogs were crossing the main road to the pond while most of the toads come from the fields and gardens opposite the pond on The Green side; the newts similarly. Great Crested Newts, an endangered and protected species, were also found in similar small numbers, and it is great to see that our pond has such an 'exotic' species in its ecosystem.

Final tallies: 382 (364) toads, 102 (166) frogs, 256 (185) newts and 17 (16) great crested newts – all safely placed in the pond. A great effort and big thanks to all patrollers!

Richard Sear

Hempstead

200 Club

£50 W Stevens, £25 L Mack, £10 P Hawkey, £5 M Fitton, L Matthews, D Durst.

Yard Sale & Car Boot

Saturday May 14th sees the Hempstead Yard Sale & Car Boot in full swing. The Village Hall will be open for refreshments, a cake stall (if you're quick!) and books as well as toilets if needed. Car parking will be central with maps available



Diana Spalton
711117

for the yard sales. Any large items purchased can be picked up later or arrangements made to take back to your car. There is still a number of car boot pitches available if you want to have a sort out. Come along and explore, enjoy the village, stop for a drink and a snack and support our beautiful church and village hall.

Queen's Jubilee Celebrations Friday 3rd June

The Street will be closed to traffic, tables set out in the road outside the Village Hall and of course the sun will shine (we hope) for our village Jubilee Lunch to celebrate this very special occasion. (If it rains we will of course be in the Village Hall). We are hoping for a big turn-out so we can all catch up with the friends and neighbours we've not seen socially in the village for over two years. Please bring your own food and to share with others, and we will have barbecues for those who want to cook their own food. We will start at 12.30pm with a glass of 'Jubilee Punch' and lemonade.

We hope lots of children will come and wear **fancy-dress** – with a royal theme – and there will be prizes for the best dressed, and grown-ups might like to add some colour wearing red, white and blue.

There will not be a village fête this year but our acclaimed and celebrated raffle will go ahead. Tickets will be delivered to everyone in the weeks beforehand (and will also be on sale at the Yard Sale Trail) and the raffle will be drawn after the lunch.

We would appreciate help on the day – putting up bunting, setting up tables etc. Please contact Yvette Gibson (712460) if you can help.

Hempstead

Yard Sale Trail & Car Boot

Saturday 14th May - 10am until 3pm

Car Boot pitches still available - on the Playing Field @ £7

in aid of All Saints Church & the Village Hall

Maps will be provided at the Car Park

The Village Hall will be open for Book and Cake sales,
refreshments and toilets

To reserve your space phone Moira on 07973 712829

Matlaske

The village (and our editor!) heartily thank Marion Shepherd, who is retiring as the CAVN correspondent, for her reporting over the years. She is turning her attention to organising community events, and Duncan Wood picks up the local pen.

Thanks to all those who contributed so much clothing and other essentials for the Ukraine appeal. The church was a beacon of generosity, a true light shining in the darkness.

Condolences to Mandy Wood (and family), whose mother Vera Argent passed away on 2nd April. Some older residents remember Vera from when she lived and worked at Matlaske Hall in the early 1950s. She is to be buried at Southrepps where other members of her family rest.

We are pleased to hear that Donny March is settling well into his new home and making new friends.



Duncan Wood
570293

Plumstead

I hope that everyone had a lovely Easter. The month of May looks to be a busy one, with the build-up to all the Platinum Jubilee events in June – keep your diaries up to date so as not to miss out on any of the fun!!

Morning Coffee

Monday morning coffees continue – drop in for a quick coffee – or, indeed, a slow one, if you prefer! Browse the bookstall or buy a craft item to help raise funds. If you have any spare wooden coat hangers, Karen, who makes the pretty peg bags we sell from the church craft stall, would be pleased to take them off your hands. Just leave them in the tower please.

It's great to be able to report that there has now been an informal get together in Plumstead church, over a cup of coffee or tea, every week since the beginning of August last year! They are on Mondays from 10.30am. Do drop in for a while if you can. Cyclists, walkers and people from across the benefice have called in on their way past.

Church Events

The church decorations for Easter this year were particularly lovely, while reflecting our deep concern for those caught up in the crisis in Ukraine. We are now greatly looking forward to the exhibition and sale of John Durdin's paintings at the end of the month. Please see the poster for more details and Emma's brilliant interview with the artist himself on the back page of this edition of the newsletter. Kirsty O'Leary-Leeson, who has been instrumental in setting up this exhibition, will also be exhibiting some of her work, as will Mary Millar Watt, and there will be other items on show too. John is generously donating 80% of the money raised from the sale to church funds, and the remaining 20% will be donated to the Honeyguide Wildlife charity founded and run by his son, Chris Durdin. As the weekend approaches we would appreciate offers of help. You can do this by just being in the church as people come in to view or purchase pictures. Contact faulknereleanor@gmail.com or kirstyoleary@outlook.com if you are willing to help.

On a more mundane note we are still hoping that the contractor will be able to put in the new church path before this Exhibition!



Harriet Rossi
577239

Macmillan Cancer Support – Norfolk Coast Mighty Hike

Seventy-six-year-old David Ramsbotham reports that his training for the above walk is going well and that he is hopeful of completing the full 26 miles on 14 May. You can support David in his quest to raise £3000 for Macmillan Cancer Support at www.justgiving.com/davidramsbotham. Both David and Macmillan would be very grateful for any donations made.



Queen's Platinum Jubilee

Keith Harding has had the lovely idea of organising a display for the Queen's Jubilee celebrations: 'Seventy Photos of Plumstead Village Life and People'. The aim is to reflect and remind people of life here since the Queen's accession to the throne. He has gathered a good selection of photos already, but if anyone has any more photos that could be included Keith would be delighted. Please see leaflet included in this newsletter for more details.

Plumstead Pond & Meadow

The cowslips in the meadow at Plumstead Green are looking good at the moment. Catherine McMahon has kindly cut the winding path and it makes a very pleasant walk. It will be interesting to see how the wild flowers in the meadow do this year as the cutting and clearing of the hay was not done, nor were sheep grazed over the winter. This was, despite considerable effort, due to not being able to find anyone to make these things happen. If anyone reading this knows whom we can contact for this autumn, please let us know. As for the pond, a miracle has occurred: the infestation of duckweed has disappeared! We very much hope it does not return, as the pond looks a lot better without it. Have a look for tadpoles and take care not to disturb nesting birds, such as the goose which is currently in residence.

Plumstead Art Exhibition

May 28th & 29th
in St Michael's Church
NR11 7LG
10.30 am - 4.30pm

Local artist John Durdin has offered a selection of his oil paintings to raise funds for the church and the Honeyguide Conservation Trust. Selected local artists including Kirsty O'Leary-Leeson and Mary Millar Watt will also be exhibiting. For further information please contact Kirsty at kirstyoleary@outlook.com



Saxthorpe with Corpusty

Barn Dance

On Saturday 14th May Corpusty & Saxthorpe Village Hall invite you to a barn dance with a professional caller from 6pm to 10pm. Entry is free and all are welcome. Please bring a bottle. There will be a raffle and refreshments available on the night.

Village Litter Pick

Thanks to all those who joined the village litter pick on 9 April. The roads approaching our villages look clear once more.

St Andrew's Church

The Parochial Church Council of Corpusty with Saxthorpe are planning from 1st to 10th May to ask all in the community how the parish church may be made more useful to people who live in the villages. The church always seeks to be a place for the community, and we hope that you will be able to respond to our survey. There will be hard copies of the survey in Church and at the Village Hall from 1st May; and you can access the survey via surveymonkey at: <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/Y88TXPY>. We would like all to respond by 10th May.

At 9am on 1st May, all are invited to Corpusty Village Hall for a church breakfast which will be followed by a model exhibition.



Sophia Hodgson
587510

Corpusty & Saxthorpe Village Hall Committee
invites you to our

BARN DANCE

with a professional caller...

ALL WELCOME - FREE ENTRY

SATURDAY 14TH MAY
2022

6PM - 10PM

CORPUSTY & SAXTHORPE
VILLAGE HALL

Refreshments available
Bring a bottle
Raffle

A small illustration of a cowboy hat and a musical note on a staff.

The Village Gardener

To Plant a Garden is to Believe in Tomorrow



The Beauty of May! As I write this (still in the depths of April) we have had a few May taster days of absolute blissful sunshine and blue skies a delightful promise of the month to come! One slight drawback is that the wonderful clear blue skies during the day has meant that night temperatures have dropped somewhat resulting in some quite impressive frosts, so gardeners beware! We are not out of the woods yet...

Now to May's tasks, which this month feels so much easier with all of the beauty of spring unfolding. I don't think there is anything more beautiful than spring blossom and then first fresh new leaves, it's a joy just to be amongst it.

So first up are tulips; once they have had their moment of splendour do take a moment to deadhead them so the maximum amount of goodness goes back into the bulb for next year. If you haven't done so already then find out any plant supports you need in the border. Remember the trick with supports is to put them in before they are needed, not after, when the damage might already be done. By the middle of the month you should be able to plant out any tender annuals that you have been nursing along. It is always worth hardening them off outside for a week so they are less shocked by going straight into the ground. You want them to get into stride quickly so they are less tempting to slugs and snails. Interestingly, I have just read that lavender plants are a big slug/snail deterrent because of both their smell and texture, I am now quite tempted to do a border of lavender in our walled garden to keep the slugs and snail out. I shall report back on that one!

One of the nicest tasks in the veg plot this month is planting out young tomato plants in the greenhouse, always such a cheerful task, do remember to plant them deep, you can plant them up to the bottom leaves as the buried stem will grow extra roots to not only support the plant but feed the plant too... every little bit helps! Another good job to get done this month is to get to sort any ponds or water features you might have, so you can divide any aquatic plants you have in situ and install any new plants you might want to add. I am hoping to find some new interesting aquatic plants to perk up our large water trough. For the last couple of years it's been tricky to find anyone who supplies aquatic plants locally, so I would love to hear if any readers out there have been successful in their hunt!

Last major task of the month is to prune any early flowering clematis you might have. The best time is literally just after they have finished flowering, and the trick is to remember that next year's flowers will be on the new growth (that's why it's best to prune immediately after flowering), You will then be maintaining the clematis at a size that suits your garden. Do give it a good weed, water and mulch after its trim to keep it as happy as possible.

This month's question is regarding Lisa Smith's lemon tree. Lisa writes that she was delighted to receive a lemon tree last summer as a present, and it has happily overwintered in her conservatory all winter, but now she asks when is it safe for it to go back out? Our advice would be to bring it out at the start of May, which would also be a good time to give it a tidy up, so do be brave and cut back any damaged or untidy branches and start giving it a liquid feed once it's out, too. Our only caution would be to have some fleece to hand just in case the temperatures really drop, so please keep an eye on the forecast just in case, and good luck!

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

Michelle & Mick McCarter

Nature Watch - The Warble Fly

Arthur Pentney



This creature, starting off life as a parasite, has nothing to endear it to us, but its bizarre life-cycle is worth describing. Looking rather like a bee and of similar size, the adult female lays around 800 eggs in her short lifetime. These are deposited on the hairs of the legs of cattle. Hatching out after about a week, the grubs invade their host by entering under the skin and then migrate through the unfortunate animal's body, eating its tissue along the way until after some months it arrives at the host's back. There, it creates an air hole and stays for about 30 days.

It's at this point that I have seen experienced stockmen squeeze out these horrible looking larvae and despatch them. Of course, with the cow's hide now being riddled with holes its value is greatly diminished. Should the larva survive the stockman, it will drop to the ground, bury itself, and pupate for some two to three months before finally emerging as an adult fly. Its life is now short though, just a week or so: it has no mouth as such

and cannot feed, merely relying on the sustenance it has inherited from its earlier manifestations. Cattle are wary of these flies – they do not like to hear them buzzing close by and they react by stampeding, a phenomenon known as 'gadding', relating to the warble's alternative name of 'gadfly'.

The author Henry Williamson was a great observer of nature and he describes an encounter between a warble fly and a sand wasp he saw when he was farming at Stiffkey. It was no contest – the warble's wings are torn off, its head severed by the wasp's powerful mandibles, and the remains of the fly's body carried off as sustenance for the wasp's own offspring. So perhaps in this obscure way the warble fly does have some use after all, as a provider of nutrition for other species in the food chain!

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Photographs by James Deveson



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Meet the Neighbours

John Durdin from Plumstead



John was born in 1926 and lived with his parents and four siblings in Hendon. In 1940 he and his younger brother were evacuated to his aunt's home in St Albans. Although John didn't like the school in St Albans there was an excellent art teacher who taught him to paint with oils. One day John and his brother bicycled home to see their parents, who were very surprised to see them. They let them stay the night and the next day they cycled back to their aunt's. After a year in St Albans, they returned home and spent the rest of the war years, including the Blitz, in London.

John was trained as an accountant and worked in the motor trade in London where he lived and raised his four children. When John was an accountant, he went to visit a farmer in East Sussex and was introduced to his two-day old son. Sixty-five years later John was at a meeting of the Freemasons in Norwich and recognised the surname of a visiting mason as being the same as the farmer from East Sussex. He spoke to the gentleman and asked whether he knew the farmer of the same name and it turned out he was the farmer's son whom John had met when he was only two days old.

John has, during his life made long standing commitments and likes to "stick with things". He has been a Rotarian for 65 years and a Freemason for 65 years. He was a Church Warden in Plumstead for 30 years (27 of those years with Thomas Wormald), a Trustee of the Cloudesley Charity for 44 years and its chairman for 26 years. The charity's history dates back to January 1517 when the Tudor yeoman, Richard Cloudesley, left in his will 14 acres of meadows in Islington to benefit the church and charitable bequests in perpetuity. Last year the charity had a grant budget of £1.8 million.

John has had a house in Plumstead since 1972 and has lived there full-time since 1984. He loves plants and gardening and has a beautiful garden and conservatory. His other passion in life has been painting, mainly landscapes but also animals and birds. On the 28th and 29th May there will be an exhibition of fifty of John's oil paintings in St Michael's Church, Plumstead. Thirty of these paintings will be for sale. From the proceeds 80% will be given to St Michael's Church and 20% will be given to The Honeyguide Wildlife Charitable Trust which helps conserve the natural environment and wildlife.

Emma Youngs