

Church & Village News

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

November 2023



Matlaske Airfield Memorial Stone

Photograph by Linda Airey

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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
www.corpustyandsaxthorpevillagehall.org.uk



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Safeguarding concerns please contact the Police on 999 or Diocese of Norwich Safeguarding Team safeguarding@dioceseofnorwich.org or 01603 882345

What's On

NOVEMBER

Fri 3	10.30am	Hempstead Coffee + Catch Up	Village Hall
Mon 6	2.00pm	Hempstead Crafty Creations	Village Hall
Thur 9	3.45pm	Hempstead Music	Village Hall
Thur 9	7.00pm	Barningham Scrabble	Barningham Stables
Sat 11	5.30am	Baconsthorpe Craft Fair	Village Hall
Sat 18	2.00pm	Hempstead Crafty Creations	Village Hall
Thurs 23	10.00am	Hempstead Crafty Creations	Village Hall
Thur 30	3.45pm	Hempstead Music	Village Hall

Clash Diary - to add an event contact

Corinne Youngs 577263 / corinne@avyoungs.com

Dec 2	Hempstead Christmas Crafts	Dec 8-10	Saxthorpe Christmas Tree Festival
Dec 3	Matlaske Christmas Party	Dec 9	Edgefield Christmas Party
Dec 3	Edgefield Painted Pebbles	Dec 9	Hempstead Christmas Party
Dec 5	Barningham Wreath Making	Dec 17	Edgefield Christmas Service
Dec 8	Baconsthorpe Christmas Quiz		

Post Offices

Baconsthorpe Mobile Post Office Van
Wednesdays 10.45am – 11.30am 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 www.duncanbaker.org.uk
Monday - Friday 9am – 5pm 01692 557140

County Councillor

Steffan Aquareone
steffan.aquareone.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

21 Dec / 18 Jan / 15 Feb / 14 March

Matlaske	12:40	NR11 7AQ	Old Post Office
Plumstead	13:00	NR11 7LG	Walnut Farm
Baconsthorpe	14:30	NR25 6LJ	Council Bungalows
	14:55	NR25 6LE	Hare & Hounds
Hempstead	15:05	NR25 6TL	Telephone kiosk
Edgefield	15:45	NR24 2AL	The Memorial
	16:10	NR24 2AX	The Street
Corpusty	16:35	NR11 7BU	Great Farm Cott's

Times and dates sourced from Norfolk County website: <https://bit.ly/2AJdSGA> Tel: 01603 222303

Holt Library

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

Sanders Bus Timetables

<https://sanderscoaches.com/timetables>

Extracts from a Sermon by Tollin Thumba on 8th October

Tolin has been on placement in the Benefice

I have been deeply touched by your hospitality, love, and generosity this week - by your rich hearts that have so graciously accepted and blessed me. The vastness of agricultural land here reminds me of my birthplace Manipur in North East India (Nagaland). It is also a rural community: my grandparents were farmers. Farmers in our context are among the poorest. Land is not a luxury but a basic necessity for survival as we depend on agriculture for our livelihood and daily sustenance.



Nagaland, North East India

My tribe, the Tangkhul, and home gives me a sense of belonging, security and ownership. Yet the value and importance we place on land has also been the cause of immense pain. For nearly 8 decades my people have fought for freedom against an occupying power: my home is riddled with violence and killings.

When I read the Bible, I find I reflect on our relationship with God and the people around us. Relationships can be beautiful as well as ugly. This is something I learnt during my time at St Anselm's Community at Lambeth Palace (<http://stanselm.org.uk/>). Often there were conflicts even over silly matters and reconciliation played a significant role. Archbishop Justin would remind us that reconciliation meant valuing relationships over differences and learning to disagree well. In 2019, the theologian Dr Muthuraj Swamy wrote "...reconciliation need not only be when there is conflict. Reconciliation is needed with people around us, with those neighbours whom we have ignored, been indifferent to, and never made an effort to reach out to (paraphrased)".

We forget how our lives are short. In attaching ourselves to the material we lose sight of higher principles that bring delight to God. St Anselm's Community showed me this: we would pack and unpacked our belongings every time we went away. Our rooms had to be left empty so that another person could move in. It reminded us that living in the room was a temporary privilege.

The past two years have been very difficult for my family as we experienced sickness and trouble. My parents and grandmother had cancer. We have no health insurance (no NHS). Money is very tight. Ethnic violence broke out between two communities over a land dispute in the summer leading to a state of total shutdown and emergency. Hundreds lost their lives: thousands were displaced and made homeless. Two months ago, I was broken as I battled for my brother who was struggling with his mental health triggered when violence erupted. Then my grandfather was hospitalised with cancer. I wanted to give up on my ordination journey and studies. We are all different. Many of you may be able to relate with me in the struggles and situations I experienced. None of us are immune to pain and suffering. Yet Scripture teaches us that this is only temporary and will pass.

So, let us cast our burden to Christ for only He can lighten the weight. If you need reconciliation with God, He waits lovingly. May our relationship be so dependent and reliant on God that we impact our relationships with others in this very brief and temporary stay on earth, sharing hope and offering solidarity.

AMEN



The Benefice of Matlaske Church Services for November

2 nd All Souls		
6.00pm	A service of prayers for those who have lost those they love	Hempstead
5 th All Saints		
8.30am	Eucharist	Plumstead
10.30am	Eucharist	Saxthorpe
12 th Remembrance		
8.30am	Eucharist	Matlaske
10.45am	Remembrance	Baconsthorpe, Matlaske Airfield for Remembrance Edgefield Village Hall, Hempstead, Saxthorpe
19 th 2 nd Before Advent		
8.30am	Eucharist	Saxthorpe
10.30am	Eucharist	Hempstead
26 th Christ the King		
8.30am	Eucharist	Baconsthorpe
10.30am	Eucharist	Matlaske
4.00pm	Children & Family Service	Edgefield
3 rd Dec Advent I		
8.30am	Eucharist	Hempstead
10.30am	Eucharist	North Barningham
Coffee: Plumstead Church, Mondays 10.30am		
Coffee Cake & Chat: Saxthorpe Church, Wednesdays 10-11am		
Country Mice Toddler Group: Baconsthorpe Village Hall, Tuesdays 10.30-12noon		



David Longe with Kevin Harvey and Corinne Youngs

Following an amazing five years of generous service as Administrator to the Matlaske Benefice, Corinne Youngs handed over the reins to Kevin Harvey. It is hard to express what a difference Corinne has made to the ministry in the Benefice, from organising events, to taking minutes, to preparing Christmas and Easter presents for the young people and many more things so often unseen yet so vital for the life of the church. We thank you, Corinne.

Kevin has just begun in this role and is looking forward to the exciting work that the Church has to offer in the Benefice. Before retiring Kevin worked for an American multi-nation electronics company with a division based in

Norwich. He has worked globally in senior management and brings a wide breadth of experience to the role. He is a keen badminton player and has dabbled in stand-up comedy and acting!

Note that the Administrator's phone number is now 07405 223934

Baconsthorpe

200 Club

£50 C Bone, £25 H Martin, £10 M Holmes, £5 M Gee, £5 H Steel, £5 H Steel

Church News

At 2pm on September 23rd Leonie and Guy celebrated their wedding vows at St Mary's church. Seventy-eight guests arrived in their finery to share their day from as far away as London and Birmingham. I have to say there were some very fine singers among the congregation that day. Judy Rosser led the service and thanks must also go to Delphine Steel for the lovely flower decorations. I feel at this point we must also mention Tessa McCosh for growing the array of beautiful blooms in her garden.

Update on the Bells

Many of you may know that St Mary's is one of the few churches that can boast a set of eight tubular bells which were erected in 1892. Nicholas Engineering have now sent in an estimate to repair and restore the bells to their former glory. A grant is now being applied for to finance this work. Fingers crossed.

Sad News

On September 21st the funeral of Bryan Thurtell was held at Cromer crematorium. His wife Joy would like to thank everyone who attended. Many of you will have known Bryan who lived on Stonefield Road, he was a regular at the Pop-Up Pub with Joy every month. Bryan trained as a chef and was catering manager for the NHS for twenty years. Rumour has it that Bryan could tell many tales about what went on behind the scenes in the hospitals!



Hazel Martin
07879 414577

Murder Mystery Evening

A thoroughly enjoyable evening was had by all. Congratulations to 'The Labradors', the team led by Maggie and Jonathan Cooper. They successfully solved the mystery of 'Who Killed the Director' and correctly named the character who 'tried' but failed to kill the director. Special thanks go to my wonderful cast and to Emma Youngs and Jane Warner who worked tirelessly to provide the supper which everyone enjoyed. Roll on the next event!



Village Hall News

The village hall was the venue for Guy and Leonie's wedding reception and we understand everyone had a great time celebrating their happy day. The hall is a lovely venue for any occasion and is still only £10 an hour to hire. The kitchen has had a small upgrade with a new fan oven fitted which increases the capacity for cooking at the pop-up pub and other events.

Craft Fair Saturday November 11th from 10am until 2pm. Free entry, tea, coffee available. This is a great opportunity to buy unique, handmade Christmas presents.

Pop Up Pub – Friday 27 - Sausage Surprise on the menu, served from 6.30pm, bar opens 6pm

Village Hall Christmas Quiz
Friday 8 December at 6.30pm
FOOD FUN PRIZES!!
£10 a head - to book call Emma 07884 432412

Christmas Quiz The Christmas Quiz is taking place on Friday 8 December. A fun, festive evening is in store. £10 a head including supper. To book call Emma Youngs on 07884 432412.

200 Club – We will be calling round in November to see if anyone would like to subscribe, as we do have some numbers available and the income does support the village hall.

Piers Warner

Barningham Winter

Michelle French of Green Farm, North Barningham would like to say thank you for all those who came to the coffee morning in aid of McMillian in September. She raised £500 for this worthy cause which was a fantastic amount and thank you Michelle for the delicious coffee and cakes.



Sara Buxton
577207

Don't forget to book a place for the SCRABBLE evening at Barningham Hall on the 9th November at 7pm. Tickets are £12 which include wine and nibbles. The WREATH making day is on Tuesday, 5th December at 10.30. This popular event will cost £25 which includes coffee, lunch, and materials to make your wreath from. Please contact amelia@barninghamestate.co.uk if you would like to join us in either or both these events.

Edgefield

Church News

The traditional harvest festival took place on 1st October. After the service, the congregation enjoyed a harvest supper and we are grateful to those who kindly provided food for this. On 7th October, a very successful Craft Fair was held in the church, expertly organised by Joy Hardiment and her hardworking team of helpers. There were several stalls and the day was well attended, raising much-needed funds for the church.



Richard Peaver
587486



In September, we were visited from New Zealand by the granddaughter of James Bird. He was the workman who died aged 38 in November 1937 after falling from the organ while it was being dismantled from its position over the west door. We had been aware of this sad story, but until now had not known the victim's name. He is second from the right in the accompanying photograph. He died in Cromer hospital and is believed to be buried in an unmarked grave in that town. Mr Bird had served in the First World War and had been injured in an accident during his service. After his death, his family lived in reduced circumstances, although his widow eventually remarried. We are pleased that we can now identify this hardworking family man who died so tragically. After the accident, the horrified Rector insisted that the remains of the organ should be burned.



Christmas is round the corner. On Sunday, 3rd December, starting at 2pm, everyone is welcome to find and take ONE painted pebble from around the village. These pebbles will have a painted baby Jesus on them and a number on the back. You are then invited into the church for refreshments and to register your pebble. This is an exciting way to start the Advent season for the whole family. If you require any further information, please email our youth ministry team at youth@matlaske.org.uk.

On Sunday, 17th December at 5pm: a Christmas Special service in church with carol singing and a children's nativity. All children can arrive and take part as shepherds, stars, angels, sheep, innkeepers, and kings. The more the merrier, plus refreshments afterwards. Please text if you would like to be involved: 07941 985 635.

Village Hall News

Christmas will be soon upon us, so just a reminder to join us for our Christmas party on Saturday, 9th December at 7pm. Tickets at £10 available from any committee member or request via our FB page. The evening will include food, drink, and silly games. What's not to like! Winners of the first 200 Club draw of the new season were as follows: 1st Karen Corbett (£50), 2nd James Longe (£30) and 3rd Carol Window (£20).

Jim Frost

Hempstead

Hempstead 200 Club

£50 R Carver; £25 L Lennox; £10 L Hill; £5 D Collier, I Bassett, N Summers

Coffee & Catchup Friday 3rd 10.30am - midday All welcome

Crafty Creations Mon 6th and Sat 18th 2 - 4pm / Thursday 23rd 10am - noon

Music in Hempstead

Thursday 9th 3.45pm for 4pm Trios by Gebauer, Bach and Jolivet

Thursday 30th 3.45pm for 4pm *Serenade op 44* by Dvorak - 11 Musicians on stage All Welcome.

Family Christmas Craft Day Saturday 2nd December 10.30am to 4pm

All welcome to join us in the village hall for a variety of Christmas Crafts. Fun for all - £5 entry.

Christmas Party - Saturday 9th December 7.00pm

Please let us know if you can attend the Christmas Party. Knowing numbers is a real help. Call 01263 713 339 Thank you.



Jonathan Neville
07836 675369

Ann Udale

Ann Udale, who had a home in Marlpit Lane for more than 50 years has passed away. Her varied life included being a pioneer Montessori School teacher and travelling extensively in South America. Her funeral will be at All Saints, Hempstead, on Friday 3rd November at 2pm where she had been Churchwarden until 2020. Refreshments will be served afterwards in the Village Hall.



Selbrigg Swans

In February 2022 four of the six cygnets that hatched at Selbrigg Pond in 2021 were ringed and had orange alpha numeric added. The ring numbers were: 4ERN, 4ERO, 4ERP and 4ERQ

- All four of the birds were at Selbrigg until at least 28/2/22, with 4ERN still there on 21/3. 4ERN then appeared at Salthouse Duck Pond on 21/4/22.
- 4ERO re-located to Kelling Water Meadows between 12/3/22 and 1/5/22.
- 4ERP was seen at Cley on 27/1 & 3 & 28/2/23.

In August 2022 that year's 7 cygnets also had orange rings added. These were 4FPO, 4FPP, 4FPQ, 4FPR, 4FPS, 4FPT, and 4FPU.

All seven were still present on 6/1/23, with only six on 20/1 (4FPT having move on), five on 25/1 (4FPR now gone), with the last four seen on 8/3 (4FPP having also already left).

- 4FPO was seen at Cley from 7/6 to at least 9/8/23 (date of writing this report) and now has a mate and enjoys time right in front of one of the main hides.
- 4FPQ was seen at Kelling Water Meadows on 6/5/23.
- 4FPU was seen at Cley on 9/4/23 & Blakeney Harbour 6/7/23.

As is typical with most Mute Swans in the UK movements were all local, though without reports of all the cygnets we cannot be 100% sure none have gone further afield.



UK Mute Swans can occasionally make long distance movements with five UK movements of over 600km recorded, and birds are known to make movements between the UK and Europe - see the BTO ringing report for 2022 Mute Swan movements <https://app.bto.org/ring/countyrec/resultsall/rec1520all.htm>

But, the vast majority of our Swans are resident to a very small local area, where as in Northern Europe Mute Swans are more migratory, frequently moving around in winter, and in some areas are more resident in coastal habitat than inland, such as Gedser in Southern Denmark where Mute Swans habitually live on the sea feeding on sea grass, to the point of when storms affect their feeding they rarely take to inland locations and can sometimes, due to the sea grass being inaccessible prone to become emaciated. If you see any orange ringed swans ideally take a photo and record location and send it to: deniselamsdell@rocketmail.com or on Facebook contact the Icen Bird Monitoring Group your help is appreciated!

Report by Chris Lamsdell, edited by Francis Feilden



Matlaske

100 Club

£25 Jackie Bortoft, £10 Steve Hamilton, £5 James Boyde

Remembrance Sunday 2023 Matlaske & Barningham Winter

Our joint Remembrance Service with Barningham Winter will be held by the war memorial off Wickmere Road on the old airfield this year, starting at 10.45 am. In the event of very heavy rain, the service will be in Matlaske Church.



Duncan Wood
570293

Matlaske airfield was built in 1940, one of nearly forty airfields that changed the landscape of Norfolk during the early years of the Second World War. It was built according to a standard plan –three intersecting runways with a concrete perimeter road. The entrance with the control tower was near Matlaske Gap. Personnel were accommodated in Nissen huts near the airfield or, the more fortunate ones, at Barningham Hall or Itteringham Mill.

It was not a large airfield. Its runways were not concreted over: they were of grass, supported by rubberised wire netting. It suffered from frequent waterlogging and could flood in bad weather. For these reasons, RAF Matlaske was not given full independent operational status and acted, within Fighter Command, as a satellite station to the major Airfield at Coltishall. Nonetheless, when it was barely operational, the airfield was bombed by the Luftwaffe twice in late 1940/early 1941.

Later, Matlaske became a very busy wartime airfield. Not only Hurricanes and Spitfires flew from there but also a full range of Fighter Command planes, mainly acting as Bomber escorts. Two major users of the airfield were Squadron 137 (Whirlwinds) and Squadron 56 (Typhoons). When the airfield closed in 1946, the site was used as a Prisoner of War and then a Displaced Persons camp. It then returned to its pre-war status as farmed arable land. Several of the airfield buildings survived in a ruinous state for decades but were eventually demolished before the end of the last century.

In 2011 the Airfields of Britain Conservation Trust erected on the site a memorial stone, dedicated to all the units and personnel based there.



Plumstead

Michaelmas Fair

Once again, our church was most beautifully decorated with autumn flowers and some wonderful angels in celebration of St Michael and All Angels. Several children took part in the hunt for answers to the angel quiz. A delightful, short harvest service took place on the Saturday followed by tea and cake. Many thanks to all who helped with putting on such an enjoyable event. Photographs overleaf by Mike Ray-Jones.



Harriet Rossi
577239

Remembrance Day

This year the Remembrance Day service for Plumstead will be combined with Hempstead's and held at Hempstead church, please see list of services for more details.

Plumstead Parish Council

The next meeting will be held on 29 November 2023 at 6:30pm in St Michael's Church. All Plumstead residents are welcome to attend. The meeting agenda will be published in advance of the date on the Parish Council website.

Saxthorpe with Corpusty

Christmas Tree Festival

Don't miss the Christmas Tree Festival in St Andrew's Church from Friday 8th to Sunday 10th December. Saturday 9th will be the best day for young visitors because Father Christmas will be putting in an appearance in his grotto. Different groups will be decorating trees, and at least 15 will be on show, creating an avenue of trees inside the church.



John Birchall
584290

Good Turnout for Defib Training

Corpusty and Saxthorpe now have more people confident in using the defibrillator outside Corpusty village shop, thanks to excellent training by Ray Nash that drew around 20 people to the Village Hall. The defibrillator provides clear instructions as soon as activated, but the session allowed confidence-



building practice on a dummy. Ray also covered the other essential steps to take if someone is unresponsive after collapsing, including the vital importance of calling 999 and how to carry out CPR. Many thanks to Ray and to Caroline Randell for arranging this life-saving training.

Celebration of Harvest Home

Millers Barn was the appropriate venue for the villages' Harvest Supper. Now the home of Lesley and Niven Last, the Barn was transformed into a welcoming venue for a celebration of harvest, enjoyed by 55 people and



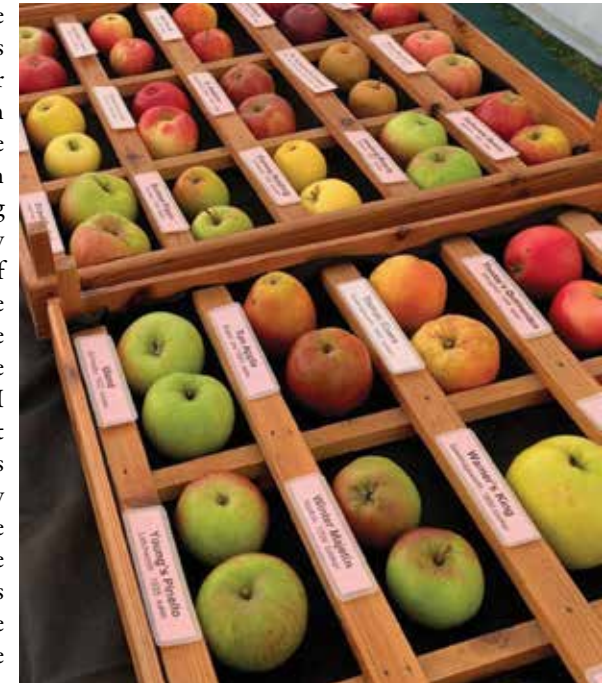
raising money for St Andrew's Church. The support and efforts of many people - especially the sponsors and the St Andrews cake team - ensured it was a truly sumptuous feast. After the meal tenor Rory Carver sang a selection of songs that were warmly received by the audience. Next year's event will be held on 11 October 2024.

The Village Gardener - To Plant a Garden is to Believe in Tomorrow

Finally Autumn is feeling like Autumn! Which can only be a good thing. It was almost with a sense of relief that we woke to a proper frost a few days ago, although I think our courgettes were less than impressed. Fortunately most of our dahlias are tucked up in our walled garden so only a few blooms were showing signs of frost damage. I think however that the writing is on the wall though and I am preparing for covering them up properly this year after last year's losses. I am struggling to get hold of mushroom compost so I think I will go either with leaf mould or some dry garden compost as I don't want anything too exciting/potent to cover them up with. Thanks very much to Gary at Edgefield Nursery for that tip!

Whilst there are plenty of chores in the garden this month, I did want to talk about apples first, so where better to start than Gressenhall Apple Day! Finally back after a few years this day is a really charming event. Beautifully organised it was a complete autumnal delight, the weather was also spot on with a proper nip in the air too. I have been contemplating planting some more cooking apple trees in our garden so I was thrilled to see that there was a large marquee tent just dedicated to different apple varieties and there were literally hundreds! Even more excitingly there was a section dedicated just to Norfolk varieties*. I had been toying with growing a Norfolk variety just for the almost rightness of doing so and also out of a determination not to plant a Bramley. I always find Bramleys frustrating as they can look perfect from the outside yet be speckled with brown spots just below the surface which means they don't keep very well. I was very happy to see that there

were actually twelve cooking apple varieties with such glorious names as Five Crowned Pippin and Winter Majetin. In the end we decided on Norfolk Beauty a stunning large yellow apple that had originated from Gunton Park and Norfolk Dumpling (chosen literally just for its lovely name and fairy-tale colouring of yellow and red) To actually be able to see the fruit from the trees before choosing made all the difference and was absolutely fascinating. I can highly recommend The East of England Apples & Orchards project* which is a registered charity committed to safeguarding the regions local fruits. Their website www.applesandorchards.org.uk is well worth a browse if you're like us and thinking of planting more fruit trees and want to stray off the Bramley path!



Now out of the orchard and back to the garden! I am hoping none of you have had too much damage from storm Babet we seem to have had such a lot of rain, I have been going round the garden checking that all of my pots that stand in trays are properly draining, it would be a shame after all that watering in the summer to keep the pots going that we lose anything now from having too much of a good thing. Normally I would be saying it's the beginning of November do start getting your tulip bulbs in, I think however I am going to wait for the temperatures to drop a bit more and for the ground to dry out a bit more too, so I will probably leave ours till the end of November....fingers crossed that that's the right call!

No question this month but instead a request! We are trying to find out if there are any more examples of the Norfolk Rattlebox apple in this parish, it is an extremely rare apple variety rediscovered in a garden in Matlaske, about 14 yrs ago. At present there are only two known trees and it would be brilliant if we could track down some more! The apples themselves are small with a dark pink coloured skin which is beautifully fragrant and with I guess unsurprisingly an almost box like shape! When ripe the apples do actually rattle! If you look up Norfolk Rattlebox on the internet not only will you see images of the said box like fruits but there will also be a link to hear the rattle...Oh the joys of technology!

Please do let us know if you think you know of a Norfolk Rattlebox apple tree!

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

Nature Watch - The Suffolk Horse
"The horse is a noble animal"
 by Arthur Pentney



Question: what do the Bactrian camel, the Rothchild giraffe, the great panda and the Suffolk horse have in common? Answer: they are all endangered species and liable to extinction.

As three of these animals are located thousands of miles away, perhaps we should concentrate our efforts on maintaining the survival of the one much closer to home.

The Suffolk horse is the oldest English breed of working horse. Those other great carthorse breeds in this country had their origins as war horses, carrying a rider wearing heavy armour into battle. Not our Suffolk Punch, though – they were bred and built for one job only: to pull, be it wagons, tumbrels, binders, ploughs, or seed drills.

This horse, whose ancestry can be traced back several hundred years, had its time in the period before mechanization took over in agriculture. The breed was still plentiful prior to the last war, but numbers have declined drastically subsequently, and now fewer than 500 survive. Imagine, then, the joy and appreciation that any recent birth of a filly foal brings, as it gives the breeders that extra bit of incentive and confidence to continue.

For a proper description of what a Suffolk should look like, we should listen to an old stockman of the time: "Lovely chesnut colour, deep broad chest, strong legs, and a backside like a farmer's daughter!" The area above the feet is not covered by hair (feather) as with other breeds, and this is beneficial when working in the heavy clay soils of the eastern counties, as the horses' feet and legs do not get clogged up with mud.

Examples of the breed working can still be seen at our nearby Gressenhall Museum, as their advertisements on the back cover of our magazine have recently demonstrated- so go and see them!

The photograph was taken at the Suffolk Show in 1958. It shows the champion stallion Springfield Commander being admired by the then Minister of Agriculture, the Rt Hon. John Hare.

We must all hope that the future of these wonderful animals is saved for posterity.

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