

Church & Village News

No: 109

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

February 2025



Winter oak

Photograph by Linda West



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WHAT'S ON

February

Mon 3	Hempstead Village hall	Crafty Creations 2-4pm
Fri 7	Corpusty Village Hall	Film night - The Critic 7pm
Sun 9	Corpusty Village Hall	Table-top sale & breakfast 9-12 noon
Mon 10	Corpusty Village Hall	Bure Valley Quilters & Stitchers 2-4pm
Sat 15	Hempstead Village Hall	Crafty Creations 2-4 pm
Tues 18	Edgefield Church	Free children's activity 10.30-12 noon
Sat 22	Hempstead Village Hall	Table top sale 10-2pm
Mon 24	Corpusty Village Hall	Bure Valley Quilters & Stitchers 2-4pm
Thurs 27	Hempstead Village Hall	Crafty Creations 10-2pm
Fri 21	Baconsthorpe Village Hall	Thai Evening 6.30pm
Fri 28	Baconsthorpe Village Hall	Pop up pub 6pm (food 6.30)

March

Fri 7	Corpusty Village Hall	Film night - Paddington in Peru 7pm
Sat 8	Baconsthorpe Village Hall	Craft Fair 10-1pm
Sun 9	Corpusty Village Hall	Table-top sale & breakfast 9-12 noon
Thurs 20	Corpusty Village Hall	Bonfire revival meeting 7pm

CLASH DIARY

To add an event contact Corinne Youngs 01263 577263 corinne@avyoungs.com

April			July		
12	Corpusty Village Hall	Spring Wreath Making	12	Baconsthorpe	Fete
May			Oct		
14	Saxthorpe Church	Plant swap day, Coffee, Cake & Chat	10	Millers Barn Saxthorpe	Harvest Supper
31	Saxthorpe Church	Evening Concert - Serendipity	Dec		
June			13-14	Saxthorpe Church	Living Nativity
28-29		Edgefield Open Gardens			

POST OFFICES

Baconsthorpe Mobile Post Office Van		
Wednesdays	10.45am - 11.30am	Village Hall
Corpusty Stores		01263 587726
Monday-Friday	9am - 12noon	
Itteringham Shop		01263 587325
Monday - Thursday	9am - 1pm	

LOCAL MP

Steffan Aquarone
steff.aquarone.mp@parliament.uk

COUNTY COUNCILOR

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

MOBILE LIBRARY TIMES

13 March, 10 April, 8 May			
Matlaske	12.40	NR11 7AQ	Old Post Office
Plumstead	13.00	NR11 7LG	Walnut Farm
Baconsthorpe	14.30	NR25 6LJ	Council Bungalows
	14.50	NR25 6LE	Hare & Hounds
Hempstead	15.05	NR25 6TL	Telephone Kiosk
Edgefield	15.45	NR24 2AL	Memorial
	16.10	NR24 2AX	The Street
Corpusty	16.35	NR11 7BU	Great Farm Cott's

Dates and times from
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Route Number: CEN 411

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NB: When unstaffed you need Open Library access on your library account.

Mon 8am - 7pm (unstaffed all day)
Tues 8am - 7pm (staffed from 10am)
Wed 8am - 7pm (staffed from 2pm)
Thurs 8am - 7pm (unstaffed all day)
Fri 8am - 7pm (staffed from 10am)
Sat 8am - 4pm (staffed from 1pm)
Sun 10am - 2pm (unstaffed)

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

Letter from the Rector - Reverend Canon David Longe
01263 577252 / 07881 950294 / rector@matlaske.org.uk

Dear All,

One of the most common words we may have heard over Christmas is “Emmanuel”.

Emmanuel is one of the names attributed to Jesus. Jesus has more than 190 names, some of which makes sense like, “Lord of All”, or “the Messiah”; others need work to understand like, “The Living Stone”; and some are revealed in the mystery of Church practice like, “The Bread of life”.

Emmanuel means “God with us”, suggesting that whatever we face God is alongside us. This seems an impossibility - can God really be with us when calamity occurs or when things go well? Emmanuel means that God is with us in sorrow and in delight, however difficult that might be.

So, if God is there why do we not perceive that presence more readily? Mother Julian of Norwich wrote that there is no space between our soul and God, suggesting that if we attend to our souls, then we perceive God's presence with us. She reached this conclusion while living in self-imposed-quasi-solitary-confinement as an anchorite in the 15th century.

When we hear the word Emmanuel in church it is often when we are looking on at the beauty of the child laying in a manger. Yet is this scene beautiful? Is it not actually a scene of human-rejecting-human, of isolation and difficulty. The family we depict was despised; shunned by an inn keeper(s); harassed at road blocks; treated as second if not third-class citizens; had to become refugees in Egypt and eventually the son is strung up like a criminal. The scene reveals not a quaint story but a harsh one.

But do we perceive its beauty at a subconscious level, because we identify with it? Do we identify because sometimes we are treated (or treat others) like outcasts and sometimes we are falsely accused (or falsely accuse others)? We may struggle with some of the story, like the “virgin birth”, but I wonder if this story resonates with our hopes, fears and failings, allowing us to find it beautiful at a deeper level because there is vulnerability and we know if we are honest that we are vulnerable too?

Another story that travelled with us into Christmas is the extraordinarily painful story of Gisèle Pelicot. Her remarkable courage to forgo anonymity proclaiming “la honte change de camp” - “Shame changes side” - is so important. She shows that although she was vulnerable, in appalling ways, she should have no shame. Rather the shame rests with those who abused her.

This courage I pray will shift our culture, giving us confidence that there is no shame in our own vulnerability. To be vulnerable is to be human: it is part of who we are. We might pretend we are not, but we are.

And this child – this Emmanuel – that looks “cute” in a manger was vulnerable. Vulnerable in the manger; vulnerable on the cross. God is with us in our vulnerability. And perhaps when we look at the nativity scenes, to understand it we need to look beyond and perceive its deeper beauty, a beauty that speaks to our souls revealing that God is with us and understands us - our trials, tribulations and vulnerabilities. Revealing as Mother Julian found that we are, whatever befalls us, beautiful in the sight of God.

May God be with you,

David

This letter is based on a homily preached at Midnight Mass in 2024.



THE BENEFICE OF MATLASKE

Church Services for February

Sunday 2nd February, Candlemas

8:30am Eucharist, Matlaske

10:30am Eucharist, Saxthorpe

Sunday 9th February, 4th Before Lent

8:30am Matins, Barningham Winter

10:30am Eucharist, Edgefield

Sunday 16th February, 3rd Before Lent

8:30am Eucharist, Plumstead

10:30am Eucharist, Baconsthorpe

Sunday 23rd February, 2nd Before Lent

10:30am Eucharist, Hempstead

4:00pm Family Service, Edgefield

Sunday 2nd March, Transfiguration

8:30am Eucharist, Saxthorpe

10:30am Eucharist, Matlaske

Wednesday 5th March, Ash Wednesday

6:00pm Eucharist, Matlaske with Revd Richard Lamey

Country Mice Toddler Group, Baconsthorpe Village Hall Tuesdays 10:00-12
Coffee Cake and Chat: Saxthorpe Church, every Wednesday 10-11am

HOW YOU CAN SUPPORT CHURCH & VILLAGE NEWS

Church & Village News has its roots in our communities and, starting as a typed sheet in the 1980s. It's still going, thanks to a dedicated band of volunteers. As far as possible printing costs are met from advertising. Although there is no cover charge, you can support the magazine by make a donation at TSB Business Banking, Church & Village Newsletter, Sort code: 30-94-34, Account No: 00598342, Ref: CVN Donation. Many thanks.

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200 CLUB

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CHURCH NEWS

A service of thanksgiving for the life of David McCosh was held in St Mary's on November 29th. A packed church listened to the delightful strains of the bagpipes being played and the service was followed by refreshments at the village hall. I think David would have approved.



CHRISTMAS DAY SERVICE

A trusty team of volunteers (pictured) appeared at St Mary's on December 23rd at 10am ready to decorate the church and welcome the congregation on Christmas morning. 'Special' coffee was provided by Jo Branningham. I hope all who came to the service appreciated our efforts.

I am also pleased to report that the Christmas Day service was extremely well attended. After rousing carols and a quiz we were given a surprise visit via the priest's door from Mouse who was accompanied by Jonathan Cooper (pictured). The collection was divided between Country Mice and School of Joy.



TUBULAR BELLS

I am very pleased to report that work began on January 14th to repair the tubular bells in St Mary's church. The repair of the bells will be a great asset to the church.

UPDATE ON WORK AT BACONSTHORPE CASTLE

Due to the recent cold weather, conservation work on the inner site and outer gatehouse has been delayed and is not expected to be finished until the end of January. Work on the footbridge across the Moat is now due to start in February, and other additional work around the site is to be completed.

English Heritage will formally announce when the castle is ready to reopen to the public. Thanks to Tom Worboys for the update.

Thai Evening

Friday 21st February Baconsthorpe Village Hall
6.30 pm

Classic Delicious Seafood Pad Thai

Authentic Rich and Creamy Beef Panang
(vegetarian options for both choices)

£10 cash on the night.
Please book on 07729972386

Cleaner Required - Reliable & Caring – NR11

A reliable and caring cleaner is required for regular cleaning of a 3-bedroom, 2-bathroom home, approximately 3 hours every two weeks.

- Cleaning & sanitising 2 bathrooms, toilets, sinks, taps, surfaces.
- Hoovering all carpets.
- Mopping hard floors.
- Removing cobwebs from beams, walls, and ceilings.
- Cleaning kitchen surfaces, including cupboard fronts, white goods, hob, sink, and wiping down all surfaces.
- Dusting and sanitising handles, switches, sockets, radiators, window sills, and skirting boards.
- Sofa refresh (vacuuming crevices and plumping cushions)

The house is occupied by two adults, no children or pets.

If interested, please contact via email:
simon@longwatergravel.co.uk

SAD NEWS

Sadly I must announce the death of Pauline Fuller on November 23rd. Pauline lived in Baconsthorpe for more than thirty years at Stonefield Road. She was a great lover of theatre and was a regular visitor to Sheringham Little Theatre. Pauline was an enthusiastic member of the Baconsthorpe village hall committee and for many years was responsible for cleaning the hall. This was a task she enjoyed and took great pride in. We send sympathy to her son Neil and her daughter Marni.

COFFEE MORNING IN THE VILLAGE HALL

Our regular free coffee and scones continues on the first Wednesday of each month - 10.30 till 11.30, to coincide with the Post Office van. We also now have two smart new coffee machines and can now offer everyone choice of an Americano coffee or a Cappuccino! Tea and usual coffee is also available. Please do come and pay us a visit. Our next date is February 5th.

MORE VILLAGE HALL NEWS

Pop up pub – Friday 28 February. Sausage and mash on the menu from 6 30pm, bar opens at 6pm. Craft Fair – Saturday 8 March, 10am to 1pm. We hope to see you there.

200 Club – We still have numbers available and you could win £50 every month for a £1 per month subscription. See village website for details.

BARNINGHAM - Sara Buxton 01263 577207

The Advent Carols service held at St Peter's in North Barningham on December 1st was well attended this year with 61 adults and 7 children taking part. Mulled wine, mince pies, sausage rolls and cheesy biscuits were most welcome at the end of the service and thanks go to all who helped with the preparation of the church beforehand and with the refreshments.

WREATHED IN SMILES

Thank you to all the kind people that supported our wreath-making day back in December. We managed to raise nearly £500.00 from this event which will all go towards our little church. Thank-you to Tessa Papworth who, once again, kindly gave up her time to instruct us and huge thanks to Amelia Courtauld who gave everyone a delicious lunch.

Thank you to the Amelia and Rebecca who decorated the church for the midnight mass service which was well attended on Christmas eve and may I take this opportunity of thanking them for all the time they give to the church.



CHURCH NEWS

(from Alison Mawson)

Thanks to all who all who helped prepare for and attended our church Christmas celebrations.

The church was beautifully decorated for the Carol Service by our team of volunteers. A large congregation enjoyed the readings and Nativity play with a host of angels, shepherds, kings, Mary and Joseph all playing their part.

Carol singing had to be in the Village Hall because of the weather but that didn't dampen the enthusiasm of the singers, fuelled by candy-floss and mulled wine. It was lovely to have so many villagers joining us.

All families are welcome to our free half term activity morning in church on Tuesday 18th February 10.30 – 12.00, when we will have crafts for all ages, and our family church service, which is on 23rd February in the church at 4.00pm.

HEMPSTEAD - Jonathan Neville 07836 675369



Hempstead 200 Club winners

£50 J Wood; £25 J Matthews; £10 M Thody; £5 M Feilden, P Wallis, D Sanders

COFFEE & CATCHUP - in the village hall

Friday, 7th February

Friday, 7th March

All welcome.

CRAFTY CREATIONS

Monday 3rd February 2.00 - 4.00 pm

Saturday 15th February 2.00 - 4.00 pm

Thursday 27th February 10.00 - 12.00 pm

HEMPSTEAD ALL SAINTS CAROL SERVICE

Thank you to so many of you for coming to the carol service before Christmas and being so supportive on a horrid windy and wet evening. Amazingly, we were 110 in the church! Happily the balcony didn't collapse and the stairs up to the organ loft proved to be helpful extra seating as there was standing room only.

The six readers did a valiant job by candle light, and the fabulous choir also managed in the dark, raising the standard of singing considerably. Thanks also to the PCC who helped decorate the church, and made and served the mulled wine and mince pies, and everyone else who helped pass things around and who gave generously to the collection. We raised £370 for the two charities - Friends of the Holy Land (FHL) and the Benefice Support Fund, a record on both fronts.

It was a very happy village social occasion and much enjoyed by all.



SEEKING SUPPORT FUND HELP

If anyone knows anybody in the Benefice who is struggling with food or fuel bills (or who has any financial worries) please do speak to David Longe, or any member of the PCC, who will be able to help (in confidence).

The support fund is there to help those locally in need. If you would like to donate to the fund, please speak to David or Francis Feilden, who would be delighted to receive any donations.

Airlie Inglis

Friends of the Holy Land would like to thank all parishioners who raised £183 for Christians in the Holy Land. Conditions continue to be extremely challenging.

Please continue to remember FHL and those we support in your prayers. We would welcome the opportunity to thank your parishioners in person and tell you more about our work.

HELP OUR LOCAL TOADS

Each spring, during February and March, toads, frogs and newts return to local ponds to breed. Most ponds, including newly installed garden ponds, are likely to be used by frogs and newts but only a few are used by toads, who are faithful to their birth pond. There are several ponds in our group of parishes that have been used by generations of toads, to which they migrate up to a mile or more at night to breed, then back again to their 'home patch'.



Toads are not fast movers, and this can make them particularly vulnerable to road traffic on migration to and from their pond – as well as crossing roads, they often use stretches of roads and tracks as it's easier for them to crawl along these than through thick vegetation. Also, male toads will often sit in roads where they can see around them, waiting for a female to grab and hitch a lift to the pond, where they are in 'pole position' for fertilising her eggs.

Rookery Pond, near Green Farm west of Hempstead village, is an important breeding pond for toads. Each year local volunteers help thousands of toads to get safely across the road near the pond. Volunteer patrollers don't need to be available every evening, they work in pairs and usually do one or two 90 minute 'shifts' a week on a rota, between dusk and the first couple of hours of darkness, when the weather is suitable for toads to move (relatively mild and damp).

If you might be interested in becoming a local toad patroller at Hempstead, please contact Tim Venes - timvenes01@gmail.com tel. 07876 322406 to find out more.

You can also help by:

- Being aware of where toad patrols take place during February and March, watch out for warning signs, and drive carefully near these, to help both the toads and the patrollers (there are also patrols nearby at Edgefield, Selbrigg Pond and North Barningham).
- Develop 'toad awareness' if you are driving on rural roads at night, especially in February and March, but also any time over the spring and summer, as toads still come out to hunt at night when migration is over. They're most likely to be out in mild and wet or damp weather. If you drive reasonably slowly and watch the road carefully, you can see them on the road in the car headlights and hopefully avoid them with your wheels.

Not all local ponds with breeding toads have a patrol - please also be especially careful in early spring near Pond Hills, Hempstead and Plumstead Hall Farm up to Baconsthorpe.

Thank you for helping our local toads!

TABLE TOP SALE Saturday 22nd February 10am - 2pm

Have you had that New Year clear out and need somewhere to sell on your preloved items?

Or do you fancy a wander to see what you can find to purchase. All welcome

Anyone wishing to book a stall at our sale please contact Lesley. lennox@project21.ltd.uk with your email and phone number.

HEMPSTEAD VILLAGE CHRISTMAS PARTY

On a Saturday in early December, the village hall was looking very festive for the annual Christmas party, which was hosted by the Village Hall Committee and welcomed all local residents. A lovely evening was had by all those that attended, with a welcome glass of Mulled Wine, followed by a variety of hot food, savouries and desserts. The hall resounded to the happy chatter as the evening progressed, with those meeting for the first time or catching up with old friends. The festive entertainment added to the enjoyment of all, with some lucky enough to win one of the great raffle prizes that had been donated by local businesses.

We would like to thank all those that volunteered, either by preparing food or setting up and clearing away, you all helped to make this a great annual village event.

Thank you Lesley Lennox and Dulce Lister.

See you in December 2025!



MATLASKE - Duncan Wood 01263 570293

The last couple of months in Matlaske have been delightful as far as the church and community have been concerned. We have had a joyful Christmas Party, a happy Christening in the church (always wonderful to welcome a new life), merry Carol singing around a blazing fire, the swinging of incense around the church to mark the holiness of Epiphany when we recognise the beauty and glory of Jesus Christ; and we are getting to know the folk who have moved into The Green. A warm welcome to them and also to Chris who has moved into the Lodge!



And a huge thank you to Marion and Jim and their amazing team for ensuring another wonderful Christmas party. I know many were disappointed who could not make it.

PLUMSTEAD - Harriet Rossi 01263 577239

Hoping everyone had a good festive break. Welcome to 2025!

CHRISTMAS AT ST MICHAEL'S

A good team effort before Christmas resulted in a beautifully decorated church once again.

This was much appreciated at the pre Christmas social gathering on December 18th, attended by 20 people.



CHURCH STALL

If you are looking for things to do during the dark hours of February, don't forget to look in the church where you will find a selection of jigsaws and books, as well as craft items and cards. The photographs used in the cards have been taken by Dave Chilvers and the cards made up by Anne. Donations for all these items are welcome and are put towards church expenses.

PARISH COUNCIL

Plumstead Parish Council meets on Thursday 13th February 5.30pm in Plumstead Church. Members of the public are warmly invited to attend this meeting.

SAXTHORPE AND CORPUSTY - John Birchall 01263 584290



VILLAGE HALL SUNDAY BREAKFAST

The Sunday morning breakfasts that accompany the Village Hall's monthly table top sales are growing in popularity. The next is on Sunday 9 Feb from 9am to mid-day, so don't miss it. Thanks to the team who make sure that it's a great way to start the day.

Another date for the diary is Film Night on the first Friday of every month at 7pm, with *The Critic* on 7 Feb featuring Ian McKellen as a fearsome theatre critic who stirs up a web of blackmail, deceit and murder. For something lighter, on March 7th bring the kids to Paddington in Peru.



CORPUSTY STATION BUILDING

You may have noticed work being carried out on the Corpusty Station building. It is now weatherproof and waiting for better weather when painting will be completed. Sometime soon a Community Payback team will be painting the walls inside as well as various other works around the Village Hall. Fundraising for the station has been going apace - thank you everyone who has supported these events. The Village Hall's station fund now stands at just under £3,000; only £22,000 to go! We look forward to the station building becoming another community resource for the village.

All our events are advertised on corpustyandsaxthorpevillagehall.org.uk and around the village. We look forward to seeing you.

FENCE ALONG THE GREEN

The parish council is considering restoring the fence that used to run along the Green between Bloomfield House and the western end, close to the children's play area. This would improve safety for children, while still allowing parking along the road. At its January meeting the council agreed to look at options for iron fencing and gates that would be in keeping with the area. The next meeting of the council is on 12 March.

PLOUGH SUNDAY FEATURED ON ANGLIA TV

Holt Ridge Morris returned to Corpusty and Saxthorpe to help the villages mark Plough Sunday - the start of the farming year - and this time the event was featured on Anglia TV! (View via links on village Facebook pages.)



On a bitterly cold morning, the hardy dancers followed a vintage tractor and plough from the Dukes Head to the church, where ploughs and other implements were blessed by the Rector David Longe in the hope of a good growing season and a successful harvest. After the service, the dancers, fortified with bacon rolls at St Andrews and libations at the pub, rounded off the event with another round of dances on the street.

ALLOTMENT LAND CLEARED

Little London Allotments land that was rapidly disappearing under rampant weeds and scrub has been cleared, allowing the Parish Council to consider how to make better use of the area. There has been some interest in smaller allotments being established on better land, possibly with a wildlife area on the wettest part of the site, and a parking area inside the top gate. The 'hedgerow' along the road has been reduced in height, but is in such poor condition that it may need replanting. A working group will bring proposals to the March meeting of the council.

BRING YOUR BOTTLES!

Although bottles and jars can now go in recycling bins, local charities benefit if they are taken to the bottle bank near the Dukes Head. The recycling credits (£317 at the last payment) from the bottle bank go to the Parish Council, which (after costs) passes the money on to charities.

HOTSPOT GRANT FOR ST ANDREWS

St Andrews has been awarded a grant from the Norfolk Community Foundation 'surviving winter' fund which will allow us to keep the church warm for Coffee Cake & Chat every Wednesday (10-11am) throughout the winter weeks. No charge for the excellent coffee and home made cakes - just make a donation if you can.



HAPPY NEW YEAR TO YOU ALL.

A huge 'thank you' to all those that donated to the children's gift appeal. It was possible for a small gift to go to each primary school aged child in all seven villages and the children of Corpusty primary school. The response was so amazing that there is enough to fund an Easter gift also. More on that later.



Special thanks to knitter Mary who carefully knitted angels to gift at a children's event about a Christmas angel, whose message was "do not be afraid".

Thank you too for Miss Kay's Community Book Pledge Mission for £200 of Usborne books to be split between Baconsthorpe Country Mice parent and toddler group, and children's areas in our churches.

If you haven't seen yet, some of our churches have quite large children's play areas with toys available any day of the week. Saxthorpe Church also offers Coffee, Cake and Chat every Wednesday 10-11 where you are assured of a welcome whether you are under 1 or 92 years of age (all catered for!), and where the play area is always in use.

February half term sees the return of a drop-in activity morning for children and their families. Tuesday 18th February 10.30-12 at Edgefield Church. The theme is stories and books, there will be crafts, painting and activities for all age groups.

Easter this year is mid-April and plans are already afoot to provide three workshops for children and parents during the school holidays to come and decorate a terracotta flower pot. We suspect there are some talented artists out there and how better to celebrate new beginnings but by creating your own pot.

Dates and venues to follow, including Saxthorpe, Edgefield and Barningham Winter.



Kay Harvey and Teresa Gransden (Country Mice leader) receiving the books, at The Tree House, Holt from Kerri (centre)





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Country Mice Group
Baconsthorpe Village Hall, nr Holt
Tuesdays 10-12

A group for babies, toddlers and their parents/carers



We aim
to be a place of belonging and community
to establish supportive and helpful relationships
to create a learning environment

£2 per family to include healthy refreshments
Message Teresa for info: 07761083701

Ah February! For those of us that suffer with SAD February may have the shortest number of days but it can feel like the longest most gruelling of months. However I am most fortunate to be sharing my life with someone who positively relishes both January and February....so during the bleakest of months our to-do list is still cheerfully full! All the old adages are true though, even on the grimmest of days just taking a moment to step outside or to get a small task done can make all the difference. So even on those cold and raw saucepan lid days there will always be something worth seeing outside and home will seem that more warm and cosy (hopefully!) when you get back in.

First up on the list is coppicing, this is a long term project but one that can really enhance your garden. If like us you're a fan of woven structures in the garden, be it plant supports or low fences then a great project is to grow the willow yourself. January/February is a good time to coppice willow whilst it is dormant and you don't have to use the willow there and then, if you keep the rods somewhere damp (not really an issue at the moment!!) then they keep their flexibility. Willow can be a thug when it gets going so coppicing helps keep it in check and will happily supply you with all the rods you might ever need in your garden, it's also a great shed project when you'd like to be out in the fresh air achieving but the weather really is too testing.

Next on the list is to plant fruit trees, again this weather is perfect for it (ground not rock hard and rain showers nearly always imminent!) I happily collected our two apple trees we had ordered from the East of England Apple Orchard Project, they are both beautiful strong bare rooted trees, one called Norfolk Dumpling the other Norfolk Beauty. The Norfolk Beauty originated from Gunton Park a mere 5 miles away, so that feels very special. We are now looking to get some more apple trees from the Orchard project, they are well worth supporting and in a sea of bland supermarket varieties it feels good to grow apples that both originated and thrived in this neighbourhood. I was charmed to hear that the Project always grafts its new bare root trees on St Valentine's Day! How much more romantic would a Norfolk Beauty apple tree be this Valentine's Day (and long lasting!) than an imported miserable bunch of overpriced red roses that fade within days. No contest in my opinion and apple blossom is infinitely prettier too!

Finally I'd recommend attempting to be as flexible gardening wise as is possible in February, the weather is notoriously difficult to predict, so be prepared for any window in the month, by that I mean getting compost in, ordering seeds so if the weather Gods shine on us, you can make the most of it. Failing that there is almost nothing nicer than going through seed catalogues and plant books as you sit by a cosy fire with a cup of tea (whilst its lashing it down outside) dreaming and planning for Spring.



Instead of this month's question (back to normal next month!) I'm going to recommend a book called *The Wild Remedy* by Emma Mitchell, whilst a slight side step away from gardening it does talk most beautifully and engagingly about how being outside in nature can really help with low mood. It's really fascinating and does explain quite wonderfully how we do nearly always feel much better to be outside and what better way to be outside than in our gardens creating something beautiful.

Please 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



TENTH BIRTHDAY EDITION!

Believe it or not, it is ten years since Church & Village News launched in (more or less) its current form. That first edition was edited by Richard Lynam, and Marion Harrison was Priest-in-Charge of a newly-created benefice that included Wickmere, Wolterton and Itteringham. There have been many changes since then, chronicled in 108 editions of CVN that can all be found at www.churchandvillagenews.org.uk.

In that very first edition (pictured) 'What's On' is there, letting people know what interesting and exciting events are coming up nearby. Right at the top is 'Hempstead Toad Migration'. To be fair, toads weren't expected to abide by the date - it was a meeting of volunteers to organise help when Spring spurred the love-lorn amphibians (with less road sense than hedgehogs) to set out for their favourite ponds.

CVN has only reached this milestone because many people, past and present, have contributed time, energy, care and no little skill to keep the magazine dropping through letterboxes: correspondents, contributors, photographers, door to door distributors, and also those beavering away behind the scenes to keep the whole CVN ship afloat.

Thanks to all - and here's to the next ten years!



John & Christine Birchall - Editors.

HISTORY WATCH - A CONUNDRUM FROM 1947

Their father's wishes were quite specific. The dairy herd was to be apportioned as follows: Tom, the eldest who worked on the farm full time was to receive half, Dick who helped out at weekends and holidays would get a third, and Harry the youngest who was away at agricultural college would have a ninth.

This was all fair and agreed until it was realised there were 17 cows in the herd.

"What the heck's a third of 17?" asked Dick.

"Or a ninth?" queried Harry.

Tom thought for a moment and then said: "As I'm getting the largest share, I'll add my house cow Buttercup to the herd to even things up."

So, now with 18 cows in the herd Tom could get nine - his half, Dick, six - his third and Harry two - his ninth.

But $9+6+2$ equals 17, the original number of the herd. So could Tom have his Buttercup back?

Well, can you work it out?



Arthur Pentney

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