

NORTON NATTER

NEWSLETTER OF THE STOCKTON PARISH

In This Issue

NEWS FROM THE
PARISH PUMP

WORD FROM OUR
SHROSHIRE
COUNCILOR

CHURCH NEWS



Photograph: Becks Bagnall

AUTUMN IN NORTON...



We would like to say a big thank you to both Becks Bagnall and Mills Morris for submitting photos for our Autumn Norton Natter competition, we loved both entries so much, we've picked you both as winners!!!

Congratulations!

Photograph: Mills Morris



THIS MONTH'S EVENTS

**Harvest Festival**

11am Sunday 1st October

We very much hope that as many as possible will come to Harvest Festival at St. Chads Stockton – Sunday 1st October at 11am, followed by Harvest lunch in Norton Village Hall. Lunch £7 adults £3 children. Call/ text Charlotte on 07503 952 911. All monies raised go towards maintenance of the church.

November Parish Meeting

The next meeting will be held at 7.30pm on Wednesday 1st November 2023 at Norton Village Hall – all are most welcome to attend to raise items of interest or concern.

The Village Hall

Our lovely village hall is about to have a makeover! We are hopeful that the work will be all done in time for our Christmas Fayre on Sunday 3rd December – 2pm – 4pm

But before then is The Harvest Festival on Sunday October 1st

More upcoming events will include:

- Quiz night
- Christmas Bingo
- Ceilidh night

All dates and details to be confirmed so look out for more information on Facebook and the village noticeboards.

Did you know you can rent Norton Village Hall for as little as £10 per hour? It's an ideal venue for family parties, events, workshops, meetings, classes and much more!

THE PARISH PUMP

Parish Council meetings September meeting

The Parish Council held its bi-monthly meeting in September with a number of projects being delivered across the area during 2023-24 which are set out below. Parish Councillors also heard at their meeting from the 'Spartans' football club who have reached an agreement with the Apley Estate for the management of the field and pavilion on Cheswardine Lane, the previous home of Norton FC. The presentation revolved around the ethos of the club which has been running for around 37 years from the Oldbury Wells School fields in Bridgnorth. Reassurance was also given in terms of facilities, parking and the car-boot sales on the site. The club has also been asked to become a contributor to the newsletter so that Parishioners are kept informed of progress on the site. Many will have already seen the delivery of containers on the site for use, once converted into changing facilities. The Parish Councils next set of meetings are at 7.30pm, Norton Village Hall on the 1st November 2023 and the 3rd January (precept setting), 6th March and 1st May 2024. Parishioners are most welcome to attend to raise items of interest or concern, particularly any Policing concerns.

Parish Projects and Initiatives

Progress continues to be made with Samco who is contracted to deliver small scale footpath and drainage improvements across the area by the Parish Council. This is part funded with a grant from Shropshire Council. If Parishioners see any small scale footpath improvements for example the need for a kerb to be lowered, a street sign missing or in need of repair, drainage ditches that need to be cleared please contact the Clerk on their details below for next years programme. This will enable the programme to again be developed for the next financial year. Any potholes should be reported Shropshire Council via 'fix my street'. The Parish Council continues to work with the Restoring Shropshire Verges Project (RSVP) on potential pilot areas and verges within the parish. The two sites under development are on the A442 opposite the bus shelter and on the lane towards Stockton Church and Stockton House. Additionally the Parish Council is looking to seed and plant up the edges/corners of the play park in Windmill Lane starting with the far corner close to the Hawthorne trees. The annual inspection of the play equipment was completed in June 2023 and the Parish Councils term contractor Rob Weir has carried out repairs to stabilise the equipment with the provision of new timbers and poles. The site continues to undergo by-monthly inspections to ensure the site continues to be safe to use. The Parish Council also made a charitable donation to the CAP project at Brignorth that helps people who are struggling with debt problems at present.



Photograph: Michelle Smith

YOUR HELP IS NEEDED

The Parish Council is always on the look out for volunteers to help with environmental projects around the area; plus anyone interested in being involved with the editorial group for this newsletter, please contact the Clerk, Graham Bould on gbouldparish@yahoo.co.uk.

ANOTHER SUCCESSFUL SEASON!

As we are nearing the end of our bowling season with just a couple of games left to play, we face a pivotal battle after which we will either be promoted to Division One or stay in Division Two. The contest between 3 teams is reaching its head!

We recently had a knockout game in the consolation cup played at the Bylaw unfortunately we came out of that game losing by 17 points on aggregate. However, we enjoyed better fortune in other competitions this year. We played the second annual Mark Bennett Memorial which was a wonderful afternoon in the sunshine. It was won by John Roberts Jnr from Horsehay in the final against our own Robert Weir. Also, the Division Two Singles was won by Darren Bailey of Horsehay winning against our own Mo Parton.

Stockton's in-house competitions so far:

- Men's Singles won by Martin Bennett after defeating John Baines
- Floodlight Cup won by Steven Bishton after defeating Martin Bennett
- Tony Scott Doubles won by Jeanette Bennett and Steven Bishton after defeating Chris Massie and Rob Weir.

Since the last post in the Norton Natter, we have had 3 members join who have already played in a few matches for us, but we are always looking for new members.

We would also like to say a special thank you to John Baines who has been our greens keeper for the last 34 years and is stepping down from the role to be taken up by Rob Weir and Martin Bennett.

If anyone is interested in becoming a social member, subscription is £27 for the year.

We welcome members from all ages and have had success in the past with social events attracting a younger crowd. Jeanette Bennett

Many thanks for your continued support.

Stockton Bowling Club



STOCKTON BOWLING CLUB



After a few years of contributing recipes to the Norton Natter, Paula has decided to close her pantry. Thank you so much for your help, Paula!

We're delighted to announce that the Natter will not be without its regular recipe slot as Rae Parnham, an exceptional cook of local renown has very kindly offered to share some special dishes from her personal recipe collection. This edition she has sent in a Butternut squash soup served with cheese scones, perfect for those colder days to come. Thank you very much Rae!

Butternut Squash Soup

Serves 6

- 3 small butternut squash (about 1.7 kg / 3½ lb)
- 2 tbsp olive oil
- ½ tsp grated nutmeg
- Salt and black pepper
- 30g / 1oz butter
- 1 large onion, roughly chopped
- 2 large carrots, roughly chopped
- 2 large celery stalks, roughly chopped
- 1.2 – 1.3 litres / 2-2¼ pints vegetable stock
- Crusty bread to serve



Method:

Cut each squash lengthways in half, and scoop out and discard the seeds and stringy fibres.

Arrange the squash halves cut-side up in a roasting tin in one layer.

Drizzle the olive oil over the flesh of the squash, and season with nutmeg, salt and pepper.

Pour 150ml / ¼ pint cold water into the tin around the squash. Roast in a pre-heated oven at 200°C or 180°C fan / Gas Mark 6 for about 1 hour until tender. Remove from the oven and set aside until cool enough to handle.

Meanwhile, melt the butter in a large saucepan, and added the chopped vegetables. Cook over a high heat for a few minutes until lightly coloured, stirring constantly. Pour in the stock, season with salt and pepper, and bring to the boil. Cover, and simmer gently for 20 minutes or until the vegetables are tender. Remove from the heat.

Scoop the flesh from the squash skins into the saucepan, then purée in a food processor or blender until smooth. Return the soup to the rinsed-out saucepan and taste for seasoning. Serve hot with the crusty bread.

Devon Cheese Scones

Makes 12

- 60g / 2 oz butter (plus extra for greasing)
- 250g / 8oz self-raising flour
- 2 tsp baking powder
- 125g / 4 oz mature cheddar cheese
- 1 egg
- 150 ml / ½ pint milk, plus extra for glazing
- Butter to serve
- 5 cm / 2 inch pastry cutter

Method:

Lightly butter a large baking tray.

Sift the flour and baking powder into a bowl. Rub in the butter with the fingertips until the mixture resembles fine breadcrumbs. Stir in the cheese.

Break the egg into a measuring jug and make up to 150ml / ¼ pint with milk. Beat lightly to mix. Add to the bowl and mix to a soft dough. Lightly knead the dough until smooth. Roll out until 1cm / ½ inch thick, cut out with the pastry cutter, and put onto the baking tray. Brush with milk.

Bake in a pre-heated oven at 220°C / 200°C fan / Gas 7 for about 10 minutes until risen and golden. Cool on a wire rack, and serve (on the day of making if possible), coated with butter.

THE THREE MONTHS OF AUTUMN FROM GRAHAM JONES

SEPTEMBER

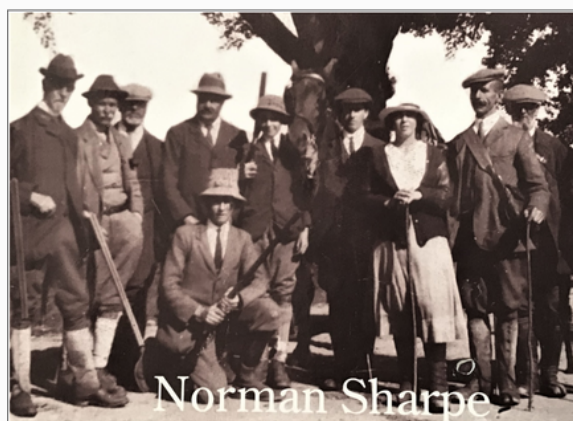
This year on the 23rd of September the sun was exactly over the equator and day and night will be of equal length. This is the autumnal equinox, the beginning of autumn. The moon is full at this time, farmers called this a Harvest Moon, which might give a little more light and give them one last chance to gather in the harvest. They would give thanks at Harvest Festival in the parish church. At Stockton the church was decorated with all manner of goods from farms and cottage gardens. The way farm produce has been harvested over the past eighty years has changed enormously, the binder is a fine example. The mechanism to cut and bind the wheat into sheaves seemed complicated at the time, now it appears primitive by comparison with the machinery of today.



OCTOBER

In recent years the number of swallows has dwindled. In the past on the eves of the farm buildings in Village Road swallows built their nest and raised their chicks. When the temperatures began to fall and airborne insects began to disappear, the swallows flew off to Africa. In Spring they returned to Village Road.

By comparison the pheasants on The Estate were assured of a plentiful supply of food, from the gamekeepers. They did not know that from the first week in October they would be in the firing line. The shooting season began and would continue into the New Year. Just how important the sport was on The Estate is set out in Norman Sharpe's book -Apley Hall - The Golden Years of a Sporting Estate.



NOVEMBER

"Remember, remember the fifth of November, gunpowder, treason and plot." We remember of course that the plot to blow up Parliament failed and Guy Fawkes was executed.

Celebrating Guy Fawkes Night was once a very popular event with little boys in Norton. Guy was thrown on the bonfire dressed in old blue overalls, bangers banged, sparklers sparkled and rockets flew off to a cheer.

A week later we celebrated Armistice Day, 11th of November when the Great War ended in 1918. At the end of the service we assembled in the church yard and the names of eighteen men were read, to remind us of the sacrifice they made. To lose a son is a tragedy, to lose both sons must have been hard to bear.

Near the lych gate is the grave of Tom Nevett. He was wounded in France and evacuated to England, but despite the best efforts of the medical staff he died.

The memorial to Tom Nevett is shared with his brother, William. He served with the Australian infantry, in action against the Turks. He died on the beach at Caba Tebe, Galipoli, on 25th of April 1915. This date became ANZAC Day, when Australians and New Zealanders remember the fallen. Percy and Tom's parents and their sister Katherine moved away, to Church Stretton, leaving the farm and all the familiar surroundings that the boys had loved so much.





HARVEST

festival & lunch



All welcome to 11am Harvest Festival at
St. Chad Church, Stockton on Sunday, 1st
of October 2023

Followed by a two course lunch at Norton
Village Hall. Please encourage friends and
family to come along too. All funds raised
will go towards required maintenance of
the church roof

Adults £7, children (under 16) £3

Call or text Charlotte to reserve spaces
07503952911



COMMUNITY NEWS

Restoring Shropshire Verges – Norton meadow project

You may remember from the December '22 edition the small verge alongside the Old Shop in Norton, had been scarified and sown with seeds provided by Shropshire Council's Restoring Shropshire Verges scheme. This summer saw lots of flowers popping up such as Yellow Rattle, Wild Yarrow, Hedgerow cranesbill, Agrimony, Field poppies, Thistles and many more that we just could not identify! We have learnt a lot, not least that its more difficult to get a meadow going than we thought! So, in preparation for next year the late cut was done by the council at the end of August and the area has been scarified once again to knock the dominant grass back. Even more Yellow rattle seeds have been sown to reduce the grass content.

Hopefully this will create space for other meadow varieties sown such as Ox Eye daisy, Welsh Poppies, Corncockle and Knapweed and so with the ever-present optimism of a gardener we are hoping for a better meadow display next year!

Bridgnorth Patch & Quilt

We are a friendly group of sewers who are always happy to welcome new members. Although we have 'Bridgnorth' in our title, we actually meet at Norton Village Hall from 10 am to 4 pm, generally on the 1st and 3rd Mondays of the month. Our programme combines 'sit & sew' sessions, where we take along our individual projects to work on, and workshops to learn new techniques based on patchwork and quilting. Nothing is compulsory! If you'd like more information or to come along to see what we do, please contact Shiona Ferriday 07971230922.

Queues likely

Apley are hosting their annual fireworks display on Saturday 28th October this year, and again the event has sold out.

Please bear in mind there will be traffic on the road around 16:30 while attendees to the event arrive.

The Seed, Plant and Harvest Swap Table

This year has seen loads of seeds and seedlings shared throughout the spring and summer, A big thankyou to all those people who dropped things off and for those that made use of the surplus! Although the table will be packed away in November until next Spring, there is still some time to share any excess bulbs or unwanted divided plants. Remember to label them though!

BRIDGNORTH SPARTANS TO JOIN US IN NORTON

Bridgnorth Spartans have started some works to bring the old Norton FC football pitch to life.

Rob Woodcock (Spartans Chair) and Les Bristow (Spartans President) presented their vision to us at a recent Parish Council meeting.

Rob was very clear to reassure residents of Norton that there will be little impact to the parish from Spartans coming to Norton. He highlighted that the old pavilion will be restored to give a view of the soon to be seeded pitch.

Rob was also keen to reassure that match days on Saturday and Sundays will use parking on the site, there will be parking officials and he was able to articulate that residents will not be affected. Rob explained that the pitch will be used on a Tuesday and Thursday early evenings in the summer months for training only if the pitch is healthy enough for that to happen and the club fully supports the continued use of the site for car boot sales and local events if required.

Les Bristow was keen to invite residents along to watch games which will not begin until September 2024. Les explain this gives Spartans 12 months to get the site ready and pitch playable while allowing local residents the time to come and say hello and get to know the club. Spartans is a community organisation and on this basis is keen to work closely with the community to ensure that the pitch brings benefits to the Norton Parish and well as the local community.



STOCKTON CHURCH

Interregnum and the future

Following the retirement of Revd Keith Hodson in June, Stockton Church and the Six Parishes (Stockton, Sutton Maddock, Kemberton, Beckbury, badger & Ryton) are currently in an Interregnum – the period between Rectors. This means that the churches carry on as best they can to hold Sunday services, Weddings, Funerals & Christening run by their local teams with the assistance of nearby clergy.

Due to low attendance at the Parish Churches it is becoming increasingly difficult to find clergy willing to minister to small communities such as ours. The Parochial Church Council (PCC) for Stockton and the other parishes are currently working with Lichfield Diocese to make plans for the future ministry for the Six parishes. It is likely that a single Council will be created for the Six Parishes to manage local Ministry. Only responsibility for local finance and the church building will remain with Stockton PCC. However, the good news is that the intention is to find a new Rector, albeit part time, to come and be our minister.

We all thank Revd Keith for his work in our parish and pray for a long and happy retirement for him & his wife Frances.

PARISH COUNCIL NEWS

We are very pleased that Charlotte and Jeremy Dyas have agreed to join Stockton PCC, joining Neale Dalton, Tina Dalton, Hilary Blakely & Lord Gavin Hamilton (now Treasurer). David Ward has retired from the PCC and we thank him for his many years of work as Treasurer. If you have any questions or ideas about Stockton Church, Services, or ways you can help, please contact any of the PCC

INTRODUCING ANDREW SHERRINGTO, SHROPSHIRE COUNCILLOR

I was born in Bury, Lancashire and educated at one of the last state grammar schools before it was turned into a comprehensive. After working for some time in the southeast, I moved to the West Midlands in the late 1980's. The black country and its environs were the place where things were still made; I couldn't see myself working in insurance or banking. I've worked for enterprises which have made enormous hydraulic cylinders for opening flood gates on dams; transformers for power stations; jet engines. Also, small stuff like heating radiators and domestic circuit breakers. I have worked in finance roles in industry, primarily in manufacturing, all my working life, holding senior positions as head of finance or financial director. In terms of large organisations, I was responsible for compliance for a large group of businesses with a combined turnover of around \$3bn in the EMEA region, so the numbers in Shropshire are not unusual. I hold an FCMA qualification.

I met Frances, my wife, when she moved into my house as a lodger in 1989, having been appointed to manage a shoe shop in Walsall. We married in 1995 and she and I moved to Bridgnorth in 1999. This was the best decision we made; Shropshire is a wonderful place to live. Our daughter was born in 2000 and is now a fully qualified Chartered Accountant, living in Shrewsbury. After my wife's death last year from colon cancer, I decided on a change in life and retired early. I decided to get politically active in 2017 as a means of protecting my mental health; I was shouting too much at the television. I was disappointed and disgusted with the state of both national and local politics, which have undergone a steep decline in my view. In both spheres it seems to me that the political class have lost focus; they've forgotten what they're there to do, paying less attention to the people they are supposed to serve and playing very expensive political games with our money.

As far as the good people of Worfield are concerned, I simply want to do a good job of acting as their representative. I will listen often and speak seldom. I give my word sparingly, but once given, I devote every ounce of energy to keeping to what I have said. I hope to restore faith in some of my constituents that all politicians are not the same and things can be made to change for the better.



NORTON HISTORY

Norton Stocks and Whipping Stick!

Not surprisingly the history of the old stocks and whipping posts is less than clear, with many versions of the 'facts' being based on stories told and retold many times by villagers, which are then subsequently adopted in part by Wikipedia and Google as irrefutable truths.

The old saying "never let the truth get in the way of a good story" comes to mind.

Cecil Jasper wrote such a tale entitled Norton Village where the Old stocks Spoilt a Romance "There was a chap put in 'em once: he was alwos drinkin, night an' day, month an year – he'd drink 'nough ale to scald a pig. He wos hot on the landlord's dater an' she bein' a buxom wench, liked 'im much.

One mornin' they sid him fast in these 'ere stocks, neck an' feet like, an' his tongue sticking out a yard. 'Twas his own fault: 'im bin drinkin' night before, an' bet some mon he couldna' fast'n 'im in stocks. All the folks know'd about it, and was the fust to see 'im. The coper let him out and kicked 'is backside to sober 'im".



Photo Courtesy of Mr. L Greenhorn



We are now in more enlightened times of political correctness, community service and sympathetic policing policies, which will hopefully mean that no matter how drunk you get, sobering up in the stocks is no longer considered an option

Back to the historical facts.... There is evidence that the stocks and whipping post was set under 'a mighty elm tree' opposite the Hundred House which possibly dates back to the 14th century or maybe not.....

Although the stocks and whipping post are registered as a grade 2 listed building there is not much of the original structure left, time and traffic accidents have not been kind to them with much of the timber having been repaired or replaced. The latest restoration work being undertaken by the Apley Estate craftsmen who have sympathetically replaced sections of oak which were set into the ground supporting the stocks which just simply rotted away .

Lieutenant Allan Brookes and Corporal Leslie Webb

The names on the recently replaced memorial bench outside the old school reflect how war and death have no respect for social class or up bringing. Lieutenant Allan Brookes and Corporal Leslie Webb came from opposite ends of the pre-war social classes. When it came both answered the call to fight for their country and made the ultimate sacrifice.

Leslie was born in Swindon Wiltshire to Charles and Annie Webb, just after his birth Charles came to work at the Hundred House for his brother-in-law Tom Shord, the Landlord. The family moved into 11 Village Road where Leslie grew up, the only son among five siblings, one of whom died in infancy. He attended the village school and on leaving he became an apprentice bricklayer with Apley Estate, in his spare time he played football for Norton and cricket for Apley. On the 21st April 1941 he joined the Royal Engineers (RE) as a bricklayer, the RE's job was and still is to maintain, the military estate. In combat they build bridges, repair roads and often clear the way for the advancing troops. Leslie was based at various military camps around the country including one in Somerset where he met his Fiancée Marion. On the 19th June 1944 he and his comrades in 14 Field Squadron embarked on a ship to France.

All RE's had some very rudimentary training in mine clearance so when on the 21st August 1944 around 4 miles North East of Vire in Normandy a local farmer reported mines, bricklayer Leslie and his men were detailed to investigate. The rain was heavy and conditions miserable as they made their way to the location. On arrival they found Riegel 43 anti-tank mines, at 800 mm long, rectangular and containing 4kg of TNT they were lethal. For some reason Leslie decided to demonstrate how to disarm one of the mines. Sat on the soft verge and with the mine across his knees Leslie called for some pliers, the mine exploded killing two men instantly. Leslie was found nearby and conveyed to the field dressing station where he died. He was 24, Leslie is buried in the Charles de Percy Commonwealth War Cemetery in France.

Allan William Ivo Brooks was born in Washington, USA on 14th April 1923 his father was a British Diplomat. Allan's Great-Grandfather the 1st Barron Crawshaw had been Ennobled by Queen Victoria in Lancashire, after he had made his money in quarrying before moving into the lucrative cotton trade. By 1939 Allans parents Herbert and Hilda were living at Cotsbrook House, Higford, later they moved to Ewdness, a couple of miles from Norton along Bridgnorth road.

Allan was educated at Eton College, on leaving he joined the Army as a Cadet Officer, he was commissioned into the Queen's Bays (2nd Dragoon Guards) as a 2nd Lieutenant in March 1943 and promoted to Lieutenant in the September. In November 1944 Allan and his regiment were involved in heavy fighting on the Adriatic coast of Italy. Those taking part in the Italian fighting mockingly referred to themselves as the 'D-Day Dodgers', even though the fighting was some of the fiercest of the war. The Germans kept retreating beyond ridge lines and rivers and the allies had to fight hard to breach each line. On the 24th November Allan Brooks and his driver were on patrol north of Rimini on the road to Bologna when the Germans began shelling the area. They took a direct hit, and both were killed instantly, Allan was 21, he is buried in the Forli Commonwealth War Cemetery in Italy.




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If you'd like to advertise your business in the Norton Natter, please get in touch.
 Send your events, news, photographs and contributions for future editions to Jackie Bennet at jackie.a.bennett@hotmail.com by 8th November 2023.
 Follow our Parish Facebook page www.facebook.com/nortoncommunitygroup

We'd love to hear what you think of the Norton Natter and we welcome ideas and suggestions to improve the content and add news and updates to the newsletter and Facebook pages. The next edition will be printed at the end of November 2023.