

The Ampfield Messenger



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St. Mark Ampfield*

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The Parish Church of St Mark, Ampfield

Our vision: To be channels of God's love in the world

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DEADLINE: The third Friday of each calendar month.

Contributions to this magazine are always welcome, however it may be necessary to edit or shorten articles. Note that the views and opinions expressed in this publication are not necessarily those of the editor or the Parochial Church Council. Advertisements in this publication do not carry the endorsement of the editor or the Parochial Church Council.

Lord Wallace, Moderator of the General Assembly, and Very Rev. Dr. Susan Brown, convener of the Faith Impact Forum are asking all of us to join them in praying for those who are frightened and at risk in Ukraine.

A prayer for Ukraine:

The news can be difficult to listen to and to read.

When that news relates to faces we know

And to voices familiar to us,

It becomes all the harder to hear.

Lord God,

We ask you to hold the people of Ukraine deep in your heart.

Protect them, we pray;

From violence,

From political gamesmanship,

from being used and abused.

Give, we pray,

the nations of the world the courage

and the wisdom

to stand up for justice

and the courage too,

to dare to care - generously.

Lord in your mercy,

Take from us all,

The tendencies in us

That seek to lord it over others:

Take from us those traits

that see us pursuing our own needs and wants

before those of others.

Teach us how to live in love

And dignity

And respect - following your example.

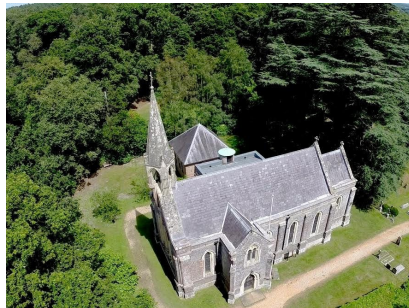
In your name and for your sake,

Amen

From the Church of Scotland website

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Letter from Sally

Dear Friends

I am writing this just as storm Franklin is blowing itself out, the end of three days of very challenging weather! The reading yesterday from St. Luke's gospel was also about adverse weather conditions, it told the story of Jesus in a boat when a storm came up very suddenly. The disciples who were with him were afraid that they would drown. Jesus calms the storm, and all is well, but he does challenge them about their faith.

The early Christians adopted as the symbol of the church, a simple drawing of a boat with a cross for a mast. They suffered persecution and there was often conflict and controversy between themselves, so at times they must have felt very much like a boat on a storm-tossed sea.

In our own personal lives, we sometimes feel that we are going through a storm and often cry out for help. The experience can often be as though we are sinking and drowning in despair.

As people seek God through the storms in their lives, we in the church, continue to sit alongside them to give comfort. We never lose sight of that symbol of the early Christians. We hold the cross before us as a symbol of love and hope as we climb into the boat, cast into the deep waters and fish for the lost and broken.

This month we will have the great joy of welcoming Revd Vanessa Lawrence as our new Vicar for the parishes of Ampfield, Chilworth and North Baddesley and you can read all about Vanessa elsewhere in the magazine. She has lots of plans for the church now that the worst of the pandemic is over. We look forward to working with her on the boat of life and hopefully experiencing calmer seas than in the last two years.

Sally



Regular Service Pattern in the Benefice

Sundays at 09:30

- 1st Sunday:** (6th Mar) – Worship for All, online only
2nd Sunday : (13th Mar) – **Communion at St Mark, Ampfield**
3rd Sunday: (20th Mar) – Communion at All Saints, North Baddesley and streamed live online
4th Sunday (27th Mar) – Communion at St Denys, Chilworth
No 5th Sunday this month but when there is one: Communion at St. John's North Baddesley

Every Sunday at 17:00: Evening Prayer using Book of Common Prayer (on Zoom)

Every Tuesday at 10:30: Morning prayer in St. Mark's Room

Ash Wednesday

There will be a service of Holy communion with the imposition of ashes on Wednesday 2nd March at All Saints, starting at 10.00 am.

Please see p. 10 for details of the welcome service for our new vicar Vanessa

Abbie West



A New Vicar for the Benefice

The Revd Vanessa Lawrence, formerly our Associate Priest, has been offered and has accepted the post of vicar in our benefice. We look forward to Vanessa taking up her new post with us and learning more about her plans for the future. In the meantime, we talked to Vanessa about her previous work and her current interests.

Vanessa's previous job was Mental Health Chaplain within an NHS acute psychiatric unit where she supported patients, carers and staff with their spiritual, pastoral and religious needs. These were people with a variety of severe and enduring mental health conditions across all adult age ranges. Vanessa had a particular remit for staff wellbeing, which has had a key role during the COVID pandemic.

In 2007 Vanessa was appointed Associate Minister in our Benefice and recently undertook a placement at Highcliffe, Winchester where she learned much from being part of a tradition very different from her own. Vanessa started her career as a Key Stage 1 Teacher in Chelmsford. In 2000 she started her curacy at North Stoneham and Bassett, Southampton. After a stepping back a little after the birth of her children, Vanessa's responsibilities in the wider church related largely to personal development and training, with an emphasis on mental health. She is a regular contributor to Radio Solent 'Daily Thought'.

Growing up in a large rural benefice Vanessa experienced a variety of styles of worship and traditions, from BCP to ASB to All Age services – and from liberal catholic to evangelical. When she was sixteen, she had a significant family bereavement which led to her asking many questions about faith. Along with great support from the ministry team across the Benefice, the people who shaped her most significantly at that crucial point in her life were those from the liberal tradition. They gave time and space to hear her questions and gave Vanessa confidence to sit with unanswered questions within the mystery of God.

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“Over the years, I have been able to experience worship of many different kinds and can connect with God in a variety of ways, whether that is through choral evensong at a cathedral, a worship band, or simply in silence ... However, wrestling with the theology of suffering firstly through my personal life, and then through my work as a Mental Health Chaplain has been the theology that has most shaped me. This wrestling has taught me the value of prayer, the need for human beings to connect with God, in order to continue the journey that each of us are making towards wholeness of being. As St Augustine prayed ‘our hearts are restless until they find their rest in you.’”

Vanessa has been a school governor and has three teenage boys who she has enjoyed supporting through Baddesley Football team, Romsey Rugby club, Romsey Beavers, Cubs, Scouts, and Mountbatten School Windband. With three dogs and her horse Dottie, Vanessa is happy to be outside for at least part of her busy days. Social justice issues are important to her and Vanessa is involved with the Shoebox Appeal, Mary’s Meals, the Benefice Holiday Meals club and the Winchester Nightshelter. She initiated the Tree of Life Café at the Café Nero in Romsey.

“I am so excited to be back in this Benefice with such a supportive team around me. The pandemic has been such a difficult time, but I can see how the Benefice has worked together and grown together. I’m looking forward to us building on that, joining in with what God is doing here and having lots of fun in the process.”



Benefice News

St. Mark's at the Ampfield Market

In January a group of volunteers decided to reinvent the 'church' table at the village market. For many years it had been ably manned by Daryl and Eve and predominantly sold Fairtrade goods, the Ampfield Messenger and some other small items. Post Christmas the cry was sent out for good, saleable items to be donated to the church. We received some very good products ranging from serving platters to brand new slipper socks with their labels still attached. The donations were excellent and by the time we set up our February Market table we had an abundance of very good items for sale. As we are situated just inside the door of the village hall we are fortunate to be the first table to explore. I do hope you will visit us at the March Market on Saturday the 5th from 10am to 12noon.

I actually wanted to write this article to let readers know what a great community feel the market has. The chance to have a look at all the different tables displaying their goods, including the fresh veg and bread, followed by the coffee and cake available and somewhere to sit down and have good chat. Not only people from Ampfield attend the market, we have regulars from Romsey, North Baddesley and further afield including, recently someone from Spain! On the 4th February the hall was buzzing from the moment we opened. All guidelines are being followed with windows open for the flow of fresh air, mask wearing and hand sanitiser available however that did not deter people from having a good time. As the hall warmed up we were very pleased to have some fresh air coming in. As stallholders we pay £10 for two tables which I think is a very fair price and last month we made over £75 and £46 on Fairtrade.

People always say thank you to Julie Trotter, who has run the market for many years, but I think she deserves a special mention as the amount of work that goes on behind the scenes, much of it before the village hall door is unlocked which is amazing.

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Even when the market is underway she is always on the go, checking everything is running smoothly, answering questions as well as trying to do a little socialising too. So well done Julie your hard work is all worth it.

Finally, I would like to ask all our lovely readers to take a look in your cupboards and even sheds for any of those unwanted gifts you haven't used, or the gardening gloves or nice bag you bought that's not really you now :) .Please consider donating them for our stall. All the monies go into the church fund to help us maintain St Mark's. It is a really beautiful building. If you would like to become a Friend Of St Mark's and donate financially then please get in touch with myself or Chris at the next market. Alternatively you can call me on 07738467350 and I can let you know how it all works and the things we have been able to do in the church and surroundings with the money donated.

Kate

Lent Course

There will be a Lent course at All Saints starting Tuesday 8th March at 7.30 pm when we will be exploring the subject of 'justice'. There will also be an opportunity to join on zoom, for full details of all that is happening during Lent please read [here](#)



New Sound Sytem

A new sound system has been installed at St. Mark church and used for the first time at a memorial service. It is brilliant! No crackles, feedback or loss of sound, the lapel mics are so light. The ones on the previous system were like carrying stones in your pocket!



Sally

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Vanessa's Welcome

Churchwardens and PCC's warmly invite you to Vanessa's Welcome Service on Sunday 20th March at 6.30pm at All Saints Church, followed by refreshments. There will be an option to watch the service online if you prefer.

Vanessa is keen to start her new role as Vicar as soon as possible, and to minimise delays, there will be a brief licensing to cover the legalities with the Bishop and Church Wardens on 10th March. Vanessa will remain living in her own home in North Baddesley until later in the year, while the Vicarage has some renovations done. Please do feel free to contact her from 10th March by using this email revdvanessalawrence@gmail.com or leave a message in the church office on 023 8073 7617.

St Mark's Church De-Clutter Day Wednesday 9th March from 10am

All help very much appreciated. Come and join us and let's make Mary Kondo proud:

"Keep only those things that speak to the heart, and discard items that no longer spark joy"

Kate



*From the St. Mark's
Register.*



On 11th February a memorial Service was held in St. Mark for Elizabeth Lois Williams.

We extend our sympathy to Eizabeth's family and friends

What's on

Welcome Café



All Saints Church,
Rownhams Road, North Baddesley SO52 9EQ

The Welcome Café is for any and everyone in the community to come and meet friends for a catch-up and enjoy great coffee. There is no charge for coffee but donations are welcome.

We particularly welcome those who find themselves lonely or who have been bereaved. There are trained 'listeners' who will be happy to talk, befriend and empathise with you and if appropriate signpost to other helpful organisations, all in complete confidence.

10am – 12 noon on
Thursdays 3rd, 17th, 31st March

Contact joinin@acnb-church.org ☎ 023 8073 7617

What's on

After two years of Covid restrictions we are pleased to announce that our regular events at St. Mark's are beginning to return:

FRIENDS FOR LUNCH



Wednesday 16th March at 12 noon

If you have not been contacted and would like to attend, please ring Kate on **07738467350**

LENT LUNCHES



From Friday 4th March 12 noon—2pm

Every Friday for 6 weeks

Please contact Chris and Rob on 01794 367104 for bookings and information

Numbers for the above will be limited and Covid precautions will be in place.

What's on

The Ampfield Market

**Saturday 5th March
From 10am to 12noon**



in Ampfield Village Hall

Our Market has a great reputation, we regularly sell:-
Fresh fruit and veg, Fairtrade foods, jams, chutneys and pickles,
cakes, biscuits and scones, plants and fresh flowers, cards and
wrapping paper, books, antiques, unusual crafts, jewellery,
children's clothes, toys, honey, seasonal surprises, bric a brac
and much much more.

***Fresh coffee and a wonderful selection of cakes will be
served all morning in the Garden Room***

Parking and admission are always FREE
All proceeds support the Village Hall
Registered charity no.1057353

Contact Julie:023 80254587 for table bookings and info

What's on - Save the dates

A great Village Occasion !

The Queen's Platinum Jubilee Weekend Thursday June 2nd - Sunday June 5th 2022

I am compiling a diary of special events to mark this momentous occasion which will hopefully involve all the village groups and will be as inclusive as possible.

Friday 13th May A Village Hall 'royal' themed Quiz to herald the start of the celebrations, featuring a bar and a raffle. 7.00 for 7.30pm. Tickets will be £5 and we welcome teams of 6.

Friday 3rd June A Fun Day in and around St Marks Church, 11.30am - 3pm. This event will replace the annual Church Fete and will feature a dog show, barbecue, various stalls and cream teas. To enter the dog show will be £2 per class. Free admission to the Fun Day, but donations are always warmly welcomed.

Saturday 4th June The Ampfield Market 10-12. Many sales tables and delicious refreshments.

Sunday 5th June Martin Hatley will lead a village walk which will start promptly at 10.30am.

Sunday 5th June 1 - 4pm. An open and free invitation for everyone to get together on Morley's Village Green to share a picnic with family, friends and neighbours. Please bring your own food and drink, there will be music to enhance this special Ampfield celebration to mark the Queen's Platinum Jubilee.

Next month there will be more details and hopefully even more events to share over this special weekend .

Julie Trotter

The History of Ampfield Village Hall: 4

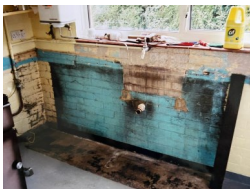
2003 - 2004

2003

The year began with the pantomime, the True tales of Robin Hood. This was followed by an ever popular quiz in February and then Gordon Giltrap returned on March 8th with a guitar workshop in the afternoon, followed by an evening concert. In April major work began to replace all the outside doors with UPVC doors to match the new windows. Two new flower beds were created either side of the smart new entrance doors using sleepers. When the summer holidays started in July, work began to prepare the Hall for a major and complete roof replacement.



Once this work was completed in August, the scaffolding was erected, volunteers began painting, all the main lights and wall lights were replaced and the curtains were given a much needed clean. In addition, the kitchen was completely refitted by the Martin Trotter, he installed new worktops, sinks and taps.



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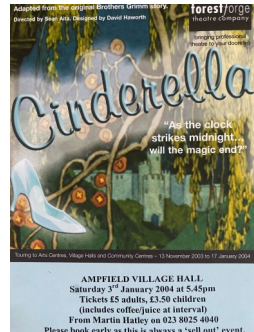


To celebrate all the hard work during the summer there was an evening of Celtic music by Matt Tarling (of Chieftain fame), on September 20th and a ploughman's supper was provided. The art class began in September and is still very active and popular to this day. In November, Joan Hatley wrote "It is so gratifying that the hall is now in use so much by all ages from all parts of the community. There are also the happy social events and entertainment arranged by the hall committee and

one of my favourites - the monthly Market. Serving the coffee and cakes, I meet so many people who enjoy the stalls and then sit down and chat with old friends, its such a happy event!"

2004

The pantomime this year was Cinderella, again performed by the popular Forest Forge Company, this was followed in February by a talk by the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust. On February 24th Hog the Limelight sponsored a concert featuring Julie Felix, it was part of a tour to celebrate her 40 years in the music business. She kept everyone on their toes with her various demands, she and her entourage stayed at



Gosport Farm and left their mark there too, but there's no doubt that she was a great talent. She sadly passed away on March 20th 2020.

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Joan Hatley sadly died in September and her passing was mourned during the Market on October 2nd, she had given so much of her time and energy to Ampfield Village Hall and the W.I. On October 23rd the hall was transformed into an 'Olde Tyme Music Hall' and



guests were served a 'bangers and mash' supper. On November 1st the W.I. Presidents Board was unveiled in the Hall and of course, Joan's name was on the list.



Julie Trotter

***The Village Hall AGM will take place on Monday
21st March at 7.00pm in the hall.***

All are welcome to attend.

Ron and Stella's Quiz Night

1. Who is Reg Dwight better known as?
2. In the zodiac, which animal is linked with Capricorn?
3. Who discovered Penicillin?
4. Which London station has a platform 9 and three-quarters in Harry Potter?
5. How many strings does a violin have?
6. Which country will host the FIFA world cup 2022?
7. How many children does Prince William have?
8. What year did the Queen marry Prince Philip?
9. How many stars are there on the American flag?
10. What is the proper name for your funny bone?



Answers on page 34

Thought for the Month

Our 14-year-old dog Abbey died last month. Our 4 year-old daughter Meredith was crying and missed Abbey. She asked if we could write a letter to God so that when Abbey got to heaven, God would recognise her and she dictated these words:

Dear God,

Will you please take care of my dog?

She died yesterday and is with you in heaven. I hope you will play with her. She likes to swim and play with balls. I am sending a picture of her so when you see her you will know that she is my dog.

I really miss her.

Love, Meredith

We posted a letter to God/Heaven with a picture of Abbey and Meredith and our return address.

Yesterday, there was a package on our front porch.

Inside was a book by Mr Rogers called, 'When a Pet Dies.'

Taped to the inside front cover was the letter we had written to God in its opened envelope. On the opposite page was the picture of Abbey & Meredith and this note:

Dear Meredith,

Abbey arrived safely in heaven. Having the picture was a big help and I recognized her right away. Abbey isn't sick anymore. Her spirit is here with me just like it stays in your heart. Abbey loved being your dog. Since we don't need our bodies in heaven, I don't have any pockets to keep your picture in so I'm sending it back to you in this little book for you to keep and have something to remember Abbey by. Thank you for the beautiful letter and thank your mother for helping you write it and sending it to me. What a wonderful mother you have. I picked her especially for you. I send my blessings every day and remember that I love you very much.

By the way, I'm easy to find.

I am wherever there is love.

Love,

God

Submitted by Diane Loveridge from an article sent by a friend.

“How desperately difficult it is to be honest with oneself. It is much easier to be honest with other people.”

E.F. Benson

“A man wrapped up in himself makes a very small parcel.”

John Ruskin

“At 50 everyone has the face he deserves.”

George Orwell



'The Story of St Mark's, Ampfield'

by Liz Hallett

With the 150th anniversary approaching, Arthur Moore felt that it would be good to have a history of the church and it was he who suggested that Anita Wood and I might like to produce one. Until then Anita and I hadn't known each other well, but we soon found we had a great deal in common and we set to work enthusiastically.

We started from almost nothing, without even a list of past vicars. One main starting point was Hampshire Record Office, where Anita was already doing research for HRO each Wednesday and I accompanied her, making extensive notes on everything I could find to do with St Mark's: parish registers, PCC minutes and much else. We visited people in the village, recording some of our conversations - I remember Anita making a cake to take to old Mr Charles Kebby who lived on Ampfield Hill and could vividly remember as far back as the Rev Vere Awdry who had taken part in the Romsey Abbey pageant of 1907. Another villager could remember pushing Wilbert Awdry out in his pram. Miss Euston living nearby was another mine of information, as were the Cartwrights of Knapp Lane, Steve White - and so many others.

We were so lucky to have started the project when we did, so that we met a generation of Ampfield people whose memories went back almost to the start of the century, and who are no longer with us. They entered enthusiastically into our project and found all sorts of information for us, including a copy of Revd. Hubert Lake's very helpful story of Ampfield which Nick has recently been sharing in the Messenger.

As our findings grew, we decided to set out the book with a chapter for each vicar. We spent a total of thirteen very enjoyable years researching the church and also the village, resulting ultimately in three books. 'The Story of St Mark's, Ampfield' was the first, printed by the great great nephew of Frewen Moor and launched as part of the 150th celebrations in 1991, one more event during that exciting month.

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I also acquired Revd Frewen Moor's inventory of the church contents going right back to the early days, and we found a copy of his 1867 book 'Memorials of the Revd J Keble' in Winchester Library, with much information about the early days of St Mark's.

We contacted past clergy who were still alive, and found the Rev. Ifor Evans in particular a mine of information. Among other things, he had a list of all the past Ampfield clergy, which was a very useful starting point. He told us wonderful stories, such as how (and why) he got stuck at the bottom of an six foot deep empty grave one evening at dusk, unable to climb out but feeling he couldn't call for help as doing so would scare anyone nearby witless! Thanks to his list we were able to contact the families of all but one of the past clergy (Col. Joce and his wife had died childless and we could trace no family links) and in doing so made some fascinating contacts.

One was Bishop Philip Ridsdale, first Anglican bishop of Zaire (now the Democratic Republic of Congo) whose father came out of retirement to care for Ampfield during World War One. This led to Anita and I, with our husbands, visiting Congo in 1996 (of which perhaps more another time). We were also delighted to get to know the Rev Wilbert Awdry of Thomas the Tank Engine fame, who had been born in Ampfield Vicarage. He adored his father and was particularly thrilled that we were researching Vere rather than

Wilbert himself, and he gave us a great deal of information. And we got to know many other less prominent but equally interesting people.



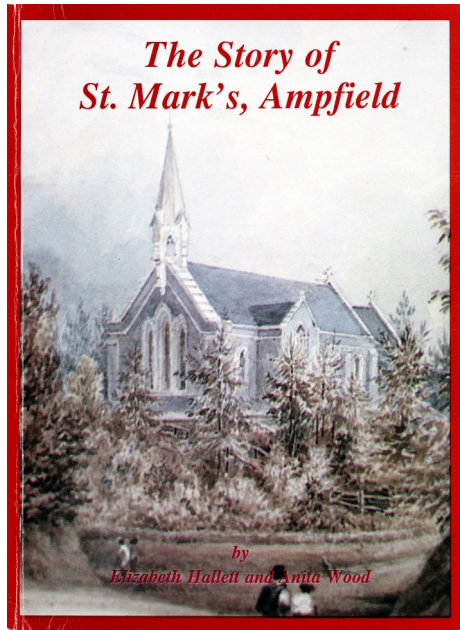
Book launch March 1991:

Liz Hallett, Arthur Moore and Anita Wood.

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The book cover uses a copy of the painting by George Frederick Prosser, employed by Heathcote in the early 1840s to record prominent features around the Hursley Estate.

Liz Hallett



The Greening Campaign

Late last year Ampfield Parish Council was invited to a meeting introducing The Greening Campaign to parishes across Hampshire.

The Greening Campaign has been set up to engage individuals and communities with the concept of global warming and to help them begin combating climate change at home. Whilst most people accept that global warming is a real and serious problem for everyone, the enormity of the subject can deter people from acting individually.

The Greening Campaign produces a specialist pack that helps individuals set out practical everyday measures, which, taken as a whole, can make an identifiable impact within the community, e.g. reducing CO² emissions. Once the initial community group has been established, it is encouraged to move further. The objective is to create a more sustainable future for everyone, which protects the environment, reduces energy use and supports human health. For more information, please see www.greening-campaign.org.

Ampfield Parish Council has reviewed this specialist pack. It concludes that the Campaign is a worthwhile initiative but believes, to be successful, rather than a council-led project, the Campaign should be led from within the community. The Council can provide support with initial meetings and with disseminating information but volunteers will be sought to lead the campaign and encourage the wider community participation.

If you have any interest in being a part of the Ampfield campaign, please contact Graham at graham@ampfield.org.uk. As soon as there is sufficient support, Graham will organise a meeting in the village hall, which will explain more, appoint leaders, etc. to take the Ampfield Campaign forward.

Graham Roads

Friends of Chapel Wood

For many weeks the arisings from our pre-Christmas rhododendron cull had been cluttering up the open spaces near the bonfire area. As the rain had poured down, they began more and more to resemble a series of amorphous green blobs, slowly taking over what is normally one of the most attractive areas in the woodland. It could have been a scene from a science fiction movie where the blobs gradually took over the planet. But this weekend, we knew it would be different.



We had been looking forward to watching the blobs evaporate into a cheery mixture of smoke and fire. The woodland could be transformed back into its usual tranquil setting, ideal for some quiet reflection. We were not disappointed. Our little pile of wood we put together as starter fire was soon a merry blaze. From there it was simply a question of adding the cut rhododendron carefully as we waited for the fire to reach critical mass. The one good thing about burning rhododendron is that the leaves contain a lot of oil so that, once lit, it burns with a good heat. Great piles of material can quickly disappear.

We had a brilliant turnout of the Friends on Saturday. So much so, that we could not all stand there putting stuff on the fire, we would have got in each other's way.



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This gave us a chance to clear away the leaves that had been laying in the glade and the burial ground since the autumn. Brushing these to one side, not only helps the grass to regenerate but also gives a much greater impression of space. It was quite surprising just how much larger an area looks when it is not blanketed with leaves.



As ever, we met up at around 11:30 for coffee and cake. It is good to listen to the warm buzz of conversations as we watched the fire slowly subside. Plans are laid, experiences and memories shared. All good stuff! The shortbread wasn't bad either although it had a tad too many calories for the writer.

The final job of the day was to make sure the fire is safe before we left the site. We make a point of not adding substantial bits of wood, as these can burn for some time. We try to get rid of all the twigs and the foliage. The larger branches are useful for building up the



fence of woodland material that separates the glade from the open wood. Over the winter, this tends to collapse a bit. Next month, we will coppice some of the nearby holly. The young stems are perfect for holding the fence in place.

We have a great team of

woodlanders, and we are most grateful for the work they put in. We meet on the 2nd Saturday of each month, in the church car park at 09:45. All are welcome.

Graham Roads



A Local Life - 2

Margaret (Meg) Rothwell

A pioneer for women in the Diplomatic Service



Meg's first posting abroad was to the Council of Europe in Strasburg, as Second Secretary. Her focus was security, international relations and human rights. She would meet the Ambassador in the mornings and the rest of the day would consist of committee work. Whilst French and German were spoken, English was the official language. Prior to her appointment Meg had spent three months in Freiburg learning German. Even though her mother was German, Meg confessed that her German is "appalling". However, her French is fluent.

Meg was given a flat overlooking the Rhine and her first car - an Olive Green Triumph Herald. This was a happy post for Meg, although the work was "rather dull". She had a good boss, the atmosphere was friendly and she liked the Alsatian people. Meg's favourite patisserie in Place Klebert served "marvellous delicacies", rings of choux pastries piled high. These postings were usually for 2-3 years and it was unusual to return to England during a posting, unless one was in a 'hardship post'. Such appointments were to "difficult" countries, where attitudes were "unBritish". Meg returned to London for three months to complete a career development course at the Treasury.

Meg's next post was in Nairobi, working for an ex-politician. Malcolm McDonald, the son Of Ramsay McDonald, had been a Labour member of Parliament. During WW11 he was Minister of Health in Churchill's government but after the war he embarked on a diplomatic and administrative career. When Meg arrived in Nairobi as Second Secretary McDonald was Special Representative of the British Government.

Cont. ...

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This was a time of great change in Africa, and when Meg arrived the Mao Mao were still in evidence. Life could be “a bit fraught”. McDonald spent most of his time writing his memoirs and every afternoon Meg was required to serve tea to diplomats and local officials, who would come to pick her boss’s brains. Meg remembers that when McDonald’s long-suffering housekeeper made a cake that did not follow his recipe “he cut up rough”. “He was eccentric, collected things (and people) of beauty but lost interest as soon as he had them”. Meg’s job was to “look after MM and pander to his eccentricities”. I asked her if this was because she was a woman, but Meg believes it would have been the same had she been a man.

Africa was “much more fun” than London. Meg had a house with servants and a car, in the centre of Nairobi. Her boss lived in a cottage that had belonged to Karen Blixen of ‘Out of Africa’ fame. On Sundays Meg would drive to edge of the Rift Valley, visiting lakes Naivasha and Nakuru. Nakuru, a saltwater lake, was famous for its



flamingos and pink sand. Meg recalls sitting on what she thought was a rock - it turned out to be a tortoise! During her stay Meg made many friends, including a colleague who now lives in Salisbury, and with whom Meg still keeps in touch.

When Meg joined the Foreign Office she was asked to which countries she would be prepared to travel. “Not Africa!” was her reply. However, Meg changed her mind. “Nairobi was pure delight”. Meg was to return to Africa many times during her career. When asked what she had learnt from this posting, Meg replied “tolerance”.

Next month we will follow Meg to Washington DC.

Chris Kerr



A Kitchen Garden (G4G)

In many respects, this is one of our favourite times of the year to be outside, working in the kitchen garden. All the beds have been cleared of debris, the soft fruit bushes have been pruned and the perpetual herb beds have been tidied. We have our planting plan for the new season, and we are busy searching out the seed packets from various sources. We can dream of orderly rows of bright, fresh, green vegetables. We can imagine lazy summer days when we can prepare, cook and enjoy grub outside with our friends and family. It all starts here.



The first thought for this month should perhaps be maintenance. How many new beds do we need to make? We tend to use treated timber, 150mm x 50mm, painted with a preservative paint, in any colour you can stand to look at for the next few years. Our beds are all 1 metre wide and either 2 or 3 metres long, held together by steel brackets and

screws. As nothing detracts from nice new raised beds than weeds growing on the paths between, they all need to be removed during January.

Another job to be finished this month is cleaning out the green house. The days are fast approaching when we will want to be sowing seeds and, by then, it will work better if we have washed and sterilised as much as we can, including seed trays and pots. We need to be thinking of putting together our seed compost for the greenhouse; we try to use peat free whenever possible. It might be worth getting some horticultural grit or horticultural grade sand. Compost can get a bit claggy so mixing in some grit or sand helps it to drain better and stay aerated.

Cont. ...

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We spoke last time about the soil. Those of us that are of a certain age might remember a famous radio gardener called Arthur Fallowfield (aka Kenneth Williams). His stock reply to any question was “The answer lies in the soil”. He was not wrong. Time spent now working out what different plants like will not be time wasted later. The RHS website provides masses of really good information on this topic.

For instance, if you want to grow potatoes look up <https://www.rhs.org.uk/vegetables/potatoes/grow-your-own> the investment in time now will pay dividends in the long run. As an example, we always grow Charlotte potatoes – they are relatively less prone to problems, can be lifted during the summer, they are versatile and can be used as salad potatoes or fried, plus we find they have an excellent flavour. It is a good allrounder!

For what to do this month in the kitchen garden, paste into your browser <https://www.rhs.org.uk/advice/in-month/january>. Other months are available. It would be good to get a chat going, please contact Chris & Rob K to exchange ideas with your own stories, tips and particularly your own recipes?



Graham Roads

One way to make a raised bed

We have spoken previously of the benefits from growing vegetables in raised beds. This is a simple way to make a raised bed, measuring 2.0m x 1.0m, which is a good unit size.

You will need the following:

2 x planks of treated softwood measuring 3000mm x 150mm x 50mm.

A tin of weatherproof black paint (we use Cuprinol Black Ash)

8 x steel 'L' shaped brackets, 150mm x 50mm

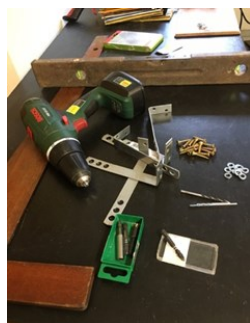
A box of 30mm no. 2 screws. Washers to fit screws

1) *Set out the planks of treated wood on supports.*

Paint all surfaces with the Black Ash.



2) *Saw each plank into a 2.0m length and a 1.0m length. Don't forget to paint the open ends. These will form the four sides of the bed.*



3) *Assembly.*

Gather all the items you will need for assembly of the bed, including levels and T squares.

Cont. ...

4) ***Set up a support platform for the bed.***

Place the four sides together on the support platform. Make sure the shorter end pieces of the bed are placed on the



outside of the longer side pieces. Using the 'L' shaped brackets, join the bed together corner by corner. The longer side of the bracket is screwed on the longer side of the bed. Don't forget to include washers where the holes in the brackets are larger than the heads of the screws.

5) ***Putting the bed into position.***

Level a shallow channel to mark the position for the edges of the bed. Lift carefully into position. Fill the bed with a mixture of good quality topsoil and well-rotted compost.



6) ***Roll on summer!***

Graham Roads

Service Rota St. Mark's Sunday 13th March

OT reading: Linda

NT reading: Chris

Intercessions: Ron

Sides: Heather C & Diane

Coffee: Stella & Ron

Cleaning

Church: Jennie & Adrienne

Church Room: Kate and Chris

Answers to Ron and Stella's Quiz Night

1. Elton John
2. Goat
3. Alexander Fleming
4. Kings Cross
5. Four
6. Qatar
7. Three
8. 1947
9. Fifty
10. Humerus (Ulnar nerve)

Information

If you need any Zoom meeting links, would like to join in with readings or intercessions, would like prayers said for you or someone you know, or would just like to comment, please email joinin@acnb-church.org.

Nextdoor.co.uk

Neighbourhood hub for connecting with local services.

Online Facebook groups:

Romsey News and Information Group

The original Facebook Group for Romsey.

Romsey Garden, Nursery & Plants, Info. Sharing etc.

Good source of local plant delivery and availability, seeds and growing information.

Hampshire Coronavirus Helpline - 0333 370 4000

Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults - 0300 555 1386

Romsey Community Pantry - 01794 522106

Romsey Foodbank - www.romsey.foodbank.org.uk

Frontline Debt Advice - 02380 552866

Southampton Basics Bank -

www.southamptoncitymission.co.uk/basics-banks

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County Councillor: Alan Dowden; Phone 02380 266458

TVBC Councillor: Martin Hatley; Phone: 02380 254040

Ampfield Parish Council: Chair Bryan Nanson; Phone: 02380 267760

The Collect for Ash Wednesday

ALMIGHTY and everlasting God, who hatest nothing that thou hast made, and dost forgive the sins of all them that are penitent: Create and make in us new and contrite hearts, that we worthily lamenting our sins, and acknowledging our wretchedness, may obtain of thee, the God of all mercy, perfect remission and forgiveness; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

From the Book of Common Prayer



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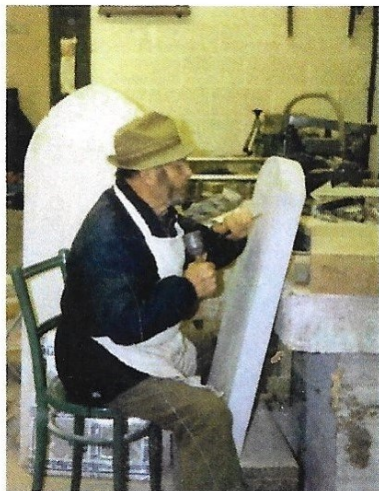
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