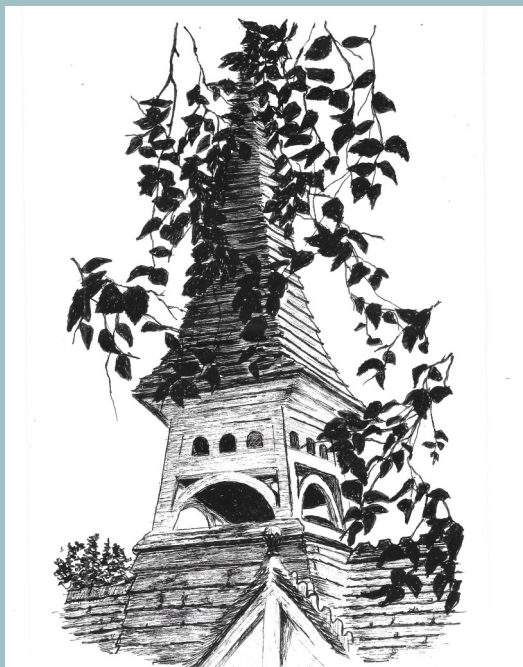


The Ampfield Messenger



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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

Vicar

Revd Victoria Ashdown Tel: 02381 788031
email: revdvictoria@gmail.com

Ministry Team

Revd Vanessa Lawrence Tel: 02380 736671
Mrs. Sally Kerson Tel: 02380 737617
Mr. Jonathan DeVile Tel: 02380 736522

For any enquiries about baptisms, weddings or churchyards please contact the parish office, telephone no: 023 8073 7617

Email us at: **office@acnb-church.org**

Website: **www.acnb-church.faith**

Facebook: **www.facebook.com/acnbbchurch/**

The office is staffed 9 - 12 noon, Monday, Wednesday & Friday.
Please let us know if you have any news of those who are sick, in trouble, leaving or about to arrive

Churchwardens: Mr. Daryl Pugh, Tel: 01794 524307
Email: ampfield.churchwarden@gmail.com
Mr. Mark Braund Tel: 01489 860218
Email: markbraund@mac.com

Secretary PCC Jennie Edwards Tel: 02380 365041
Treasurer PCC Mrs. Pamela Morffew Tel. 02380 411146.
Email - acnb@gmail.com

Any cheques should be made payable to Ampfield PCC please

Gift Aid Secretary Mrs A Jeffery, Tel: 02380 252865
Email: nickandade@gmail.com

Magazine Editors Chris & Rob Kerr, Tel: 01794 367104
E-mail: cl.kerr@btinternet.com

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.

Online Worship

As last month, services are still online only. They are available on the church website (www.acnb-church.org) and on our [YouTube channel](#) (to which we encourage you to subscribe):

Sunday 9:30am – Worship or Worship for All (1st Sunday)

Tuesday 5:15 – Visual Compline

And our zoom coffee activities continue on **Sunday** after the service and on a **Wednesday** at 11:00am. For the zoom details please email joinin@acnb-church.org.

Epiphany traditions

We began the year with Worship For All thinking about the traditions of Epiphany and suggested that worshippers bring along one or more of the following to reflect on what these traditions might tell us:

King cakes (see picture below) - in several countries these have a bean hidden inside which reveals who is king for the day. The star revealed to the magi that Jesus is King of the Jews; Jesus' life, death and resurrection reveal to us that he is the Son of God.

A Christmas decoration – in New Orleans, Christmas decorations are taken off the tree and new decorations are put on for it to become a Mardi Gras tree; the celebrations of Mardi Gras look forward to the hope of Christ's resurrection at Easter.

A piece of chalk – in Austria and other countries there is a custom of writing this blessing in chalk on the door:

20 + C + M + B + 21+ for the cross, 2021 - this year, CMB – the initials of the traditional names of the wise men and also of the Latin for 'May Christ bless this house'.

A broom – in Ireland, Epiphany is also known as Little Christmas or Women's Christmas when, traditionally, women could rest and celebrate after their hard work at Christmas. A broom can also represent a fresh start – we commit ourselves afresh to live this year in the hope of Jesus?

Abbie West



Letter from Vicar Victoria

It's February- many of us are tired - and a lot of us are fed up. There isn't a huge amount left in the tank, and we may feel pretty disenchanted with the way things are. COVID - and everything that goes with it- continues to cast a real shadow, to cause real strain, sadness, illness, loneliness and death. It's really hard.

Of course, we have good things to look forward to. There is light at the end of the tunnel. Even if it's a pretty awful tunnel. As I write this, in the third week of January, we have three vaccines licensed for use in the UK. The days are getting longer. By my very rough calculations we will be enjoying about an hour per day more sunlight by the beginning of February than we are right now. I have even seen a couple of very wary shoots in the garden, peeking out of the soil. It is a comfort to me, and perhaps to you, to know that the seasons roll on and that this season of physical darkness is waning.

But the things that have comforted me most in recent weeks have been the kindnesses of other people, in which I see the love of God breaking out, sometimes where I would hope to see it, sometimes in very unexpected places. An unexpected bunch of flowers. A phone call from an old friend. An email from a colleague. Someone who anonymously provided food for some individuals and families in need over Christmas. The donations to the FoodBank that get left on the Vicarage steps.

Jesus talks a lot about little things making a big difference. He talks about the widow's mite - a tiny financial contribution given with a big heart. He talks about a tiny bit of yeast raising a whole basin full of flour. He talks about a mustard seed of faith growing into a great tree. He talks about someone who offers a little one a cup of water being rewarded in heaven. Locked down as we are, we may feel helpless or useless, but we can all be bringers of light, encouragement and comfort to others. When you have to go out to buy necessities, make a point of thanking the person who serves you at the till.

If you live on your own, perhaps you could call a friend and hear their news. If you live with someone else, perhaps you could be the one to cook a lovely meal, or bake a cake to enjoy together. If you have a neighbour who is home schooling their children, could you offer to pick up something for them at the shops so that they don't have to drag the whole family around Sainsbury's?

You yourself, I am sure, will have memories of small acts of kindness which have made a big difference to you. It's not rocket science, but kindness really works. It really transforms people's lives.

I pray for each and every one of you, the blessing of giving and receiving unexpected small kindnesses in the coming weeks.

Victoria

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Clifford Cottam Hill DFC - A Local Hero

Lockdown has presented an opportunity to find out more about my late father-in-law's involvement in WW2. Clifford Cottam Hill was born in Yorkshire and for a while he lived on Hocombe Road working as a teacher and a carer for his very poorly wife. In his early working life he was a policeman in Grimsby until 1942 when the decision was taken to release the younger members of the police service

for combat duties in the armed forces. Cliff volunteered for aircrew and was invited for tests and interview at Birmingham. He passed and whilst waiting for a training course attended Grimsby Nautical School.

In 1943 he received his calling up papers requiring him to report to Lords Cricket Ground where he was enrolled as a Pilot or Navigator or Bomb Aimer. He reported for Initial Training at Paignton in Devon where he received just 7 hours pilot training on a Tiger Moth before being graded for training as a navigator. He was posted to RAF Jurby (Isle of Man) where he trained for 8 months on Anson aircraft before being posted to RAF Warboys for a conversion course on Mosquitos. *(The mosquito was designed in 1938 by the de Havilland Aircraft Company and was built mainly of wood. Two Rolls Royce Merlin engines would give the relatively light weight aircraft an un-matchable top speed eliminating the need for defensive armament).*

Having successfully completed training he was assigned his pilot Flight Lieutenant J W G (Johnnie) Smith. Cliff wrote in his memoirs that he considered himself fortunate to fly with a pilot who he considered to be "the best in the world". In 1944 the pair were posted

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to 128 Squadron, RAF Wyton, Huntingdonshire which was part of the Light Night Striking Force (LNSF) of Number 8 (Pathfinder) Group. 128 Squadron sent out 12 mosquitoes each night, weather permitting. Cliff and Johnnie were required to fly 2 nights out of 3 with a week off every 6 weeks. It was whilst he was on leave that the decision was taken to reduce the number of sorties making up a recognised tour from 55 to 50. As they had flown 52 sorties they were “tour expired” and able to extend their leave by 2 weeks.

Returning from leave Cliff and Johnnie were posted to North Africa on Transport Command duties ferrying mosquitoes and on one occasion an American B26 Marauder bomber from Blida, a French airfield in Algeria down to airfields in Egypt. They would return in Dakotas after spending a few days in Cairo. On one of their missions they were wrongly briefed to take a mosquito to an airfield at El Ferdan instead of nearby Ismailia. The limited airfield was not designed to take mosquitoes and it was only owing to Johnnie’s skill as a pilot that the plane was landed. It was a harrowing experience and as Cliff stepped down from the plane he could barely believe his eyes when the driver of the truck sent out to greet them turned out to be his brother Victor who he hadn’t seen for 3 years, an amazing turn of events.

It was whilst Cliff was in North Africa in July 1945 that he received notice that he had been awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross. After the war Cliff returned to the police force and attained the rank of Chief Inspector before deciding to make a total career change and study for a history degree and retrain as a teacher. He taught locally at Compton and Hursley retiring in 1985.

John Rendell



Jean Rose - a local life

Jean lived in Ampfield on the same plot of land for over 70 years. At Ampfield school, where her father had been one of the first pupils, she loved reading and history. Sadly, Jean left school at 14, though considered a grammar school candidate, as her Mum died and she was in charge of the house while her Dad was at work. Some housekeeping mishaps occurred, but neighbours helped, especially Mrs Wellstead next door.

Jean worked at, what was then, the Thatches restaurant, also doing war work at Rolfes garage, making smoke floats for the Navy. She had many friends in the village, one of her best being Irene Gould, or Blondie, as she was called at the time. These two went cycling for miles enjoying the films at the Plaza cinema and dances at the Crosfield Hall in Romsey.

Jean met Geoffrey Rose during the war and they wrote to each other as friends when Geoff was posted abroad with the Royal Navy. After the war their friendship grew to love, and they were married at Ampfield Church in 1949. Geoff remained in the Navy often being sent abroad for long spells, which was usual in the 50s and 60s. Jean stayed in Ampfield and lived with her father in "Ivy Cottage" at the top of Ampfield Hill. In 1955 the family, now including daughter Lynda, decided to build a new house on the same plot but further away from the busy road. "Heritage" was built and "Ivy Cottage" demolished, it's well filled in. Jean spoke of her joy and amazement at switching on the electric lights in the new house. A second daughter, Sara, was born in 1956 but soon after Jean's dad died. Geoff was abroad so Jean coped with her father's death, a new baby and a 5 year old. Again, she was grateful for good neighbours.

Jean was a founder member of the Ampfield Women's Institute and a regular at Mother's Union meetings. For many years she cleaned Ampfield Church weekly, riding there on her bike. She never learnt to drive. She did ride pillion when Geoff had a motorbike...daughters in the sidecar!

Cont...

Jean attended some of the Royal Navy functions, making her own cocktail and evening dresses. But, having a different background from most of the officers' wives, meant it was not always enjoyable. Jean was , sadly, widowed in 1975 when Geoff died, aged 48. Eventually she built a life for herself, continuing to enjoy gardening, filling her large garden with flowers and vegetables. A beautiful cottage garden that many admired. She continued membership of the WI and MU and started quilting classes at Sparsholt College, where she met a new group of friends. Her creative abilities continued into later life, when, having had some confidence-boosting lessons from her neighbour, Miss Euston, she started watercolour painting. She particularly enjoyed painting flowers; though, once, had the experience of a life drawing class!

Although Geoff had travelled the world, Jean was nearly 50 before she went abroad (to give stability to their daughters' education.) She went to many countries including Israel, Egypt, Syria, Jordan, Greece, Turkey, India and China. Italy was a firm favourite. Towards the last decades of her life, she moved house to Woodley, appreciating the conveniences of a newer house and a smaller garden. She joined local social groups and found a friendly welcome amongst the St Swithun's congregation at Crampmoor. In the last few years, as her health failed, she was sad to lose her gardening and painting abilities but she enjoyed having her family nearby and was proud of her grandchildren and four great grandsons.



Lynda Emery

Recipe of the month - Jennie's Ginger Cake

Oven Temperature: 325 degrees/ gas mark3/ fan 150 degrees
8" round or square deep tin, base lined with greaseproof paper
(I also wrap some brown paper around the outside of the tin so does not burn)

12 oz Self Raising flour
Pinch of salt
2 teaspoons ground cinnamon
4 teaspoons ground ginger
6 oz margarine
8 oz black treacle
6 oz soft brown sugar
2 egg
¼ pint of milk



Into a saucepan put the black treacle, margarine, soft brown sugar and melt gently whilst stirring. Allow to cool slightly.

Place the Self Raising flour into a bowl, and add the salt, cinnamon and ground ginger and mix thoroughly.

Whisk the eggs and milk together.

Now pour the cooled mixture into the bowl with the flour etc, add the egg/milk and thoroughly combine together. I beat it!

Pour the mixture into the lined tin and pop in the oven for one and a half hours. Check with a skewer or needle that it comes out clean when inserted into the middle of the cake. Leave in tin for a short while and then loosen the edges with a knife and turn out.

Hey presto, you have a very moist and delicious cake. I love a slice warmed in the microwave with icecream or yogurt!! (If you like the ginger taste to be slightly stronger, add a little more ground ginger, or reduce if too strong) Enjoy!

Jennie Edwards

Happiness



All the world's major religions agree that happiness is about making others happy -

True happiness consists in making others happy
Hindu Proverb

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness
Galatians 5.22

Thousands of candles can be lit from a single candle, and the life of the candle will not be shortened.
Happiness never decreases by being shared.
Buddha

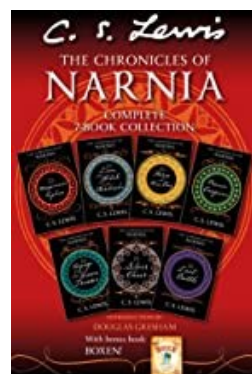
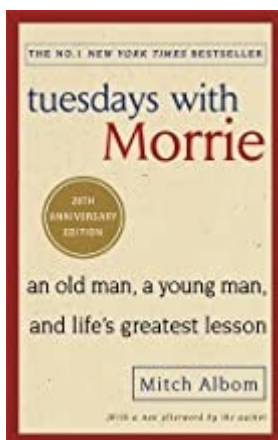
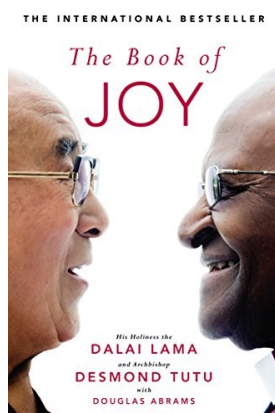
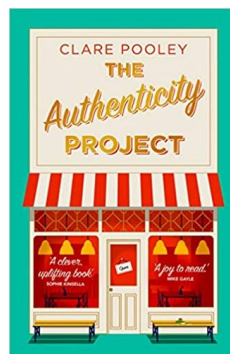
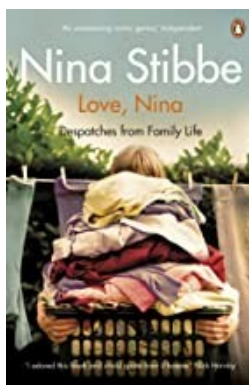
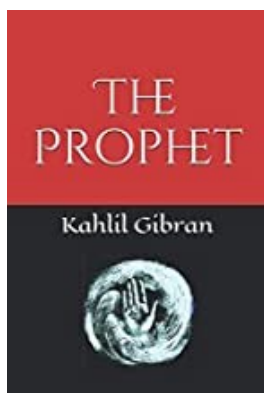
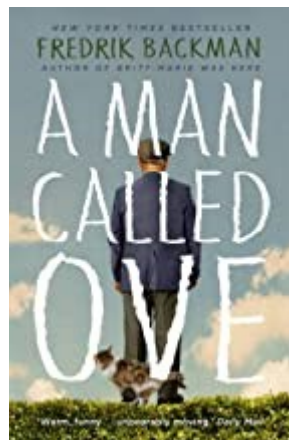
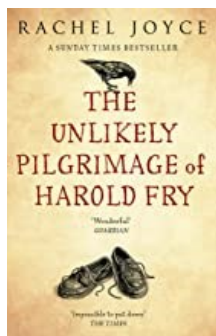
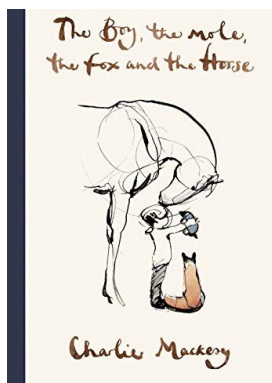
Happiness is loving for others what you love for yourself.
Islamic quote anon.

Happiness is not always pleasure. It is not always ease. It is connection.
Evan Moffic,
Jewish writer

We are visitors on this planet, we are here for ninety or one hundred years at the very most. During that period we must try to do something useful with our lives. If you contribute to other people's happiness you will find the true goal, the true meaning of life.
Dalai Lama

And **Martin Luther King said** : Those who are not looking for happiness are the most likely to find it, because those who are searching forget that the surest way to be happy is to seek happiness for others.

Books to make you smile in the pandemic





Dogs of Ampfield

Daisy and Tilly

Here is a picture of Daisy and Tilly following a very snowy, wet, muddy walk in Ampfield woods — it's quite hard to get them both to sit still! Tilly is the black and white mad springer cross lab and is 6 years old, and Daisy is a cocker spaniel and is four years old.

Sue P



A man says to his doctor, "I think my wife is going deaf, but I don't want to mention it. It'll be tactless and insensitive. Is there any way of checking, without her knowing?"

The doctor replies, "Choose a moment when she has her back to you. Say something in a normal voice and, if she doesn't answer, move a little closer and say it again. Then you'll get an idea about her hearing."

So, when he comes home from work, his wife is standing with her back to him in the kitchen. He asks, "What's for dinner, love?" but gets no answer.

He moves in a little closer. "What's for dinner, love?" he repeats. Again, no response.

He moves even closer. "What's for dinner, love?" Nothing.

By now, he's right behind her. He says again, "What's for dinner, love?"

She turns round and shouts, "For the fourth time - chicken!"

Memorials of Ampfield - 4

by The Reverend Lake

Roads continued:

Besides this highroad, there existed from Saxon days an interesting lane which linked up Crampmoor with Ampfield. Sometime after the water of the great mere, Tadburn lake, began to recede an upland farm appears to have arisen to the west of High wood, known as Hauterworth, now called "Halterworth", and probably then as now it was approached from the valley by Halterworth Lane.

If so, then Green lane must be an old Saxon road, for on the hill by Gosport Farm there are indications of one of these hollow ways. The name Gosport also indicated this, for when "port" is used of a place inland, it generally means a shelter on an ancient road.

Gosport would therefore mean "Good shelter", or "God's shelter for travellers". If the "Washer's Well" is an ancient spring, it is natural to find a shelter to travellers erected near.

The junction of this lane with the high road was not then quite the same as it is now. It is well known that, in the 18th century, the coach road, on ascending the road to Ampfield turned sharply to the right when half way up and wound round in a very narrow lane to Lower Farm, which it passed and came out opposite the stables of Ampfield House, also that travellers on entering this lane at either end, were obliged to blow a horn to warn those coming the other way, owing to the narrowness of the road.

There remains one other road to deal with. Ampfield required some means of communication with Southampton. Like Winchester and Romsey, Southampton can trace its origin back to the ancient days of Britain. To the north-east of the present town on the opposite side of the Itchen, where Bitterne now stands, the Romans had a military
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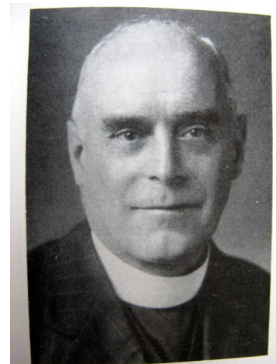
station called "Clausentum" which was succeeded by the Anglo-Saxon town of Hanturne. Canute, after his establishment on the throne, made this town his occasional residence. In Norman days Southampton derived its importance from being the port of Winchester.

Probably it was not frequently necessary for the people of Ampfield to journey to Southampton, but it happened that the road to Southampton passed through the neighbouring parish of North Baddesley between which and Ampfield there was an intimate connection.

With the dawn of the 14th century bringing the establishment of the Knights Hospitallers at North Baddesley, there must have come more life to Ampfield, and a greater communication between the two villages, if not better roads on which to travel to and fro. The Hospitallers had several branch establishments in the county, with headquarters at Godsfield till the Black Death broke out and they were removed to the Preceptory at North Baddesley. Three of the Preceptors, after this removal, became distinguished members of the order and one Sir William Weston was Grand Prior when the Order resisted Henry VIII's divorce from Queen Catherine.

This led to the downfall of the Templars in England in 1540. Sir William died of grief within the year. After the suppression of the religious houses, and the departure of the Hospitallers, the population of Baddesley greatly increased.

Contributed by Nick Jeffery



A Kitchen Garden

The other day, Chris Kerr mentioned she would like someone to write a short article for the Messenger, possibly something to do with gardening, perhaps vegetable gardening. She thought about 450 words on the subject would be fine. I suggested that there were many, many residents of our parish with considerable experience of kitchen gardening, all of whom would be very good. Her response was simply to say she would like to receive the first copy by the coming weekend, if that was OK? Ho, hum!

So where to start? Perhaps, a good place might be to say that the very little knowledge I have on the subject can be put down to the teaching of two remarkable people - Chris Bird and Ray Broughton. When I gave up gainful employment, I spent several very happy years attending Sparsholt College, where Chris and Ray were the principal tutors in horticulture. Another good place to start might be to say I have never really seen the point of growing vegetables unless you like to eat them. In mid-summer, there is very little that beats going out into the garden to harvest fresh vegetables for dinner that evening.



Probably, the most important thing I learnt at Sparsholt is that if, from the start, you look after the earth, it will look after you later. (Remember the oft-repeated quote by Arthur Fallowfield of Beyond Our Ken fame “The answer lies in the soil”). The easiest way to do this, perhaps, is to grow your herbs and vegetables in raised beds, a practice which provides many advantages. Large or small, raised beds really do work! For instance, even a half barrel growing flat-leaved parsley provides a good source of flavour for a wide variety of dishes, including a very good but simple pesto, which is great when used as a sauce with pasta.

A second thing to think about is what you want to grow. Start by considering what you like to eat and then what you have room for. At this stage it is really helpful to do a bit of research. There are a number of good sources for this. I have always found the Royal Horticultural Society (<https://www.rhs.org.uk>) to be a good first port of call - lots of info. plus some interesting bits on plant history. The RHS Award of Garden Merit is a very good guide as to the reliability of different plants and seeds.

Finally, it is always worth keeping good records, not only will it be helpful when trying to remember what worked and what didn't, but different vegetables require different growing conditions and a lot of plants do not like being grown in the same spot year after year as pests and diseases can build up in the soil.

Growing fresh vegetables can be a very rewarding pastime. It is something we can all do during these testing times and gives us something to look forward to during the summer months - well, at least the eating bit does!! These few scribbled lines are meant solely as a reminder of the fun that can be had. Please do contact Chris and Rob with your own stories, and particularly your own recipes!

Graham Roads

Hillier's Winter Wonderland



In times of stress and trauma, Hillier's Gardens has always acted as a safety valve for us over the years. The Gardens have been even more invaluable in the current lockdown. They have remained open and continue to uplift the spirits. Its superb winter garden is astonishingly colourful for the time of year: The slender, blade-like leaves of the black ophiopogon, the white flowers of the Edgeworthia - a most distinctive, sculptural shrub, beloved by an artist

friend of mine, a clump of winter daffodils (appropriately named – for these times – First Hope), the fragile yellow and red flowering witch hazels, the powerful, all consuming scent of the daphnes, the emerging yellow aconites, the pink, delicate, cyclamen, and a prolific display of white/pale pink hellebores, whose flowering season just seems to go on and on, the red and yellow stems of the dogwood and the small, but powerfully fragrant white-pink flowers of the sarcococca.

Arguably, the glory lies with the snowdrops. There are so many, and such a variety of heights, shapes and subtle variations in colour of the petals. Moreover, they always serve as a reminder that Spring is just around the corner. Perhaps, more than ever this year, we cling to the optimism that plants in the early New Year bring – symbolising a renewal of life.

The first lockdown in 2020 deprived us of sight of all of the traditional plants of Spring and early Summer – the magnolias, azaleas, rhododendrons, camellias (though some of the latter were in flower in November). Let us hope we can view them all in a few weeks time. It's not that long ahead. We are extremely fortunate to have such a world-class garden on our doorstep.



Alan Edwards

Ron and Stella's Quiz Night

1. Which part of the Horseradish plant is used to make the well known sauce?
2. What was voted the nation's favourite wildflower in a countrywide survey?
3. Cranesbill is the common name for which herbaceous plant?
4. In which year were the lovely blue west windows dedicated in St. Mark's church?
5. What was the final cost to build St. Mark's church in 1841?
6. What was the name of the British steam locomotive that achieved the world's steam speed record of just under 126 mph, on the third of July 1938?
7. What year was the liner Queen Elizabeth 2nd, commonly known as the QE2, launched?
8. Who was Henry 8th's second wife, whom he married in 1533 and was executed in 1536?
9. What was the name of the great playwright who was born on Saint Georges day 1564?
10. What does VSTOL stand for in the world of aviation?



Friends of Chapel Wood

Another year - another lockdown. Sadly, this time the rules appeared sufficiently restrictive that we felt to hold a working party in January would most certainly be against the spirit of the lockdown, if not technically against the letter. Plans for bonfires, etc. had to be put on hold for the time being whilst we waited to see how other volunteer groups would respond. At the moment it still remains unclear whether the February working party can go ahead. However, just in case it is allowed, all the necessary risk assessments have been completed, so we will be good to go.



We did manage to make some progress on a couple of fronts during the month. The contract for the outstanding health and safety related tree work was placed. The contractor has promised that the work associated with this can be completed by mid-February, so we are looking forward to that. This

will include removing the tree adjacent to Chapel Hill, whose branches stretch over the power cable. Each of these jobs is being undertaken for safety reasons at the specific recommendation of our arboriculture consultants. It will be good to get these out of the way. We are relieved to report that the recent very strong winds did not result in any further actions being required.

The other front where some good progress has been made is the rebuilding of our long-awaited dipping platform over the pond. (See picture above of previous dipping platform destroyed in a storm a number of years ago. The old platform itself now forms the stand for the drum kit of the band which plays at the annual fete.)

We have issued invitations to several firms to tender for this work and it would be nice to think it could be completed by the autumn.

A new platform will bring a number of real benefits to our woodland. The previous dipping platform was used to provide a 'hands on' learning experience for children from local schools. An understanding of the importance of habitats, diversity, plants and wildlife is a fundamental part of education for people of any age. The new dipping platform will enable visitors to the wood to observe more closely, and in safety, the aquatic environment provided by the woodland pond. In order to provide a simulated classroom experience, it is proposed that informal seating will be available on and around the platform.

Finally, it was lovely to see the snow providing a white blanket across the woodland and the churchyard. There are probably many who think it was also lovely that it did not last too long. But while it was new and fresh, magic!



Graham Roads

A Latvian Odyssey—Part 2

My name is Elly and I arrived in Latvia 4 months ago to embark on an adventure with my husband Tom and our one and a half year old Kaija. We are here to restore my husband's old family country house, 'Riekstkalni' (it's name translates as nut hills), which has not been used or lived in by his family for many years. It was built in the early 20th century and its original structure is baltic pine log framed,



with a more recent pitched metal sheet roof. The loft area is huge, and at the moment all the rooms remain on one level. We are currently living in two of the 6 rooms, as well as the bathroom and kitchen.

It is warmed by wood burners in each room, and has a wood fueled stove in the kitchen. It is truly rustic and it will take us some time to insulate it and make it completely warm. The land around it is full of apple trees and cherry trees, and pine and silver birch surround the rye fields. There is a huge expanse of woods in front of us which stretches across the horizon. A lot of the land is used to grow rye for a local farmer to feed her cattle, which is a relief as it would be hard to manage so much land with our limited knowledge! Looking out over the expanse makes me feel small and humble and I remind myself that what nature gives us we must return by looking after her.

The house has a history and for those of you that know of Latvia will be aware that it is filled with a lot of sadness. People lost their properties and were displaced from home in refugee camps, or spent years hiding in the woods and a lot of people were killed, during the Soviet era. Some of Tom's family still find it difficult to overlook the family home's past. Tom has



...Cont.

always enthused about giving the house new warmth and new memories and making it into something the family can be proud of and that friends and the local community can share in. It is this enthusiasm which convinced me to help push this dream into a reality as it offers an opportunity to learn more about living off the land and a chance to step in with nature's rhythms. I have to admit so far it has been challenging.



There are strange rumblings at night from the woods opposite. Wild boar and other animals are very active at dusk. There have been bears seen not too far from us and Elk also frequent the forest. These are the animals that are rarely seen. Other wildlife here is very present. We have pine martens nesting in the huge loft space and deer who wander the fields with tracks running right through the orchard. There is also an incredible amount of bird life here - a lot of



which I've never seen before. There are soaring birds of prey that swoop at mice in the fields and storks' nests peppering the field boundaries ready for their return in Spring.

And there are mice. A lot of them! They are big here - grey and white wood mice - and they like to run in

between the walls of our house. I love being in nature but these mice have pushed us both to feeling outnumbered. There have been moments when I have been sitting in a room and suddenly their little bodies start thudding down between the surrounding walls. They then proceed to loudly scuttle and squeak within all the walls. I think I now understand why they are called 'a band of mice.' They do this at night when the pine martens return to the loft space, because they are running for their lives. I used to be terrified of rodents, but I've had to

Cont...

get brave. Luckily we also have a Latvian rescue cat Layo who helps me patrol the rooms and check for any that dare enter our living space. We have had to pull down walls and re-insulated with hemp - mice hate hemp. I remind myself that wildlife only comes into the warmth in order to survive. They are doing what the rest of us are doing. Although nesting in my jumper drawer was a step too far, I feel.

Winter here does feel like survival. We are lucky to be able to stay somewhere close by whilst we finish insulating the walls. At Christmas time, Tom's parents Agne and Roger were visiting and they looked after us all with warm meals and fine wines and we enjoyed some well needed festive cheer and rest. More recently the temperature has dropped to -25 degrees. It has been so cold we couldn't be out for more than 10 minutes at a time. Kaija, who loves eating the snow and seems to be intent on devouring all of it, is perplexed by the uninviting cold extremes. The sea has frozen in parts and at sunset it looks and feels like we are somewhere in The Arctic. People are skiing down the roads and ice skating on lakes.

Our days at the house can be tough, with dusty, physical work, full of uncovering problems we need to solve. Sometimes projects like this can be disheartening as things take much longer than you predict. Anyone who watches programmes about restoration and house builds will know that frustrated look of the family having to spend years living in a caravan next door to their dream home! As we look out at the beautiful snowy landscape, watching the blue tits make the most of the fat balls in the trees, we both agree: What doesn't break us makes us stronger.... and also that we will take a day off tomorrow to try skiing. Spring will soon be upon us with the promise of new landscapes and fresh beginnings and I feel excited to be in the thralls of nature and her rhythms.

Elly Rendall

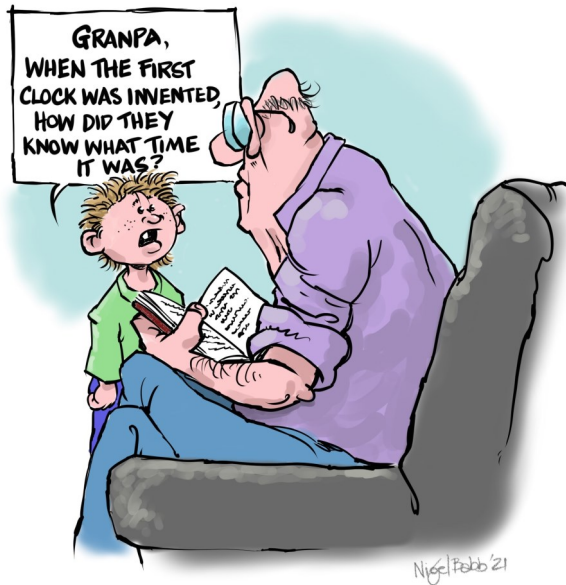


The most misspent day of any life
is the one where you've failed to
laugh.



Nicolas Chamfort 1741-94

*How does Moses make tea?
He brews ...*



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An Introduction

Lent may originally have followed Epiphany, just as Jesus' sojourn in the wilderness followed immediately on his baptism, but it soon became firmly attached to Easter, as the principal occasion for baptism and for the reconciliation of those who had been excluded from the Church's fellowship for apostasy or serious faults. This history explains the characteristic notes of Lent – self-examination, penitence, self-denial, study, and preparation for Easter, to which almsgiving has traditionally been added.

*Now is the healing time decreed
for sins of heart and word and deed,
when we in humble fear record
the wrong that we have done the Lord.
(Latin, before 12th century)*


As the candidates for baptism were instructed in Christian faith, and as penitents prepared themselves, through fasting and penance, to be readmitted to communion, the whole Christian community was invited to join them in the process of study and repentance, the extension of which over forty days would remind them of the forty days that Jesus spent in the wilderness, being tested by Satan.

Ashes are an ancient sign of penitence; from the middle ages it became the custom to begin Lent by being marked in ash with the sign of the cross. The calculation of the forty days has varied considerably in Christian history. It is now usual in the West to count them continuously to the end of Holy Week (not including Sundays), so beginning Lent on the sixth Wednesday before Easter, Ash Wednesday. Liturgical dress is the simplest possible. Churches are kept bare of flowers and decoration. *Gloria in excelsis* is not used.

The Fourth Sunday of Lent (*Laetare* or Refreshment Sunday) was allowed as a day of relief from the rigour of Lent, and the Feast of the Annunciation almost always falls in Lent; these breaks from austerity are the background to the modern observance of Mothering Sunday on the Fourth Sunday of Lent.

As Holy Week approaches, the atmosphere of the season darkens; the readings begin to anticipate the story of Christ's suffering and death, and the reading of the Passion Narrative gave to the Fifth Sunday its name of Passion Sunday. There are many devotional exercises which may be used in Lent and Holy Week outside the set liturgy. The Stations of the Cross, made popular in the West by the Franciscans after they were granted custody of the Christian sites in the Holy Land, are the best known.

Times and Seasons: Lent pg 211 Common Worship and is copyright © The Archbishops' Council of the Church of England 2000



We will be producing a Lenten Reflection video available online on YouTube, Website and Facebook twice a week. There will also be a lent course which is likely to be on Sunday afternoons at 4pm – but that is yet to be confirmed. See the website for details....
The Benefice Team

Ampfield CofE Primary School

The start to the spring term and 2021 has certainly been a very interesting one for the school and for all schools! The excitement of returning to school after the Christmas break was overshadowed by the concerns over whether it was safe to come back, taking into consideration the increase in cases and the new, more infectious strain. We were then plunged into a third lockdown with schools being instructed to 'close' with immediate effect.

I am very proud to say that our wonderful team of teachers and support staff, here at Ampfield, were ready for anything and we were agile enough to be open the next day for the children of Critical Workers and vulnerable children (such as those with Education and Health Care Plans for Special Educational Needs and for those families supported by a Social Worker.) About 50% of our children are coming in to school each day (the County average is around 20%) and we are providing a lively mix of online learning opportunities for those children at home. This includes live and recorded teaching sessions and learning resources to help keep children in line with the teaching at school. Teachers are also running daily 'check in' sessions online with their home learners so

that they can communicate with and stay connected to the staff and children in school. Teachers are also calling parents for regular catch-up conversations, as we know that home schooling is not easy!

The school is still able to provide hot lunches for all children attending school and we have made the option open to families eligible for Free School Meals to receive either a weekly food pack or to be sent food vouchers. We have received our allocation of five laptops from the Government and we are currently in the process of distributing these appropriately.

School staff have taken part in the mass testing programme for Primary Schools, from the week beginning 25 January. This involves school staff taking a COVID-19 test at home, twice a week, using a Lateral Flow Device. These give results in 30 mins and the programme is intended to pick up any positive cases in asymptomatic people. For any positive results, staff must isolate (along with the rest of their household) and request a PCR test to confirm the positive result. Primary school children will not be tested as part of this programme and should remain at home if they present with any of the main symptoms for coronavirus. Thankfully, we have not yet had any positive cases in school and we have therefore not had to close any of our 'bubbles'.

All things considered, the school is a very positive, happy and successful place to be. Our new teachers and support staff have enabled a supportive and progressive learning environment which is a delight to see. Our children are thriving! As always, we would like to take in more children as our Number on Roll has always fluctuated; so, if you are thinking of benefiting from the merits of a small school, then give us a call on 01794 368219. Our website is www.ajkfed.com

Finally, I wanted to share with you a Bible reference which has become the focus for our work with children, in service to our school community:

"I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me."
John 10:14

I will take some more time in a future article to explore this in more detail.

Marcus Roe

Executive Headteacher
Federation of Ampfield & John Keble
CofE Primary Schools

Ampfield: 01794 368219
John Keble: 01962 775241



February



*Married in February's sleety
weather,
Life you'll tread in tune
together.*

*If February give much snow,
A fine summer it
doth foreshow.*

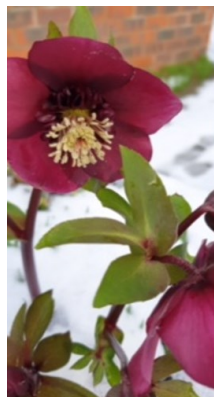
*Fogs in February mean frosts
in May.*

*If Candlemas Day [February 2]
be mild and gay*

*Go saddle your horses, and
buy them hay
But if Candlemas Day be
stormy and
black,*

*It carries the
winter away
on its back.*

*It is better to
see a troop of
wolves than a
fine February.*



Photos ©Charlie Allen 2021



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Answers to Ron and Stella's quiz night:

1. The Root 2. Bluebell 3. Hardy Geranium
4. 1855 5. £3248 6. Mallard 7. 1967
8. Ann Boleyn 9. William Shakespeare
10. Vertical, short take – off and landing.

Praying together for the Pandemic

In response to reaching the terrible milestone of 100,000 deaths from COVID-19, the Archbishops invite all to call on God in Prayer. Starting on 1 February we invite you to set aside time every evening to pray, particularly at 6pm each day. More than ever, this is a time when we need to love each other. Prayer is an expression of love.

We remember before God those who have died and we pray that God's love will surround all who mourn them, now and always

Gracious God,
as we remember before you the thousands who have died,
surround us and all who mourn with your strong compassion.
Be gentle with us in our grief,
protect us from despair,
and give us grace to persevere
and face the future with hope
in Jesus Christ our risen Lord.
Amen.

For more information visit the website:

<https://www.churchofengland.org/resources/prayer-nation>



Victoria also invites you to join her in silent prayer in your home between 9 and 10 am on Tuesdays.

In response to Covid-19

AMPFIELD

NEIGHBOURS

working with

unity

The Test Valley Borough Council Volunteer Support Group

A group of Ampfield residents have come together to help as volunteers working with Unity during the Covid-19 pandemic. Unity is the Test Valley Borough Council Volunteer Support Group.

If you live in Ampfield and need help with collecting prescriptions or shopping
contact

Unity on the Test Valley Community Helpline -

0330 400 4116

or

UnityC-19@unityonline.org.uk

Thought for the Month

January is such a long month and we have just passed Blue Monday but the McCallums decided to have a positive day with only good thoughts and kind gestures ... and we actually managed it!! Angus made soup for the first time ever, guided by his Hungarian girlfriend via Skype, as she is working at home in Budapest. It was sooo delicious and we have asked him to do more cooking for us (here's hoping!). Molly made up her mind to face a situation she had long put off and the outcome has made her feel she can take charge of her life and change things. Stevie and I took a long walk to get some time and space together in what has been a busy household for some months now.

Probably the highlight of 2021, so far, was the snow. It felt truly magical to sit and watch the landscape change in front of our eyes and then we ventured out, and were lucky enough to catch a glimpse of a family of deer in the woods.

I have found it very hard not being able to just walk into the church and see all the other lovely parishioners, friends for lunch bunch and all those who are such a big part of my life. I look forward to the day when we can come together again, even if it is just the service in the glade – I know God is with me and my prayers keep me strong.

So, I intend to continue to be positive and I hope that the world will be a better place when we have conquered this virus.

Kate McCallum



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.

Hampshire public libraries are currently closed for browsing for the remainder of the national lockdown however, they are offering many services. Check their website for details.

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

Online suppliers recommended by readers:

Donald Russell (meat): hello@donaldrussell.co.uk; www.donaldrussell.com

Regal Fish: info@regalfish.co.uk; www.regalfish.co.uk

Cafe Bingham's will be offering take away fish and chips from Friday 5th February. Please contact its website for details:

binghams@cafebinghams.com

Local Representatives

Member of Parliament: Caroline Nokes; Phone: 01794 521155

County Councillor: Alan Dowden; Phone 02380 266458

TVBC Councillor: Martin Hatley; Phone: 02380 254040

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

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This is the blackboard outside All Saints, it was put up for Advent with a box of chalk next to it so that people could write Christmas messages as they were passing. It stayed up longer into the New Year than originally planned because there were some nice New Year messages on it.

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