

BLEASBY NEWS



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FEBRUARY 2016

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Welcome to February's Bleasby News

Farewell to Christmas and New Year and welcome to - winter! It's been some time coming but the weather certainly turned seasonal in January.

We also seem to have said farewell to the Bleasby Buzzard which was to be seen very regularly before Christmas in trees or the field near High Cross. Let us know if you spot him/her again (*late news - seen again late January*). Lots of wildlife to be seen up there - regular sightings of a barn owl, often hares, sometimes even roedeer - always kestrels hovering.

A sad farewell also to Sophie, our copy editor for the past year, who now has returned to work after her maternity leave - she has been invaluable in making Bleasby News an even more attractive publication. Offers to join the team gladly received - copy editing skills especially welcome.

As well as our farewells we are always very pleased to hear of newcomers - we have our 'spies' who help to make sure no one is overlooked but please tell us if we leave out a welcome.

On the subject of welcomes - fieldfares, redwings, itinerant blackbirds, gulls, waterfowl, snowdrops - welcome all!

We always look forward to hearing from residents - please send your articles etc for April's Bleasby News to:- Rachael Andrew, Sutton House, pran@suttonhs.fsworld.co.uk or Barbara Cast, Little Dower House, barbaracast@btinternet.com by 21st March.

Your Editors, Barbara and Rachael



Welcome to Bleasby

We extend a warm welcome to Donna, Matt and Andrew Ward, now at Romany Corner, and the Allens in the former Post Office (now a splendid looking family house) Chris and Louisa, Hugo, Louis and baby Harriet.

Bleasby Parish Council News

A Happy New Year to you all – and many thanks to all those organisations and individuals in the parish who made a Christmas in Bleasby something for all to remember. The community spirit was amply shared amongst us all by the efforts of the church, school, Waggon, tea shop, Trent Choir, Village Hall and all the festive family garden lighting! It all combined to bring “goodwill amongst all people”. Christmas concerts, performances, special services, fayres and the like all require considerable time and effort on the part of organisers and participants – to all of you we offer our hearty congratulations and thanks.

However, at the same time, and mostly behind the scenes, there was a rising awareness of our vulnerability to flooding, sitting, as we mostly do, in the bottom of the valley of the Trent – with the water table rising, water pouring off the hills and the ground becoming more and more saturated. Elsewhere (even as close as Yorkshire) places less fortunate in the vagaries of Atlantic weather storms than we have been were being flooded – sometimes repeatedly. In Bleasby, over many years, the Flood Action Group has worked continuously to reduce the risk of flooding at both ends of the parish from the hills (into Lower Goverton and on towards Notown) to the river (into Gibsmere and on towards Bleasby centre), and to try at least to minimise its impact when, as it inevitably will from time to time, does occur. We are vulnerable to both fluvial (river) and pluvial (rain) flooding; the former became more likely during the first two weeks of January and the latter at intervals during the later weeks of December as well. We had no less than twenty-five members of the community signed up and on stand-by to offer their support in various ways throughout this time of flood risk.

The Christmas period has served to highlight just what makes village life so special and so particular here in Bleasby.

To try and ensure that everyone can feel informed, aware and involved, the Parish Council has been working towards re-establishing its own website so that people can feel connected, whether on the heights of Goverton or the lowlands of Gibsmere and you will find further information on this in this edition of Bleasby News. It is important that you sign up to the Council website as soon as possible so that you can actively participate in the forthcoming Parish Plan which will “give you a voice” in the way in which Bleasby Village and its hamlets can develop over the next ten years.

We all take a pride in the setting and appearance of our parish and you will see an advertisement in this issue for an additional lengthsman to help keep everything as we would like to see it throughout the year. We would be pleased to hear suggestions from you as to where and when certain areas or features need to be attended to so that we can build up an effective programme which allows shared effort, especially at seasonal pressure points.

On a rather less encouraging note the Council has been receiving complaints about the significant problem of dog fouling on footways throughout the village which has

caused much unpleasantness, particularly to families going back and forth to school from the areas of densest housing. Children and their prams, scooters and bikes have proved especially vulnerable and the school has had to contend with excreta being carried on to the playground and floors of the building. Complaints have also been made to the District Council and its Animal Welfare and Control officers will monitor the situation and, where necessary, fines of up to £1,000 will be imposed. An article from those officers is included in this edition. Please support us in helping us to keep Bleasby's pavements and footpaths pleasant and carefree places to walk on.

The recent frosts and brighter weather, along with premature spring flowers, should remind us all that winter is still with us with potential for disruption but that spring - and all its promise - is just around every corner in Bleasby.

Peter Cast on behalf of the Parish Council

News from the Waggon and Horses

Hi everyone, a very Happy New Year to you all. After a very hectic Christmas season things have settled down very nicely into Tomato Juice January.

As I write this we are interviewing a chef and hope to have some good news for you all very soon.

Due to some technical and planning issues the porch and bar alterations have been delayed, but we hope to have some better news in the coming months.

The Pub Quiz is still proving very popular on Sundays at 8.30pm but more teams are welcome, the more we get the better the prizes!!!

Our new website is now up and running, please have a look -

www.thewaggonbleasby.co.uk You can also follow the link to our facebook profile and like the page - this will ensure you are kept up to date with future plans and events.

Ian and Liz

Joke of the Month!

Customer to Librarian "I'm very keen on DIY Have you got any books on shelves?"

"MAX"

Whilst every effort is made to ensure accuracy, the editorial team cannot accept responsibility for errors or omissions in articles appearing in Bleasby News. The views expressed in Bleasby News are not necessarily those of the Editors nor of Bleasby Parish Council. Bleasby News is distributed by local volunteers to whom we remain very grateful. Printed by Toot Hill School Reprographics

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Dogs: Man's Best Friend? – A Message from Newark and Sherwood DC Animal Welfare And Control

Humans domesticated dogs many thousands of years ago, since when they have helped them to hunt animals for food, control pest species, herd livestock, protect property, and keep them company. These days most dogs are kept mainly as pets, and in this role provide a rewarding friendship and company to many who would otherwise live alone. Kept responsibly, dogs should not cause serious problems to others: why is it then that many thousands of complaints are received every year by Council Dog Wardens across the country? It is not usually the dogs which are at fault, but their owners. Everyone who owns a dog has a serious responsibility, both to the animal, and to neighbours and others who may be affected by the dog's behaviour. What are the most common of these problems?

FOULING

Dog dirt is unpleasant, smelly and may carry diseases and parasites which can affect humans. Many complaints are received about owners who allow their animals to leave their droppings in public places and do not clean up the mess. **THIS IS AN OFFENCE AGAINST THE LAW:** anyone not cleaning up after their dog can be fined up to £1,000. You can buy purpose-made 'poop-scoops' to pick up your dog's mess, but a plastic carrier bag will do just as well. Bins are provided in many parks and road verges for disposing of the mess, but if there isn't one near where you walk your dog, use an ordinary litter bin or, if there aren't any, take it home and put it in the wheelie bin. This law applies to almost all areas in the open air to which the public have access.

Our Dog Wardens are giving offenders Fixed-Penalty Fines: DON'T BE ONE OF THEM!

Complaints are also received about householders who let their dogs foul their own garden, but never clean up the mess: if it accumulates it smells unpleasant and attracts flies, which carry diseases. The best way to dispose of droppings is by using a 'dog-loo' sunk into the earth of your garden, which allows the waste to decompose safely without causing problems. Alternatively bury it in an area of soil set aside for the purpose, but using a different spot every time, working around the plot, making sure it is covered well. Councils have powers to compel owners to clean up their gardens if the state of the garden is causing a nuisance to others.

[Val Brown/Eddie Howes](#), Animal Welfare & Control, NSDC, Brunel Drive, Newark, NG24 2EG - 01636 650000

Note on Bleasby's recent dog fouling problem

There has been an increased incidence of dog fouling on many of the main footways, both roadside and public footpaths, over recent months. It has been very evident on the route children and parents have to take to school - it is also obvious that people, possibly children, haven't been able to miss stepping into it, thus they go to school with dirty shoes which means that carpets etc will get fouled which is a health hazard for all our children. PLEASE if you have a dog and go out with it day or night, please make sure you clear up after it, please understand why all dog mess must be cleared up - and why it is so necessary! WE WILL ALL BE VERY GRATEFUL!

Flowers at St Mary's

St. Mary's church in Bleasby is lucky enough to have a few more church services since the installation of our new vicar, Rev Phil White. This means we have a few spaces on the church flower rota!

The voluntary job means once a year you are allocated a Sunday of your choice and asked to provide a small arrangement to sit on the altar. A small vase is provided and the key is available when convenient to you.

This is a great way to support our church, at a time best for you, and the flowers add such beauty to our building and services.

Please help if you can. I would be happy to show you what to do.

Ali Sutherland 831026



Busy hands at **Bleasby Playgroup** making fairy buns!

Babies and under school age children with their parent, grandparent, other carer, always welcome on Mondays at 9.15am to 11.15am in the Village Hall.

Going away?

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We had snow! Thanks for the photo Willis.

TRENT CHURCHES CHOIR

The Carol Concert at Rolleston on 13th December was very well supported and £450 was raised for the Lincs and Notts Air Ambulance.

The Bleasby Advent Carol Service also attracted a good congregation, as did the Christmas Carol services at Hoveringham and Halloughton.

Our schedule for the coming months is:-

Sunday, 14th February, Blessing of the Plough at Halloughton;

The evening of Good Friday, 25th March, the sacred cantata "Olivet to Calvary" at St Mary's Church, Tickhill, South Yorkshire;

Saturday, 16th April, at Thurgarton Priory Church - **SPRING CONCERT** - this is a new venture for us - and a rare opportunity to showcase music from our library, plus some new music. We hope that many will feel able to support this venture. No admission charge but there will be a retiring collection.

John King



New members to the Choir are very welcome - at the moment we are especially short of altos. Rehearsals are on Thursdays in Bleasby Village Hall at 7.30pm from 21st January to 14th April.

Church News

Christmas Services

Although there was no service here in Bleasby on Christmas Day we were pleased to welcome friends from other churches in the West Trent Group on the Sunday before Christmas for the Benefice Holy Communion.

It was wonderful to see so many young families (and some not quite so young) at the Crib Service on Christmas Eve. To have a full church and candle-light as a setting for readings, carols and the narrative of the timeless Christmas story has become a tradition at St Mary's and, judging by the attendance, one that is appreciated. Our thanks go to the young people who read so well - Lewis Gillooley-Rogers, Connie Thompson, Clem Beardmore, Hope Barnes and Matty Smith and particularly to Jack Shine who, as well as reading, took charge of the younger children, helped them with the microphone and persuaded them they weren't nervous in spite of the fact that they were reading to a hundred and fifty and more people! Thank you also to Christine, Chris, Philip, Victoria, Lisa and Baby "Jesus" for bringing the narrative alive. And we mustn't forget Annie Cast-Coombs, who although disappointed she couldn't see very well because she was sitting at the back, did a great job blowing or snuffing out all the candles when everyone had gone home!

Lent and Easter

Easter is very early this year. No doubt you noticed Easter eggs in the shops on Boxing Day! We aren't so well organised so our plans have not yet been finalised but we hope that we will be able to celebrate Shrove Tuesday on February 9th as we have done in the past and to hold Lent Lunches on the 6 following Saturdays beginning on February 13th. There will be other opportunities to publicise these and other events, through emails, notices and word of mouth so please be alert for these and for news of Good Friday and Easter services.

Email alerts and notice boards

Diana is updating the church email contact list. This is a useful way of passing on information about services, especially late changes to published service schedules, social events, meetings and materials which might interest you. If you would like to be included (or no longer want to receive mail) please let Diana know.

Gordon Hastings

Gordon and Phyllis Hastings have lived on Gypsy Lane for many years and have been very much a part of the community. Although Gordon was a long-standing and distinguished member of the United Reform Church and worshipped with Phyllis in Nottingham, we were delighted to be able to hold his memorial service at St Mary's on December 11th so that so many of his family and friends could attend. The church was full to capacity, including additional seating in the choir and social area. Members of at least five different Christian denominations came together to celebrate his life. This was a truly ecumenical occasion which no doubt would have pleased him. Please see the eulogy given by his son on page 24.

CHRISTMAS LEGACY

Shower gel in the bathroom, the granddaughter's toy in the hall, an unloved Christmas present in the living room: our Christmas visitors leave things behind. We may not be quite sure what to do with them: send them back, keep them for the next visit or dispose of them. However, hopefully we had a good time together, I certainly did.

My first Christmas in the West Trent Group was a very special one. The Advent Carols, the 'Crib' Service, and times with Bleasby School pupils and staff. Hopefully all those special events leave something significant with us. There is the meaning of the event, some of the content, even the feeling of the moment. All of which can be recalled, reflected on and inform our present moment.

Although, do we need to be intentional about the reflecting? For example, those items left behind may be signs to remind us of particular moments and significant people. Their influence can be really important to who we are now and what we believe. Even the unwanted things remind us of the difficult moments but they can be recycled and put to a good purpose. They can't just be left there, to get in the way and trip us up.

So most of the seasonal paraphernalia has been put away, recycled and sorted out. The legacy of those significant people and events remains, even if we are still not sure what to do with the shower gel, the granddaughter's toys and the unloved present.

The Revd Phil

07720010066

phil_07@btinternet.com

www.westtrentchurches.co.uk

(The West Trent Group includes the 7 Parish Churches of Thurgarton with Hoveringham, Bleasby with Halloughton, Rolleston, Morton with Fiskerton and Upton.)

The Revd Phil is contactable as above or via the newly appointed administrator for the West Trent Group: Sarah Hall at 07855022921 or WestTrentGroup@gmail.com

Post Office Services

Many residents will be using the Post Office services provided by those in Fiskerton, Southwell and Lowdham. However, for those who find travelling to these post offices, Post Office Ltd has established a Home Service to Bleasby. This is provided by the post office at East Bridgford and those wishing to sign up to use the service can ring the Postmaster and the services on offer (stamps, bill payments etc) can be delivered to their home. Posters and leaflets will be available on the full range of services to be offered. Sign up now to access the service – just ring the Postmaster on 01949 21057.

Bleasby Parish Council Websites & Communications

We are delighted to announce Bleasby Parish Council has launched two websites; one for parish council and the other for community news.

Bleasby Community Website

- For information regarding Bleasby community **go to** www.bleasbycommunity.uk
- **Sign up** for email alerts to keep up to date with the latest community news
- **Help us** build this website by sending contributions about your club/organisation (please use the form at the bottom of the parish council homepage)
- **Send us** details of events you may be running for sharing with your community

Bleasby Parish Council Website

- For information regarding your parish council **go to** www.bleasbyparishcouncil.uk
- **Sign up** for email alerts to keep up to date with the latest parish council news

This new website will be important to enable you to become more involved in the Parish Council's forthcoming Parish Plan – you will be able to have your say in matters relating to Bleasby Parish.

Making sure we can communicate with everyone in the parish is important to us. We will be looking into alternative ways to keep you informed in the event that you do not have access to a computer.

Please note the old parish council website www.bleasbyvillage.org.uk is no longer running and the parish council does not use the email address @bleasbyvillage.org.uk for any communications.

A flyer has been delivered with Bleasby News so that you can keep it to hand for future use.

As well as the websites run by the parish council there is a Facebook page called 'Bleasby Village Facebook Page' and an email service called 'Bleasby Village Email List'. You may find these another source of useful information but please note that neither this email service nor the Facebook page is run or endorsed by the parish council.

Bleasby Parish Council

Jubilee Ponds and Nature Notes – Rise and Fall on the Jubilee Ponds

What a winter for nature to contend with – it has prompted early spring flowering of primroses and daffodils with consistently mild weather during December – the warmest since records began with temperatures often rising to double figures and some people suffering from hay fever symptoms as a result of early flowering hazel catkins! Frosts during December and January can be counted on one hand and consequently the numbers of visiting winter waterfowl and other wintering species have been considerably down with some species completely absent.

The once common flocks of 30 to 40 pochard are no longer seen on the Ponds - a maximum of six have been recorded periodically this winter. A national fall of 21% in the winter population of pochard may be due to this species enjoying the increasingly warmer climes further north in Europe. Goldeneye also seem to be enjoying warmer winter breaks further north with similar national falls in winter populations and a complete absence of these charming birds here which used to be regular visitors to the Ponds in winter. On the other hand gadwall are still on the increase and can be seen in good numbers on every visit to the Ponds at this time of the year. Goosander populations are on the rise nationally, possibly due to wider and more successful breeding than previously, and as a consequence have made appearances here in groups of up to 8 or so. The odd flock of fieldfares has passed through the woodland, hedgerow and scrub around the Ponds but redwing have been scarce and such species as brambling completely absent. The warmth has reduced our visiting bird population but so have the very wet conditions which have meant that ducks like mallard, wigeon and teal have found plenty of flooded grassland for feeding and safe expansive areas of flood land for roosting long before they reach Bleasby.

And what of our resident birds? Well, cormorants can nearly always be seen on the Ponds and are now as happily breeding inland as on the coast. Our buzzards are now to be commonly seen over the JPs and over the parish mainly in glorious soaring flight with mournful mewing but, as the front cover testifies, an individual has been sitting prominently 4 metres above the ground in the young, sparse trees along the road near High Cross for day after day in the miserable, dank drizzle, apparently feeding on worms from the recently sown fields there.

No signs of wintering swans but our resident and rather aggressive cob mute swan harried an ailing immature swan seeking sanctuary on the Ponds until it finally succumbed and was found dead. At this time of year when fat levels are being drawn upon, swans that have ingested lead shot from fishing line and wild-fowlers' shotgun (used long ago and buried in the mud) receive a fatal dose of lead into the bloodstream. This may have been an underlying cause of the poor swan's vulnerability to a stronger competitor.

Our reedbed has been nicely flooded by the rising water table caused by high river levels and periodic heavy downpours, making it less vulnerable to invasion first by reed mace and bog iris, followed by willow and then birch, which would effectively eventually turn the area to woodland. If our much appreciated and very hard working management team did not suffer the agony of wading through mud and water to dig, cut and pull out these colonising species the days of our reed bed would be numbered. It is to be hoped that some lucky passer-by might spot or disturb the odd bittern (now increasing in population) that finds the reed bed perfect habitat for winter

concealment. We might also hope that it will continue to prove attractive to reed warblers this late spring and that they will then entice back cuckoos which are now very scarce about the parish with rarely a calling male now heard. There has been a 63% decline in cuckoo numbers over the past twenty years - you may be surprised to know that at about the time you are reading this article cuckoos will already be leaving the Congo, Angola or Gabon in Africa to make their way on a northward migration back to Britain in time to parasitise the now more widely adopted reed warbler hosts. Populations of birds have always risen and fallen according to the prevailing weather conditions but, if as most people now accept, we are witnessing climate change, then our countryside may well become a rather different place to that which we currently know and love. Let us all do our best for the future of our planet.

Peter Cast



Keys to Security – Report of the Safer Neighbourhood Group

We are pleased to report that crime levels in the Trent villages (Lowdham to Sutton-on-Trent) have been very low with very few burglaries - only six being reported throughout the whole area over the run-up to Christmas and the New Year. This is indeed good news and may reflect Christmas goodwill and conscience or, more likely, that people are becoming more security and key conscious at a critically vulnerable time of the year.

The more significant crime that has been reported since our last article has been vehicle theft. Delivery vans appear to be being targeted as busy drivers leave ignition keys in place whilst making their deliveries or even leave engines running, making them an easy target for opportunistic thieves. The owners of more appealing cars are also proving more vulnerable and there have been a few cases where keys have been taken from predictable places near doors and used to drive the chosen car away. Unfortunately one of our own villagers has only just (mid-January) been added to the statistics of this kind of crime. Please, therefore, keep your keys safe, away from sight and, ideally, on your person when not in use. Be especially careful during frosty weather not to leave your car unattended if running the engine to clear frost from windscreens or warm the car before setting off. Leaving your car keys in the ignition is an open invitation! But it hurts the pocket as well as the pride as you may well find that your insurance is invalidated!

We can learn much from the misfortune of others but let us not forget to support them in return.

Derek Whitman & Peter Cast

BLEASBY SCHOOL FRIENDS ASSOCIATION NEWS



Thank you to everyone who pulled together in support of Bleasby School and the BSFA at the Christmas Fair on the 5th December; you helped to make the event a huge success raising over £1300! We received a large number of book donations from the community which was fantastic; many of the books went straight to the school to replenish supplies. It was lovely to see so many people from the Bleasby community attend as we really couldn't raise this amount of money without every single bit of your support.

Well done to all of you who took part in the pre-Christmas Easyfundraising competition. We raised over £600 and once again went on to win first prize and a whopping £1000! For further information on how to get involved please visit www.easyfundraising.org.uk or contact Janene on Janene.Scurfield@erac.com.

After a busy end to 2015 the BSFA is looking forward to another successful year packed with fundraising and social events for adults and children alike. On January 20th, as a thank you to the families of Bleasby School for their continued support, the BSFA was able to pay for the children to see the Robin Hood Pantomime. January also saw us host our first adult quiz night, a great time was had by all and lots of money was raised. As a result of such successful fundraising the BSFA has been able to pay for collapsible staging, a fantastic new projector and screen, 12 ipads, books for the reception class, the Christmas tree, pantomime tickets and anti-bullying wrist bands and pencils.

The BSFA is an integral part of the school community and it aims to provide closer links between home and school, bringing staff, parents and friends together working towards a common goal. We appreciate and thank you for any help that you are able to give and the myriad of skills that you are able to bring. We hope you will continue to support us this year in our fundraising efforts so that we can provide resources and extras which enrich the learning experience of pupils at Bleasby School.

Janene Scurfield (Chair) Nicola Bennett (Treasurer) Sam Bennington (Secretary)



Fill the Bin Campaign



**On Friday 26th February
8:30 am - 9:30 am**

We are holding a textile recycling day at Bleasby School. The following bagged items will be accepted; clothing, towels, sheets, blankets, curtains and paired shoes. Volunteers will be at the top of the drive to greet you. All are welcome to contribute to the bin daily, but we are looking to raise awareness and funds and see if we can fill that bin sooner!

Thank you for your ongoing support.

Flood Action Group – Sewerage Problems?

Have you noticed any increase in unpleasant smells recently during, and especially after, a period of heavy and prolonged rain? Do your drains seem to be emptying more slowly? Are inspection hatches lifting? If not, be glad and grateful that people are using their sinks and toilet facilities with careful consideration and are following Severn Trent pleas to avoid the narrowing and blockage of our sewerage system by flushing unnecessary and inappropriate materials down our WCs and into the waste-water. The build-up of fats (think how much was produced from your Christmas dinner alone) and the collection of insoluble materials such as nappies, wipes and sanitary products severely reduce the capacity and flow of our sewerage system. Because most of our houses are on low-lying land our waste water and sewage has to be pumped by pumping stations strategically placed around the parish. Unfortunately these can themselves be incapacitated by accumulations of matted fat and insoluble debris, causing a build-up, and consequently creating an unpleasant back-flow into homes. Unfortunately the intended separation of foul and surface waters has never been achieved because of economic costs so when it rains all surface water from roofs, drives, hard surfaced areas and roads is emptied into our sewerage system and threatens to overwhelm it, especially if its capacity has been reduced by inappropriate disposal of materials and food stuffs down the drains. Flooding of homes is bad enough but flooding with sewage is appalling, costly and dangerous. Collect all oils and fats and dispose of them in solid or absorbed form in the normal non-recyclable bin and make sure that only 3 Ps go down the toilet please!

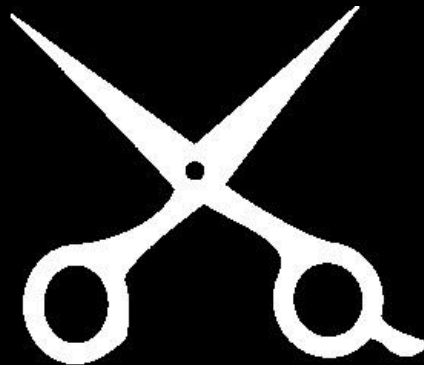
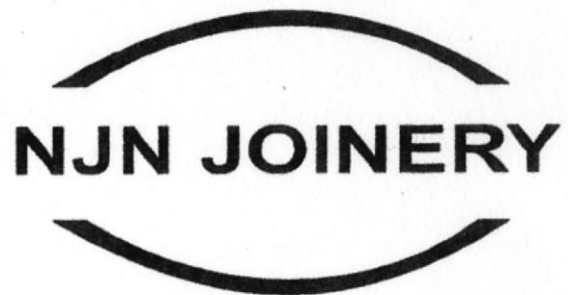
Severn Trent disposal advice

- *In the kitchen*
 - *Scrape pots, pans and plates before washing up*
 - *Use strainers in all your sinks*
 - *Recycle leftover food waste, including soups and sauces*
 - *Collect used oil in a container and throw it in the bin*
- *In the bathroom*
 - *Only ever flush pee, poo and toilet paper*
 - *Bag sanitary towels and tampons, then bin them*
 - *Use a bin with a lid to keep bathroom waste out of sight*
 - *Bin wipes to avoid blocked drains*

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Bleasby Diary of Events

Date	Time	Event	Location
Saturday 6 th Feb	9.30am	Jubilee Ponds Working Party	JPs
Sunday 7 th February	10.30am	Service of Morning Prayer	St Mary's
Monday 8 th February	7.30pm	Meeting of Bleasby Parish Council	Village Hall
Tuesday 9 th February	9.30am	Jubilee Ponds Working Party	JPs
Tuesday 9 th February	7pm for 7.30pm	Shrove Tuesday Supper	Village Hall
Saturday 13 th Feb	12noon	Lent Lunch (watch out for information on venue)	Various
Sunday 14 th February	11am	Service of Holy Communion	St Mary's
Sunday 14 th February	6pm	Plough Sunday Service	St James' Halloughton
15 th - 19 th February		Half-term week	
Tuesday 16 th February	7.30pm	Meeting of Bleasby WI with Patsy Rayner on Why are the Japanese so Healthy	Village Hall
Saturday 20 th Feb	12noon	Lent Lunch (watch out for information on venue)	Various
Sunday 21 st February	9.30am	Jubilee Ponds Working Party	JPs
Sunday 21 st February	10.30am	Benefice Service of Holy Communion	St Michael's Hoveringham
Tuesday 23 rd February	7.30pm	Meeting of BLHS with Ellis Morgan on the History of the Burgage Manor	Village Hall
Friday 26 th February	8.30- 9.30am	Fill the Bin Campaign	School
Saturday 27 th Feb	12noon	Lent Lunch (watch out for information on venue)	Various

Saturday 5 th March	9.30am	Jubilee Ponds Working Party	JPs
Saturday 5 th March	12noon	Lent Lunch (watch out for information on venue)	Various
Sunday 6 th March	10.30am	Service of Morning Prayer	St Mary's
Saturday 12 th March	12noon	Lent Lunch (watch out for information on venue)	Various
Tuesday 8 th March	9.30am	Jubilee Ponds Working Party	JPs
Sunday 13 th March	9.30am	Service of Holy Communion	St Mary's
Monday 14 th March	7.30pm	Meeting of Bleasby Parish Council	Village Hall
Tuesday 15 th March	7.30pm	Meeting of Bleasby WI with B Saunders on Ploughing Adventures in Haiti	Village Hall
Saturday 19 th March	12noon	Lent Lunch (watch out for information on venue)	Various
Sunday 20 th March	9.30am	Jubilee Ponds Working Party	JPs
Sunday 20 th March	10.30am	Benefice Service of Holy Communion - Palm Sunday	Sts Peter & Paul Upton
Monday 21 st March		Deadline for April's Bleasby News items	
Tuesday 22 nd March	7.30pm	AGM of Bleasby Local History Society	Village Hall
Friday 25 th March		Good Friday Walk	
Sunday 27 th March	9am	Easter Day Holy Communion	St Mary's
Saturday 16 th April	7pm	Spring Concert by the Trent Churches Choir	St Peter's Thurgarton

Jubilee Ponds Working Parties are regularly held on the first Saturday, the second Tuesday and the third Sunday of each month - dates included in the diary. You will be very welcome - there's always plenty to do - and see!

Bleasby Women's Institute

We had a most enjoyable time at our Christmas Party in December. We also sang carols in Manor Close just before Christmas and raised £100 for Beaumont House.

Our meetings are a high spot of the month: in January we were most interested to hear all about our speaker's involvement with her bees, it was a brilliant talk! We have a couple of most interesting titles in February and March - (see the diary).

As well as having a wide variety of speakers at our meetings, we also hear about what is happening in the wider WI world, especially about its renowned tradition of campaigning on important issues - campaigning with a lot of success over the years!

We are always pleased to welcome new faces to our meetings - but we also have many other activities outside our regular meetings - the book club, visits to places of interest and to theatres, walks, monthly lunches at a different venue each time, darts team etc etc. And then there are the specials - fund-raising events such as last year's Routes to Roots adventure.

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February Church Services in the West Trent Group

(HC = Holy Communion MP = Morning Prayer EP = Evening Prayer)

	Bleasby	Halloughton	Hoveringham	Morton	Rolleston	Thurgarton	Upton
Sunday 7th	10.30 MP		6pm EP	10.30 MP	10.30 MP	10.30 HC	10.30 HC
Tuesday 9th							10.00 HC
Wed 10 th Ash Wednesday				7pm Ash Wes'day Service			
Sunday 14 th	11.00 HC	6pm Plough Sunday		10.30 MP	9.30 HC	10.30 MP	10.30 MP
Thursday 18 th							4pm Zip Bam Boo
Sunday 21 st			10.30 Benefice HC				
Sunday 28 th		9 HC	10.30 All age	10.30 HC	10.30 All age	10.30 with Methodists	10.30 HC

March Church Services in the West Trent Group

	Bleasby	Halloughton	Hoveringham	Morton	Rolleston	Thurgarton	Upton
Sunday 6 th Mothering Sunday	10.30 MP		10.30 All Age 6pm EP	9.00 HC	3pm Mothering Sunday	10.30 All Age	9 Mothering Sunday
Tuesday 8 th							10.00 HC
Sunday 13 th	9.30 HC	6pm EP		10.30 MP	11 HC	10.30 MP	10.30 MP
Thursday 17 th							4pm Zip Bam Boo
Sunday 20 th Palm Sunday							10.30 Benefice HC
Thursday 21 st Maundy Thursday				Maundy Thursday service			
Friday 25 th Good Friday					2pm Stations of the Cross		
Sunday 27 th Easter Sunday	9 HC		10.30 All Age	10.30 HC	10.30 All Age	8 Easter HC & breakfast with Methodists	10.30 HC

Gordon Hastings remembered. Adapted from the eulogy given by his son Tim

Our father touched the lives of so many people in so many wonderful ways. He was a preacher, a teacher, a scholar of theology and history, a mentor and friend and, above all, the best of husbands, fathers and grandfathers.

The vicar prompted me to speak to a text - so it is Psalm 19 v 14 "may the words of my mouth and the meditations of my heart be acceptable in thy sight", for that was the familiar refrain with which Dad so often ended his sermons. He started preaching in a different era - with no Sunday trading or sporting distractions - when people simply put on their Sunday best and went to church in numbers, and some great preachers were household names. The story goes it all began for him in the school debating society – the motion was “this house believes that idealism must shape the post war world” and he was moved in the moment to speak without notes, and won a rousing ovation. He had found his calling; the die was cast. His talent catapulted him at the tender age of 26 to the ministry of Queens Road Baptist Church in Coventry. He was very young and yet he became the spiritual and pastoral leader of more than 400 people.

Then, still only 32, he went to the church they called the Baptist Cathedral, at Sutton in South London, where for 11 years – in many ways his halcyon days – he led a membership of over 600 people. Now I'm biased - but I never heard a finer preacher - although I say that, confident in the knowledge that many present today would agree. There is no doubt that he was a performer – he used dramatic gestures, and wonderful control of pitch and volume - but his command of language and ideas was clear, his preaching was engaging and intelligent and it was substance not just style that got him noticed. His theology was liberal not evangelical - I remember his sermons littered with references to all the noted liberal Christian thinkers and writers. Yet, despite the intellectual rigour he applied, his ideas were clear and accessible to a broad audience. His focus was on humanity and this world, more than what might follow in the next, and I never sensed that he believed in a God who judged good people, simply because they didn't share his faith. Whilst his prowess in the pulpit marked him out, it would be wrong to characterise his ministry as one dimensional. He was a consummate communicator in all contexts - at the church door, at the hospital bedside, in the classroom or in the personal counsel and guidance he gave to so many in their hours of need. His ministry in Sutton was marked above all else by his commitment to ecumenism. He was a Baptist, but a Christian first and foremost, and he devoted himself to the union of the four churches of different denominations that stood on the corners of the crossroads at the heart of that London suburb.

Across the first half of his adult life, he also travelled the length and breadth of the country preaching in small chapels, great cathedrals and most places in between. He travelled the world as well – to Brazil as a student and, later on, two extended preaching tours of the USA. He participated in the opening of the new Coventry Cathedral, spoke in the Royal Albert Hall, preached live on national TV and, in the days when television came to an end each night with appropriate solemnity and at a sensible hour, he gave the broadcast epilogue!

Then aged 42 he turned to teaching. This was not a loss of faith – although his theology was taking him in a different direction to the mainstream Baptist way – but it seems he was too successful, too soon, and after eleven years in Sutton he wanted a new challenge that he could not find within the full time ministry or in the upper echelons of church administration. So he became Head of Religious Education at Wyggeston Boys Grammar School in Leicester and started a new chapter. The transition from being the leader of a large congregation to the ranks of the teaching staff was challenging but he took to it with determination. Nor did he ever stop preaching! He initially undertook a punishing weekend regime of travelling to wherever the call came from, but later pragmatism prevailed and he adopted an ailing church in Leicester and guided them over several years to unity with another nearby church. The school changed and became a sixth form college - religious studies were no longer in the same demand and he diversified and became a teacher of history. The school magazine marked his retirement with a long tribute, ending: - "Few teachers have offered expertise over so wide a range of subjects or have been so widely respected".

In retirement his zest for life found new outlets - gardening, travel - everywhere he went he found a church or two to support or rescue: he became a stalwart of Probus and something of a star on the local WI lecture circuit with travel lectures and historical talks, and he worked tirelessly for Christian Aid and he even found his way at one time on to the Anglican Synod in York.

But above all, his later years were about family. In our childhood, our world revolved around the church and the church revolved around him. He didn't keep conventional hours for family life - so we saw less of him than many see of their fathers, but the difference was we got to see him at work - at least some of the time. Away from the church my main childhood memories are of the hobbies he pursued - gardening, DIY, home brewing, sports fan, lover of classical music, walking his dog - like most driven and focussed people he rarely sat idle. We had long holidays - towing a caravan across Europe, and then for years at his beloved Aldeburgh in Suffolk. We walked, we talked, we played scrabble and cards and in these ways we connected with him deeply as we grew older, and in adulthood we all found in him a role model and best friend.

It's a great tribute that he achieved this place in our lives despite his own rather isolated and lonely upbringing. He was an only child with a difficult relationship with an anxious and insecure mother. His father was genial and well liked but a creature of a more formal age. So his family life was not like ours. This might have made him insular or limited him emotionally but, under the influence of my mother's large and welcoming family, he became the very opposite. As we grew older, he always said he didn't give us advice - but he didn't need to - because he just encouraged us through quiet, clear example, and he supported us unconditionally through our troubles. In later life he also made no secret that his family meant everything to him. He rejoiced in - and usually hopelessly exaggerated - our achievements. His pride extended exponentially to his grandchildren. They've all spoken of the interest he took in them,

how he made each of them feel special and how he didn't shy from telling them how much he loved them. If he was sometimes boastful, it was about us, not about himself.

For 63 years the constant presence, influence and love of his life was our mother. How helpless and lost he seemed as we sat with him in the garden twelve years ago, during the long hours that Mum underwent brain surgery, when her life seemed to hang in the balance. In the end, as the cruel grip of his dementia took hold, it was Mum who selflessly cared for him and made his last years tolerable despite the drain on her energy and health.

Although the illness badly diminished and restricted him, I took comfort from the fact that we could still find the real Dad, beneath the confusion and distractions - his love of family and his concern for the wider world remained right to the end. And so he leaves us all - his children and grandchildren - with a huge hole in our lives, but all of us with the strength and confidence to try to do justice to his memory, through the way we lead our own lives.

"I go to church on Sundays and watch Question Time on Thursdays" he took to saying in recent times and in a simple way that summed him up - because my lasting memories will always be of his faith in God, manifest through his belief in the innate goodness of the human spirit; of his concern for the world through his lifelong interest in political debate and current affairs; of his fascination with the world around him, and the people in it; of his love of the small details of people's lives, and his desire to help others in any way he could; of his perceptive, kindly wisdom and of his devotion to his family.

What a life he led, what an example he set. What a good Christian gentleman he was. ...and may the words of my mouth and the meditations of our hearts be acceptable in thy sight. Amen.

John Holmes of the Old House, writing in 1816

"Two small floods happened at the beginning of the year; one on the 18th Jan and the other on the 25th. The month of Jan was mild and open, with very little frost. From the first of Feb to about the middle of the month, was very frosty, with but little snow. The month of March was windy, but dry; with gentle frosts. On Sunday the 17th, the village and the surrounding county, for many miles, was thrown into the greatest consternation about half-past 12 o'clock, by a serious shock of an earth-quake. Divine service not been over at the parish church the congregation, (and myself) distinctly felt the undulation in the motion given to the building about three or four seconds. It been the Assize Sunday at Nottingham, the judge and his retinue being at St Mary's church, it was perceived to shake very much. A large quantity of rain fell on the 12th of April, which caused one of the greatest landfloods ever known, in this village; a large Trent flood followed on the 14th (being Easter Sunday) which did a deal of damage, by overflowing the new sown lands etc."



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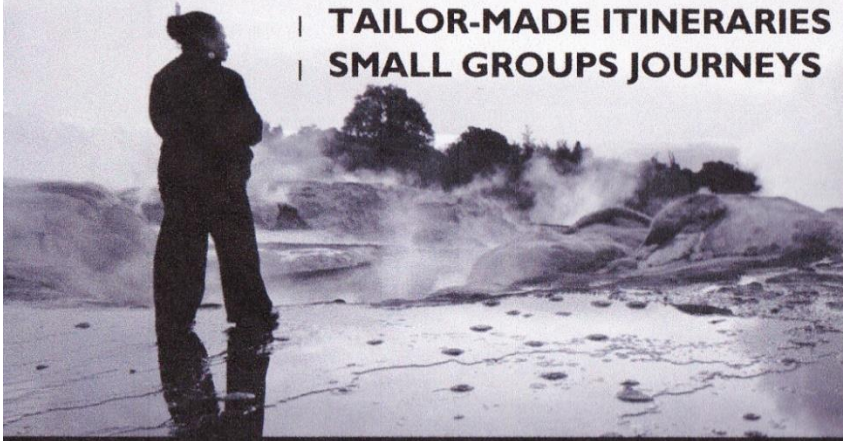


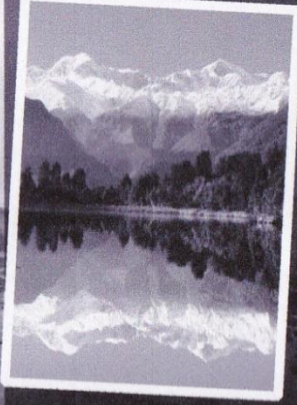
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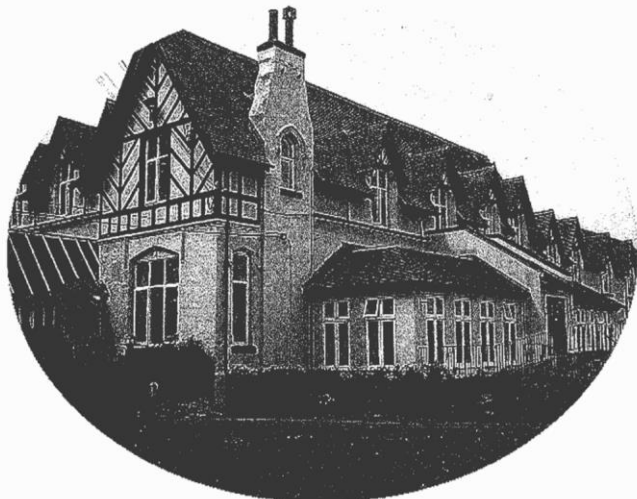
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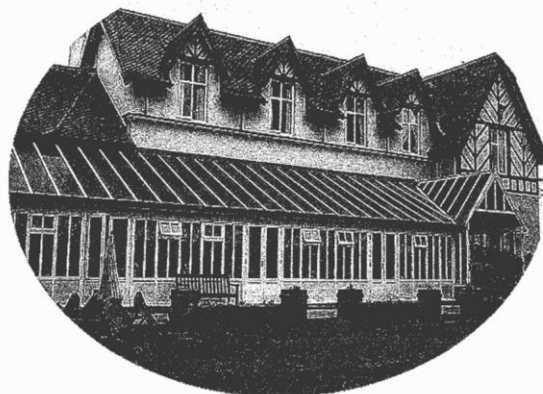
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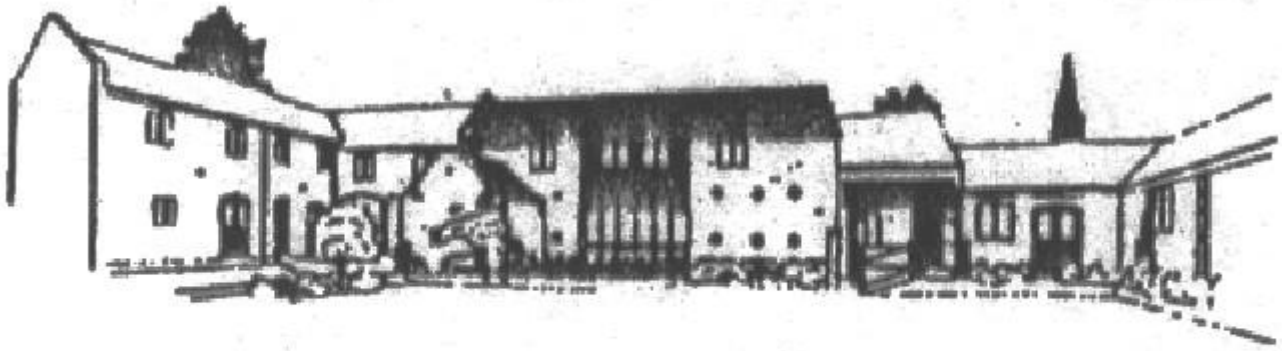


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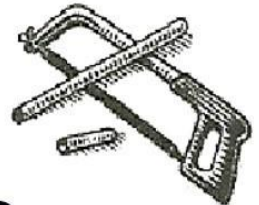
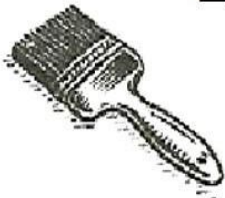
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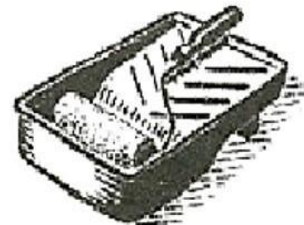
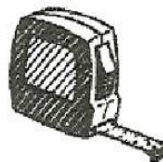
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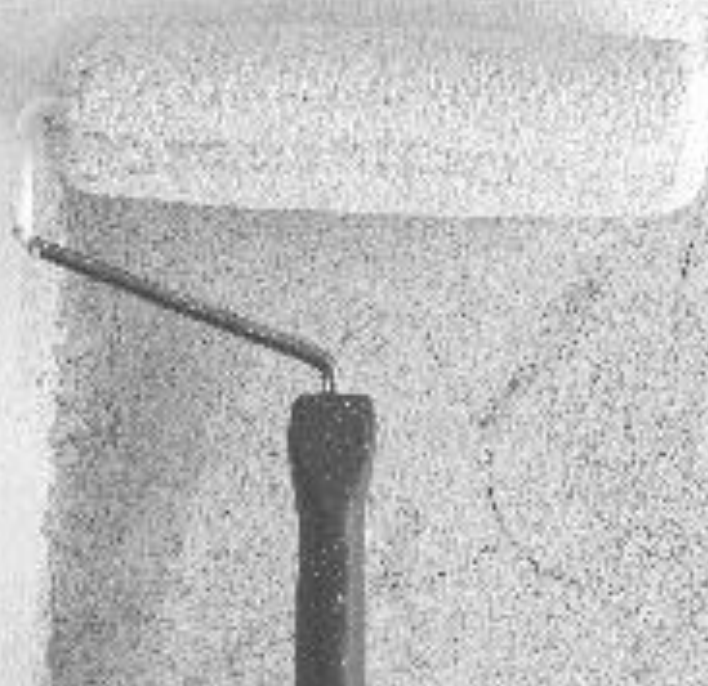
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- repainting traditional finger and mile posts
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