



THE PRATTLER

The Heyford Village Newspaper

December 2021 / January 2022

Issue No. 445

THE
Heyford
SINGERS

Come and join us for



Carols on the Green

Sing In Christmas!

Friday December 17th

At 6.30pm

*Nether Heyford Village Green
in front of the Village Hall*



BRING A TORCH!!

**ALL PROFITS FROM A BUCKET COLLECTION WILL GO TO
HEYFORD SINGERS & NETHER HEYFORD PARISH CHURCH**

The late Geoff Thorneycroft

It is with great sadness that we heard of the passing of Geoff Thorneycroft. Geoff was a massive asset to the village, the community and wider afield - he will be missed by everyone. Our thoughts go to Wendy and her family. R.I.P. Geoff

Geoff's funeral arrangements are as follows:

Milton Crematorium

Friday 10th December

11.45am

Wendy knows there will be a lot of people who will want to attend. Wendy has requested that priority for the inside area of the Crematorium is given to the family and friends that she has personally invited - and she thanks everyone in advance for their understanding.

Heyford Scouts Christmas Card Delivery Service is back this year!

Heyford Scouts are pleased to announce that we will be resuming our Christmas Card delivery service this year. Donations are still 20p per card, for collection and delivery in Heyford.

As we are still building back our group numbers we will do a single house to house collection, which will be on the evening of Monday 6th December.

We also plan to have postboxes available at Bliss School, Heyford Meats, One Stop Shop, Foresters Arms and the Olde Sun. Please post cards in a bag with payment by 20th December latest.

We wish all residents of Heyford a very Merry Christmas!



Good News & Merry Christmas

I'm pleased to announce that we can resume printing the Prattler monthly from February 2022. This is because of an upturn in our finances and organisations being able to meet again. Many thanks to the advertisers for their past and continuing support throughout the period.

It seems that Christmas comes round faster and faster every year so once again, the Prattler team would like to wish everyone a merry Christmas - let's hope Santa brings you everything you've wished for.

Sue



Geoff Thorneycroft. The Parish Council was saddened to hear that Geoff had passed away. Whilst Geoff was not a Councillor, he had always been a great help to us all. His comprehensive knowledge of the village, his willingness to get involved and help will all be much missed; as will his company and humour.

The October 4th, 2021 Parish Council meeting was held in the Baptist Church Rooms.

Talk about and Demonstration of Speed signs. Simon Hall demonstrated speed activated signs. This was a top of the range system that could be battery, mains or solar operated; widely used by Councils and commercial firms. The system is mobile. One of these signs costs approx. £3,500 plus VAT.

Public Participation: Geoff Thorneycroft expressed concerns about the proposed expansion of the travellers' site on the A5 opposite Clark's garage, being particularly concerned about the impact on schools and doctors' surgeries in the area. He also felt sure that Gypsies were not allowed to claim retrospectively.

Clerk and Chair to attend an EGM at Stowe 9 Churches.

Pat Andrews voiced his continuing concerns over the former Wickes site. Barley maintain that their activity is at a low level as they have not yet had their licence to operate. Activity may be from another warehouse on the site. Concerns about bunding being taken down, with the risk of increased noise for neighbours, were voiced and further concerns that it won't be replaced. It was suggested that there should be a sign saying "No Through Road. Low Bridge." Highways to be asked for a site meeting.

Reports

PCSO – new PCSO is Chris Dudley. New finance means will also be roving PCSOs visit.

Lights. Winston Close light has been restored to vertical for £103. It is felt that there is little point in trying to pursue a case against Gigaclear. Amazon have been unhelpful and obstructive regarding the damaged light in Watery Lane, and it is felt that attempts to claim from them would be fruitless. The ageing concrete column would have been replaced as part of the changeover to LED lights.

Roads and pavements. LD reported that Horse signs had been installed, feedback was positive.

Playing Fields. It was reported that face to face meetings had resumed. Money is still being sought for new changing rooms. The PFA intend to produce a video to help with fundraising.

Trees. DM reported that the trees would soon be available for the Platinum Jubilee planting scheme on the Green. Resolved. Project to proceed with a budget of up to £300.

Footpaths. DM is now the official Footpaths warden, and is the link to the Fixmystreet site.

Youth Club. LD reported that there are now approx. 40 children registered, and that a cap may be necessary. There are number of children from other villages and many complements.

Canal. IP felt that the area closest to the Furnace Lane bridge becomes too muddy to walk in winter. There has been a leak there. DM to report.

Defibrillators. Spares having arrived, both in good order. Packs for children & babies to be purchased.

Land behind Denbrook

Council considered an application to put rooms in the roof, (which has already been done) and to replace the required reclaimed brick wall with a wooden fence. Lee Pratt has voiced his and neighbours' view that the Case officer has failed to enforce planning details, and that there has been no monitoring officer in place. Residents now taking legal action and will approach the Ombudsman.

Resolved. Council to object to the application.

The question of the strip of access land was raised as this is not as wide as the access required by Highways. It is 3.5 M as opposed to the required 4.5M. The question of an easement was raised.

Resolved. Council to write to the Developer's agent to ask how they intended to proceed.

Environmental Report on Muck-spreading. This occurred on Sept 6th & 7th. The chair had asked for an enquiry into why the inspector had not had appropriate measuring equipment. It seems the correct procedures were followed, but those closest to the spreading are almost unanimous that the smell and discomfort was beyond anything they had previously experienced. Clerk to write to MP to ask that the product and the procedures used be looked into.

The November 1st , 2021 Parish Council meeting was held in the Baptist Church Rooms,

Lights. Lighting contractors, Aylesbury Mains have ceased to trade, but have passed on details of another contractor who is willing to take on the village at the same rates.

Roads and pavements. Resident in Hillside Rd has complained that double decker buses are making her house shake. Clerk had sent links to possible sources of assistance.

The Green / Play Area. IP drew attention to parking on the Green. Unfortunately, the instruction not to park on the Green is difficult to enforce. Fortunately, most people do understand the amenity value of the Green and do take notice and comply.

Trees. Quotes for pollarding the Limes on the Green to be sought. There had been no significant damage due to the extreme weather conditions on Oct 31st which had felled many trees nearby.

Allotments. Quotes for cutting back the hedges to be sought. LE asked permission for Manure and chippings to be bought annually. Resolved to allow this. There had been a visit from Daventry Allotments association, which had been very complimentary about what had been achieved at Heyford.

Footpaths. As Footpath Warden DM now attends a monthly Zoom conference with WNC officers, and is the link with Fixmystreet.

Youth Club. Will now be open weekly after a good response for helpers. New chairs and water heater purchased, and all electrical equipment checked.

Canal. DM reported Bridge 32 brickwork still not repaired despite many reports to Canal & river trust.

Defibrillators. The shop defibrillator had been used, and the pads replaced and ready to use again.

Representative for the Village Hall Committee, and PPG at Bugbrooke surgery.

A Wallace to be the new Council representative at the Village Hall.

M McLean to be the PPG representative at Bugbrooke Surgery.

A Williams to be the new Council representative on the School Governors.

Speed Survey 2022. IP felt that this was over restrictive. Felt that new signage obviated the need for this at this time.

West Northamptonshire Strategic Plan Town & Parish Council Briefing. AWi reported that this replaced the SNC Joint Core strategy, and will not be adopted until 2024. This is the consultation period regarding large housing and industrial developments. WNC will be required to provide 64,000 new houses from 2024-30 and has 37,000 allocated so far. It is felt that the completed NP will protect the village from over-development. There is concern at what will happen opposite Panetone Park on the A4500. AW to draft a response for Council. Individuals may also comment.

PCSO MM felt that the visibility of an uniformed Police officer was an asset, and it was agreed that it was beneficial for a PCSO to be seen around the village on a regular basis. Resolved to continue the contract into 2022/23, dependent on Bugbrooke's continuing participation in the scheme, and as Bugbrooke are continuing, so will Heyford's part of the contract

Parish Council meetings in 2022 will be on the first Monday of each month, (unless a Bank Holiday) and would start at 19.30. The next ones are on Monday Dec 6th and Monday Jan 10th. Full meetings.

Reporting Highway and Footpath Issues. The Clerk will report issues that Council is made aware of, but Council would encourage residents to use the Fixmystreet service to report issues themselves as there will then be no time lag; and first-hand reports are almost always better than 2nd or 3rd hand reports. The service can be found here <https://www.fixmystreet.com/>

It is easy to use; you can have your own account and can check up on any issues you have reported.

Streetlights within the village can be reported to the Clerk, who will report them to the maintenance company. Please do not report to Balfour Beatty as they deal only with major Highway lights – i.e., motorway, A5 and A45.

Roadworks locally & nationally can be seen on this site <http://streetworks.org.uk/live-traffic-works-map/>

*Clerk to the Parish Council: Guy Ravine Tel: 07935 931787
E-mail: netherheyfordparishcouncil@gmail.com*

Councillor list with responsibilities and preferred means of contact.	
C. Kiloh, 3 Church Lane. Nether Heyford. Tel. 07779 900860	Chairman Planning, Finance, Arnold Trust
L. Dilkes. 17 Furnace Lane, Nether Heyford, NN7 3JF e-mail thedilkesfamily@outlook.com 07967753216	Village Hall Rep, Youth Club, Vice Chair, Finance.
L. Eales – 3 Church Lane, Nether Heyford Tel. 01327 341707 e-mail lyndaeales@aol.com	Allotments, Playing Field.
L Hall linda.hall.netherheyford@outlook.com	Councillor
N. Haynes, 30, Weedon Rd, Nether Heyford Tel. 01327 340167	Tree Warden, Planning, Joint Burial Board
M Mclean mcleanmj@aol.com	Council rep. to Bugbrooke surgery
D. Musson. davemusson073@gmail.com	Footpaths.
I Parris. ianparris@ianparris.com	Councillor
C Thomas C.thomas327@btinternet.com	Councillor
A. Wallace. 5, Western Avenue, Nether Heyford. NN7 3NQ. andrew.wallace8765@gmail.com	Council rep to Village Hall
A. Williams 26 Church St, Nether Heyford, NN7 3LH anthony.k.williams@talk21.com	Chair of Planning, Finance, Council rep to School governors
Cllr Karen Cooper - West Northamptonshire Council, The Forum, Moat Lane, Towcester NN12 6AD www.westnorthants.gov.uk Karen.cooper@westnorthants.gov.uk Tel: 07753 638180	Conservative Councillor for Bugbrooke Ward – Lead Member for Nether Heyford, Blisworth & Gayton

Next Meeting Monday Dec 6th at the Baptist Church rooms.



Parish Church of St. Peter and St. Paul

Services for December 2021

Sunday 5 th	8:00 am	BCP Said Holy Communion Service at Flore Church
	10:00 am	Holy Communion at Church Stowe
	10:00 am	United First Sunday Service at Flore Church
	6:00 pm	Evening Worship at Heyford Church
Sunday 12 th	10:00 am	Benefice Gift Service at Flore Church
Saturday 18 th	2:00 pm	United Messy Church & Christingle at Flore Church – all welcome!
Sunday 19 th	10:00 am	Holy Communion at Heyford Church
	10:00 am	Children's Christmas Service at Flore Chapel
	4:00 pm	Family Carol Service at Upper Stowe
	6:00 pm	Carols by Candlelight at Heyford Church
Friday 24 th	6:00 pm	Village Carol Service at Flore Church
Xmas Eve	8:30 pm	Christmas Holy Communion Service at Church Stowe
Saturday 25 th	9:00 am	Christmas Holy Communion Service at Heyford Church
Xmas Day	10:00 am	Christmas Holy Communion Service at Flore Church
	11:00 am	Christmas Day Family Service at Upper Stowe
	11:15 am	Christmas Holy Communion Service at Brockhall
Sunday 27 th	10:00 am	Benefice Said Service of Holy Communion at Heyford Church

Midweek Service: Morning Prayer at 9:30AM via conference call (not 29th Dec) and 9:00AM every Friday via Zoom (not 24th or 31st December). Please contact the Rector for an invitation – all welcome.

Prayer During December we shall be praying for people living in Winston Close, Roberts Field and Ridgeway Furlong in Heyford, Nether Lane and Thornton Close in Flore, The Green in Church Stowe and The Old Rectory, Rose Cottage and Western Cottage in Brockhall.

Services for January 2022

Sunday 2 nd	11:00 am	Informal First Sunday Worship at Flore Church
Sunday 9 th	10:00 am	Benefice Service of Holy Communion at Church Stowe
Sunday 16 th	10:00 am	Service of Holy Communion at Heyford Church
	10:00 am	Partnership Service at Flore Chapel
	6:00 pm	Evening Service at Upper Stowe
Sunday 23 rd	10:00 am	Service of Holy Communion at Flore Church
	4:00 pm	Café Church at Heyford Church
Sunday 30 th	10:00 am	Benefice & Partnership Covenant Service and Holy Communion at Flore Church
	6:00 pm	BCP Evening Prayer at Church Stowe

Midweek Services: Morning Prayer at 9:30AM every Wednesday via telephone conference call (not 5th January). Morning Prayer at 9:00AM every Friday via Zoom. Please contact the Rector for an invitation – all welcome.

Prayer During January for people living in Church Lane and Weedon Rd in Heyford, Spring Lane and Russell Rise in Flore, Francis Row in Upper Stowe and the Stables and Coach House in Brockhall.

Food Bank

Don't go hungry – if you are in need of help, please contact Towcester Food Bank 07724 832043 (24 hours). www.towcester.foodbank.org.uk

Leave a message and they will phone you back. They can issue vouchers for food as well as a delivery or collection service.

Alternatively if you wish to help, please leave donations for the food banks in the box outside the door of 15 Middle Street where they are delivered to the banks twice a week.

Thank you.

Dear Friends,

As you read this, we are in the season of Advent, which began on Sunday 28th November. In the Church, Advent is a time of waiting that points us forward to God's future, a future full of the promise of restoration, salvation and new life - a promise that will finally be fulfilled when Jesus returns. The Advent stories tell us to prepare, to get ready for something momentous to happen, after which things will never be the same again. The Prophet Isaiah foresaw this, writing "*Rip the heavens apart! Come down, Lord; make the mountains tremble. Be a spark that starts a fire causing water to boil. Then your enemies will know who you are; all nations will tremble because you are nearby*" (Isaiah 64:1-2 CEV). Isaiah spoke of a people calling their God to come and turn the world upside down. Still today, we make that same call, willing the arrival of a God who will overturn injustice, and give birth to the promised new creation. No wonder the mountains tremble and quake!

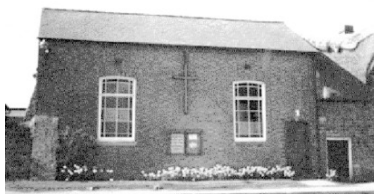
For almost two years, our normal lives have been shaken by a microscopic killer that has swept unseen through communities and nations. Lives and livelihoods have been adversely affected by the global pandemic and national lockdown. People have struggled to provide for themselves, others have known the grief of a sudden and untimely death. In addition, we're aware of a refugee crisis on our borders, of global climate change, of political hypocrisy and power games. In response to all this, in heeding God's call and promise, we should shake with anger and frustration. We should be impassioned to act for justice and do all we can to welcome in God's coming Kingdom of love and justice, peace and wholeness for all people.

So, as we open the windows on our Advent calendars, as we count down the days to what we hope will be a 'normal' Christmas, we wait for the one who will turn our world upside down, the one who will be with us through the turmoil and the chaos, the one who will restore our hope and our faith.

I'd like to take this opportunity to wish you all a very peaceful and joyful Christmas and a prosperous new year. And I pray that this Christmas, God will gift you, bless you, comfort you and inspire you as we enter into a new year.

Yours in Christ,

Stephen (tel 01327 344436)



Nether Heyford Baptist Church

Services for December / January 2022

December 4 th	10:30am	Service led by Wendy Manley
December 11 th	10:30am	Christmas Gift service led by Martin Buckby
	4:00pm	Carols by candlelight led by Martin Buckby
December 18 th	10:30am	Service of lessons and carols led by Les Britten
December 25 th	10:30am	Christmas day family service led by Les Britten
January 2 nd	10:30am	Worship led by Clive Leakey
January 9 th	10:30am	Worship led by Wally Mular
	16:00:00	Songs of Praise led by Martin Buckby (with tea and cakes)
January 16 th	10:30am	Memorial service for members and friends who have died during the Pandemic when funerals have been limited by numbers, led by Martin Buckby.
January 23 rd	10:30am	Worship led by Les Britten
January 30 th	10:30am	Communion service led by Martin Buckby

Events

November 26 th		Church Christmas dinner
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All welcome

Thanks and Congratulations

Emma's amazing Wing Walk raised the magnificent sum of £1,897.27p to be shared equally with the Baptist chapel and Weedon surgery so well done Emma and many thanks for your bravery and generosity.

Hello again

As we approach Christmas again (I say again because I, like many others who read this article have been here many times before. Many Christmases have come and gone). So what might make this Christmas different to others we have known in the past or will it be something that just comes and goes? This Christmas will of course be different for us all, last year was so unusual and during this past year many will have mourned the loss of loved ones and others will be anticipating that this Christmas may well be their last or the last for a loved one. Perhaps we might pause for a moment to reflect and remember.

Christmas time means different things to different people, for many a time of excitement and expectation, for some, as I have already said, precious memories are painful memories as they consider the loss of a loved one and for others a time for a new commitment to the true and treasured meaning of Christmas. This caused me to think of what people might expect from a good Christmas. These might include food, family, friendship, glitter, gifts and for others carols, candles and The Christ in the crib.

I am a great fan of the “season of Christmas” (and it can just be a season of excess, expense and short lived expectation) because of my family and the lovely times shared. But I am also keen to embrace the “reason for Christmas” in having faith in the God who came to us, came for us to bring us the lasting meaning of the season. Pivotal to Christmas is that of giving and receiving gifts and presents and already our shops, newspapers, magazines and the media are full of ideas as they raise people’s hopes and expectations of what Christmas will bring to them

I recall that when I was growing up presents or gifts were so important and when money was really tight, having gifts at Christmas meant receiving something which you would not have otherwise been able to go out and buy. What does or should the giving of a gift or present convey to the person receiving it? - well I guess it says many things including affection, appreciation, care and love.

Only just a few days ago I said to my grown up children who are currently embarking on major home improvements, “please don’t buy me anything for Christmas, I don’t need anything, I have all I need.” I know that they appreciate and love me because their love is expressed in words and actions and I don’t need or want presents to know that. They understood the meaning and feeling behind my words. Presents and gifts should, ideally, be given for a purpose and the gift then used for the purpose for which it was given.

Someone wisely said and I often quote this as I support farewell services “In life we can so often strive for possessions, power and position but when we near the end of life’s journey we find that happiness depends on none of these but rather on the love of family and friends”.

Do we just want a good family, feast focused Christmas or combined with that a God focused Christmas as we embrace something of lasting worth?

God became the greatest gift to us and we can embrace that gift and allow him to impact our living, our loving, our giving and our Christmas

A lovely carol comes to mind, "In the bleak mid winter" and the final verse

What can I give him, poor as I am?
If I were a shepherd, I would bring a lamb;
if I were a Wise Man, I would do my part;
yet what I can I give him: give my heart.

Poverty and poor may not apply to many of us these days because so many of us have plenty and plenty to spare. The emphasis of this carol is on us giving back to God something of what he has first given to us.

I have many many favourite Bible verses but one of them is this

2 Corinthians 8 verse 9

"For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that you through his poverty might become rich"

That is the reason for the season of Christmas.
My best wishes to you all and thank you.

Martin

On behalf of the fellowship of "the chapel on the green"



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Towcester Area Door-to-Door Community Transport

Towcester Area Door-to-Door (TADD) is a long-established charity operating a door-to door community transport service for people across the West Northants area. The service enables the elderly and disabled to attend medical and well-being related appointments and services. TADD is affordable and helps people retain independence in the absence of suitable public transport and avoid reliance on family, friends and neighbours.

During the COVID pandemic there has been a dramatic decrease in the number of journeys made, however we have continued to provide transport for those who needed it. Routine appointments are beginning to be made once again, the flu and booster vaccine campaign is starting up and we are seeing an increase in requests for transport. If you, or anyone you know, would benefit from joining and accessing the service please do get in touch.

We desperately need volunteer drivers in the Heyfords. There are many elderly, disabled or isolated people who rely on TADD in our community, so if you have a little spare time and are a driver, please consider volunteering to help your neighbours. You never know when you might need to use the service yourself! Drivers need to have access to a car, be available on a fairly regular basis and are required to complete a DBS check. Mileage is reimbursed at the HMRC rate, insurance premiums are not impacted and journeys are allocated weekly by mutual agreement.

To learn more about becoming a member or volunteering for TADD please get in touch:


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THE Heyford **SINGERS**

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www.heyfordsingers.org

2022 Northamptonshire Village Awards Scheme

(organised by ACRE – Action for Communities in Rural England)

One of the many village events cancelled or postponed in 2020 due to Covid, was the Northamptonshire Village Awards Scheme. Whilst this was disappointing - given the considerable time and effort put into the preparation of our entry by many of our village organisations - I'm pleased to report that a new Scheme will take place in 2022.

As we know, Covid-19, with its resultant repeated lock-downs, has had a significant effect on many organisations and activities, including some of Nether Heyford's. So we cannot simply re-submit our 2020 entry. Instead, over the next few weeks I shall be contacting village groups once again with a request that they report any changes - and also any future plans to help them move forward once more. However, if your group does not hear from me by 10th December and you have either made changes to your group, or some new plans, I'd be very grateful if you could contact me on: alwyne76@gmail.com or 01327 340 803. This will help us to produce an up-to-date picture of our community life.

On 4th December two Village Awards Assessors will visit Nether Heyford and meet three representatives: Charles Kiloh, chairman of the Parish Council; Linda Eales for the Allotments Association; and Alwyne Wilson, voluntary co-ordinator, to advise us on what will be required in our submission.

The deadline for application is even tighter this time – 31 January – not ideal with Christmas and New Year reducing our preparation time.

Following our submission, judges will visit our village to talk to groups and view our facilities. I do hope that, if invited, you will be willing to join a small group of Heyford people to meet them and help convince them what a marvellous community we have in our village.

In advance of your support, thank you.

Alwyne Wilson
(Voluntary Co-ordinator)



The Late Carol Baker

Two and a half years ago I lost my darling wife to a brain tumour. Some of you may have known her as a member of the Heyford Singers, or from conversations around the village. Perhaps even more importantly the cheerful one in our partnership.

Those of you who have been fortunate enough to avoid contact with cancer, and particularly this devastating version of the disease, may not appreciate its impact on the sufferer and their loved ones. It is a relentless, cruel disease. It's too late for Carol, but the Brain Tumour Charity offer some hope for sufferers through their research. They have made some important discoveries recently that mean future treatment may be more successful. Totally dependent on charitable donations they need all the help they can get.

During Carol's illness conversation was difficult, because her cancer affected the areas of the brain dealing with language. That meant many conversations we should have had couldn't take place. I took to writing down my thoughts, and I've recently published those pieces on Kindle e-book under the title "The Words You Never Heard".

Kindle insist on me charging 77p for a copy, but if you use Kindle Unlimited (you can trial it for free) you can download a copy for free, and share it with friends.

There is a Just Giving page detailed in the book, where you can donate to The Brain Tumour Charity. That's my goal. To raise some money for them. If you aren't interested in the book you can still access the Just Giving page at:

<http://giving.com/fundraising/graham-baker-for-carol>

If you do buy the book be assured all royalties paid to me will be forwarded to the charity.

Please give it a read, if only to better understand the kinds of things many carers face. And share it to spread the word. Most carers need support. And, if you can, make a donation, however small. It will be gratefully received by the charity.

And by me. And Carol.

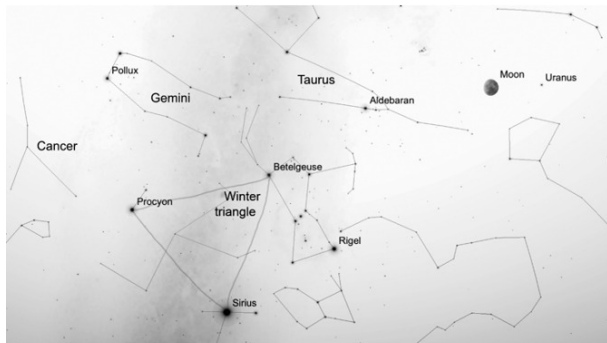
Thank you.

Graham Baker



Astronomy on the Green

December welcomes the winter sky, a point at which our view of the Milky Way has changed. In summer we are at the part of Earth's orbit that points us towards the Galaxy's core, which is very noticeable in the dark sky than the view we currently get looking out across the outer arms of our home Galaxy. That is not to say that the contents of the Milky Way are of less interest, there is plenty for the visual (or binocular) viewer to see. [Sky below as of the 15th of December].



If we begin at the upper left shoulder of Orion (Betelgeuse) we are at the edge of the Milky Way. This red giant star forms a part of the "Winter triangle" together with Sirius (Canis Major) & Procyon (Canis Minor).

To the left and above Orion, you will see the twins (Gemini) each headed by a star Castor and Pollux. Follow Castor down to the right foot and just above to the right you can see the Shoe Buckle cluster (M35) 3,000 light years distant, as a large misty smudge to the naked eye, but binoculars will reveal the brightest 100 stars. If you then do a similar route but this time starting at Pollux, just below and to the left of the left foot you will find the Christmas Tree cluster – some imagination is needed to reveal the tree. NGC 2264 is 2,200 light years away, a small smudge to the naked eye can be resolved into 80 stars with the use of binoculars.

Moving down to the blue of Sirius (the brightest star in the night sky) takes us close to two more clusters the Little Beehive cluster (this will be low in the sky), it lies directly beneath Sirius and contains 100 silvery stars (best seen with binoculars or a small telescope). [Its big brother the Beehive Cluster M44 can be found in Cancer, just above the central star]. Finally, to a large, unnamed open cluster - M47 it is visible to the naked eye (with care) and lies to the left of Sirius, more or less directly below Procyon (which is much higher in the sky).

A quick note about Sirius, it is well worth a look at this beacon in the night sky. This star is known as the Dog Star, being low in the sky it twinkles brightly. Only 8.7 light years from us it is a double star, forming a system of its own.

Clear skies, and a starry Christmas to you all.

Tony Boulle

Village Hall News

It is so good to see the village hall open and busy again with virtually all our activities back to normal. We have had quite a number of bookings for private parties wanting to celebrate significant birthdays and anniversaries where the celebrations were delayed because of "the dreaded Lockdown". Our village hall is an ideal place for these celebrations and we are considering revamping the kitchen to make it even more suitable for catering for these functions.

Our Christmas Tree will be installed in the foyer and the hall decorated in time for Advent. The Crafty Club who are holding their Christmas Fair on 4th December have kindly agreed to decorate the tree.


Despite the very best efforts of Alwyne Wilson our past chairman, we have been unable to find a company to put on our usual Pantomime - one more casualty of Covid. I know this will be missed but hopefully by Christmas 2022 we will have more luck.

We are already working on our programme for the Village Fete on June 11th next year. We want it to be extra special to compensate for its absence for two years. We would welcome all ideas and offers of help and are planning to set up a working group in January. Please contact me if you would like to be involved. Work will start in earnest at our next committee meeting on 18th January.

Have a very Happy Christmas and I look forward to a very busy 2022 for the Village Hall.

Joan Kirkbride

Email: jknhvchairman@gmail.com

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*Bella and Abbie wish you a Merry Christmas
and Bob and Vicki Hamblin hope you have a
happy Christmas too*

Bugbrooke and District Flower Society

For the last couple of months, we have enjoyed some wonderful demonstrations and it has been good to re-unite with our members.

We do not meet in December and in January we will be holding our AGM, but in February we shall look forward to another demonstration; hopefully leading to a year of more normal meetings and enjoying events with everyone again. Our meeting will be on Monday 28th February and new members and visitors are always most welcome.

In the meantime, we wish you all a peaceful and happy time over the festive period and a healthy 2022.

For more information please follow us on Facebook or contact Dianne on 01604 830063 or Simone on 01327 342167.



Heyford Picturedrome

Picturedrome is back!!

Our first film after the Lockdown was **Dream Horse** which was hugely enjoyed by an audience of 39 members.

Our next event is the **Christmas Supper and Film Evening** which will take place in the Village Hall on Thursday 16th December and is a **ticket only event**.

Tickets are available from Rosemary Dunkley, 3A, Watery Lane (01327 342588) and email: jigsawrmd@icloud.com) at a cost of **£15 per person** all inclusive of the meal, wine and soft drinks.

Doors open at 6.30pm with the supper starting at 7.00pm. The film will be **Elf** which is a very popular seasonal favourite.

Tony Clewett
(Phone no. 341533)

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FLOWER T POT

Original Art

'Really enjoyed tonight. Thank you so much for the great class I have learnt so much' one of our members WhatsApp-ed after using black and white charcoal for the very first time ***'you are both such good teachers and so encouraging.'***

The Flower T Pot art class is going from strength to strength meeting on a Thursday morning from 10:00 till 1:00 and in the evening from 6:30 till 9:30. Experienced amateurs and complete beginners leave the world behind and come together once a week for three hours of complete bliss to satisfy their creative desires. We have such a wonderful time, exploring a different medium and trying a new technique every week. So far this term we have used pencil to sketch, took a pen for a walk, painted with watercolour and explored black and white charcoal.

This morning we were led by Andrea (one of the leaders) who showed us how to use under painting to maximum effect with soft pastels. Next week we will be mark making with Veneeta (the other leader) and using acrylics to explore abstract art. There is something for everyone. We will be finishing the year learning how to paint with oils. It's so exciting!

During the morning class today I overheated one of our members say ***'When people ask me 'What do you do these days?' I reply, Oh I'm an artist.'***

Our classes will run until December 16th and begin again January 6th. So treat yourself to three hours of creativity, or put art classes on your Christmas list. What a fantastic gift to to give or receive.

If you want to know more about Flower T Pot Original Art you can contact us via flowertpotart@gmail.com or phone 07729105584/07716410344 or follow us on our Facebook page 'Flower T Pot Art'.

Veneeta Rayner

View from the Wildlife Patch

Right now, in and around "The Patch". All seems well.

The Hedge has now been given its winter trim and looks quite neat and tidy. The grasses in our newly planted Meadow Seeds are showing through. We expect them to be around 100mm - 4 inches - tall by next March when we will crop them off to around 3 inches (75mm) tall to allow low growing plants to see the light. What happens after that depends on the growth of the plants during Spring and Summer. I am reluctant to plan too much. We are living in unprecedented times and who knows what weather we will get next year or how our plantings will be affected.

There were some frogs in the pond last month. Frogs hibernate in ponds like ours before spawning the following Spring. A successful spawning season with our home grown tadpoles leaving to grow on in the surrounding area would be good.

Slugs and Snails, whilst not universally popular, are essential for a healthy wild area. There are around 40 slug species and 120 snail species in the UK. Each species occupies its own ecological niche. It's own unique place in the Web of life which is occupied by no other living being in that area. This enables species to live together without competing with other Slug or Snail species in the vicinity. In turn, these provide food for other animal species. Mammals, e.g. hedgehogs eat slugs and snails, as do badgers. Song thrushes depend on snails to feed their nestlings and many other birds include slugs in their diet. Ground Beetles are known to be important predators of slug and snail eggs. Some centipedes depend on these eggs as well.

It's fair to say that due to molluscs reliable abundance, a great many species of animals large and small are dependent on land molluscs at some stage of their development for sustained survival. In recent years there has been a change in the UK slug population. You may have noticed huge, flesh coloured slugs in your garden and maybe some slime tracks in an outhouse or garage - even in your house, especially the kitchen. You may have found green/brownish speckled slugs when you switched a light on in these places.

Other than they belong to the Genus *Arionidae*, I have to admit that I don't really know what is going on with these big, flesh coloured slugs. I have noticed when they move in, all other slugs disappear. I will make it a project for 2022 to find out exactly what they are and what is happening and report back.

The other slugs, the brown ones that leave silvery trails on our floors and walls are Green Cellar Slugs. These have moved in in recent years to oust our native "Yellow" Cellar Slugs which have almost gone from the map. Both Green and Yellow Slugs seem to occupy the same niche but the new, Green Slugs are much more successful. Neither species eats green leaves but they will eat seeds, flour etc. Whilst in kitchens, they seem to thrive on the crumbs left about the floor and often live behind kitchen units etc.

Dave Musson



In Nether Heyford

Until last month I would not have believed that a glossy magazine could be turned into a piece of jewellery. But, if you had peeped through the Village Hall windows on November 4th you would have seen Nether Heyford WI members busily trying to copy the Acholi women of Uganda making beads made from long strips of ...? Yes, a glossy magazine!

Alison Rockett and her husband went to teach in Uganda for several years and took their family on a life changing experience. She told us how the Acholi people spent their time, with the men-folk at the bottom of deep pits quarrying large lumps of stone which, when brought to the top, were broken down into smaller pieces by the women using hammers. The children completed the job by making them even smaller and it was sold as gravel. All this hard work earned them £1 a day.

The women also made beads from paper, transforming it into beautiful necklaces and bracelets. When Alison came on holiday to England and Canada she brought some of these and sold them to various shops. So, a new life was started for the Acholi Beads and for the women who made them. We then had a chance to learn how to do it and, I have to say, we all went home with a bracelet of Acholi beads!!!

December 1st is our long awaited 90th Birthday meal. As you can imagine our plans have been arranged and re-arranged as covid has changed our lives. Hopefully, this time it will work. We may be a year older, perhaps not much wiser, but we will certainly be excited to be able to celebrate the achievement of Nether Heyford's women over nearly a century. Reading the minutes of meetings, particularly during the war years, gives a great sense of pride.

Thursday January 6th in the Village Hall we will be starting a New Year with our own craft expert, Deborah Burrow, teaching us 'Quilling for Beginners'. If, like me, you have thought you would like to try it, now's the time! We start at 7.30 and the cost for the evening, including refreshments, is £5. It would be good to see you, but, until then, A VERY HAPPY CHRISTMAS AND HAPPY AND HEALTHY NEW YEAR from Nether Heyford W.I.

Mary Rice
Heyford Lodge
01327 340101

Dear Diary,

December 1963

M was 21 this year. He didn't do much celebrating because he broke his leg playing football for Express Lifts and was in plaster for 13 weeks, not that he planned to do much anyway. He couldn't ride his scooter so he had one or two mates with cars who ran him to his darts matches and down the bookies, but he is planning on learning to drive himself when he can. His lessons are booked with Dennis Slinn, a local at The Castle Inn where he plays darts, at 17/6 a go instead of the guinea he usually charges.

I went on holiday with M and his parents to Clacton in a caravan in July. His brother came too so it was a bit squashed. I'm doing well at Tech and passed my Shorthand & Typing exams again this year. I enjoy my one afternoon a week there, it takes me out of the office and I've made more friends. M is also at College to learn Engineering during his apprenticeship, until he's 22 at least.

My uncle got married in September this year and I was one of two bridesmaids. M was an Usher and the wedding was at St. James Church. This means we have one less living in our house but he was always out 'courting' or with his mates, so it's not much different. I miss him though. He's 10 years older than me but more like a brother. He moved in with us when his parents (my grandparents) died. Not quite true as we moved in with him really as their house was bigger than ours.

We've had a telephone installed. It came to a head when dad was ill recently and mum had to go across the road to the public telephone to call the doctor. It'll come in handy to call her brother in Leeds and if I miss the bus home I can let her know. Dad can give me a ticking off over the phone rather than face to face then.

Every Saturday night we go dancing at The Salon in Jimmy's End. They have some big bands there and it's great to dress up and dance. The only problem is that M often gets a nosebleed during the evening and I sit out like a lemon waiting for him to recover.

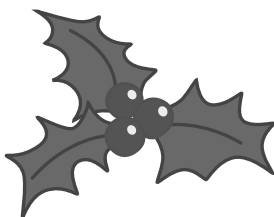
On Sundays we alternate. One week I go to M's house for tea and we go to St. James church then on to the working men's club until my bus comes. He comes to Heyford (the terminus) on the bus with me, then goes back on the same bus, sometimes after sharing a pint with the conductor and driver, although on Sundays the pub shuts at 10:30. He's not the only one who does this either. The following week he comes to my home for tea and mum buys a tin of meat and a Battenburg cake, we go to the village church then cross the buttercup field to The Old Sun until he takes the last bus home. It works well.

Christmas will soon be here. My Christmas list so far is hankies for dad because he gets through loads, and face powder for mum. My cousin will be with us along with my aunt and uncle but I'm not expected to buy them anything. I think I'll get M a pen as he's always looking for something to write with and I could get his mum and dad

some fancy biscuits. We'll play games like snakes & ladders and cards in the front room where dad will light a coal fire. Trouble is you sit round it and your front is warm but your back is cold. The living room is always warm because of the rayburn but it's traditional at Christmas to use the front room. Other times of the year it's a waste of space.

I may not see M for Christmas day or Boxing Day as the buses don't run much over the Christmas period but he'll keep.

Polly



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Where: Baptist Rooms
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Times: 10.00am – 1.00pm
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For more information and to sign up contact **Veneeta Rayner** on

Tel – 07729 105 584

or **Andrea Slater** on

Tel – 07716410344

or **Email – flowerpotart@gmail.com**

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Hear from some of our students:

Thank you for making my Thursday mornings such a treat!

Great teaching, very encouraging and I love the variety

I didn't know how good an artist I was until I was taught the techniques!

Flower T Pot Original Art



Allotment News

Looking Good

I am sure that many of you will have noticed that the hedges around the allotment have been recently pruned. They look in good order and our thanks goes to the team employed.

Allotmenters continue to maintain their plots to a good standard and our much valued volunteers have kept the pathways, orchard and community areas well mown. Two "Volunteer Saturdays" took place in November when allotmenters and friends of the allotment took part in a number of routine maintenance tasks such as pruning fruit bushes, spreading mulch, cutting back brambles in the wildlife area and planting up wall flowers in the community cut flower border. We hope to repeat these volunteer sessions in the New Year so anyone keen on helping out for an hour or two would be most welcome to join us. You don't have to be an allotment holder to take part, just look out for future announcements.

Taking Stock

Reflecting on what we have grown, what has been a great success and what has been a bit of a disaster is an important task at this time of the year. It allows us to think about what we might grow next time round, what seeds to order and ... what we might do to combat tomato blight in the coming year! I am afraid that subject is still too painful to even think about just now!

Rent Night and Vacant Plots

Our annual rent night will be held in January although we will also be offering the chance to again do this digitally. Plot holders will receive a letter from the Parish Council before then, informing them of their rent for the coming year.

We are aware that a few people are planning to give up their allotments next year because they have either moved out of the area or can no longer find the time to cultivate their plot. Where this is the case we have asked them to confirm their intentions so that we can begin to plan for new allotmenters in the New Year. If you are interested in taking on an allotment do contact Lynda Eales at ealeslynda@gmail.com or on 01327341707 and she will be pleased to talk to you about what we have to offer.

One of the initiatives that we have been pleased to launch in the past few years has been the availability of smaller plots and free "starter plots" for those who would like to give allotmenting a try without committing to anything too demanding.

Experience has shown only too clearly that if un-taken plots are left for too long they quickly become overgrown and any new tenant is faced with the daunting task of trying to do battle with a sea of weeds. We will therefore try to quickly clear these and cover them with landscape fabric, thus making them easier for any of you thinking of joining us as allotmenters.

Winter Blues?

Many people think that gardening and looking after an allotment comes to an abrupt halt when winter approaches. Nothing could really be further from the truth. Monty Don might not have his regular Friday night slot on television but there are a host of jobs to be done. Just “google” winter tasks in the garden and on the allotment and you'll be staggered by what you could be doing. Added to which, it has been medically proven that time regularly spent outdoors in winter is a way of fighting both physical and mental ailments and certainly banishing winter blues. There is a saying attributed to the famous writer and hill walker, Alfred Wainwright: “There is no such thing as bad weather, only unsuitable clothing”.

Sadly Missed

I have no doubt the pages of the Prattler will rightly mourn the sad loss of our friend Geoff Thorneycroft, but we would like to add our own condolences. Although Geoff often told us that he was no gardener, he would regularly stop on his way to carry out jobs on the Playing Field and chat about what we were growing and how well the allotments were doing. He helped us in so many ways, particularly in helping raising the profile of that area of the village - erecting fencing, planting of trees and improving access to and from the allotments and the new facilities on the Playing Fields. Our Memory Tree, planted earlier in 2021 for local victims of COVID 19 will take on an even greater significance. Our thoughts and best wishes go to Wendy and all Geoff's family and friends.

Keeping in Contact

If you would like to know more about the allotments in Heyford or are interested in taking on a plot contact either Lynda Eales at ealeslynda@gmail.com or on 01327341707 or Mike Langrish at langrish_heyford@hotmail.com or on 01327341390.

Good Gardening.

Mike Langrish

The Prattler

The Prattler is run by an active voluntary committee comprising of Sue Boutle, Christine Watts, Vicki Hamblin, Jez Wilson, Nick Essex, Richard Musson and Mary Rice. If you would like to submit articles or have any suggestions for future issues, please get in touch.

The Newspaper is supported by donations from the Parish Council, the Parish Church, the Baptist Church, Heyford W.I., Heyford Garden Club, Heyford Singers, the Bowls Club, the Village Hall and Heyford Picturedrome as well as the advertisers.

Thanks are also due to the volunteers who distribute it every month. It is all very much appreciated.



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Heyford Garden Club

www.heyfordgardenclub.com

The next Garden Club meeting will be on 10th January when Clare Price will tell us about winter planting.

Broad Beans

It was traditional to sow some broad beans in the open ground in October or November for an early crop, and it was always stressed that only specific hardy varieties should be used. It may be a sign of changing climate, but I have found that almost any variety can be used this way. However I have learned from experience that some creatures, probably mice, eat most of the beans before they can germinate so I have in recent years taken to sowing the beans in trays at any time from November to January and keeping them in an unheated green house (protected from mice!) until they have produced their first leaves and planted them out when the weather was suitable. This has proved successful - up to now.

Cultivation Problems

Earlier this year I had several batches of healthy seedlings of various sorts which I pricked out into pots in the usual way. All of these plants failed to thrive; they didn't grow and became yellow and sickly looking. There didn't seem to any obvious reason for this so I suspected the potting compost even though it was a brand I had used without any problems for a couple of years. When I repotted the plants into new compost from another source they recovered and grew on without any further issues so it seems that I may have been correct. Compost, even if good quality, can deteriorate if not stored properly. It is sometimes tempting to save money by buying in bulk, but if you don't use it within a few months it may not be such a bargain.

Christmas Rose

I have found the Christmas Rose (H Nigella) is a bit tricky to grow. We have bought, or been given as a Christmas present, several plants over the years which have flowered in their pots but on being planted into the garden have usually just faded away. This year I have one that was given to us last Christmas which is still alive, though not very impressive, but does appear to be producing flowers. Perhaps finally I have a success. I don't have any problems with other species of hellebores which thrive and produce numerous seedlings.

Things to do in December and January

Remove leaves from lawns and ponds.

Planting of shrubs, trees and herbaceous plants can be done when the ground is not frozen or waterlogged and fruit trees (except for cherries and plums) can be pruned.

Mark Newstead

Nether Heyford Village Hall



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www.heyfordsingers.org

*Christmas Is
A Winter Night
On With the Snow
Christmas Shopping Blues
When a Child is Born*

**Some of the songs included in
this year's Christmas concert**

Well, after many months, several lock downs and then the slow, cautious lifting of restrictions, a much-loved Heyford event is finally back on the calendar... Heyford Singers Christmas Concert!

"WE NEED A LITTLE CHRISTMAS"

is the title of the 2021 concert, to be performed on Friday 10th and Saturday 11th December in the village hall, at 7.30 pm. It will feature many, familiar Christmas songs (some listed above) as well as **"Light Eternal"**, music and words composed especially for this concert by resident pianist, Graham Kinnerly. It is a moving tribute to the memory of all those who have lost their lives to Covid 19.

The concert will have the two usual halves, these may shorter than before, but still with an interval and opportunity to buy tickets for the raffle draw. To enable social distancing this concert's format will be café-style, with audience members sitting at tables rather than rows. Audience numbers will be limited to **45** for each performance, so it is essential to book your tickets early to be guaranteed a seat!

This should be done by telephone **07971 786912** or email **kvra44@gmail.com** and in both cases to Keith Rands-Allen. Ticket prices are £6.50 for adults and £4.50 for children under 12 years of age.

It will be wonderful to have the village hall full of the music, songs and joy of Christmas once again!

Another date for Heyford's Christmas festivities is **Friday 17th December at 6.30pm** when Heyford Singers invite everyone to come along to **Carols on the Green**, in front of the village hall. Bring a torch, bring your families, friends and neighbours, for a truly special village event... and for this the third time it will be dry! All profits from a bucket collection during the evening will go to Heyford Singers and Nether Heyford Parish Church.

This is my final Prattler article for Heyford Singers. Eight years ago, when I took on the post of Secretary, the committee agreed to my request to write a monthly article for the Prattler, to promote the choir, its legacy to the community, its values and its history. I hope I have achieved this over the years, but I also trust that I have

shared with you, the readers, my love and enthusiasm for music and the importance of music in all our lives, whatever our personal preferences.

I have on numerous occasions waxed lyrical about the benefits, and the sense of well-being (social, mental, physical, intellectual, etc) that comes from the sheer joy of listening to music, or singing, dancing, playing an instrument, being part of a choir. I hope that is true for you? In a myriad of articles we have looked at TV, stage and film themes, national anthems, seasonal songs, famous singers and composers, the Beatles, sounds in nature all around us, and even excitingly Heyford Singers being invited to the televised Songs of Praise! The World War 1 commemorations, 2014 - 2018, allowed me to explore the music of that sad and traumatic time a hundred years ago, and the legacy of memories, words and tunes left to us to cherish and pass on to the next generations.

Thank you to all those people who compiled and sent to me, during enforced lockdown, the eight pieces of music they would take to an idyllic lockdown island. We printed and thoroughly enjoyed several of these, apologies for those that didn't get into print.

It was with much sadness that I wrote articles about dear friends and fellow choir members who died. They enjoyed their music and singing and gave so much to Heyford Singers, but were also much loved and valued members of our wider community, the church, the school, etc. Hugh Adams, Carol Baker, John Billingham, Jean Dilkes, Joan Hanley, David Smith, Betty Vickers, Alan Watson, Bob Wilson, and sadly many more as well, some who lived in Heyford, others who commuted weekly in order to sing with Heyford Singers. Each and everyone of them leaves a legacy of music, love and fond memories. On a happier note, I really enjoyed researching and writing focus articles on Mary Rice and Graham Kinnerly who have dedicated so much time and enthusiasm to the choir and its continued success.

I believe that every child should be entitled and enriched by all the musical opportunities and stimuli that life can offer, from the earliest nursery rhymes to music activities in school, from playing instruments to singing, dancing or performing together. They are all the richer for such early opportunities! So forgive me if many of the seventy odd articles penned for the Prattler have dwelt on my own life experiences, or those of our two sons and their partners, or now those of our five wonderful grandchildren. We shall watch and join in with so much pride as little Langrishes perform and sing at their school Christmas carol concerts, another return to normality after a lost year!

It has been both a pleasure and a privilege to write all these articles, I do hope some folk have read them to the end? I now pass the music baton, or quill, to Julie Rands-Allen and I really look forward to reading her pieces each month.

My final quoted song belongs to four people who so love music that, forty years later, they continue to share their songs with us ...

*Thank you for the music, the songs I'm singing
Thanks for all the joy they're bringing
Who can live without it, I ask in all honesty
What would life be?
Without a song or a dance what are we?
So I say thank you for the music
For giving it to me. (Abba)*

"Thank you" from Jill Langrish

If you would like to find out more about Heyford Singers please look at our website
www.heyfordsingers.org

Christmas Quiz

1. At what time on Christmas Day does the Queen broadcast to the nation?
2. Which two of Santa's reindeers share names with meteorological terms?
3. What links excitable Edgar within Monty the Penguin?
4. Name the fictional character created by Dr. Seuss that stole Christmas?
5. How many different flavours are there in a standard tub of Quality Street?
6. Which pantomime character marries Alice Fitzwarren?
7. In the poem 'The Night Before Christmas', visions of what danced in children's heads?
8. The American states of Georgia, Arizona, and Indiana all have towns that share which same Christmassy name?
9. Popular in Victorian England at Christmas, what is a 'Smoking Bishop'?
10. In the 1947 Christmas comedy-drama Miracle on 34th Street, which actress plays the little girl brought up not to believe in Santa Claus?
11. Bob Geldof and Midge Ure wrote the song 'Do They Know It's Christmas?' In which year?
12. Christmas Island, a territory of the Commonwealth of Australia, is located in which ocean?
13. Which country was the first to use the tradition of the Christmas tree?
14. Which Christmas carol based on a poem by English poet Christina Rossetti has been set to music many times, the most famous by Gustav Holst?

(Answers on Page 37)

Heyford Bowls Club

As with most sports clubs 2021 proved to be a very difficult year for Heyford Bowls both indoors and outdoors due to the enforced Covid restrictions. However we did make the best of the bad situation and like most bowls clubs muddled through. The lack of play did help with the building work encountered during the extension of the clubhouse.

The outdoor season only lasted 12 weeks and the short mat in the Village Hall did not resume until September with very reduced numbers.

Some of our members took part in both county and national competitions with our best outcome being the ladies team getting through to the quarter finals of the Ladies Fours only just being beaten by the eventual winners of the competition.

Despite the shortened season our members actively took part in the club competitions and these were celebrated in our recent Presentation Evening.

Obviously with the end of the season and the coming winter months, the recent news of the passing of Geoff Thorneycroft has left a huge hole in our hearts. He was such an active and valued member of the club, instrumental in many of the improvements and enhancements to the club and other aspects of the PFA. I am sure that many will join me in saying how we will miss his unique humour and that Friday nights will never be the same.

We are obviously all keeping our fingers crossed that we can get back to some form of normality next year. Due to the Covid restrictions we were unable to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the club or the opening of the new clubhouse in 2021. However we do intend to do this in style 2022 over a Bank holiday weekend, so watch this space.

Lorraine Streeter
Club Captain

Welcome Packs

Welcome packs are available for newcomers to our Village. The information in them helps people feel at home quickly.

If you notice that someone has moved in recently, get a pack for them by calling:

Sue Morris
21 The Green
Nether Heyford
01327 349387

Flood Watch

October defied the long term weather forecasts with higher than average monthly daytime temperatures. However rainfall exceeded monthly average by 160% and a tornado struck the Village on 31st with 5 minutes of strong winds in gusts of 60-70 mph with rain being driven horizontal causing damage to trees and dislodging roof tiles. November on the other hand has continued with daytime temperatures in double figures but as the end of the month approaches temperatures will drop into single figures. Clear night skies have resulted in a number of sub zero temperatures and heavy frost. There is definitely a distinctly wintry feel to the weather with the possibility of snow.

With the chaotic behaviour of the jet stream caused by climate change to events worldwide long term weather forecasts are definitely becoming less accurate. Since the flooding in late December 2020 river levels have remained consistently low throughout. Sunset times will continue to fall until 24th December before rising by nearly an hour by the end of January 2022. Daylight saving, ie. clock changes will occur on 27th March 2022.

The Environment Agency have issued a revised set of criteria for flood warning alerts in the hope of improving forecasts. The area now uses more localised data for rainfall and river levels and limit these to alerting the Nether Heyford/Bugbrooke area. Rainfall gauges in Litchborough have been added (effects Horestone Brook). I have suggested Daventry should be added as a tributary of the Nene impacts the Village via Church Stowe outflows into Heyford Brook. I have also recommended that automatic recording of rainfall and river levels should be installed more locally to further improve forecasts for Nether Heyford.

I understand many residents have not signed up for telephone/e-mail warnings of potential flooding. Many rely on their own local knowledge to forecast potential risks but I would recommend this free service can provide additional information based on a broader range of monitoring. A call to 0345 988 1188 will register personal needs whilst concealing your personal details.

COP 26, climate change conference, preoccupied the media for nearly two weeks reporting many promises made by a large number of participating countries, both in terms of funding and action plans. However all the promises will be worthless without concerted action. The target of 1.5 degrees centigrade rise remains with the current level at 2.5 degrees, and rising.

I am still awaiting a response from E/A to organise a meeting to discuss our local flood issues which will include the impact of local planning on our flood risk. As we approach the end of the year its time to review your own flood risk and take actions to protect your property in the unlikely event of flooding. Low cost solutions such as

walls, raised steps and home made flood gates can be effective, backed up with a submersible pump. Lastly familiarise yourself with on-line rainfall/river level sources such as Shoothill Gauge map to enhance your own preparedness.

J. Arnold.

U3A

Monthly meetings take place in Bugbrooke Sports & Community Centre, Camp Close, Bugbrooke NN7 3RW. They are usually on the **third Monday afternoon of the month**, starting at 2 pm. An exception is the December meeting, which is on the second Monday.

Following the AGM on 17th May, prospective Committee Members are still being sought – please consider this carefully, for the existing Committee is at the minimum for a viable Group. Offers of help and participation are always welcome.

Meetings will be subject to prevailing government guidelines in relation to coronavirus.

Monday 13th DECEMBER – CAPABILITY BROWN – HERO OR HOOLIGAN? By Michael Brown.

Lancelot Brown was probably England's most famous garden designer. Was he the vandal some say? After listening to Michael's talk you can decide for yourself.

Monday 17th JANUARY – AMAZING JAPAN by Laura Malpas.

Highlights of Japanese culture. Modern Tokyo meets ancient Kyoto, temples, shrines, gardens, castles, traditional guest bathhouses, geisha and of course the delicious food.

Guests welcome at the monthly meetings – to learn more visit our website **www.u3asites.org.uk/upper-nene**

Quiz Answers

1. 3pm 2. Donner and Blitzen (the names mean 'thunder' and 'lightning' in German)
3. John Lewis Christmas adverts 4. The Grinch (from How the Grinch Stole Christmas!, a children's book by Dr. Seuss) 5. 12 different flavours 6. Dick Whittington
7. Sugar Plums 8. Santa Claus 9. A type of mulled wine 10. Natalie Wood 11. 1984
12. Indian Ocean 13. Germany 14. In the Bleak Midwinter



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THE PRATTLER

NEXT EDITION

Submission date: 15th January 2022 for written items
20th January 2022 for email items

Publication date: 1st February 2022

e-mail: heyford_prattler@yahoo.co.uk

Or drop off at Heyford Meats or the One Stop Shop

Editorial: Sue Boutle 01327 342519

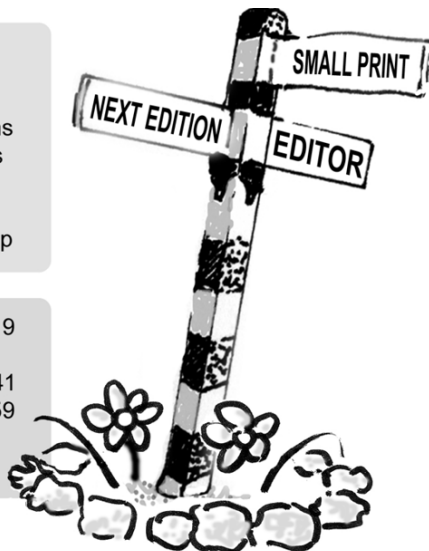
Proofreading: Tony Boutle

Typing & Distribution: Christine Watts 01327 340041

Adverts & Payments: Vicki Hamblin 01327 341059

Design: Nick Essex

Website: Jez Wilson



We welcome Prattler contributions, please send these to the Editor. Please include your name and full contact details. We prefer items by e-mail & all images should be JPEG files.

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Design to Print Limited

46 Daventry Road

Norton Daventry

NN11 2ND

01327 872950

www.designtoprint.org.uk