



THE PRATTLER

The Heyford Village Newspaper

February 2025

Issue 476



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 bank in the box outside the door of 15 Middle Street or the One Stop Shop where they are delivered to the bank once a week. Thank you.

Cover

Picture from last December's Pantomime Beauty and the Beast - Laugh Out Loud theatre company.



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Subsequent to the resignation of the Chairman the Parish Council is electing a Chair meeting by meeting up until the Election in May

The December 2024 meeting took place on the 2nd December at the Baptist Church Rooms

The meeting took place shortly after the worst flooding to hit the village since the Easter floods of 1998, and this event dominated the meeting. Councillors had expected a number of members of the public – but there were none.

An unprecedented amount of rain had fallen in a short period in November on to ground that was already saturated; and overwhelmed flood defences, causing considerable damage here and in many other places locally. Many people became involved in the struggle against the rising water and prevented more damage being done. The Parish Council would like to thank those who selflessly gave their time and energy to help others.

Flooding Issues

An audible alarm system was being looked into; possibly to be installed at the culvert opposite the Millennium green.

West Northants Council (WNC) would not be able to supply sandbags, and it was stressed that residents in the flood zone should make their own contingencies. Council could help by initiating a flood watch including both Councillors and residents.

A “Disaster Relief Plan” would also be initiated which would look at possible actions, seek advice and possibly purchase sandbags. Expanding sand free sandbags were felt to be a possible option though considerably more expensive than the conventional sort.

LD felt that there should be a maintenance contract with any pole/alarm system; although the battery life for these systems is c. 20 years. The installation of any such device would have to be done in conjunction with the Environment Agency (E.A.).

IP felt that sandbags were of limited use and that an attenuation pond near Winston Close would be the best protection from the Luddle stream overwhelming the culvert. TW reported that there was funding for farmers to install such ponds, but

that DEFRA have placed a pause on applications as overwhelmed. Funding currently still available, but DEFRA not processing any new applications.

IP felt that residents at risk should be approached directly. TW wondered if an already written plan could be used as a starting point. Clerk to contact NCALC and see if anything has happened regarding flooding. DM suggested looking to coastal communities.

The Environment Agency has been approached with a view to holding a public meeting in the village, but it is understood that we are only one of many communities that have been affected, and that we are not the worst affected.

Planning - Housing Needs Survey - There had been a very good response, 200 representing 30% of households. A representative from East Midlands Homes would attend the January meeting.

Concerns were expressed over the illegal expansion of the traveller's site on the A5.

Report from the Finance Committee - Copies of the proposed budget were distributed and some changes suggested. The budget would be reconsidered in January after looking into possible costs relating to flooding.

Election May 2025 - NCALC is keen that all Councils do their best to publicise the 2025 election. Clerk and councillors were considering what could usefully be done to achieve a contested election. This will be an opportunity to get involved in the first tier of local government, and there will be posters etc as soon as the application packs are available.

Community Lounge (CL) at the Youth Club in Roberts Field - The Lounge is open from 10.30 to 4.30pm each Wednesday from Nov 6th until the end of March; when it will change to afternoon only. The Lounge is now part of the National Chatty Café network aimed at combatting isolation and loneliness and promoting wellbeing. The volunteers are debating what sort of afternoon programme there should be. Suggestions are welcomed.

The CL is dependent on volunteers to keep it running, and many thanks to Lynda and Karen for all their efforts. If you do have a free afternoon, you are always welcome as a visitor or a helper.

Parish Council meetings in 2024/25 will normally be on the first Monday of each month, (unless a Bank Holiday) and would start at 19.30.

Reporting Canal Issues can be done by phoning 0303 040 4040 during normal office hours.

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/>

The Prattler

The Prattler is run by an active voluntary committee comprising of Sue Boutle, Vicki Hamblin, Mary Rice, Jez Wilson and Mick Watts. If you would like to submit articles or have any suggestions for future issues, please get in touch with us by email or leave a message in Heyford Meats.

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

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

Councillor list with responsibilities and preferred means of contact.	
Mrs L. Dilkes. 17 Furnace Lane, Nether Heyford, NN7 3JF e-mail thedilkesfamily@outlook.com 07967 753216	Acting Chair, Finance, Youth Club
Mrs L. Eales – 3 Church Lane, Nether Heyford Tel. 01327 341707 e-mail lyndaeales@aol.com	Allotments, Youth Club
Linda Hall, 8 Western Ave, Nether Heyford linda.hall.netherheyford@outlook.com	Website, Finance
D. Musson. 16 Rolfe Crescent, Nether Heyford NN7 3NG Tel: 01327 344461 davemusson073@gmail.com	Footpaths. Tree Warden
Ian Parris, 1 Winston Close, NN7 3JX 07909 514916 ianparris@ianparris.com	Councillor
Karen Rivett. 12 Watery Lane, Nether Heyford. NN7 3LN yartahk@gmail.com 07711 312069	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 Trustees
K. Sanders-Moody. Newlands, 4b The Green, Nether Heyford 07702 701862	Councillor
P. Cowley. 16, Furnace Lane, Nether Heyford 07892 401245 philip.cowley4@btinternet.com	Councillor
Cllr Adam Brown - West Northamptonshire Council, The Forum, Moat Lane, Towcester NN12 6AD Tel: 07714 255077 Adam.Brown@westnorthants.gov.uk	Leader of the Council Cabinet Member for Housing, Culture & Leisure
Cllr Karen Cooper - West Northamptonshire Council, The Forum, Moat Lane, Towcester NN12 6AD Karen.cooper@westnorthants.gov.uk Tel: 07753 638180	Conservative Councillor for Bugbrooke Ward – Lead Member for Nether Heyford, Blisworth & Gayton

Clerk. Guy Ravine, Tel:07935 931787.

E-mail: netherheyfordparishcouncil@gmail.com

Next Meeting Monday 3rd February at the Baptist Church rooms.



Parish Church of St. Peter and St. Paul

Services for February 2025

Sunday 2 nd	10:00 am	Holy Communion Service at Church Stowe
	11:00 am	United First Sunday Service at Flore Church
	6:00 pm	Evening Prayer at Heyford
Saturday 8 th	2:00 pm	Messy Church at Heyford Church Rooms
Sunday 9 th	10:00 am	Benefice Communion Service at Church Stowe
		Morning Worship at Flore Chapel
Sunday 16 th	10:00 am	Holy Communion at Heyford
	10:00 am	Partnership Service at Flore Chapel
	6:00 pm	Holy Communion at Upper Stowe
Sunday 23 rd	10:00 am	Holy Communion at Flore
	10:00 am	Family Service at Upper Stowe
	10:00 am	Morning Worship at Flore Chapel
	4:00 pm	Café Church at Nether Heyford

Midweek Services:

Thursday 10:00am Holy Communion Flore Church

Friday 9:00am. Morning Prayer via Zoom - Please contact the Rector for an invitation

During February we shall be praying for people living in Hillside Rd and Hillside Crescent here in Heyford, Sutton St, Yew Tree Gardens and Sutton Acre in Flore, The Manor in Church Stowe and the Gate House and the Old Dairy in Brockhall.

Dear Friends,

It might happen to all of us at some time or other. A faint sense that there is more to life than meets the eye. A fleeting thought there is something else, something transcendent, something greater than ourselves. Maybe we sense it when something wonderful happens – the birth of a child or a grandchild, a beautiful sunset, the first sight of a breathtaking view. Perhaps something tragic triggers unfamiliar feelings – the death of a loved one making us question life and its meaning for example. Or someone we meet inspires and impresses us, leaving us to wonder what it is that makes them seem different. These are common human feelings and experiences, that so often go unnoticed amidst the countless distractions of ordinary life. Yet these faint stirrings may be deeply significant in our spiritual lives and it's important that we recognise such moments and reflect on them.

Such moments are easily lost if we don't make time and space to ponder them. Everyday life seems to rush by, filled with sound, busyness, work, news, and social media, with conflicting and increasing demands on our time and energy. In a culture that encourages us to pack more into our day, we really need to build in time to slow down, to take a breath, to be aware of those moments of wonder that might otherwise go unnoticed. Slowing down, taking time is another key part of our spiritual life.

Finally, after we've sensed those stirrings of wonder, thanksgiving or need, after we've made time and space to reflect on them, and what they might mean for us, we might want to say something about them. In spiritual terms, that could lead us into prayer, using our words to communicate with each other, and with God. Christianity, Judaism, and Islam all tell of a talkative God, a God who communicates through the words of scripture. And for Christians particularly, those written words lead us to the Word made flesh, to Jesus himself.

So, in this whistle stop overview of spiritual life, we've sensed the wonder of a 'something else', we've made time and space to meditate on such moments of wonder and what they might mean to us, and we've sensed a desire to speak about them, perhaps to 'Someone Else' in prayer – of which more next month.

In the Diocese of Peterborough of which this benefice is a part, our Bishop, Debbie, has made prayer the focus for 2025, as we think about where we are, where – with God's guidance – we would like to be, and how we might get there. If you'd like to know more about prayer, give me a call, or watch out for special services and events in the benefice throughout this year. These include a Lent course on prayer which begins on Saturday 1st March, and the Bishop's Bible Day a week later, on Saturday 8th March. Again, look out for more details in March's Prattler.

With prayers and blessings,

Rev'd Stephen (Tel:01327 344436)



Nether Heyford Baptist Church

Services for February

February 2 nd	10:30 am	Morning service with Pre-record message by Lee Hillyard
February 9 th	10:30 am	Morning service led by Lee Hillyard
	4:00 pm	Songs of Praise also led by Lee (with tea and cakes)
February 16 th	10:30 am	Morning service led by Dave and Pat Biddles. (coffee after the service)
February 23 rd	10:30 am	Morning service including communion led by Clive Leakey.

Events

Wednesday	February 19 th	10:00am	Church meeting
Tuesday	February 25 th	10:00 am	Prayer and bible study

All welcome

Community is important, and volunteering is a great way to interact and support each other. We have opportunities ready and waiting for you, this month our focused opportunity that should not be overlooked is providing technical support at Nether Heyford Baptist Church on Sunday mornings.

When you volunteer for technical support at NHBC, you become part of a team dedicated to fostering an engaging environment for worship. Your expertise can significantly improve the way services are delivered, allowing others to focus on their spiritual journey without distractions. Additionally, volunteering in this capacity can also lead to new friendships and strengthen community bonds.

If you are curious about how to get involved, reach out to Lee on 01604 389405, he can provide more information on the specific needs and how you can help with Sunday morning technical support. Embrace this opportunity to make a difference while developing your own skills. We looking forward to hearing from you.

Lee Hillyard

Astronomy on the Green

We can see several of the planets in the sky at the same time this month. Four are visible by eye namely Venus, Mars, Jupiter and Saturn. More distant are Uranus and Neptune, these will need the aid of binoculars or a small telescope. The display occurs as the planets lie on the ecliptic, this line is related to the path of the sun in the sky from Earth and the planets (approximately lie in the same plain). Due to the angle that the Earth is tilted at (24.5 degrees) the Sun follows a low trajectory in the sky during the winter months in the northern hemisphere. This is the cause of the winter months being cold as days are short and the power of the sun is depleted due to its position. It is counter intuitive, but during the winter we are our closest to the Sun, the Southern Hemisphere has its summers during this time (and this accounts for Christmas barbies on the beach).

The ecliptic also accounts for the signs of the zodiac as the constellations listed are passed through by the sun during the relevant months. The effect of this is that your star sign will not be visible in the night sky until half a year later. As an astronomer I give no credence to horoscopes as the truth is that the position of stellar objects has no influence on our individual lives. However, the science of Astronomy sprang from Astrology and astrologers' interest in the skies.

The constellations visible change as the year progresses, however there are some that are constant companions and act as useful guideposts (as they contain distinctive asterisms [patterns of stars within the constellation] that point to other areas of the night sky). Most recognised of these is the 'Plough' in Ursa Major the two stars at the top of the asterism 'the pointers' direct us to Polaris – the north star around which the sky apparently rotates. Of course, the reality is that the Earth rotates, and Polaris happens to be very close to true north (that will change over thousands of years).

Now during the winter months, we gaze out through the edge of our galaxy. As summer comes, we will be looking in towards the galaxy centre and the Milky Way becomes prevalent in our skies. Our galaxy is called the Milky Way due to its appearance on a clear night, when it looks as if milk has been spilt across the sky. The term has been in use for at least 2,500 years, but we do not know the origin of it. The Milky Way provided astronomers with the Greek root for the astronomical term "galaxy". That happens to be my favourite chocolate bar, not as it turns out milky way. Gets everywhere this space stuff!

Clear skies

Tony Boutle

HEYFORD PICTUREDROME

FLY ME TO THE MOON

‘Romantic drama – but a great movie’

**Cast includes Scarlett Johansson, Channing Tatum
and Woody Harrelson**

Nether Heyford Village Hall

THURSDAY 20th FEBRUARY 2025

7.00pm for 7.30pm
Admission £6.00

Marketing executive wreaks havoc on NASA launch director's already difficult task as he makes preparations for the Apollo 11 moon landing.

When the White House deems the mission too important to fail, the countdown truly begins...

FILM WILL BE SHOWN WITH SUB-TITLES

TEA, COFFEE, BAR



Cancer Support Group – Weedon



The Cancer Support Group in Weedon is for everyone affected by cancer living in Weedon and the surrounding area – whether you are newly diagnosed, going through or have finished treatment, living with and managing cancer or part of the valuable support network of carers, relatives & friends. You are all able to share information, stories and anecdotes which will help others and be part of the cancer support network. The group is a place to come and chat over tea & cake, talk about whatever you want and have some time to relax with others. We have a selection of leaflets and information which may be useful and can help to source any other information for you.

The Cancer Support Group is held in the Chapter House at the rear of St Peter & St Paul Church, Weedon, on the 2nd and 4th Wednesday of every month, 2.00 – 4.00 pm.

Come along and join us on 8th & 22nd January and 12th & 26th February 2025

Speakers have been arranged for the following dates:

22nd January – Kay Owen, Macmillan Nutritionist / Dietician. Kay will talk on aspects of what best to eat before, during and after cancer treatment, addressing some of the common side effects which can affect food intake and how to overcome them. Focusing on nutrition and diet to help you through treatment and afterwards. She will be able to address any general nutrition and diet questions you may have.

26th February – Jenny Walker, Macmillan Support Worker - a talk about keeping a positive mental outlook through all that life brings. How to overcome the more difficult days and work through those times using various techniques and coping mechanisms taken from the Macmillan HOPE course about mindfulness.

Access to the room is flat with no steps, parking is either under the railway arches at the side of the church or in Church Street. If you don't want to come alone, bring a friend.

For anyone who would like to come along and be part of the group, would like more information, who has time to help out with refreshments or chatting with people please contact Libby Hart on 01327 341816 or e-mail: csgweedon@btinternet.com.



Nether Heyford Village Hall

Registered Charity, No. 304256

www.netherheyfordvillagehall.org nhvhevents@gmail.com

Village Hall News

View from the Chair

A very Happy New Year to you all.

We saw out the old year with fabulous afternoon entertainment by the Laugh Out Loud Theatre Company pantomime performance of Beauty and the Beast. A great time was had by children and adults alike.

The year ahead will see changes and challenges for the hall as we embark on a programme of improvements and repairs. Most recently we have had a major problem with the heating system which hopefully by the time you read this will have been sorted but will result in the need for the hall to be redecorated. Both a significant inconvenience and expense. Thank you to all of our regular users who have endured the upheaval and worked around it.

The trustees have recently been giving a substantial amount of their time keeping the hall fully functioning but assistance from anyone in the village with any DIY skills would be really appreciated. We have several minor repairs and of course the internal painting to do as soon as possible so if you can help please email me. Not everyone has the time to be a trustee but any assistance by parishioners with any skills helps to keep us afloat.

Work is already underway to organise the village fete in June. If you would like to be involved or have anything to offer please again let me know.

Finally, whilst the hall is well used and bookings are steady we do have availability in the main hall during the day on Fridays and will soon be offering the smaller meeting room for separate hire with a kitchen and toilet facility. This might be a perfect space for meetings, conferences or smaller groups. If you are interested please contact the booking secretary via our web site.

Please follow our Facebook page to keep abreast of what is going on at the hall.

Carol Tuckley
Chair of Trustees

Carolnhvhchair@gmail.com



Heyford Bowls Club

A belated Happy New Year to our supporters. The Bowls Club held two successful Christmas evenings, a quiz and a Christmas Party, at the clubhouse on the playing fields, and we hope to enjoy one or two more during the closed outdoor season, like Bingo and a Beetle Drive, which are open to all members, full or social.

Although our outdoor games are on hold for now, our Short Mat sessions are in full swing.

We meet every Wednesday at 2pm and 7 pm in the village hall, so why not start the New Year with a new hobby. It's a good social event and helps keep you fit. Just come along and watch or join in. We can provide the bowls, just wear flat soled shoes or slippers, and you can be sure of a warm welcome. If you wish to play, the first 3 sessions are free. then we charge £2:50 a session.

Our first competition is The President's Cup at 1 pm on Saturday 1st February which is well supported by players and spectators. We hold a Raffle and tea and cakes are provided. It's a good opportunity to see what indoor bowling is all about.

Nether Heyford Village Hall



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Website: www.netherheyfordvillagehall.com

Phone: 01327-342167

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**Drop in and see us at
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01327 828520 or

07808815042

**lisa.hillyard@mytc.com or
amy.hillyard@mytc.com**



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.

Monday 17th February – On the Bench
by Dr Richard Greenfield

A light-hearted look at sitting on the Bench

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



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KEEP THIS BY YOUR COMPUTER - YOU MIGHT NEED US!



In Nether Heyford

Well, if that was January, very cold and very grey, roll on the Spring. The only good things were eating the last few chocolates in the box, and opening the tins of biscuits that were given at Christmas. Always a bit of a disappointment though, the nice tin promises more than it delivers. Now I have to find a sensible use for that tin, "it's too good to throw away". My New Year's resolution to declutter will have to wait until next year.

There was no disappointment for WI members at the January meeting. We learnt a bit [there is so much to know] about Astronomy from a really interesting and informative talk given by Tony Boutle Nether Heyford's very own Astronomer On The Green. It is sometimes overwhelming to try to comprehend the vastness of the universe. We learnt about the significant discoveries pioneering women scientists like Annie Jump Cannon and Cecelia Payne had made in the early part of the 20th century, paving the way for women astronomers.

It was amazing to be shown what can be seen through sophisticated equipment passing over Nether Heyford in the sky during a year. Tony told us that at the end of February all seven planets will appear be in a line which is a rare occurrence. You will have to read his article if you want to find out more from someone who really knows what he is talking about.

And now for something completely different... at this month's meeting on Thursday February 6th we will be welcoming Steve Dimmer who will present The Wicked Wit of Alan Bennett. Steve will tell us about the career of this popular playwright showing many examples of his work, his compassion and his wicked sense of humour. Bennett's observations of scenes and characters of ordinary life delivered in that dead pan manner accompanied by his Yorkshire accent sum up a very British sense of humour. We do like to laugh at ourselves.

If your New Year's resolution was 'to do something else in the community', well come along to a WI meeting in the Village Hall. You will be most welcome. As Alan Bennett said 'life is rather like a tin of sardines we're all of us looking for the key'.

Jane Wareing.
01327 340875

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Heyford Allotments

Cold and Wet

It is the middle of winter so we should expect some cold, wet weather. It is a time when it is increasingly difficult (and damaging) to work on the soil. So, there is not much growing to write about this month.

Maintenance

If the weather does allow you to get into the garden or the allotment, it is however, a good time to carry out some of those maintenance jobs like shed and fence repair and building or replacing raised beds. Time spent on tasks like these, frees up time for more creative activities - growing and nurturing fruit, flowers and vegetables in Spring and Summer.

Dogs

Another polite reminder that with one or two notable exceptions, dogs are not allowed on the allotments (or the nearby playing fields). We would kindly ask that villagers do not let their dogs run loose or, if they have strayed onto the allotments, they check their pets have not fouled the area and if necessary, clear up after them.

Holes in the Hedge

Some of you may have noticed several holes appearing in the allotment hedge along Watery Lane. This has come about because dead trees have been removed. Replacement hedging will be planted in the near future and, as a temporary barrier while this becomes established, a chestnut paling fence will be erected.

Vacancies

By the time you read the February edition of the Prattler the Parish Council will have held their allotment rent night. That sometimes results in a few tenants deciding to give up their plots, thereby creating vacancies. If you are interested in taking on an allotment, do contact us on one of the numbers below:

Mrs Lynda Eales, 3 Church Lane, NH tel. 01327 341707 email:
lyndaeales@aol.com

Mr. Mike Langrish, 28 Manor Park, NH tel. 07879777802 email:
langrish_heyford@hotmail.com

Mike Langrish



View from the Wildlife Patch

As this is my first of these notes for 2025 let me begin by wishing all readers a Happy New Year. I can also begin the year with some good news. The Patch has official approval from our Wildlife Trust. When the project to revitalise the allotments was first discussed, I was among several allotment holders who decided to ask if we could include a Wildlife Area in the plan. This was for the use of all villagers. We were delighted when this request was granted.

I invited Matt Johnson, who is Northamptonshire Conservation Manager for the Cambridgeshire, Bedfordshire and Northamptonshire Wildlife Trust - whoever you are, you need to become a member - to give us advice at the time. He was happy with the plan. In fact it was his idea to include long grass areas for mammals so we decided to get on with the work of developing a parish nature reserve.

We chose not to set timelines for completions and have been adding "mini habitats" to the patch year on year. We have now reached the stage in developing the reserve where we have met almost all of the objectives. The one goal still uncompleted is due to not being able to sow permanent flora on the final plot. This is because of the presence of undesirable perennials including Ground Elder. Recently, I needed Matt's advice on an unrelated project. I took the opportunity to meet him on "The Patch" last week where he could cast his very experienced eye on the fruits of our labours at the same time.

He was favourably impressed with the site altogether, particularly so at the amount of sustainable habitats we have on the site. He did have two suggestions of how we can improve on what we are already doing.

One of those suggestions was to include some feeders. It would be great to have some feeders on the site. However, these need regular care in replenishing, cleaning and general maintenance. Anyone of any age will be welcome to organise a team of volunteers to place and maintain bird and small mammal feeders on the Wildlife Patch. Please contact me or another member of the Wildlife Association steering group if you would like to do this.

Matt also suggested cutting and clearing some small areas of our long grass areas rotating on a 3 of 4 year rotation. This would allow for young vegetation growing, seeding and wintering. We will be including this regime in future management plans.

Maintaining footpaths in the reserve

Until the middle of 2024 we were able to use my own, heavy, 50cm mower that was quite powerful enough to keep the long grass on footpaths in the Patch under control. Unfortunately this mower has been deemed broken, beyond repair so was

scrapped as was another mower that belonged to the allotments. If anyone is changing their old 50cm (18 inch) rotary mower. I will happily collect it from its current location to use it in place of our previous mower.

Patch or Reserve?

I began calling the area a “patch” at the start as a temporary measure and have continued with this throughout the years of writing these articles. However, the Village Neighbourhood Plan calls for the development of a “Nature Reserve”. I don't know if there is any official definition of “Nature Reserve” or if anyone has a preference. I would prefer “Nature Reserve” but it's a village project for the village.

All views are welcome.

Dave Musson

Bugbrooke and District Flower Society

The next demonstration will be 'Age of Aquarius' by Richard Twiselton on Monday 24th February at 7:45pm.

If you love flowers do come along to our friendly club where you can be sure of a warm welcome and a relaxing evening.

For more information please ring Simone on 01327 342167 or Dianne on 01604 830063.

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:

Charles Kiloh, 3 Church Lane, Nether Heyford Tel. 07779 900860



Heyford Cricket Club

After a particularly difficult end to the 2024 season, one that put significant strain on the volunteers running the club, we are delighted to begin the rebuild of the club. Work has started at the cricket club as we prepare for the new season which begins in April. Clearance of all the contents of the fire damaged should be completed by the end of January and we will then be looking to clear and replace the container itself.

Thanks to a positive outcome from the insurance and the fantastic generosity of the local and cricketing community, we are currently placing orders for replacement mowers for the square and outfield so we can start on pre-season in late February/early March, depending on the weather.

The club committee, on behalf of all who play for Heyford CC, would like to thank again everyone who has helped the club both financially and also with messages of support since the vandalism and fire of last year. This help came both from the village and also clubs and organisations from further afield.

Having limped through to the end of the 2024 season, this help now allows the club to start again with new equipment for 2025. Some of these funds will also be allocated to improve facilities at HCC as we continue to try and attract new players across both our senior and junior ranks.

The club is planning a series of fundraising events in the coming months to build on everyone's generosity and further details will be announced in the next few weeks. As always, running any voluntary organisation depends on people giving free time. If anyone feels they would like to get involved, particularly in the running of the junior section, we would love to hear from you. Otherwise, please pop down later in the year to watch for an hour or two. It would be great to see you.

Rob Pardon
Chairman
07894 865194



www.heyfordsingers.org

It seems a lot longer than just seven weeks ago that we gave our Christmas Concert which we hope started the Festive Season for you in a joyous way. We all thoroughly enjoyed ourselves and were buoyed up by your enthusiasm. Thank you all so much for your support – both nights were fully booked. And although the attendance at this year's Carols on the Green was down (the rain threatened but didn't actually arrive) we raised £172 which was divided between the Choir and the Parish Church - and nice to see families attending.

As some of you know we 'went on tour' to Kislingbury where at The Sun Inn we sang carols outside – under cover – in the pouring rain. The audience sheltered under a gazebo and strangely because the weather was so wild and everything was against us, we had a lovely evening and enjoyed the drink and sandwiches which the Landlord kindly provided. As we were in different territory we tried to recruit as we are urgently in need of men. Anyone know a Bass singer/s who would like to join a Choir? We are down to just four... Because we are a non-profit making organisation we have managed to raise this year just over £1,676 for various charities and our total since The Heyford Singers started is just over £20,445. Not bad for a small Choir in rural Northamptonshire... And our grateful thanks to Kath Whiting (Alto) from Weedon who as our Treasurer keeps us on the right track.

And now we are back in action again rehearsing for our May Concert which will be held on Friday 9th and Saturday 10th May – please put these dates in your diary. We had a visitor this week sitting at the back of the hall whilst we skimmed through (technical term) the hitherto unseen music and at the break she said she didn't know how we got from tentative, faltering notes to the music we produce four months later. The answer is - very hard work and a lot of enjoyment.

As you can see, we as yet don't know our music well enough to inject the necessary emotions into the pieces – but certain old favourites like 'Let Me Entertain You' and 'I Have A Voice' (words and music by Jay Althouse) will certainly come back to us easily. There was a documentary on television about Maria Callas and apparently she was the only singer who managed to act out every passion as she sang. Her voice was never perfect (there was a slight 'wobble' apparently on the very high notes right from her early years) but people flocked to see her because she became the part she was singing in the most outstanding way. Well, we can but try...

We are singing a wide range of music this year from 'Don't Get Around Much Anymore' (music by Duke Ellington) to the original Ave Maria written in the late 16th

Century and attributed to Caccini who was a composer, singer and lute player and active in Florence during the late Renaissance period. However no-one is exactly sure about this (music attributed to Giulio Caccini 1545 – 1618) and is nothing like the one we sing today composed by Franz Schubert (1825) which has us in tears at funerals. However we might well be in tears over this piece of music (arranged by Patrick M Liebergen) as it is extremely difficult to sing as we keep expecting the notes to morph into the Schubert version. However we will get there. See us in four months' time!

JRA

Growing up in Nether Heyford

I was born at No 3 Furnace Lane in 1946 and lived there with my parents until 1969 when I got married. My father was the eldest of 7 children in the Collins family, living at 'Wharf Farm', Furnace Lane. Lower Heyford, as it was known then, changes its name in later years because the village was often mistaken for Lower and Upper Heyford in Oxfordshire, where the air force is based.

My mother originated from Harpole, and she met my father at the 'Heyford Feast' and got married, living in Heyford for the rest of their lives. Heyford Feast was a long standing event. It always fell on the 11th October each year and consisted of a large fair on the village green with Swing Boats, Carousels and Dodgem cars, not to mention Roll the Ball, Shooting and many other amusements. Also, lots of stalls selling candy floss, hot dogs mint humbugs etc. The fair was run by the Abbott and Billing families and over the years we got to know them well and while in the village, their children attended our local school. I went to Heyford School when I was five years old and was educated by Mr & Mrs Woods, then by Mr & Mrs Warr. The school bell was rung twice a day at 9.00am and 1.00pm just as it is today. Although other nearby villages had their own feast dates, Heyford was the largest because of our fabulous village green. People used to come from miles around and Tom Rolfe, who ran the Foresters Arms, opened up the club room for dancing which went on late into the night.

We also had a very good Youth Club which was held in the village hall. I was club secretary and my friend Lynn was treasurer. The fee was 2 old pennies per evening and we often had an awful job getting the money in. We had regular dances, often on a Friday night with live groups. People came from all the nearby villages and Northampton and they proved to be very popular. As club secretary, I had a hand in arranging these events.

I have many things I remember about life in the village. A lot of my leisure time was spent with my cousins on my grandmothers farm, especially in the school holidays. My dad's youngest brother, Reg and his wife Joan, helped my Grandmother on the farm and lived there with their four children. In the school holidays, my two eldest cousins and I would help out and played for hours in the hay barns and fished in the nearby canal. The railway line ran next to the farm and we would go into the signal

box with the signalman and watch the trains going by. If we were lucky, he would let us pull the levers to change the signal.

Haymaking was always good fun too. My uncle would put the bales on his trailer which was then hitched up to the tractor and us children would stack them in neat rows, getting higher and higher as we went. Then we would sit on the top with my uncles towing the load back to the farm. (This would not be allowed nowadays).

My father, Arthur worked at the Northampton Power station as a fitter until he retired. He was one of the many volunteers who helped build the village hall, giving up their free time whenever they were able to.

Also, in the school holidays I would go with my mother fruit picking on Mr Beck's farm. He would come into the village with his tractor and trailer to pick up the many helpers (mostly women) to take back to pick the fruit off his many currant bushes and other fruits. At the end of the day he would transport everyone back into the village. He lived on the large estate where Heyford Hills farm is today.

When my parents married, they lived in a small rented house with no amenities, no running water and an outside toilet. One of my lasting memories of this, is having local men come round on a regular basis with the 'Muck Cart' to empty the bucket. (No such luxury of a flush toilet). On one occasion I was sitting on the toilet as a young child and they arrived to perform this delightful deed. I shouted through the door, "I haven't finished yet". Back came a very calm reply from one of the men, "It's alright my duck, I can wait".

Mr Faulkner, the baker delivered the loaves of bread to various houses. It was always in the evening as he baked the bread first in Northampton. He would sometimes stop and chat and on many occasions my mother used to say, "When is he coming as I want to go to bed". Suddenly the kitchen door would open, and a hand and arm would appear clutching the bread, put it on a chair by the side of the door and say "Coo-Eee" and he was gone in a flash. Thus, he was known as Coo-Eee The Baker. At Christmas time, it was even later, as many customers gave him a drink or a mince pie, and he would be a little worse for wear when he arrived.

Eventually, my parents were able to buy the house we lived in together with the one next door, after John Earl (who owned the property) died. They had the two knocked into one and modernised, and it still stands today.

I have lots of fond memories of living in this wonderful village, which has grown tremendously over the years with the Village Green as its heart. School sports, football and cricket matches were played on the green before the arrival of the playing fields, which all the village folk would turn out to watch regularly. John Smith's cows would often escape and go charging over the green with John running frantically behind. Some people now refer to the green today as the park, but to us oldies, it will always remain our beloved village green

Jenny Lewis

(See more memories on the Prattler website - www.heyfordprattler.org)

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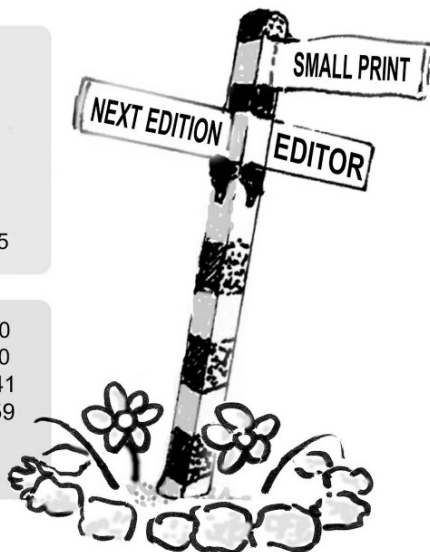
Submission date: 15th February for written articles
20th February for e-mailed articles

Publication date: 1st March 2025

e-mail: heyford_prattler@yahoo.co.uk

Or drop off at Heyford Meats or Sunrise Cottage, 15
The Green.

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The Prattler is printed by



Design to Print Limited

46 Daventry Road

Norton Daventry

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01327 872950

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