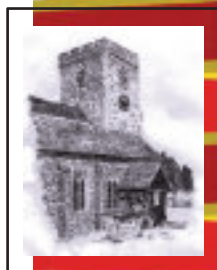




Higham
Raydon
Holton St Mary
Stratford St Mary

Quartet

The Parish Magazine



December 2020
Issue 388



FOR SALE

Lakeland Bread Maker

In excellent working order.

£10

Phone 07999537995

Excellent accommodation for two/three hens, complete with bedroom and nest box. Also flexible self supporting netting for creating large exercise space.

Buyer to collect. Bargain at £40

Contact Wendy Mumford for viewing and more details.

01473 312123 or 07969899237



Don't forget to recycle your Christmas trees after Christmas

There are council collection points at By Pass Nurseries, Capel, and Village Hall Car Park at Stratford.

Small Ads Pin Board

No charge for non-commercial ads placed for one month only, space permitting. Email quarteteditor@hotmail.co.uk

Quartet Diary



December

- 4 HSM Lunch Club
- 5 HSM Green Gym
- 24 Higham - Crib Service
- 25 Christmas - I hope.

2021

January

- 12 Raydon Parish Council Meeting

February

- 9 Raydon Parish Council Meeting

March

- 9 Raydon Parish Council Meeting

April

- 13 Raydon Annual Parish Meeting

May

- 11 Raydon Parish Council Annual General Meeting

June

- 15 Raydon Parish Council Meeting

July

- 13 Raydon Parish Council Meeting

September

- 14 Raydon Parish Council Meeting

October

- 12 Raydon Parish Council Meeting

November

- 9 Raydon Parish Council Meeting



Editors Corner



Well, some things don't change - may we be the among the first to wish you a Happy Christmas! Not entirely sure what Christmas is going to be like this year, and it may be that we have to be a little more creative than usual in order to achieve a Happy Christmas, but we wish you it all the same.

Gone are the Christmas fayres, concerts and events, that you usually find filling the pages of the magazine in December, but you can still get your christmas tree from Raydon (see page 28), get to a Crib Service in Higham (see page 13) and enjoy a good read of quite a few varied articles in the Quartet. Our stalwart writers have really worked hard this month, with too many articles to mention amongst the pages. A big thank you to everyone who has contributed and we hope you readers find something to enjoy!

Don't forget, the deadline for articles for the January edition in 19th December - when you usually have your mind focussed on other things, so email us early to avoid disappointment!

So whatever this most extraordinary of seasons delivers, we trust you will all find a way of enjoying at least some of it!

Happy reading

Anne and Jane

Articles for the Quartet are included if we have room, and if, in the opinion of the editors, they are of general interest to our readers. Please remember all articles will be subject to editing. We prefer you to contact us via email where possible.



Copy deadline for next edition:
19th December 2020

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Stratford St Mary



SSM 100 Club Winners

November

162	F. Gordon-Clarke	£40
104	S. Gotelee	£10
44	S. Ranson	£5



The Village Emergency Telephone

The Stratford St Mary Village Emergency Telephone System (VETS) is now up and running.

If you are with a person who you suspect has had a cardiac arrest, immediately call 999 as normal. An ambulance will be dispatched as soon as possible, however due to the location of Stratford St Mary, this may take a while.

You will probably be alone with the patient and cannot leave them to go and get the village **defibrillator**, so we have a group of 10 volunteers who will respond to a telephone call from you. All the volunteers are on the same number and if a volunteer is available you give them your location, they will collect the **defibrillator** and come to your location, they will then assist in CPR and using the **defibrillator** until the ambulance or medics arrive.

The number to call these volunteers is :-

01206 700919

Stratford St Mary Parish Council Emergency Team

If an emergency does arise, please contact one of the following team members:

Norman Woodard

12 Swaynes 01206 323015
Norman.woodard@fatbloaters.com

Chris Griffin

Brook Farm, School Lane 01206
337363/07885 807567
chrisbrookfarm@gmail.com

Steve Kite

42 Strickmere 01206 322482
07958 515573

Bill Davies

3 Spanbies 01206 322990
billdav@hotmail.com



POPPY DAY APPEAL – 2020 (STRATFORD ST MARY)

The 2020 Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal in Stratford St Mary has raised **£1,646.10** so far.

Thank you to all contributors and generous donors in this rather unusual year. Your generosity is much appreciated.

David Isaac

Remembrance Sunday

For the second time this year, an Act of Remembrance was held under very different circumstances, alike to no other year. In August, we held a short socially distanced service to mark VJ day, never expecting at the time, that we would need to do the same for the Remembrance Sunday service on 8th November - the nearest Sunday to armistice day. At the moment, all public services and acts of worship are suspended, yet it felt vitally important to mark the 75th anniversary of the ending of WW2. Due to late dispensation, a very few were able to gather in the churchyard to hear the names of the fallen from this parish read out and remembered in turn. Many thanks are due to Brenda and Brian Such who rang a bell for each of the lost servicemen. Thanks also to Barry Davison who wrote and read out a poem he had written specifically for the occasion and is set out here below:

Verse
FROM A SOLDIERS NOTE BOOK
The futility of war

I am a lowly soldier in a foreign land
And finding it hard to understand
Why the man in my sights has to die
He looks at me with disbelief
As I squeeze the trigger I share his grief

The recoil from my rifle
Smacks it butt into my shoulder
And in that instance
My heart once warm grows colder & colder

The adrenaline was rushing
It was him or me
I could have let him live
I could have set him free
But in that instance in the blink of an eye
What made me choose that he should die

Was he like me, With a wife and child
With a family he loved and all the while

Longing to be home from this tragic war
Longing to live as he did once did before

What I did to him would he have done to me
Would he have panicked so he could be free
From persecution and tyranny
That is the tale that was sold to him when they
sent him to fight
Then he would have to live with the nightmare
dreams, With the visions of hell for eternity
Of the realisation of what he had done

He would have to wonder about the pain he
had caused
The child without a father, his mother
distraught, his wife beside herself with grief
And his father who had fought
In a previous war and lived with the pain and
tried to block out the memories
Of the man he had shot without knowing his
name
But always they remain .
They will never go away

I can not go back how I wish I could
Others will justify what I did
Others will say we are proud of you son
But in my cold heart I feel a shame
That will rise and fall in differing degrees.
For ever

How many generals suffer from that thing called
PTSD
How many colonels have thought about me
To that wooden cross at Calvary
I pray every night and beg for forgiveness
But the Lee Enfield rifle the point 303
Will go on killing in spite of me
It will kill more and more and more and more
and more
So I pray to you Jesus, bring an end to this war.

Barry Davison

*NB - this poem is the second part of a trilogy by
Barry and follows on from his poem written for
last year, entitled Somme. Next year's Act of
Remembrance will see the completion of this
project.*

Sandy Ranson, Stratford St Mary PCC.

In the bleak midwinter, frosty wind may blow

What can we expect weatherwise for December? We have experienced one of the mildest November's on record so is it likely that December will follow the same trend?

December is the darkest month of the year with sunrise at around 8.00am and sunset at 3.50pm at the winter solstice. Even at midday, 12 noon, the sun is only about 17degrees above the horizon at latitude 52 degrees north of the equator. On a still sunny day, there is still a little bit of warmth to be felt

The weather can change quite dramatically from warmth to cold. December 2009 produced a cold spell with some snow and December 2010 was one of the coldest on record with considerable falls of snow causing much disruption, the average temperature for the month was 0 degrees Celsius! The end of December 1996 was cold, December 1981 was severe as was December 1950. One of the most remarkable cold spells started on December 1962 with a sudden change of wind direction from SW to NE on Christmas Eve. Christmas Eve and Christmas Day were bitterly cold with a piercing NE wind with the temperature hovering around freezing point but snow didn't arrive at Stratford until Boxing Day. This heralded one of the coldest winters on record in the last 250 years and severe cold conditions continued until the start of March. The heron population was decimated due to frozen lakes and river estuaries and less hardy shrubs, trees and plants perished. It was the plant nurseries worst nightmare.

The chances of extreme conditions this December are small but the month could be colder than the previous two or three.

If a ridge of high pressure develops with a cold light NW wind, a particular day could

be sunny and cloud less after an early frost which could linger all day in the shade and return quickly an hour or so before dusk. If the ridge doesn't stagnate, the wind the next day could back to the SW with resulting misty and damp conditions and the temperature gradually rising. A typical weather situation in changeable conditions

So we hold our breath see what is in store

Robin Jackson



Blue Christmas Service

A Blue Christmas Service is a quiet and reflective service for those for whom Christmas 2020 is not going to be a happy and joyous time. This year has been a challenge for everyone, with many grieving for friends and family members who have died due to COVID-19. The pandemic has also resulted in many people losing jobs with resulting financial difficulties. Anxiety, fear for the future and depression have affected many people. All of us have experienced loss of physical contact with family and friends.

Mothers' Union members in Suffolk have recorded their 'Blue Christmas Service' so that it might be shared with those who would otherwise not be able or feel safe to come to church this Christmas. The service can be viewed from their website, www.musuffolk.org.uk from 5pm, Monday 21st December, which when the longest night of the year begins. The service will remain on the website until December 31st.



Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year

Donations have been made to Stratford St Mary Church in lieu of Christmas Cards

Raydon



Fair Trade coffee morning

Our Fair trade coffee morning this month was, I'm afraid, rather a wash out! The previous few days were cold, very

windy and with heavy showers as well, which continued through November 3rd. We tried to be brave but sadly not brave enough to cope with the conditions. Annoyingly the following few days were very bright and sunny, that's called somebodies law isn't it?

Our next Fair Trade coffee morning should have been on December 1st, but again that "Somebodies" law has put a stop to that with the latest lockdown not being lifted until December 2nd.

We're hoping to hold an informal get together with coffee and Christmas goodies sometime during the month, when the weather looks a bit more promising. If it's after December 14th then our new rector should be here, so we could extend an invitation to her.

Thanks to everyone, who throughout the year, have supported us, stand by your phones to get news of when the December event might take place.

Looking forward to catching up again

Wendy Mumford

01473 312123

Raydon Church Stall.

A huge thank you to everyone who continues to donate goods and make purchases from our Church fundraising stall. We appreciate it very much.

Just a little reminder of the goods that we welcome:

Books, jigsaws, bric a brac, toys, pots and pans, kitchenware, garden equipment/tools, plants, and fruit/vegetables. All in good saleable order please.

Sorry, but we are unable to accept:

Electrical items, clothes, shoes, bedding/fabric items, large pictures/canvases, video/audio tapes, broken or damaged items.

Wendy and Daphne (who looks after the plants) have enjoyed tending the stall for the last 12 years and hope to continue for many more. BUT, without your kind donations we would have nothing to sell, so please continue to help raise the funds for St Mary's Church Raydon.



Raydon and District Garden Club



Another month passes by and the club is now closed for our usual winter break of December & January. By the time you read these notes guess you will be thinking about Christmas and wondering what you might be able to do party wise, or will it just be a nice turkey lunch + all the trimmings for 1 or 2, a nice glass of wine or 2 or 3, then dose in the armchair, and plenty of telly. No driving to worry about, sometimes simple can be very nice and far more relaxing. Then on Boxing Day it's out for a nice long walk and plenty of fresh air (weather permitting) but just a shame the days are short on daylight.

Christmas week generally will see me outside in the garden looking for the first signs of Spring, i.e. snowdrops might just be showing their spiky leaf shoots along with daffodils and early crocus if in sheltered spots. There is always some job that's needs to be dealt with even in winter and for me one job I always try to do is cover up the Rhubarb crowns with about 12" of straw, a few sticks on top to stop wind blowing straw away, then just wait for the first sticks ready to eat in February as they grow through the straw. If it's a hard winter extra straw has to be added to stop the new leaves being frosted and could delay picking to March. Of course I feed the Rhubarb with a good helping of homemade compost in the autumn making sure the crowns are left exposed till Christmas time, also make sure the soil is sloping away from the centre to allow rain water to seep away. It does not like to be water logged. I always like to get the veggie garden with compost (homemade of course) + last year's leaf mould added (it's free if collected each autumn) and I reckon combined it saves me at least buying £25.00 worth from the garden centre, to dig in, left over winter when hopefully some frosts will help break down

the clay into a fine tilth so in the spring time it will be ready to plant once again with a little help from my hand cultivator and rake. If it dries out too early in the spring (as it did this year) it gets very cobbly so germination is much harder.

Next month I check to see which new seeds I need to purchase so enjoy looking through seed catalogues to plan for the coming new season. Seed potatoes I tend to leave until February to purchase, then lay out in egg box / trays to allow them to shoot before planting.

So as promised here is update on village hall:- Current situation is hall sold subject to contract and in hands of solicitors. Provided no problems it should be empty in the early new year. This means that when your garden club can start up once again (and we are raring to go) we will be holding meetings in the KGF playing field pavilion. A new Spring, a new Home, and a new start. Further information as it becomes available will be in future copies of the Quartet. Your committee will be holding a proper meeting as soon as we are allowed to safely to discuss many items and plans for next year which will be our 41st year, here's hoping it will run more successfully than the one just gone. Looking forward and ever hopeful to a possible Spring



Show which may of course be our first meeting together, only time will tell. At least if it's the case then the lighter months and all the lovely spring flowers will be all around for you to enjoy once again. The birds will be singing and who knows perhaps we will all be singing, it does you good, and lifts the soul, and we can look forward once again to another successful gardening year.

On behalf of your garden club committee we wish all members and any prospective new members a Happy Christmas, and a Healthy, & Peaceful New Year. Geoff Horrex, 310422 / 07810086143



RAYDON PARISH COUNCIL

SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS 2021

(all at 7.30pm via ZOOM until further notice)
 Tuesday 12 January
 Tuesday 9 February
 Tuesday 9 March
 Tuesday 13 April (Annual Parish Meeting)
 Tuesday 11 May (AGM)
 Tuesday 15 June
 Tuesday 13 July
 Tuesday 14 September
 Tuesday 12 October
 Tuesday 9 November

NB: if you would like to see copies of the minutes of any Raydon Parish Council meetings, please contact

Jane Cryer, Clerk to Raydon Parish Council, 01473 824287 / 07920 713940, raydonpc@gmail.com

Your Raydon Parish Councillors

Sue Newton (Chair)
07587 243678

Keith Lovering
07939 075143

Howard (Jim) Lowe
01473 313094

Amanda Pyall (Vice Chair)
01473 310050

Sigi Steer
07591 875267

Jayne Tann
01473 828283

Faith Backhouse
07999 018049

Stephen Coe
07947211802

Trevor Sayer
07747 610317

Jane Cryer – Clerk
Sunnyside Cottage, Overbury Hall Road
Lower Layham IP7 5NA
01473 824287/07920 713940

raydonpc@gmail.com





The Raydon Pavilion has now re-opened with COVID secure measures in place. Anyone wishing to hire the building should contact Clive Duddridge on 01473 310162.

To comply with current government guidelines, the bar will now open at **8pm** and close promptly at **10pm**. A good selection of beers, wines and spirits are available at considerably less than pub prices.

Membership is open to all residents of the village (over 18s only) and anyone wishing to join is welcome to come along to enjoy a socially distanced drink and chat.



The 'lockdown' would seem to be likely to continue for several more months so please be assured that the The Phone Tree is still active.

So if you have any need of help – shopping, prescriptions, or just a phone call - do not hesitate to call either

Simon Tennent 01473 310320 or Geoff Horrex 07810086143 and we will find someone available to provide assistance.



Vera Gostling and family would like to thank everyone who sent their condolences and support with the recent passing of David. Having made their home in Raydon for the past 51 years, David had been involved with several village projects. Raydon/Wenham and Holton Youth Club, one of the founding members of the Gardening Club and running Cycling Proficiency courses and tests for children of Raydon CP school. One of the previous pupils recently wrote recounting the time she rode over David's foot during a lesson. But remember how she still passed and has the certificate at home.

Whether in his work or personal life he was well respected, with his fabulous sense of humor he always had a story or joke to tell and will be sadly missed by all those who knew him.



Higham



We would like to thank all those who have sent cards and good wishes in the last few weeks. A two week stay in hospital and a two week recovery period was made lighter by all the kind thoughts and prayers. Ongoing treatment is now being put in place for Margaret.

From Margaret and Peter Snelling.



Crib Service

24th December, 3.30pm,
Higham

Along with everything else, this year's Crib Service will be a little different.

Please meet on the village green at 3.30pm with torches and wellies.

We will process in a socially distanced and safe manner to the Church where the Christmas story will be told.

Children (and adults!) are encouraged to come dressed as a character from the Nativity.

We look forward to welcoming you and the light of Christ into the world.

A Walk Around Higham: 1950's - 1960's

Following on from last months notes I will now take you on a circular walk around Higham remembering some of the names and families who used to live there.

I left Higham when I got married in 1968. Forgive me if I haven't remembered everybody or every house but we are talking 60 to 70 years ago.

I will start off from what was my home called Bridge House by the river Brett. Going down the road to the bridge a few hundred yards it used to be the boundary between East and West Suffolk but now a days its all called South Suffolk. The tarmac changed to a different colour exactly mid bridge and in those days many cars seemed to come to grief and hit the bridge walls especially if travelling from Stoke by Nayland direction and more so after they straightened out the road. The original old road can still be seen amongst the trees if you know where to look. The bridge was a hump backed bridge in those days and a sharp bend so visibility not good and any speeding car could come to grief.

Now just over the river and on your LH side used to be 2 farm cottages (now a lovely house called "The Baubles" lived in by the Watkins family until recently) and belonging to Wasses farm (part of Giffords Hall estates) a bit further down the road by junction to the Marsh Road. Mr Manders used to be the stock man but later moved to the farm. His two daughters Judy &

Brenda went to Stratford school along with me. I spent many hours helping him round up the beef herd on the marsh and bringing them to the farm yards especially in winter when marsh was flooded (most winters).

So onwards opposite the Wasses farm entrance down the Marsh road passed first set of cottages then take first RH turn down dirt track, but if you carried straight on you come to Tea Pot cottage (lovely blue bell wood close by) and you could also walk to Shelley if desired coming out by church. However taking a right turn down track to what was known as Hilderbrands / water mill (not a public footpath now a days, you could walk past and up a very rough hill track passing a bungalow known as Cherry Tree Cottage, lived in by family called Browns. This area was overgrown by large trees making it like walking through a tunnel especially in winter afternoons when getting dark and lots of ferns in the damp soil but eventually coming out into the day light opposite entrance to Dewlands and Higham Race Course. Straight on you could walk to Sandpits lane but we are turning right back to village centre. Going passed Spindle Hill on your right you then pass a bungalow on your left called Marney Lodge where Mr & Mrs Wheeler & their two daughters lived. Just past this on your left is the grove/drive way to Valley Farm, then home of a Mr Douglas Doyle Jones, then on same side you pass a cottage lived in by Dr Ball and almost attached Hill House which belonged to Lady Rolls.

Lovely large gardens and views of Brett vale from here and you were able to see back of Bridge House and river but guess view probably changed now. Further down the hill on RH side tucked behind a large hedge and also in a sunken garden you see Tea Caddy Cottage which used to have a cellar underneath which if I remember had 5 steps up to the garden level and all garden tools including lawn mower had to be carried up (I know as I used to do the gardening for several years to earn pocket money). Next down the hill on RH side was Little Grange lived in by Mr

& Mrs Goodchild before reaching main street with the Kings Arms Pub on your left run by Mr & Mrs Harold Partridge. Now we turn left and cottages on left lived in by a Mr Howard (Howards cottage) and a Mr Scofield. Further along a Mrs Howes and even further you eventually come to Higham Lodge home at one time to Brigadier Gurney. In the house up the top of driveway on RH side was a cottage home to Mr & Mrs Francis. Back down on road turning back towards village centre again you had Masons Farm, that's all gone and a very large house has been built. Then down further on LH side used to be a small cottage lived in by a Mrs Cone. This was demolished and replaced by a house called Pear Tree house lived in by Mrs Evelin Woods and her sister. They moved to Clovers Mill Dedham when it was converted to housing.

Almost back to the pub also on left a bungalow called the Lodge ? lived in by Mr & Mrs Mathews who owned a small nursery in Stratford growing tomatoes and gladiolus as well as other plants, this has now all gone and a small housing development called Mathews Close has taken over. Then just round the corner you come to what was Higham Post Office and sweet shop (built in 1650's so fairly old) run by Miss Borley a lovely lady and my sister Jane & I used to get our weekly sweet ration Yes (sweet ration) remember old money 1 penny used to purchase enough aniseed balls or lemon sherbets. Then to the Green here you see that lovely Copper Beech tree planted in 1953 by Mr Easy to commemorate HRH Princess Elizabeth becoming Queen of England. Also facing the triangle green you have a very imposing house called Higham Place and opposite The White House, home of Mrs Howes. On the third side Mr Furniss lived.

A good place to rest awhile but a way to go so will continue in January quartet to finish my memories walk back down by the river Brett. Geoff Horrex.

Holton St Mary



The First Friday Lunch Club



As I type this in the middle of the second period of lockdown, we do not yet know if we can resume FFOTMLC lunches in December. Ever hopeful, Sally has a list of people (most of the November list) who want to come if we are able to go ahead. At this stage our hope is for a platter of food on each table, to emulate last year's buffet. No more than four to a table so we can sit up without compromising anybody's safety and once again it will be table service so we are not getting too close to each other. The Village Hall Committee have changed the fire door and entrance lobby door so entry through the front door (exit at the side).

Assuming Government guidelines relax to permit us to resume, we may have to move it to the second Friday or even later (11th December or even 18th) to give us time to get organised (for example, there is no food order service running at the local supermarkets at the moment). Geoff has promised to make his sausage rolls again and we will have roasted potato-chips, cocktail sausages, chicken bits, bread, cheese, fruit and salad and some sort of desserts with mince pies - somewhat emulating the "Barefoot Contessa" on Food

Network it will be buy some, make some and "it's going to be fabulous".

If you want to come and have not already confirmed please contact Sally or Frances by email or phone, so we can make sure we keep you updated Sally via salthurlow@gmail.com 01473 312080 Frances is familytorrington@btinternet.com or 01473 312046



Holton St Mary Social Club

Well at least we opened for one week, it was good to see so many faces. Hopefully we will open again before the next Quartet is sent out. We will let you know via the Village Facebook group and the normal village gossip line.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank everybody associated with the club for their support and help. Looking forward to seeing everyone more frequently in the future.

Wishing all a very Merry Christmas and a much brighter New Year

Bob Holmes

Bobholmes55@icloud.com
Mobile 07966266293
Home 01473 310584

Christmas Greetings 2020



Jean

Claire

Pam & Tudor

Geoff and Sally

David and Sheila Morgans

Sally & Peter Longmate and Archie

Brian and Trena ~ Jacqueline Unwin

Paul, Frances, Dom, Martha and Lydia

Chris and Marjorie ~ Erik, Naomi & Coco

Oliver and Antonia ~ Richard and Jeanette

John, Paula and Seb ~ Chris, Bid and Archie

Anne and Bill Priestley ~ Eileen & Peter Starling

Liz, Chris & Maddie Sims ~ Keith, Karen, Tazmin and Isobel



**Merry Christmas
and a
Happy
New Year
to all our
friends**



Donations have been made to Holton St Mary Church
in lieu of Christmas cards

Holton St Mary Millennium Green Century Club

Winners are:

October: £30 No 73 Brian & Joan Keen, £15 No 106 Dot Steeds, £10 No 86 Les Norman, £5 each No 63 Marjorie Haste and No 103 Dave & Jackie Gregson.

November: £30 No 49 Robin Hood, £15 No 28 Gerald Godden, £10 No 60 Rosina Mann, £5 each No 83 John Partridge and No 41 Grahame Wade.

December: £30 No 91 Peter Starling, £15 No 74 Peter Burgess, £10 No 24 Ian Pearce, £5 each No 113 Kevin Last and No 86 Les Norman.

Thank you all for your support this year. Subscriptions (£12) will be due again in the New Year and we are encouraging payment by bank transfer. Further details will be available in January.

Marjorie Haste, Secretary



COVID 'One Liners'

Back in May I asked for 'Covid 19 One Liners' and I received a variety of interesting comments. The current set of restrictions is different and I would be interested in your thoughts and comments now. All one liners will be recorded anonymously.

Please send your comments to marjorie.haste01@btinternet.com or phone 01473 311615.

Marjorie Haste, Village History Recorder

Green Gym Group

The Green Gym Group will meet in Church Square at 10.30 on Saturday, 5th December. Details of the work we will be doing will be posted on the Village Facebook page earlier in the week. Home-made mince pies will be provided to celebrate our labours of 2020. Everyone is welcome...

Richard Appleton



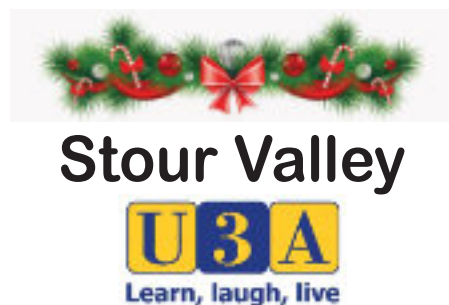
SESAW CHRISTMAS APPEAL

This year, for the first time ever, we are making a Christmas Appeal. Unfortunately COVID-19 has severely curtailed our fundraising efforts but a regular monthly payment for as little as £2 (more if you wish) will help us so much at the moment.

If you would like to give someone a present that will help a needy animal throughout the year, please make cheques or BACS payable to Suffolk & Essex Small Animal Welfare at NatWest Bank, Account No. 52717321, Sort Code 60-21-30. Alternatively, go to our sponsorship on our website at: https://www.sesaw.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/sponsorship-form_2018.pdf or phone for a form.

Thank you to all supporters, past, present and future.

Suffolk & Essex Small Animal Welfare, Reg.Charity No.1124029. Stoke Road, Leavenheath, CO6 4PP. 01787 210888 www.sesaw.co.uk info@sesaw.co.uk



News

Knocked back by Covid we are now rebuilding as quickly as is safely possible. The majority of our activity groups, including walking, ten pin bowling, fitness, canoeing and kayaking, are back up and running.

Other groups, from philosophy, to book club and languages, continue to operate using Zoom. Our gardening group has a number of visits planned, including a week away to Harrogate.

Membership

We are always open to new members. Our fee for 2020/21 is just £8. To find out more, visit our website to see how we work and get the latest updates: stourvalleyu3a.org.uk or contact Graham Manuel (chair) gandamanuel@gmail.com or Sue Basted (secretary) susanbasted10@gmail.com

About us

Stour Valley U3A is one of more than 1,000 U3A groups in the UK. We have just over 400 members based in the Essex/Suffolk border encompassing areas including Manningtree, Dedham, East Bergholt and Shotley.

We work with neighbouring branches in Hadleigh, Harwich and Colchester which provides a wider range of social and learning opportunities.

The Third Age Trust looks after all U3As nationally bringing together people in their "third age" to develop their interests and continue learning in a friendly and informal environment. Third age is a time after you have finished working full-time and have time to pursue interests or just try something new.



Holy Family Roman Catholic Church

Ipswich Road, Brantham CO11 1TB Parish
 Priest: Fr. Paul Vincent OCD Assistant
 Priest: Fr Bineesh Elenjikkal OCD
 180 Hawthorn Drive Ipswich IP2 0QQ

TEL: 01473 684963.
www.stmarksparish.org.uk

Services planned for DECEMBER 2020

Tuesday 1 9.20am Eucharistic Adoration
 10am Mass
 Sunday 6 2nd SUNDAY OF ADVENT
 9am Mass
 Tuesday 8 THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION
 OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY
 9.20am Eucharistic Adoration
 10am Mass
 Sunday 13 3rd SUNDAY OF ADVENT
 9am Mass
 Tuesday 15 9.20am Eucharistic Adoration
 10am Mass
 Sunday 20 4th SUNDAY OF ADVENT
 9am Mass
 Tuesday 22 9.20am Eucharistic Adoration
 10am Mass

For Mass times on 24th & 25th December please read the Parish weekly newsletter or visit the Parish website

Thursday 24 THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD
 Friday 25 CHRISTMAS DAY

Sunday 27 THE HOLY FAMILY OF JESUS,
 MARY & JOSEPH 9am Mass
 Tuesday 29 9.20am Eucharistic Adoration
 10am Mass

The weekly Newsletter, with Mass times, is always displayed in the cabinet alongside the Church's front door and the latest Parish news may be read on the regularly updated website www.stmarksparish.org.uk.

With the further widespread restrictions on people's activities announced, we cannot be sure we will be able to attend Church in the same way as before. However, we hope very much that Christmas and New Year Services will be possible albeit with limited numbers and the social distancing we have become used to. Inevitably, it seems Christmas will not be the same whether we attend church or not. We all hope for a cure and that some good will come about as the world recovers.

There are three special Feasts of the Lord in the Christmas period: the Nativity, the Epiphany and the Baptism. In the West we greatly emphasise the Nativity but Eastern Christians tend to strike a balance between all three. There would be no celebration of the Nativity at all had there not been the later passion, death and resurrection of the Lord, the story of Easter, as there would be no reason to look back to the birth of Jesus.

The 100 Club Draw took place on Sunday 22 November at the home of the Promoter and witnessed on FaceTime by a member of the congregation. Three lucky winners shared a £165 prize pot. The Club, set up to support the life and mission of our Parish, has grown from strength to strength since its launch. New Members are always very welcome and the Annual Newsletter, that includes an application form, can be found at the rear of the church or please visit the Parish website www.stmarksparish.org.uk. The next draw takes place on Sunday 20 December.

The popular Bring & Buy Coffee Mornings that have taken place at Viv & Wyn's home, Paddock Gate, Whitehorse Road, East Bergholt are cancelled for the foreseeable future.

Supporting our Local Hospice

All Parishioners are asked to collect used postage stamps, ALL YEAR, not just at Christmas and place them in the box at the rear of the church to help support the outstanding work of our local Hospice.

The Sick & Homebound - Fr Bineesh Elenjikkal is the Ipswich Hospital Catholic Chaplain assisted by Deacon Rev Clive Brooks (01026 396319). Please be aware that for reasons of patient confidentiality, the current practice in the NHS is NOT to inform the chaplains of any Catholics that are admitted to hospital. So, unless you or your relatives inform the chaplain of your hospital stay yourselves, you will not be visited by a priest or any other member of the chaplaincy team. Please let Fr Paul Vincent know of anyone who is ill at home or housebound, so that they may receive appropriate pastoral care. Both Fr Paul and Fr Bineesh may be contacted at the Priory on 01206 684963.

All are very welcome at Holy Family, Brantham, CO11 1TB. All are very welcome to attend Holy Family services; it is not necessary to be a Catholic and enquiries about the Catholic Faith are always welcome. Please contact the Priory, as above, or a local person whom you know is a Catholic.



Amen: a little word that means much

'Amen' is a significant little Hebrew word (אמן) that is defined as, 'so be it' or 'be true'. A more liberal translation is 'truly' or 'certainly'. It is a word that is said often, usually automatically and probably without much thought when ending a prayer and during acts of worship. However, it may also be used in a secular context in response to a profound comment following a sad incident or in anticipation of a potential future event. It is often followed by an '!' for emphasis, whatever the context.

The word originally signified agreement. When ending a prayer, 'Amen' implies commitment to what was prayed as well as the desire to see the prayer come to fruition. In other words, to believe in what we have prayed and that it will happen. In a secular context, we could think about what 'Amen' would mean if making a business deal, buying or selling a house or car or writing a will.

We could justifiably utter a collective 'Amen!' in our national agreement on what was the depressing, tragic and unequivocally physically and emotionally exhausting trauma of 2020 or, as Her Majesty the Queen stated at the end of 1992, an '*annus horribilis*'.

However, 2020 also witnessed wonderful and often selfless acts of help and support, friendship and fellowship. This was in all areas of physical, emotional and spiritual suffering and practiced through both humanist and religious approaches. Showing insight, compassion and empathy and caring for others is important and sets us apart from the birds and beasts of the farm, field and forest. This should always include strangers because even the birds and the beasts are genetically-

programmed to protect their families. If our behaviour is manifest by 'self' and that only I matter, then we are no different than the animals. Whatever our perception of God, we were not created, or would not wish to act in this way but to think of others and in 2020 we had to face this challenge. When caring for, and giving willingly and enthusiastically and in joy, our bodies show a healthy physiological response; endorphins rise and our cortisol ('stress hormone') level falls with consequent benefits. Helping others may also be contagious, an appropriate pun at this time, as Plato wisely uttered: 'Good actions give strength to ourselves and inspire good actions in others'

2021 will bring significant opportunities and challenges for all of us, as individuals and as a country. The most eagerly anticipated will be an effective and safe vaccine to control the virus or at least reduce the frequency and severity of its short and long-term sequelae. However, its real value will only be realised if uptake of the vaccine is very high and this will be as much of a challenge as finding the vaccine. It is unlikely that any vaccine will be universally available until early or mid-2021. In the meantime, and even beyond, we must find the courage, determination and, difficult though this sounds, the joy to continue what we all learnt to do so well in the past year.

Each of us will find their own way of doing this, some with ease but many others with difficulty, which is why we must be there for each other and those in greater need than ourselves. I felt that an appropriate way to end was with the inspiring and much-loved poem, 'God Knows', by Minnie Haskins. It was used by King George VI to end his radio broadcast in Christmas 1939 when the country's mood and confidence over the future was extremely low:

'And I said to the man who stood at the gate of the year:
"Give me a light that I may tread safely into the unknown."
And he replied:
"Go out into the darkness and put your hand into the hand of God.
That shall be to you better than light and safer than a known way."

Towards the end of his speech, King George said: 'With God's help we will prevail'.

Amen!

Richard Appleton



Constable Country Patient Participation Group report

Flu vaccination clinics

This year we were asked to help book in eligible patients for their flu vaccinations, starting with the most at risk over 65s. Individual appointments were felt to be a much safer option for patients at present and we were pleased to be able to help out. Around 500 patients were vaccinated each week and, along with those vaccinated at pharmacies, the practice was able to meet the target set by the NHS of 75% or more of eligible patients being vaccinated.

Suggestions, comments and complaints

There are a number of ways you can get in touch with the practice. You can write to the practice manager, Pete Keeble at East Bergholt surgery, Heath Road, East Bergholt, Colchester CO7 6RT or you can

use the "Have your say" tab on the practice website: www.constablecountrymedicalpractice.co.uk Using this tab you can send comments to the Patient Participation Group or to the practice. On this link you will also find the minutes of our monthly meetings and a list of members with our contact details.

Alternatively you can leave feedback about the practice using the Suffolk Healthwatch links on the website.

If you scroll down to the very bottom of the page there is another link "Send us your comments or suggestions."

If you have a serious complaint about the surgery you can contact NHS England by email: england.contactus@nhs.net or in writing to NHS England, PO Box 16738, Redditch B97 9PT. Pharmacies are also covered by NHS England.

Join us? We would like more people to come forward to join the Patient Participation Group. Contact us via our email address or by phoning Kathy. We would particularly like to encourage working age people to join us.

Kathy Pollard (Chair) email: constablecountryppg@gmail.com Tel: 01473 311384



SESAW News

We hope the Lockdown has ended when you read this so that our plans are safe and not scattered. Our indefatigable fundraisers should be selling 'classy gifts' and running a Tombola at the Festive Fair on Saturday 12th December at Bridge Farm Barn, Monks Eleigh, IP7 7AY. Sharon's Christmas face masks, including the "Maggie's Farm" design, will also be on offer, quite the must-have fashion accessory for humans! Sadly the annual Sudbury Christmas Tree Festival in St. Peter's Church has been cancelled.

We are still rehoming animals by appointment only but politely ask that nothing is left at the Sanctuary without prior arrangement. We have to limit intake because everything must be quarantined to protect volunteers and bedding, food or sale goods left at random make this impossible. Thank you for your unwavering support and best wishes for a safe and peaceful Christmas from all of us, including Ollie (the Black) Cat and me, (Kennny the Boss) Chihuahua.

Suffolk & Essex Small Animal Welfare, Reg.Charity No.1124029. Stoke Road, Leavenheath, CO6 4PP. 01787 210888 www.sesaw.co.uk info@sesaw.co.uk



Twas the night before Christmas, when all through the house
Not a creature was stirring, not even a mouse.
The stockings were hung by the chimney with care,
In hopes that St Nicholas so soon would be there.

But Christmas 2020 was like no other before
and one that will surely go down in folklore.
The reindeer wore face masks, their hooves were all clean
And the red nose of Rudolph
Was ne'er to be seen.

And what of old Santa? That merry old soul
He was self isolating, back at the Pole
The elves had been furloughed, despite what they pleaded
Ironical indeed that their presence not needed

And children worldwide think Santa's a miser
Cos all of their presents are hand sanitiser
So hold on the tinsel and mute celebration
And say a short prayer for mass vaccination

Johnny Lockdown



GP practices report big number of 'phone calls about three main issues

Issued on behalf of NHS North East Essex, NHS West Suffolk and NHS Ipswich and East Suffolk clinical commissioning groups

GP practices are reporting a big increase in telephone calls and emails from patients about three main issues – when will flu vaccinations be available for those aged 50 to 64, can I get a letter from my GP to say I'm shielding and when will a coronavirus vaccine be available?

And although all GP practices are open for business and staff are ready to help during this second lockdown they are keen to provide clarity on these topics. By doing so, they aim to reduce the number of unnecessary calls and emails so staff can focus on delivering care to those most in need.

Dr Mark Shenton, chairman of NHS Ipswich and East Suffolk Clinical Commissioning Group and Professor of Integrated Care at the University of Suffolk, said: "The flu vaccination programme is now well underway, with GP practices and community pharmacies having already administered thousands of vaccines to the

most vulnerable people in our communities, such as those aged 65 and over, pregnant women and those with a long-term health condition.

"There will be a national announcement on flu vaccinations for those aged 50 – 64 years. This is expected sometime in November or December, depending on flu vaccine availability. Until we know more there is no need to contact your GP practice."

Dr Christopher Browning, a GP in Long Melford and chairman of NHS West Suffolk Clinical Commissioning Group, said: "While during the previous lockdown the most vulnerable people in our communities were urged to shield themselves in order to protect their health, this is currently not the case. No one is being asked to shield and instead people must follow the new national restrictions.

"However, if you are considered clinically extremely vulnerable and shielded before, you are advised to follow the full advice on the Government's website.

"It includes advice that you should stay at home as much as possible and are also strongly advised to work from home. If you cannot work from home, you should not attend work for this period of restrictions. You are also advised not to go to the shops or a pharmacy, but to shop online if you can or ask others to collect and deliver shopping or medicines for you.

"New shielding letters are not available from your GP as shielding is not being advised nationally."

Dr Hasan Chowhan, a GP in Colchester and chairman of NHS North East Essex Clinical Commissioning Group, said: "I urge people not to call their GP practice asking when a Covid-19 vaccine might be available, as our staff don't currently know the answer."

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Route 14

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Week Commencing	30th November	Recycling Week	
	7 th December	Refuse Week	
	14 th December	Recycling Week	
	21 st December	Refuse Week, but Friday's collection will be on Monday 28 th	
	28 th December	Recycling week - Mon, Tues, Weds collections are one day later, Thursday collection is on Saturday, and Fridays collection is the following Monday	
Waste Services 0300 1234 000 (option 4) Email: recycling@babergghmidsuffolk.gov.uk Visit www.recyclenow.com to find your nearest recycling banks			



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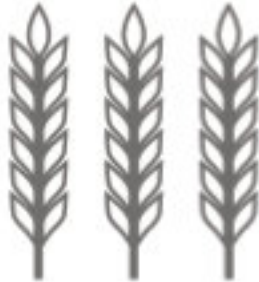
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As I write this letter, the clocks have recently changed and we are now getting used once again to the dark evenings. I heard several times, the comment '*surely we don't need an extra hour of this wretched year!*' and maybe, like many others you are also wishing this year with all its difficulties was well and truly behind us.

In his letter last month, Simon helped us to look forward, on a number of fronts. Advent is the start of the new church year. I always think it is rather strange that we have so many different 'new year' starting points. The financial year starts on 6th April, at least for tax purposes, but many accounting years end in December and begin in January, in line with the calendar year. In the world of Education, September marks the start of the new year but for the Anglican Church, the beginning of December marks the start of a new year, with a new lectionary of readings and themes. It is a time to look forward.

We are very much hoping that restrictions start to be eased in time for Christmas and we have planned a range of services in December that we hope will take place in person. One very eagerly awaited service will be the Licensing on 14th December of our new priest in charge Rev'd. Manette Crossman. If this is able to go ahead as planned, it will necessarily be restricted in number and therefore by invitation only, but certainly it will be no less joyful an occasion because of that. If we cannot hold a service in the church, it will likely be conducted through the wonders of technology. In any event, we hope the occasion will be filmed and available for viewing.

It is appropriate at this point, to acknowledge the outstanding contribution and commitment that Rev'd. Nicola has given throughout the two long years of the vacancy. As our licensed Reader, Nicola voluntarily stepped into the breach arranging cover for services, attending meetings across the Benefice and helping in every way to keep the show on the road. This second year has truly proved to be the proverbial baptism of fire - at the same time as working and devoting much time to voluntary activities, Nicola completed her training, going forward to be ordained as Deacon (*or curate*) in September of this year. We wish to thank Nicola for all she has done for the Benefice (*and the list is long!*) in sustaining an active worshipping community and to acknowledge gratefully, the invaluable and unstinting support of her family. Looking back over this year, we have enjoyed and been grateful for the filmed daily reflections, the interactive Zoom services, the filmed acts of worship and services in collaboration with the Elmsett Benefice, many of which were recorded in our local churches. Thanks are also due for the many acts of individual kindness, unspoken and unsung that have made a huge difference to people in our local community. Thank you Nicola!

When Rev'd. Manette joins us in December, we will have a great team to help us move forward on the next step of our journey - a cause for optimism and a great blessing for us all.

Sandy Ranson - Lay Elder, Stratford St Mary.

Benefice Contacts

Deacon:

Rev'd Nicola Tindall: 01787 212340 nicolajtindall@btinternet.com

Please contact Rev'd Nicola to discuss any aspect of faith and services in the Benefice including home visits.

Benefice Administrator:

Frances Torrington: 01473 312046 familytorrington@btinternet.com

Please contact Frances to talk about baptisms, confirmations, weddings and funerals.

Benefice website: www.4marys.org.uk

Churchwardens:

Higham Hugo Parker 01206 337234

Holton Richard Noel 01206 298276
Paul Torrington 01473 312046

Raydon Geoff Horrex 01473 310422
Simon Tennent 01473 310320

Stratford Jonathan Dewey 01206 322148



Benefice Services and Events

Please note: Due to Covid restrictions there will be no House Group in December

Stratford St Mary Church (Lady Chapel - accessed via churchyard) will be open for Private Prayer on Wednesdays & Saturdays 10.00 am to 2.00 pm. The other churches in the Benefice will be closed except for Sundays when services take place.

Services in December

Please check our website for current updates: www.4marys.org.uk.

6th December

Stratford 10am Holy Communion

13th December

Holton 10am. Holy Communion

14th December

Stratford* Licensing of Rev'd. Manette Crossman

15th December online

The Benefice Carol Service
(see website / fb page for details)

20th December

Higham 10.00 am Holy Communion
Stratford 10.00 am Family Hour Nativity in the Parish Rm.

24th December

Higham 3.30pm Crib Service (commences on village green).
Holton 11.30 pm Midnight Mass

25th December

Raydon 9.30 am Family Communion
Stratford 9.30 am Family Service

27th December

Raydon 10.00 am Holy Communion

* The Licensing of Rev'd Manette as Priest in Charge for the Benefice will be by invitation only to comply with current restrictions. It is hoped that the service will be filmed and afterwards available online. See website for details.

A mid-week service of Morning Prayer in the Parish Rm, SSM, will take place on Wednesday 16th December at 10am. Please contact Christine Cousins 01206 322530 if you would like to attend.

Benefice Advent Bible Study

This year the Advent Bible Study is via Zoom, using the book 'A Strange Christmas' by Krish Kandiah. If you just wish to join the weekly group meeting please let Rev'd. Nicola know and she will send you the relevant pages. For those without access to a computer we will make the discussions available in paper form.

The first meeting is on **Monday 30th Nov. at 7pm** and the link is

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85676369375?pwd=MFJVOTd3N0ptOW9YeiRVeDRVcmtdz09>

Meeting ID: 856 7636 9375

Passcode: 249732

Other course dates are: Mon. 7th December, Tues. 15th December, and Mon. 21st December. Each session will last between 60 and 90 minutes. Please contact Rev'd. Nicola for the weekly Zoom link.

Elders

Our Benefice is fortunate to have three lay elders, appointed locally and licensed to help and assist with certain aspects of church ministry. For example, they may undertake pastoral work e.g. visiting people in their homes or in hospital, work with young people in running family and children's services and assist with general church services. The lay elders work as part of our local ministry team and may be contacted about local church matters if churchwardens are unavailable.

Christine Cousins 01206 322530

Janet Dewey 01206 322148

Sandy Ranson 01206 322156



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SSM: Nancy Ablitt, Laura Kerry, Josie Thompson & family

Others: Helen Gregory