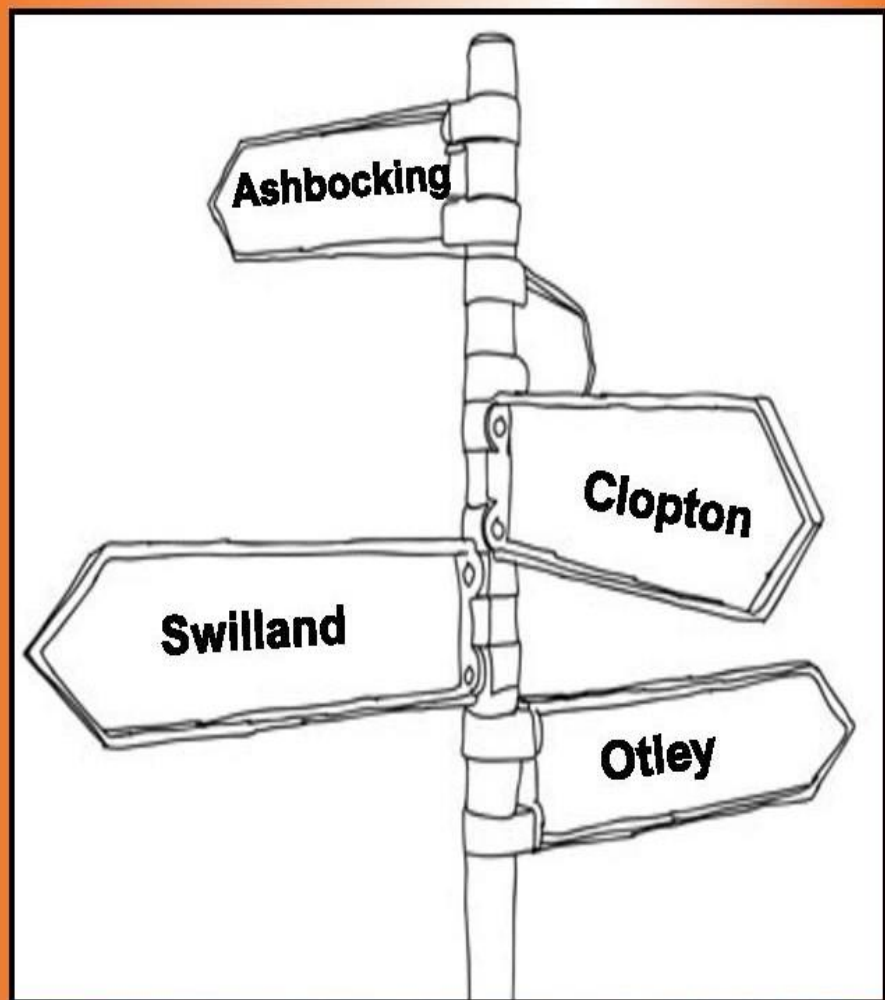


The Signpost



News from the Parishes

A Word from The Editor.....



Welcome to another year, another Signpost, the **February** edition. How is it possible that we have already ticked off the first month of 2023? With changeable weather from mild, to cold, then wet and currently sunny, cool and wet but we have so far escaped the white stuff. We all have to adapt to what is in front of us each day, we have no choice but to go with it! What challenges will we have to face this year, there will undoubtedly be both good and bad challenges. For some it might be physical challenges, for others mental, recovering from illness or injuries but for many it will be the cost of living and increasing bills. We should all know that we all have family, friends, neighbours and our communities that will be there to help and support us along the way. There will be great excitement as May approaches and we witness the Coronation of King Charles, an exciting historical event. There will be many plans for events throughout the year, if you are involved in any and would like to spread the word, please let me know and I would be very happy to include in The Signpost.

If there is anything else you would like to see within the magazine, whatever it may be, I would gratefully receive it for consideration for upcoming editions.

If you would like any family or friends' birthdays, exam results or anniversaries celebrated, then please do let me know and I will include in next month's magazine.

**The next magazine will be the March issue,
with a deadline of 24th February 2023.**

To register to receive The Signpost via email, each month,
please email Amy bakergirl174@gmail.com

News of the Carlford Churches and details of online Worship can be found on the website carlfordchurches.org and within the Mini Grapevine. If you would like to receive the Mini Grapevine weekly via email, please register via the website carlfordchurches.org or with Mark Cresswell – mark@carlfordchurches.org. There are links on the Carlford Churches website to the Facebook page, Mini-Grapevine and The Signpost. The Carlford Churches Facebook page can be accessed directly <http://facebook.com/carlfordchurches>.

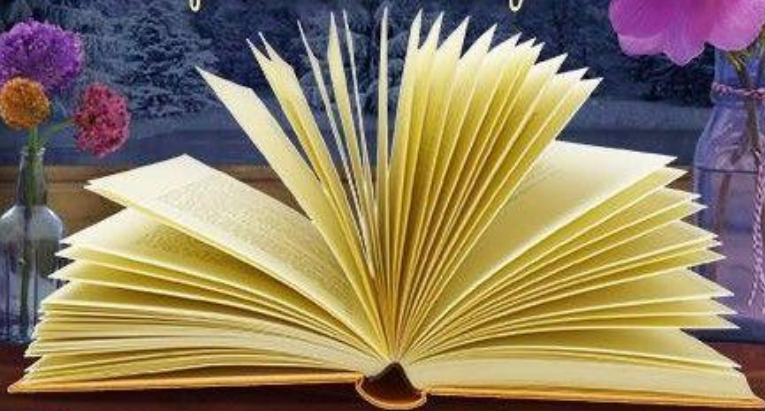
Should you wish to speak with Rev'd Katrina Dykes or a member of the benefice team,
please telephone 01473 735183.

Keep safe, till next month...With best wishes, Amy

February



Winter walks
and starlit nights,
Good books and cozy hours,
Time for friends,
and heartfelt sharing,
Dreams of springtime flowers...
Although it may be short on days
Each February brings
The simple little gifts we count
Among life's
precious things.



Rainfall November

The first week was very wet with 1.25 inches of rain but it continued to be very mild for November. There followed a week of fine weather and then the month finished up with a period of rainfall most days. November was not a cold month, and the total rainfall came to 4.20 inches, the year so far has only reached 17 inches which means that we are still well short of the year's average of 25 inches.

Russell Ling

February Weather Sayings.....

- *There is always one fine week in February.*
- *If bees get out in February, the next day will be windy and rainy.*
- *Fogs in February mean frosts in May.*
- *Winter's back breaks about the middle of February*
- *A weathercock that swings to the west
Proclaims the weather to be the best.
A weathercock that swings to the east
Proclaims no good for man or beast.*
- *A wet February, a wet Spring.*
- *If Candlemas be fair and clear, there'll be two winters in the year.*
- *If a hedgehog casts a shadow at noon, Winter will return.*
- *If it thunders in February, it will frost in April.*



8th February Kew and The Wild Boar

St Kew has nothing to do with gardens or the 'Q' of James Bond fame. This Kew was a girl who lived in Cornwall in the 5th century, and who should be the patron saint of girls with difficult older brothers.

Kew's older brother was a hermit who felt his younger sister was not worthy to even visit his cell. But big brothers often underestimate their younger sisters, and he was no exception. One day Big Brother saw a wild boar charge out of the woods towards his sister. Kew spoke to it kindly in tones of such purity and sweetness that it immediately slowed down to a peaceful walk.

Big Brother was so shaken by this that he repented of his superior attitude. When he then bothered to spend time talking with young Kew, Big Brother discovered her nature to be of "rare virtue and holiness". Other people thought so too, and after her death they decided Kew had been a saint, and so should have the parish church named after her.



Perhaps the moral of all this is that if you want to win over a difficult older brother, you should first practise on wild boars.

Winter Olympics

The first ever winter games were held in Chamonix in France in 1924. It initially was called the International Winter Sports Week, but then renamed the "1st Olympic Winter Games" in 1926. All of the events at the Winter Olympics take place in snow and ice and include ice skating, skiing and snowboarding. You then have the intrepid athletes who venture high into the mountains on cross-country ski races while others indoors at specially built venues.



The first Winter Olympics were held in the February of 1924. There were around 250 athletes from 16 countries with 16 events ranging from ski jumping to ice hockey!

The Winter Olympics traditionally take place two years after the summer Olympics but since the Summer Olympic games of 2020 were moved to 2021 due to the COVID19 Pandemic, The Beijing Winter Olympics of 2022 followed closely behind their sunny sibling.

While horses and dogs have not been invited to join in with official sports, they have both played a role in ‘Demonstration events’. Dog-sledding featured in 1932, while in the 1928 Olympics, horses demonstrated skijoring – an event that involves athletes being towed on skis behind riderless horses!!



Athletes competing in skeleton bobsleigh hurtle down slopes at up to 140kmph! Sliding on boards the width of their body, these athletes balance on their bellies and navigate around tight turns, steering with their feet on a hair-raising course made of ice. The Luge is very similar, but they travel on their backs with feet first – this can be done singularly or as a two person team. The winners of these events are those that complete the course in the fastest times. Yikes!!

In the first Winter Olympics women were only allowed to compete in ice skating. This continued until 1948 when skiing also became a competitive women’s sport. Thankfully now, women can now compete in all sports at the Olympics.

Only one person has ever won gold in both the Winter and Summer Olympics. American Eddie Eagan grabbed a gold medal in boxing during the 1920 Summer Olympics in Antwerp, Germany. Then more than 10 years later, he won another in the 1932 Winter Olympics as part of a four man bobsled team.

In 1940 and 1944, the Winter Olympic Games were interrupted by the Second World War.

Walt Disney was in charge of the opening and closing ceremonies for one memorable Winter Olympics. These took place in the Squaw Valley, California, USA in 1960. We all know how Walt Disney was such a creative director – he wanted to make the opening ceremony the most impressive yet, Disney’s performance included a whopping 3,700 musicians, 2,000 doves and more than 30,000 balloons!



The 1964 Winter Olympics were set to take place in Innsbruck, Austria but with the event fast approaching the officials realised that there wasn't enough snow! The Austrian army were sent off to the nearby mountains and carted down more than 38,200 cubic metres of snow and 20,000 blocks of ice!

The Jamaican bobsleigh team made history in 1988 when they were the first tropical country to be represented in a winter sport. They even inspired the film 'Cool Runnings'!

Marit Bjorgen who is from Norway has won the most medals of any Winter Olympian, an amazing cross-country skier who has won a whopping total of 15 medals. She secured her title at the 2014 Winter Olympics, by winning three gold medals.



Since the games began, Norway has won the most medals. The 2018 Olympic Winter Games at Pyeongchang saw the most participants (2897) from 92 teams.

The opening ceremony of the 2026 Winter Olympics will be held at the San Siro, Milan's iconic soccer stadium, which opened in 1926. The closing ceremony will be at the ancient Arena di Verona, which is best known as an opera venue. Competitions in between will be scattered around Northern Italy at 14 different venues.

There will be some new events for the 2026 Winter Olympics such as the addition of ski mountaineering, also referred to as "skimo". Five medal events will be contested: sprint and individual events for men and women and a mixed-gender relay. The individual races require skiers to trek up and then down mountain terrain while passing through time checkpoints. Sprint events include uphill skiing, racing on foot, and a skiing descent. The relays are contested as a modified sprint event with multiple competitors on each team.



Brain teasers

- 1 Who was king when Jesus was born?
- 2 Jesus was tempted in the desert for how many days?

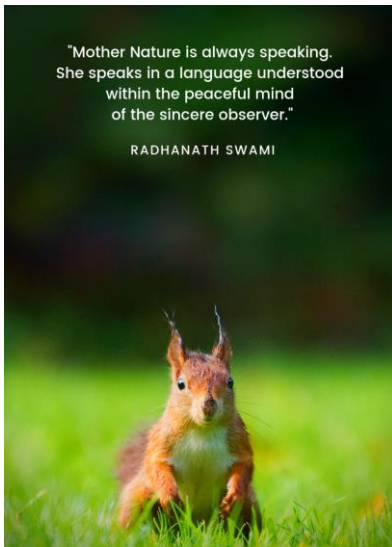


Body Parts Brain teasers - *The answer to each of the following clues is an idiom or an item, which includes a part of the body e.g. At the top of the bed = Headboard / To keep silent = bite one's tongue*

- 3 A signal of approval
- 4 A type of woodwork joint
- 5 Necessary for Chilli Con Carne

(Solutions on Page 29)

Wildlife to look out for this February



- **Blackbirds** – A sure sign that spring is just around the corner. In mild conditions they may start singing this month.
- **Hoverflies** - The first ones are on the wing now (flying).
- **Brimstone Butterflies** – on warm sunny days.
- **Badgers** - The females, sows, give birth early in the year.
- **Roe deer** – still sporting their winter grey coats.
- **Grey Spotted Woodpeckers** - Their dagger-like bill makes contact up to 16 times a second. Both sexes drum, though paired males are most active.

"There is no more lovely, friendly and charming relationship, communion or company than a good marriage".

– Martin Luther

Church of England's National Investing Bodies publish Deforestation Policy

Deforestation sits at the heart of climate, biodiversity and food and water security challenges, all of which many parts of the world are currently struggling to address.



The Church of England has therefore said: “We recognise the need to support a transition to sustainable policies and practices in a way that conserves and restores forests while also protecting local communities and livelihoods.”

To that end, the National Investing Bodies of the Church of England (NIBs) have published a Deforestation Policy, to address these critical issues before they become crises.

“We recognise the critical role which tropical forests play in stabilising the earth’s climate system, absorbing one-third of the CO₂ released annually from burning fossil fuels. The policy is aimed at halting tropical deforestation related to agricultural commodities that put forests at risk, such as palm oil, soy, beef, pulp and paper, and timber.”

Do you Remember?



I am not sure that our younger generations really know what an apron is. The principal use of Grandma’s apron was to protect the dress underneath because she only had a few. It was also because it was easier to wash aprons than dresses and aprons used less material. But along with that, it served as a potholder for removing hot pans from the oven. It was wonderful for drying children’s tears, and on occasion was even used for cleaning out dirty ears.

From the chicken coop, the apron was used for carrying eggs, fussy chicks, and sometimes half-hatched eggs to be finished in the warming oven. When company came, those aprons were ideal hiding places for shy kids. And when the weather was cold, Grandma wrapped it around her arms. It carried the wooden pegs to the washing line and back. Those big old aprons wiped many a perspiring brow, bent over the hot wood stove. Chips and kindling wood were brought into the kitchen in that apron. From the garden, it carried all sorts of vegetables. After the peas had been shelled, it carried out the hulls. In the fall, the apron was used to bring in apples that had fallen from the trees. When unexpected company drove up the road, it was surprising how much furniture that old apron could dust in a matter of seconds.



When dinner was ready, Grandma walked out onto the porch, waved her apron, and the men folk knew it was time to come in from the fields to dinner. It will be a long time before someone invents something that will replace that 'old time apron' that served so many purposes.

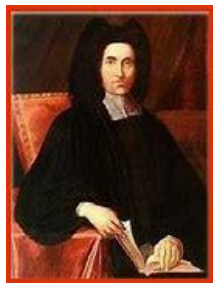


REMEMBER: Grandma used to set her hot baked apple pies on the windowsill to cool. Her granddaughters set theirs on the windowsill to thaw. They would go crazy now trying to figure out how many germs were on that apron. I don't think I ever caught anything from an apron – but love.



ALTHOUGH ROVER MEANT HIS GIFT TO BE AN EXPRESSION OF LOVE, PRINCESS BELIEVED IT WAS AN ATTEMPT TO POISON HER.

15th February - Thomas Bray, founder of SPCK



Thomas Bray was once called a ‘Great Small Man’, with good reason. This diminutive 18th century English clergyman (1658 – 1730) not only helped to establish the Church of England in Maryland, but he was also founder of the Society for the Propagation of Christian Knowledge (SPCK) in 1698 and the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts (USPG) in 1701.

Those are long names for societies whose aim was to get Christian books and resources into the hands of those who desperately needed them. For the early 18th century was not an easy time for poor clergymen: books were expensive, and many of them had few, or none to guide them in their ministry. And so, Thomas Bray, who had been educated at Oxford, joined with some other clergy friends to help them.

After a trip to assess the needs of the young Episcopal Church in Maryland (he was sent by the Bishop of London), Bray became rector of St Botolph’s, Aldgate in London in 1708. From here he served his parish, and through SPCK eventually established 80 parish libraries in England and a further 39 in the Colonies. SPCK and USPG worked by asking learned authors to donate copies of their books. They also appealed to merchants to the foreign plantations for financial help in establishing the libraries.

Thomas Bray’s life has affected hundreds of thousands of people over three centuries. Not only was his work in America the first major coordinated effort to establish libraries in the New World, but SPCK is still one of our leading UK Christian publishing houses today.



As if that was not enough, Bray also worked to help poor debtors emigrate to better lives, and homeless children to get care in England. He helped feed prisoners at Newgate prison in London and joined in the political fight against slavery. He also supported outreaches to Africans and Native Americans in their home countries. When he died on 15th February 1730, thousands mourned him. A great small man indeed!

DID YOU KNOW.....

February originates from the Latin word 'februum,' which means purification.

February has a fixed Birthstone, Amethyst, and a fixed flower, primrose.

Being Born as Leapers is very rare – About 1 in 1000-2000 people are born in February at the 29th date.

Same Day of the Week of 3 Months – There exist three months in a year in which the first week of their months starts with the same day. These months are February, March, as well as November & this is only the case when it is not a leap year.

1st 1788 The Steamboat was invented and in 2003, The Space Shuttle Columbia broke apart and took place just 16 minutes before the shuttle's landing, seven crew died.

2nd Groundhog Day – The day we find out whether winter will last six more weeks, or Spring is here.

2nd 1943 On this day 1943 the German sixth Army surrenders at Stalingrad.

3rd 1959 Buddy Holly dies in a plane crash.

4th 1973 Boxer Oscar De La Hoya was born.

5th 1971 Apollo 14 lands on the moon.

6th 1337 Julius I is elected Pope.

8th 1587 Mary, Queen of Scots was executed at Fotheringhay Castle having been found guilty of treason.

8th 1971 The start of the NASDAQ stock Market index.

9th 1960 The Hollywood Walk of Fame begins

9th 1964 The Beatles made history by appearing on the Ed Sullivan Show – it was their first tv appearance.

10th 1931 New Delhi becomes the capital of India.

11th 1936 Burt Reynolds was born.

13th 1668 Portugal becomes an independent nation.

14th 1876 Alexander Graham Bell invents the telephone.

15th 1898 The Spanish-American War begins.

16th 1923 Pharaoh Tutankhamun's burial chamber is opened.

17th 1867 The first ship passes through the Suez Canal.

17th 1959 The first weather satellite is launched.

18th 1516 Mary I of England and in **1954** Actor John Travolta was born. Also, on **18th** in **1930** Pluto was discovered.

19th 1878 Thomas Edison invents the phonograph.

19th 1986 The Soviet Union launches the Mir Space Station which operated in low Earth orbit from 1986 to 2001.

20th 1951 Former Prime Minister, Gordon Brown was born.

21st 1431 The trial of Joan of Arc begins.

26th 1797 The Bank of England issues the first one-pound note.

26th 1846 Famous Cowboy, Buffalo Bill was born- he was a soldier, a bison hunter, ranch hand, railroad contractor, fur trapper & showman.

28th 1906 Mobster Babsy Siegel was born.

“Water and Air, the two essential fluids on which all life depends, have become global garbage cans”

Shocking Photos have been shared of a once beautiful river in Bosnia, known for its breath taking scenery but now has become heavily polluted with plastic waste.



The Drina River in Visegrad has been overflowing with huge piles of rubbish following heavy rain and unseasonably warm weather along with torrential floods in recent weeks.

Waste dumped in poorly regulated and insufficient landfills or directly into the waterways usually end up accumulating behind a trash barrier in the river. This week, the barrier once again became the outer edge of a massive floating waste dump crammed with plastic bottles, rusty barrels, used tires, household appliances, driftwood and other garbage picked up by the river from its tributaries.

The Drina River runs 346 kilometres (215 miles) from the mountains of north western Montenegro through Serbia and Bosnia.



Some 10,000 cubic metres (more than 353,000 cubic feet) of waste are estimated to have amassed behind the Drina River trash barrier in recent days. The same amount was pulled in recent years from that area of the river. Unauthorised waste dumps dot hills and valleys throughout the region, while trash litters roads and plastic bags hang from the trees. Removing the rubbish takes up to six months, on average.

The countries of the region have made little progress in building effective, environmentally sound waste disposal systems despite looking for membership in the EU and adopting some of the EU's laws and regulations.



APPLE FRANGIPANE



An easy, versatile recipe that packs in a lot of flavour.

It can be served warm or at room temperature and can be made with whatever fruit is available: rhubarb, cherries and pears all work well.

Ingredients

2 apples, peeled
65g butter
30g wholemeal flour
2g salt
65g ground almonds
100g caster sugar
5ml almond extract
90g egg whites, room temperature
30g flaked almonds

Method

Peel and cut your apples into 1-2cm chunks. Turn the butter into brown butter by cooking it in a medium-hot pan until it becomes dark and nutty and smells like hazelnuts. This should take around 5 minutes. Once done, remove and leave to cool.

In a large bowl, sift together the flour and salt. Add the ground almonds and sugar. In another bowl, whisk the almond extract into the egg whites just until frothy.

Add the dry ingredients to the egg-white mixture and gently whisk until combined. While the butter is still pourable, run it into the batter and gently whisk just until the butter is incorporated.

Pour the batter into a 9in cake tin, lined with parchment/greaseproof, press in the apple and sprinkle with flaked almonds. Bake at 165°C for 20-25 minutes. Serve with custard or ice cream.

NEWS FROM OUR CHURCHES

ASHBOCKING

It seems a long time since we had our last communication. We have had a Carol service and Christmas, when Ashbocking church looked at its best and we enjoyed Christmas celebrations with family, friends and neighbours.

January is always a slow month and an anti-climax after the festivities. At this time of year the church is always so cold despite the heaters and very damp. It was decided to have these services as home-based services as they had worked well previously.

We have enjoyed both services in January at home here in Ashbocking at our house, in the warm, with refreshments afterwards. Last Sunday's service was joyful as we had good numbers attending and Fergus Wilson, who started high school in September, did an excellent job of reading the lesson.



Our next home-based service, also at Hawthorns, The Green, Ashbocking is on Sunday 12th February at 11:00am. This will be led by Rev Phil Dykes, everyone is very welcome to come, as long as you can tolerate our very ancient Staffy snoring throughout the proceedings!

We also have a home-based lay led service here on Sunday 26th February at 11:00am. Again, everyone welcome.

We hope to be back in church in March, very much dependent on the weather. So please watch this space.

As we go back to church services, we are always ready to welcome volunteers to the team of people willing to help with cleaning rota and doing flowers; we do have a dedicated few who do a wonderful job but the more the merrier.

We would also like to get our rota back in operation of those willing to host a coffee morning now and then. Coffee or tea and a biscuit is all that is needed and a friendly space for us all to chat. Obviously, the more volunteers we have the better, as it is less for us all to do.

Above all, **we urgently need a new PCC Treasurer.** Anyone who is good with basic book-keeping and has a little time to spare and is willing to give it a go, please get in touch. You can contact either of the churchwardens detailed below.



The next Ashbocking coffee morning is on 3rd February at 10:30am until 12:00 noon and is also at Hawthorns, The Green. Please join us for a chat and refreshments. Also, as everyone is now turning to ideas for holiday and plans for the summer, we must turn our attention to fundraising. There are a lot of things that need doing to improve the working of the church and our plans for an indoor loo and a kitchenette. We also want to remodel the back of the church to accommodate other activities. All expensive stuff which must be done sympathetically in a building of this importance and age. Any ideas you may have for raising some money would be appreciated. Thank you.



Our “Knit and Stitch” group have been meeting on the first Monday of the month, however in February this clashes with the Otley and District Gardening Club lunch, so it has been moved to the following week, on the 13th February at 10:00am, here at Hawthorns, The Green. Everyone very welcome to come with their preferred crafting project. Do not worry if you are not doing anything at present or would like some ideas, we are here to help. Come and enjoy a chat and refreshments.

Linda Pollard: 07887537152 or 01473 890836
Church Wardens: John Pollard 07786 803490
Duncan Bray 07933 705350

Linda Pollard



**“The way we treat a headache here
is to divert your attention to
something else.”**

**Doctor says I have
to cut out drinking.**



CLOPTON

The December Craft Fair in Clopton Church was a great success. There were lots of beautifully made seasonal crafts plus jewellery and wood carvings. There was also a great selection of other things to buy. The teas and cakes did a good trade and altogether over £1000 was made for the organ fund. Thank you to everyone who made items to sell and baked cakes.



James Hall led our Candlelight Carol Service on Christmas eve. It was lovely to see a full church. Thank you to all the readers and to Andrew for playing the organ. We will send a donation to the Salvation Army.

Hobbies Group will meet in the Village Hall from 10am until noon on Wednesday 1st February. Please come and join us, you do not need to bring a hobby, just enjoy chatting and see what other people are doing.

Coffee Morning



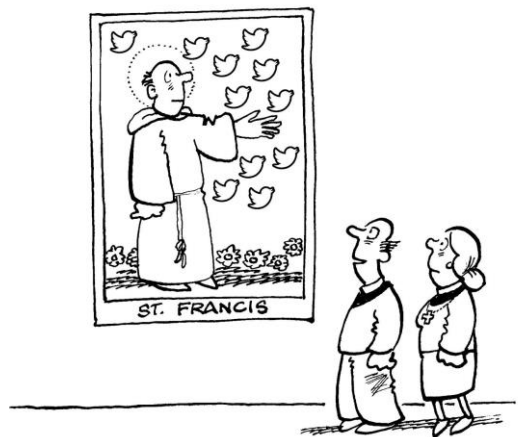
Sue Emmerson will be hosting the February Coffee Morning in the Village Hall on Wednesday 15th February from 10am until noon. You will be made very welcome.

We wish everyone a very Happy and Healthy 2023.

Doris Main



"He moved here after the PCC voted to lower the church heating bill. He says it is warmer out here."



He's been updated. He's now the patron saint of tweeting!

Clopton Bell Ringers Commemorative Board

On the death of Queen Elizabeth II, the bell ringers rang the bells at Clopton specifically to mark the occasion. Ringing for past royal events is recorded on commemorative boards in ringing rooms across the country and given the significance of this particular royal event a commemorative board was commissioned for Clopton ringing room.



The board, pictured, references the bells being fully muffled with the tenor open at back stroke. This is explained by the fact that a bell rotates both clockwise and then anticlockwise with the clapper striking the bell each time. Each strike represents a particular position of the rope as experienced by the person ringing the bell and the two positions are described as hand-strokes and back-strokes. Either or both sides of the clapper may be fitted with a leather pad or muffle which softens the sound of the bell at one or both strokes.



For funerals and other sombre occasions, bells are sometimes muffled on one stroke giving a sequence of alternating loud and soft ringing. The only time bells are likely to be muffled on both strokes is on the death of a monarch. When bells are fully muffled with the heaviest tenor bell being muffled on only one stroke it creates a sound of a tolling bell against a background of soft ringing.

To hear what it sounds like try a link to a video recording of the ringing which was put on the Clopton village Facebook page.

<https://www.facebook.com/jeremy.stannard.94/videos/606255247658380?idorvacity=1288586794651640>

If you wish to learn more or would like to see bell ringers in action or you wish to learn to ring, then contact me by email. davidstanford@btinternet.com

David Stanford



Ceilidhs on the Move

*English ceilidh/barn dance
for all - with caller*

Clopton Village Hall

IP13 6QN

7.30 - 10.30 pm

*18 February 23 - Erin Brown + Barry Watson
from Stumpy Oak with Sarah Petts calling*

*Sausage & onion baps
(also veg bap option)
and cake supper £5*

Mmm!

*Raffle
In the interval
at 9pm*

Fundraising for Clopton Church Organ Restoration

Adults £10 Youth (10-16) £5

Family £20 (2 adults 3 children) U10s free

Tickets: juliegittoes@hotmail.co.uk

Bring your own drinks

Doors open at 7pm

MARDLES.ORG

The online successor to Mardles - the East Anglian folk music and dance magazine

WHAT'S ON • NEWS • MORRIS • FEATURES • REVIEWS

OTLEY



Happy New Year everyone. As I write January is already half gone and 2023 seems to be speeding ahead. The village hall is busy with different groups starting up again. Last year's newly formed community choir 'TOADS' (The Otley and District Singers) under the direction of Gill Dodd and with

Judy Cairns' piano accompaniment had its first 'public performance' at our carol service with a lovely version of 'Silent Night'. There were also some descants to be heard during the congregational singing. The church was beautifully decorated starting with some welcoming flower arrangements in the porch. There was a Christmas Tree and our red candle holders decorated with ivy. Our two sets of nativity figures were on display, too. The oldest set made by Mrs Longbottom was on the windowsill near the piano and the knitted nativity made by the handbell ringers was on the big cupboard in the South Aisle.

The service was taken by Katrina and James with readings, prayers, a couple of poems and a short address. We enjoyed mince pies and mulled wine after the service, and it was good to have a full church for this special occasion.



Our first December service was on the 2nd of Advent when we lit two candles on our Advent wreath. Katrina preached and James did the intercessions. The focus of the service was on John the Baptist.

On that Sunday there was also a joint Christmas Fayre by Witnesham and Otley Primary schools. The main Hall was filled with lovely stalls and refreshments were also available. Our Curate Gail Minter had organised some craft activities for the children in the back room. They were very popular – particularly the activities using glitter. There was a real buzz all around.



On Christmas Eve we had a nativity again at the Warren Farm barn thanks to the Chilvers. There were real live animals and a real baby. This event was enjoyed by many families.

Children are natural mimics – they act like us, in spite of all our attempts to teach them good manners.

Christmas Day went in a haze for me being at home with a chest infection, but I have been told that there was joyful carol singing accompanied by Helen at the organ.

Looking ahead our next service is on Sunday February 5th at 9.30am where you will be very welcome.

Last year we had decided to use the Village Hall as a warm and welcoming space during January, February and March. This has now started on Wednesdays 2pm till 4pm. Do come and join us for 'Warm Space – Warm Welcome'. Another date to keep in mind is the 18th of February when we are holding a quiz night. Ruth Farnhill writes:

It's Back!

Saturday 18th February sees the return of the St. Mary's Village Quiz. The last one was in 2019 but the team haven't forgotten how to host a fun evening out.

Doors of Village Hall open at 7pm and questions start at 7.30pm.

Teams of up to 8 or become part of a team of individuals and couples formed on the day. Tickets £12.50 each which includes a yummy jacket potato supper, bar, raffle

For more information and to book ring Ruthie on 890970, Ruth on 890543 or text 07902024976



SWILLAND



We had a good turnout for our Carol Singing along the High Road finishing in the Moon and Mushroom. Thank you, Gina, for providing mulled wine and mince pies at the beginning. It was good fun and we raised £133.88 for our kitchen fund.

Thank you to everyone who does flowers in the church and to those who take turns to keep the church open during the day. We often get complimentary comments in the visitors' book about the church and the fact that it is open.

Our next lay led service will be on 5th February at 11 a.m.

Happy New Year to everyone. It is lovely to see the spring flowers appearing. I have seen snowdrops, aconites, primulas, winter jasmine, winter sweet, daphne, irises, hellebores, viburnum and very recently daffodils.

Ann Kent

Number of Christmas services surged, as parishes welcome public

At the end of last year, the number of Christmas services advertised on the Church of England's church-finding website were up by more than a quarter on pre-pandemic levels.

The *A Church Near You* website was advertising just over 23,850 services and other gatherings. And search engines saw a surge in people searching for phrases such as 'midnight mass'. All in all, an estimated 682,000 people visited AChurchNearYou.com in December, and around 80 per cent of these visitors were on the site for the first time.

News Stories from The Stranger Side of Life

Naughty Dogs are the Smartest Dogs

Badly behaved dogs are often the smartest. Katriina Tiira, from the University of Helsinki, has assessed about 5,000 dogs for traits such as logical reasoning and problem solving. She found a surprising pattern. "Intelligent dogs are not nicer pets," she said. "Many people come to the test and they say, 'I have huge problems in my daily life with this dog' — and often the dog is at the high end of the cognitive results."



Billionaire fined for speeding on his own island

A billionaire tech mogul was cautioned for speeding on his own Hawaiian island. Larry Ellison, the seventh richest man in the world, admitted to breaking the law after running a stop sign and exceeding the speed limit. The officer involved was praised for enforcing the rules, despite Ellison owning 98% of Lanai and running it as his private fiefdom. Ellison bought 90,000-acre Lanai for £247m more than a decade ago.



TV host locked King Charles in a toilet

A television presenter has admitted that she once locked King Charles in a toilet. Alex Jones, the host of the One Show, said her fateful encounter with the then-future monarch happened during her first job as a researcher for a TV production company. She accidentally trapped Charles in the facility after locking it to prevent a smell from a nearby river coming through to the building. Jones said he was “lovely” and “just saw the funny side”.



Man lost at sea survives on ketchup

A Dominican man lived on tomato ketchup while lost at sea for 24 days. Elvis Francois, 54, was swept out by adverse weather conditions as he repaired a sailboat just off a harbour on the island of St Maarten. “I had no food,” he said. “There was only a bottle of ketchup that was on the boat, garlic powder, and bouillon cubes. So, I mixed it up with some water for me to survive 24 days in the sea.” He was rescued after he angled a mirror to catch the sun’s rays and reflect them towards a passing plane, which sent for help.

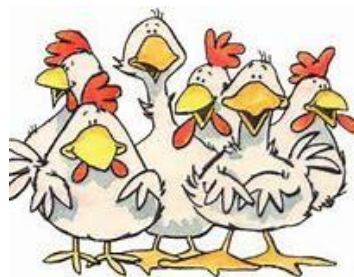
Bad Santa



A US police department has granted the request of a local resident to have the remains of a cookie and some carrots DNA tested to determine if Santa Claus bit them. The Rhode Island cops said they received a letter from “a young investigator” making the unorthodox request. “This young lady obviously has a keen sense for truth and the investigative process and did a tremendous job packaging her evidence for submission. We will do our very best to provide answers for her,” said Chief Matthew J. Benson.

Man ‘feels awful’ after eating 40 chickens

A man who ate 40 chickens in as many days said he had “nightmares” and “felt awful”. Alexander Tominsky said he embarked on the challenge as a way of making him self feel “uncomfortable” which he believes is “necessary in life”. He said it was “interesting” that “something that was initially enjoyable could, with enough repetition, turn you off”, adding: “There were times when I asked myself if I was out of my mind.”



RUSSELL LING REPORTS

Memories of wartime in Otley by Lester Hawes and Russell Ling

Low flying enemy aircraft, hedge hopping, to use the contemporary expression, were a real hazard. It was prudent to take cover rapidly to avoid the possibility of being seen and quite literally being machine - gunned, it could and did happen. You just could not take a chance I decided one evening when I pushed my sister into the roadside hedge along the Helmingham Road and then dived in after her.



We were never really a prime target at Otley and local incidents were probably not planned, nevertheless various bombs were dropped in and around the district. There were oil bombs, incendiaries, high explosive types and anti-personal booby trap devices but overall damage was very slight. A great many loaded aircraft passed overhead at night on their way to Ipswich and more distant targets. They were usually flying high in the sky, but it was possible to distinguish them by their engine noise and rhythm which was very distinctive. On many occasions I stood in the garden late at night listening to the aircraft passing overhead and then looking toward Ipswich when the action started. Anti-aircraft fire, exploding bombs and then a red glow in the sky were a familiar pattern of events. A friend who lived there throughout the war has recently told me that the first air raid on Ipswich took place in June 1940 and the last one in March 1945. He kept records during that period, and they make interesting reading. During 52 air raids 686 high explosive bombs, over 11,000 incendiaries, three land mines and two flying bombs were dropped (NB, these were the V1s or Doodle Bugs as they were commonly known). There were 73 people killed, 412 injured, 195 properties totally destroyed and another 13,000 damaged.

Much has been written over the years about the air activity over southern England during the summer and autumn of 1940, when the sky was constantly criss-crossed with vapour trails. I can only add that as a schoolboy I eagerly awaited the re-appearance of our returning fighter aircraft, hoping and on several occasions witnessing a victory display in the



form of 'looping the loop' to quote the colloquial term for this spectacular manoeuvre. I realise now that I did not appreciate the seriousness of the situation and most certainly, I never considered the possibility of defeat.

The construction of Debach aerodrome by the American army engineers commenced during the year 1942, this was a major event and produced a new interest in our lives. We soon got used to having white and coloured Americans around our district although most of us were seeing coloured people for the first time. We spent a lot of time round the aerodrome when construction was completed and my lasting memory relating to those days is of slipping into the back of the cinema and seeing the latest products from Hollywood, quite possibly before they were on general release in this country. Until then my only experience of the cinema and moving pictures had been when Mr Jack Palmer provided the village with film evenings in the Village Hut a year or so previously. By 1943 junior units of the armed forces were being formed and in Otley we had the Army Cadets for the boys in their early teens. We met and drilled in the old school room next to the Rectory. With our ill-fitting battle dress uniform the joke was surely



on us this time. I will leave others to judge whether our keenness served any logical purpose. At least we were provided with an interest, and I know the comradeship was very enjoyable when we attended weeklong summer camps at places like Shrubland Park. My enthusiasm prompted me to transfer to a unit based in Ipswich when I left the village and the highlight of my cadet service occurred while with the Ipswich unit, when we were taken for a flight with the American air force. I have since pondered on how it was possible to get such a thing arranged albeit towards the end or just after hostilities had ceased. Safety precautions were a secondary consideration at take-off from Rougham aerodrome, as the 30 or so boys were instructed to remain sitting on the floor in the waist of the machine, a B17 Flying Fortress bomber to ensure appropriate weight distribution. Once in the air we were allowed to wander about the aircraft at will and I made a point of trying out the crew positions of bomb aimer and the various air gunner turrets. I hasten to add that although the weapons were still on board the ammunition for these had been removed. We cruised round East Anglia and along the coast for about an hour before returning to Rougham.

Well over forty years have passed by since those events took place, and that period of life now seems so remote and unreal. However looking back, one realises that the era of constant change, which has been seen over the many years since then began with the war. It leads one to appreciate on what life would be like now if the war had not taken place.

The above article was written by Lester Hawes in 1988.



The final part of Otley in Wartime

Other activities that took place during the war were the appointment of Fire wardens, who took it in turn to go on top of the Church Tower at night when there was an air raid and report if they saw any fires that may have been started by incendiary bombs. This would have been particularly important at harvest time as any fires in the cereal crops could have spread over a wide area, fortunately this didn't happen here. There were also Air Raid wardens who would go round the village at night to make sure that there were not any lights showing through the blackout curtains that had to be put up at all living room windows. There were of course food rationing apart from bread, there was a standard loaf only consisting of part wholemeal wheat. Farm workers were given extra rations at harvest and when threshing corn stacks during the winter. Clothes including shoes were also rationed and jumble sales were held which helped a great deal particularly for children.

In December 1941 there was a National Warship Week, all towns and villages were asked to raise money to help pay for the building of new warships to replace those that had been sunk. Apparently, a large amount of money was raised but the total sum was not recorded in the PC minutes.

Apart from the bombs that were dropped on Grange farm at the beginning of the war there were also three large and four small ones that exploded at Shrubbery Farm in 1942. One of the large ones fell on the meadow near the front garden and another near the back garden, the third dropped on a field on the other side of the road. Three of the small ones fell on the field opposite a row of cottages called

Donkeys Row while the fourth came down on the left hand end cottage. Fortunately, this last one fell on one that was unoccupied, these cottages have now been demolished and a house built behind where they once stood. You may wonder why Shrubbery Farm House was not demolished but it only took down all the ceilings and blew out the windows. These old farmhouses were built in the seventeenth century and consisted of studwork on a wooden plate resting on about two rows of brick, this allowed the house to move unlike a brick house which would have had more damage. Even the large bombs were relatively small unlike the ones that were dropped later in the war. Two others which were dropped by parachute called land mines came down in 1944, one on a field at Grange Farm which failed to explode and was removed by a bomb disposal squad. The second fell just over the hedge in a field belonging to Hall farm, the parachute on this one failed to open with the result it caused a huge crater, eventually this was filled in and there is no trace of it now remaining.



The Home Guard was disbanded in 1945 and enclosed is a photograph of the last Parade with the names of the members apart from two. They were Bert Martin, Will Adams, Dennis Hawes, Fred Martin, Tom Baylem, Harry Stebbings, Bernard Stebbings, Will hunt, Will Goodwin, George Stebbings, Jim Bennet, Leslie Stebbings, Harold Poole, Ted Durrant, Sid Davey, Charles Kemp, Fred Dye and Stanley Staff.



Russell ling

Let those who thoughtfully consider the brevity of life,
remember the length of eternity. – *Bishop Thomas Ken*

An American in Otley: A Sinister Shrub

“Blooming way too early!” Years ago, that was my first thought upon seeing a bare-limbed shrub in the hedgerow. It was covered with dainty white flowers which popped against the small tree’s dark bark. “Blackthorn,” explained a neighbour later. “And . . . on the heels of its blossoms ferocious cold is bound to follow,” he said. “Blackthorn winter is sure to come.” Have the flowers or the cold snap arrived yet in Otley?



Snow was falling here in Utah as I recalled my first glimpses of *prunus spinosa*. I was quite entranced with what I assumed was a harbinger of spring. Recently, I took to the internet to refresh my memories of the shrub only to discover that it has a truly sinister reputation among the Celtic peoples. I can understand the unpleasant association given the prodigious thorns that line its branches. Encountering pricks and gouges from those can lead to serious infections and visits to the doctor.



Despite its thorns or perhaps because of them, Blackthorn has been planted deliberately in hedgerows for hundreds of years. Before the advent of barb wire, interlocking limbs of Blackthorn kept livestock, who were prone to wander, in their pastures. In the fairy story, Sleeping Beauty, the impenetrable hedge of thorns that guarded the princess was meant to be Blackthorn, because of its protective qualities. Through perseverance, her hero finds and rescues her.

What I hadn’t appreciated was the historic linkage of Blackthorn and Cailleach, the Celtic divine hag or sorceress. In myth, she was the veiled one, the Dark Mother of the Woods, the sacred crone of the Triple Goddess, the Queen of the Winter, and the controller of weather from November 1 (Samhain) to May 1 (Beltane). Blackthorn is her tree and one of three Celtic fairy trees – the ash and hawthorn being the other two. The latter two have happier reputations. Both the Irish and Scots give Blackthorn a place of importance in their mythology. The Irish, however, incorporated the name for it, straif, in their early alphabet.

Blackthorn was associated with warrior battle, death and transformation, strength, protection, and darkness which can yield enlightenment. Not surprisingly, the wood of the Blackthorn has been used to make cudgels, staffs and even the Irish shillelagh. It is a strong, hard wood with a close grain and can make excellent weapons known as Black Rods. There has been some speculation that the earliest Black Rod wielded by the House of Lords' personage of the same name was made of Blackthorn.

Given its reputation for power, witches used Blackthorn to make their staffs and wands. Because of its association with Celtic mythology the shrub was incorporated into the lore surrounding witchcraft. Whether the

wood could actually affect the spells that were cast, many witches swore by it. The wood could also inflict punishment on them – it was used to build and stoke the fires that consumed them during their time of persecution.



In any event, whatever uses to which you put the tree, be careful to placate the moon fairies known as the Lunantidshe who live in the thickets of Blackthorn. An Irish myth states that these barbed fairies guard the trees and prevent (through mischief?) the unwary from cutting limbs except on Beltane and Samhain. And do not take boughs of the flowering Blackthorn into your house – bad luck will follow. But enjoy it in the hedgerows and dress warmly because winter will make a comeback.

Mary Miner, susiespinner36@msn.com

Solutions to the Brainteasers on Page 8

1. Herod
2. 40
3. Thumbs Up
4. Elbow
5. Kidney Beans



How did you do?

SMILE LINES

Sick

During a church service my young niece had to go outside, as she did not feel well. She returned a few minutes later and admitted: 'I have been a little sick.

But it doesn't matter, there's a box at the door marked 'for the sick'."



In a sack

Seen in a church magazine: "Bring your old newspapers (and your neighbours), put them in a sack and tie them if possible."

With Valentine's Day in mind...how do you define love?

A group of 4-to-8-year-olds was once asked: 'What does love mean?' The answers they gave were surprising for their depth of insight....

- "When my grandmother got arthritis, she couldn't bend over and paint her toenails anymore. So, my grandfather does it for her all the time, even when his hands got arthritis too. That's love." Rebecca - age 8
- "When someone loves you, the way they say your name is different. You just know that your name is safe in their mouth." Billy - age 4
- "Love is when a girl puts on perfume and a boy puts on aftershave and they go out and smell each other." Karl - age 5
- "Love is when you go out to eat and give somebody most of your chips, without making them give you any of theirs." Chrissy - age 6
- "Love is what makes you smile when you're tired." Terri - age 4
- "Love is when mum makes coffee for my dad and she takes a sip before giving it to him, to make sure the taste is OK." Danny - age 7
- "If you want to learn to love better, you should start with a friend who you hate." Nikka - age 6 (We need a few million more Nikka's on this planet)
- "Love is when mummy gives daddy the best piece of chicken." - Elaine - age 5



Miscellaneous observations on life...

Marriage licence - the only permit taken out after the hunt is over.

Some people cause happiness wherever they go. Others, whenever they go.

Love is grand. Divorce is a hundred grand.

Be nice to your kids. They'll choose your nursing home.





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Sundays 5th Feb;

5th March

11am-12 noon

All welcome

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CHILDREN'S CORNER

Salt Dough Handprint Bowl - *You may need the help of an adult*

Salt dough crafts are so easy to make and give a lovely keepsake, a handprint bowl. Follow the instructions for the salt dough recipe and then you can make your own bowl in the shape of your hand.

You will need:

Salt Dough

A small oven proof bowl

Acrylic Paint

All in one glue and sealer



To make the Salt Dough

Mix 2 cups of plain flour and 1 cup of salt together in a large bowl.

Add 1 cup of water. Add it in slowly as you may need less.

Knead the mixture into a dough.

To make the Bowl

1. Mix up some salt dough using the method above.
2. Flatten the salt dough using a rolling pin to about 1cm thick and press your child's hand onto it to create an imprint. You will need to press your child's hand into the salt dough quite firmly and press down on each finger to make a good print. *Quick tip: By rolling the salt dough out on baking paper, it will make it easier to transfer the salt dough later.*
3. Use a sharp knife to carefully cut around the edge of the handprint.
4. Put a small oven proof bowl on a baking tray and place the salt dough handprint on top of the bowl (see image below). A tiny bowl that is meant for dips will create the shape of your handprint bowl. Take your time to make sure you are happy with the shape of the salt dough hand.
5. Bake the handprint in the oven at a low temperature (about 100°C) for a few hours. When you remove it from the oven check that the salt dough is completely hard on both sides, if it isn't just put it back in the oven for a little longer.



(If you don't have a small oven proof bowl you can put the hand shape over a small plastic bowl or ball and leave the salt dough to air dry but using this method it will take several days to dry.)

Once the handprint bowl has cooled down it is ready for decorating. The first photo shows a bowl painted with blue acrylic paint, once the blue paint had dried a red heart was painted on top. A black Sharpie pen was used to add detail to the heart.

It is important that once your salt dough creation is finished you add a coat of varnish or use a sealer so that your keepsake will last forever. If you don't use a sealer the salt dough may soak in some moisture and become soft.

Q. What is the best item of clothing to wear on February 2nd ?

A. A Tu-tu



Q. Knock Knock..... Who's there?

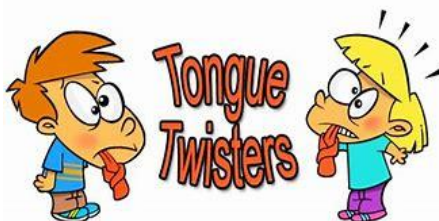
A. Noah

Q. Noah Who?

A. Noah good joke about February?

Q. What is a frog's favourite month?

A. February – because it has a leap year!



Try to say these lines, repeat them and try to get quicker each time

- Smelly shoes and socks shock sisters.
- Fred fed Ted bread, and Ted fed Fred bread.
- A big black bug bit a big black dog.
- Yellow butter, purple jelly, red jam, black bread, spread it thicker and say it quicker!

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