

# WINDCROSS MAGAZINE

The Leadon Vale Group of Parishes

60pence

June

2020

Covid-19 online edition



St Bartholomew's, Redmarley

DYMOCK - DONNINGTON - PRESTON - KEMPLEY  
REDMARLEY D'ABITOT - BROMSBERROW  
PAUNTLEY - UPLEADON - OXENHALL

One of my favourite authors Terry Pratchett liked to use the quote 'May you live in interesting times.....'

Who could have expected 2020 to lead us into such interesting times. Strange times, sad times, lonely times and yet sometimes joyful times with unexpected pleasures. I wonder how are you doing in these interesting times?

My household is quite full - my eldest is back from Uni and so there are 7 of us living together and working together. Home schooling is happening. I am not sure it would rate an Ofsted 'Outstanding' or even 'Good', but attempts are being made. Each person in the house is reacting differently to the interesting times.

Nat aged 13 is living his best life. He is an introvert and though he likes people, he doesn't need them - socialising at school can be very wearing. For him this is perfect - when he needs contact he can initiate it via Zoom or WhatsApp - for the rest of the time he can be in his room reading and studying.

For Jem aged 12 this has been a very different experience. He loves his friends and he misses them deeply. He gets frustrated by being in the same space, but hates having to keep 2 metres away from everyone if we go out: it makes him feel weird.

Tom, 16 has had to deal with the sorrow of not doing his GCSEs, Molly has had to end Uni early, Eliza misses her friends but loves playing with her brothers and poor Ali has had to pretty much take the weight of all it and look after a poorly wife.

For me it has been really frustrating; my Facebook twitter and Instagram feed are full of people baking banana bread, learning piano, taking beautiful walks, studying theology and so on. As I have been ill for most of the lock down, having COVID19 which was followed by pneumonia, I have done pretty much nothing. This is not my natural state - I had a lot of plans but have had to realise that all I can do is rest.

I wonder how you are finding lockdown?

The wonderful thing is that as Christians we don't face any of our trials or our joys alone. It has been much said that we are all in the same storm, but not in the same boat - but to mix metaphors a bit we can all stand firm on the same rock. Jesus told the incredible parable of the two houses built, one on sand, one on rocks. The one on sand disintegrates in the storm while the one built on rocks survives.

Both houses face the storm.

We are all facing a storm at the moment but we can plant our feet firmly on the rock of our faith and know that we are not doing it alone. When Jesus went up to heaven He said "I will be with you always to the end of the age". Jesus is with us - in the good days and the bad.

I pray that for all of us our faith will grow, and I am expectant of the time when the storm passes and we can mourn our sorrows and celebrate being back together with those that we love.

We are very much looking forward to moving to Leadon Vale. At the moment we are not sure when that will be; but the packing boxes are being filled and we are ready! I can't wait to meet you all and learn more about the beautiful communities of the Benefice. It will be a different start to my ministry than I had expected, but in these interesting times I have faith that God is here and has a plan for His church. It will be exciting to work out together what that is.

Blessings

**Kat**

## **Our Benefice - Latest news on the Vacancy**

Bishop Robert is very much looking forward to formally licensing Kat to our Benefice on June 22<sup>nd</sup>. This is likely to be at a virtual service over the internet.

The ongoing safeguarding restrictions for covid-19 means that it is unlikely that a service for the installation of Kat into the Benefice can be held on that date. However we can all look forward to welcoming Kat and her family in person at a later date when we can gather together and celebrate the arrival and installation of a new Priest to our Benefice in true Leadon Vale style.

Keep Safe

Yours Aye

**Andrew**

## **Leadon Vale Benefice The Nine Parish's Services for June**

It seems unlikely that we will be able to hold any services inside churches during June. If that should change the details will be posted on the website and in all our churches.

A service that can be used at home is being produced for each week and is provided on The Leadon Vale website (<https://zymology.net/Leadonvale/>). This includes music from our own church organs and choirs which has been recorded by using virtual technology to follow Government guidelines.

A printed version of the service is available from the churchwardens of all our churches for those who do not have e mail or web access.

The Leadon vale website also gives details of other virtual social events and links to other information that you may find helpful. Do please join us there if you can.

**David Clowes**

## **Dymock Community Support Group**

has been established by Dymock Parish Council to co-ordinate local help and support in the parish. If you, or someone you know, would like any assistance please ring or text

**Arin** (Parish Clerk) on the dedicated  
**Dymock Support Group** number:

**07484 619582**

The types of things we may be able to help with are:

- Picking up shopping and essential supplies
- Arranging collection and delivery of prescriptions
- Dog walking
- A regular chat over the phone

*Please note, we will not enter your house or have direct contact in person.  
We will notify you when supplies will be left on your doorstep.*

If you are living with a long term health condition and have received a letter from the Government requiring you to self-isolate for 12 weeks, please register with The Gloucestershire Help Hub so they can monitor the support you are receiving by visiting:

**[www.goucestershire.gov.uk/helphub](http://www.goucestershire.gov.uk/helphub)** or calling **01452 583519**

### **Would You Like to Volunteer?**

We are compiling a list of people who are able assist their local community through this difficult time. If you can help, please get in touch on the number above or email **[dymockpc@outlook.com](mailto:dymockpc@outlook.com)**

Keep up to date with the latest support initiatives by signing up to the Parish Council email Newsletter

Visit **[www.dymockparishcouncil.org.uk](http://www.dymockparishcouncil.org.uk)** to subscribe



***Dymock Community Support Group is a community group that has been initiated by Dymock Parish Council.***

## Local Suppliers List

**Windcross Dairies** - 07719 493628 - **milk** in glass bottles.

**Little Marcle Farm Shop** - 07970 296153 - fresh organic veg, order by phone or online for delivery on Wednesdays.

**Andy Creese Butchers** - 01531 820209 - taking telephone orders, free delivery for orders of £25 or more.

**Moody Cow Pub** - 01989 780470 - takeaways delivered locally.

**Forest Bakehouse** - Open Wed-Fri 10am - 3pm and Sat 10am - 2pm, contactless payment only.

**Stephen Bull** - 07768 780543 - stephenbull2016@btinternet.com - delivery possible depending on distance. Large tarts £28, medium £20.

**Hillbrooks Ice Cream** - 01989 780745 - call ahead to order. Cash only or BACS before collection.

**Newent Friday Market** - newentfridaymarket@gmail.com\_ - delivery Friday mornings of most produce available at the Newent Friday Market. Access their facebook page for further details.

**Kilcot Pig Sausages** available from Gorsley Community Shop.

**Sandford Farm Eggs** available from Gorsley Community Shop or Castrees Nursery, Bromsash.

**Bentleys Fruit Farm Shop** - full range of juices available.

**Three Choirs Wine** –Wine delivered locally - 01531 890223 – info@threechoirs.com

**The Beauchamp Arms** – take away service on Wednesday/Friday evenings & Sunday lunchtime – 01531 890266 – Advance orders only.

**The Shop at Bromsberrow** –Now with a delivery service for the housebound. 01531 650744

## Becoming Eco-Friendly

I'd assumed, over optimistically as it turns out, that the lockdown would be relaxed somewhat last Sunday (May 10) and I'd be writing about how we hope to hold socially-distanced church services in Pauntley Churchyard; but despite our plan to ask everyone to carry a pointy umbrella to measure and, if necessary, maintain the required 2m social distance, it turns out that we are not as far along the path as we'd hoped, and must bide our time.

Sunday's news was more subdued than the media had predicted. The VE Day celebrations were also subdued, marked here by bunting and a red, white and blue Victoria sponge. Not much compared to what had been planned, but the cake was a neat symbol of the kinder side of this strange shutdown: made by a neighbour using donated flour and shared between 7 households.

It's rather appropriate that VE Day occurred during the lockdown, since our domestic lives seem to have regressed to something similar to WW2: basic items in short supply, queuing, rationing, and despite the anxiety and anguish, something good has become clear: People are still basically kind, decent, and prepared to help others. We've long looked back at the Second World War and marvelled at how people pulled together, with a sneaking feeling that modern day society wouldn't be able to match that; but look how the country has reacted!

The huge majority of people have rigorously observed the shutdown, despite the financial hardship it is going to cause many of them. Those who were needed to carry on working have done so without complaint, despite the risk to their own health: not just our amazing NHS and other health workers, but postmen, shop workers, bus drivers etc., all of whom earn basic wages and little kudos in everyday life.

And generally people have been very supportive of one another. There is a large but unsung army of volunteer home-sewers making 'scrubs' for NHS, care home staff etc., often paying for the fabric themselves.

Our local foodbank has seen a huge increase in donations, from local companies as well as the public. And for me, one of the most positive outcomes has been the move to house homeless people in empty hotels and such – a situation which opens up the possibility of other kinds of help which they may not have found otherwise, which could be life-changing.

Local groups and individuals were quick to offer to shop for those who need to be isolated. Small enterprises such as Bromsberrow Shop, Newent Country Market, local butchers, greengrocers, etc. are providing deliveries - although it's doubtful whether they'll be making much profit. And despite the earlier loo roll madness, most of us have only bought what we need, understanding that stockpiling basic necessities causes problems for those who can only afford to shop week to week.

With all but essential shops closed, we have had to do without some of the things we normally take for granted: hopefully it will have made us think differently about what is a necessity and what we can live without. Which brings me back to WW2, or rather, how we've changed since then. Around the 1970's consumer goods became so enticingly cheap that we forgot the principles of 'Make Do and Mend', replacing that mantra with 'Throw Away and Replace'.

We didn't see then what was happening to the planet, but we can't argue with the evidence now: if we change how we live, pollution drops. Since the world has been on lockdown there is a noticeable improvement and that's something we'd all like to see continue. We maybe don't have much influence as individuals, but if we've used less resources during these past few months, surely we can continue to do so? As this crisis has shown, working together in small ways can have a huge effect.

There are many products on the market which offer 'Green' credentials, but few are cheap. We have a huge resource, however, in the people around us – some of you lived through WW2 and its aftermath when everything was scarce, many grew up without easy access to shops, and a whole lot of you are just so self-reliant, and ingenious, that you've never needed to buy a labelled product for every eventuality.

At Pauntley Church we are trying to find ways to improve our 'eco' credentials, and one thing we think would be useful is to gather together the ways in which people avoid waste, and those tried and tested alternatives to harmful and expensive products.

I know this sounds like basic common sense to most of you reading this, but we're not trying to teach Grandma how to suck eggs: we're thinking of the younger families faced with trying to pay the bills and save the planet at the same time. There are so many ways of doing things that to you may seem too obvious to mention, but would be a revelation to most 30 year olds.

Bicarbonate of Soda is a prime example; I'll bet most of you can think of half a dozen uses for it, none of which involve cooking! So how about starting with Bicarb? It will only take a moment to email your favourite uses to [pauntleychurch@yahoo.com](mailto:pauntleychurch@yahoo.com) and (with Terry's permission) we'll share some of them in this magazine, and also on a dedicated page on the Church website.

**Sue Bartlett** PCC Secretary, St John the Evangelist's Church, Pauntley

Anybody who has listened to certain kinds of music, or read certain kinds of poetry, or heard certain kinds of performances on the concertina, will admit that even suicide has its brighter side.

**Stephen Leacock**

## Dymock Church Daffodil Teas 2020



Many thanks to all those volunteers who managed to lend a hand with the limited session of the Dymock Daffodil Teas this year. We started on Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> February and we closed on 16<sup>th</sup> March after the third successful Lent lunch in Dymock Church.

The total funds collected in this limited period was £1500, with some gift aid and thanks to generous donations amounting to £70. This is far short of our usual total of about £6000 but a fair attempt in a just over a fortnight. As this is our main fund raiser for the church any ideas for future fundraising would be greatly appreciated.

The amount of time we are all spending in our gardens this year could inspire some of us to open our gardens for the first time after lockdown to raise some significant sums!!

Many Thanks

**Chris May**

Churchwarden of St. Mary's Church

### Days

What are days for?  
Days are where we live.  
They come, they wake us  
Time and time over.  
They are to be happy in:  
Where can we live but days?

Ah, solving that question  
Brings the priest and the doctor  
In their long coats  
Running over the fields.

**Philip Larkin** Sent in by Sue Bartlett

Are you all right? You should have two of everything down the sides and one of everything down the middle.

**Ken Dodd**

## Pam Ayres' View on our Lock-Down

I'm normally a social girl  
I love to meet my mates  
But lately with the virus here  
We can't go out the gates.  
You see, we are the 'oldies' now  
We need to stay inside  
If they haven't seen us for a while  
They'll think we've upped and died.  
They'll never know the things we did  
Before we got this old  
There wasn't any Facebook  
So not everything was told.  
We may seem sweet old ladies  
Who would never be uncouth  
But we grew up in the 60s -  
If you only knew the truth!  
There was sex and drugs and rock 'n roll  
The pill and miniskirts  
We smoked, we drank, we partied  
And were quite outrageous flirts.  
Then we settled down, got married  
And turned into someone's mum,  
Somebody's wife, then nana,  
Who on earth did we become?  
We didn't mind the change of pace  
Because our lives were full  
But to bury us before we're dead  
Is like a red rag to a bull!  
So here you find me stuck inside  
For 4 weeks, maybe more  
I finally found myself again  
Then I had to close the door!  
It didn't really bother me  
I'd while away the hour  
I'd bake for all the family  
But I've got no flaming flour!  
Now Netflix is just wonderful  
I like a gutsy thriller  
I'm swooning over Idris  
Or some random sexy killer.

At least I've got a stash of booze  
For when I'm being idle  
There's wine and whiskey, even gin  
If I'm feeling suicidal!  
So let's all drink to lockdown  
To recovery and health  
And hope this awful virus  
Doesn't decimate our wealth.  
We'll all get through the crisis  
And be back to join our mates  
Just hoping I'm not far too wide  
To fit through the flaming gates

**Pam Ayres**

## **The Shop at Bromesberrow**

### **End of the Beginning?**

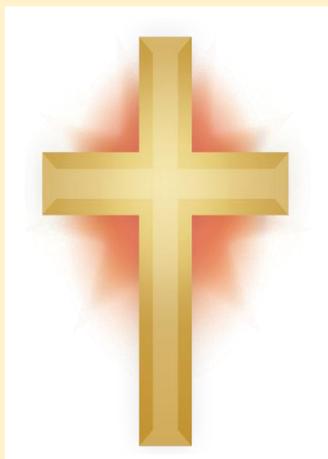
The team in the Shop have done a fantastic job since March 23<sup>rd</sup>, not just keeping the Shop going but extending the range of goods available, particularly daily fresh meat, fruit and vegetables. In addition they have developed a delivery service to those who are house bound which is running at a comparable level to the Shop's regular takings before the crisis. The increase in chilled goods has necessitated a new chiller and most recently a second purchase when one of the aged freezers expired.

The management committee recognise that this has been achieved with great personal commitments and that a plan was needed for the next 3 months (at least) that provided a sustainable operation where rest days and longer breaks and what passes for normal life was possible. Not having met for 10 weeks, a socially distanced meeting was held in the Shop car park disguised as a circular queue thus complying with Government requirements. Hopefully we have made some sensible decisions to ease the problems. One of the issues was the need to have a structure of operation that allowed for the return to work of furloughed youngsters who have kept things going – ***if at this point you are thinking I could help, please give the shop a call (all details in our advert).***

It was also decided that, despite our rules, we could not hold an AGM before the end of June and that once elements of freedom and confidence have been restored it would be the time to meet. In the meantime we have strengthened our committee through co-option. Callum Mayo, relatively new to the Shop but one of our younger core team, and we gladly welcome back two previous committee members, Jo Davidson and Jackie Tweedale. We sincerely hope that they still wish to stand for election when the time comes.

**Monica Butler**

## To all our Church Family



I hope you are having time to enjoy the beautiful weather and appreciate the lovely area we live in – blessings for us amidst all that is concerning and sad.

I have been asked to say something about church finances and would be grateful for your understanding. I am sure the current restrictions will be affecting all our lives. It is a great sadness that the churches remain closed for public worship. We do not know how long the present situation will last and our churches have lost a proportion of their regular income; the collection money from Sundays and special services, the income from weddings and baptisms and the income

from visitors. We are also unable to hold any fundraising events, which again are an important source of income.

Unfortunately, while our income has decreased there has not been a significant reduction in our expenditure, apart from heating and lighting for services. We must continue to pay our insurance, ongoing maintenance and, above all, our parish share, which is the amount we contribute to central church funds for the cost of all our priests' ministry. We are fortunate to have such a dedicated ministry team continuing to offer us ways of worshipping, pastoral care and support and of course funerals.

Many of you give regularly to the church through standing orders or direct debit, and for that we are extremely grateful, as it gives us a regular income stream. Thank you also to those who continue to care for our churches and churchyards whilst the churches remain closed.

Please may I ask, that if you usually give to your church by cash in the collection on a Sunday, or if you mostly do so by supporting fund raising events, that you might consider changing to a regular bank giving. Similarly if you already have a bank arrangement, but 'top up' your giving through cash collections and fund raising events, that you might take this opportunity to review the amount you give regularly. You can even just send any monthly donations direct to your Church Treasurer. These measures would be a very great help in ensuring the future financial viability of our beautiful and valuable village churches.

I, as Benefice Treasurer, would be happy to give you details of your Church Treasurer so you can contact them direct. Please phone or email at your convenience.

Tel: 07963 035415

Email: [rlphillips369@gmail.com](mailto:rlphillips369@gmail.com)

With all good wishes and prayers.

**Becky Phillips**

Honorary Treasurer Leadon Vale Benefice



A free phone line of hymns,  
reflections and prayers

"With many in our country on lockdown, it's important that we support those who are feeling lonely and isolated, whatever age they are."

***Archbishop Justin Welby***

The statement above is from the home page of the Church of England's website, and I would like to make sure you are aware of the free phone line set up by the Church of England called Daily Hope. It's really for people with no internet access.

<https://www.churchofengland.org/.../cor.../daily-hope-phone-line>

**Please pass this phone number on to anyone you know  
who has no internet access.**

**It is open 24 hours a day**

Upleadon Church Webpage - <http://www.upleadon-village.co.uk/st-mary-the-virgin/>

Upleadon Church Facebook page -  
<https://www.facebook.com/StMarysUpleadon/>

**Phil Cooke**      Treasurer, Upleadon PCC

## The Centenary Glade

*"You only need sit still long enough in some attractive spot in the woods that all its inhabitants may exhibit themselves to you by turns"*

Henry David Thoreau, Walden, 1854.

I need not reference Thoreau's mid C.19<sup>th</sup> writings when self-isolating in Walden, New York state, with 'new' philosophies brokered in these pandemic times, but I shall note that his subsequent book *Civil Disobedience* 1849 has been a yardstick for environmental action through the last century as well.

The poor fist we have collectively made of 'science policy' and mitigation efforts to contain a single viral threat to our species, may not offer huge hope for the climate change campaigns we were pursuing with small success in the local area. DyFRA's efforts have been focussed on the Biodiversity Emergency, and right up to our Forum at the end of February, we were establishing an action network across the parish, district and counties of the Golden Triangle.



This month Bluebells are the subject of my Centenary Glade report for online Windcross Magazine readers. If I may I'll demonstrate this to be just one of the many 'underlying conditions' that have become evident from our 15 years work on Climate warming.

In 1988 at the launch of the charity Plantlife I produced a report entitled "Global Warming – the Death Knell for the Bluebell" - this at the time of computer *models* demonstrating threats to wildlife habitats with increasing greenhouse gas emissions. The thesis was that warmer Springs would initiate earlier growth of cow parsley, which would shade out bluebells, and their populations would recede. 50% of the **global** population of 'English' bluebells are in the British Isles. They are a meadow species, and therefore most seen (in these severely reduced margin farmlands) in woodland edge, but also on grassland margins of cliff tops

My observation at the time (1988), in the chalk down lands of Wiltshire, was that bluebells were the dominant ground flora under the large Beech woods (Local Lions Club fundraising days then, were the third week in May...). This exclusivity was demonstrated in June when the only evidence of ground flora under the dense leafy boughs, were the bare ghost stems of the faded flowers, along with the many fabulous, edible, species of fungi.

Since coming to Forest of Dean in 2002, and after 15 years of active wild daffodil conservation, 2020's enforced policy to stay local, we have witnessed an extraordinary Spring – cancelling the Daffodil Weekend festivals before lockdown was advised nationally (fortunate when you see what happened at the Cheltenham Racing Festival). The fine bluebell population, admired by so many at the edge of the Queens Wood Car park, is due to volunteers' management these last 3 years – terrific daffodils earlier evident only at the sunny stretches of the roadside Beech avenue leading to Kempley Green.

What wasn't predicted in the planning of The Glade, with the bramble busting, and the grass and flower seeding of the central ride, was that opening up to the light created a vista more often associated with the grazed slopes of the Malvern Hills. Bluebells in drifts, amongst short grass, and thistle species (wrongly identified by me last month as dwarf thistle, but probably spear thistle).

There is much more to come – and some months before we can hope to get the climate agenda running within a Covid-19 exit strategy, but surely now is the last cliff face for



any wake up call to become the normal appreciation of how we act to survive in a climate changed world. The science has been understood by many for a longest time – the behaviour change is all around us just now – and it doesn't have to be predicated by fear.

Thoreau: *“Live in each season as it passes; breathe the air, drink the drink, taste the fruit, and resign yourself to the influence of the earth.”*

Please make contact – we need help with the identification of species in the Glade. Active volunteer work is suspended until distancing measures can be instigated.

In this time we have a fabulous chance to work at the parish level and prepare for the climate and biodiversity challenges ahead. Share your wildlife photos with Arin Spencer, parish clerk.

**Chris Bligh** [dyfradaffs@gn.apc.org](mailto:dyfradaffs@gn.apc.org)

## **Something to make you laugh from Frank Muir's autobiography, “A Kentish Lad”**

“I don't know how well you know St Anne's Hill in Surrey, whose sharp corners and gentle slopes (before the motorway was built) carried the motorist up from Thorpe and down into Chertsey, but I was taking that rural route one morning in my old, fifteenth-hand Lagonda. I was 'think' driving, driving idly well on my side of the road, hoping that a bright idea might alight like a mustard seed on the damp flannel of my brain, when round the corner ahead came a woman driver at speed, in a clapped-out, dented Morris Minor. She missed my beautiful Lagonda by a centimetre, wound down her window furiously and yelled at me, 'PIG!'. 'Women drivers!' I snorted, drove on round the corner and hit a pig.

***NB Anybody using my pig story without saying where they got it from will be hounded through the law courts of Europe.”*** ***Frank Muir***

**Jill Bond**

Your function as a critic is to show that it is really you yourself who should have written the book, if you had had the time, and since you hadn't you are glad that someone else had, although obviously it might have been done better.

**Stephen Potter**

# A Trivial Quiz to Relieve a Little of the Tedium of Our Present Situation

## Waters of the United Kingdom

1. This ferry across this river rose to fame musically (5,6)
2. Worker in the cloth trade (5,6)
3. The penultimate letter (5,3)
4. Overwhelming wonder(4,3)
5. Missed out on Gold, Silver, or Bronze (5,5)
6. The banks are bonny (4,6)
7. Worth eight in scrabble (5,3)
8. Ship of the desert (5,5)
9. A jolly miller once lived here (5,3)
10. Lucky number? (5,6)
11. Cosmetics with a personal touch (5,4)
12. Link with 1984 (5,6)
13. Monday was the day for this (3,4)
14. Sounds as though it's not wild (5,4)
15. Sounds like a group of players (5,4)
16. A balanced burden (5,8)
17. The prong of a fork (5,4)
18. Often served in the afternoon (5,4)
19. A low vibrating sound and a cold shiver (5,6)
20. A summer berry (5,3)
21. Not quite twilight (5,3)
22. Stag's fighting place (7,5)
23. Britannia crosses this (5,6)
24. Main town on three legs (5,7)
25. Rhymes with a winter breakfast (5,8)
26. Sporting series (5,4)
27. Bonnie's partner (5,5)
28. Less than a thin trickle (5,6)
29. Flexible metal strand (5,4)
30. Payment to landlord after a cuppa (5,5)

Answers later on in the magazine – don't cheat!

## **Not Heard at the Benefice Council**

Despite the fact that we haven't held a meeting since January, there's still lots going on as we come to terms with the indefinite nature of our lockdown. Of course, you're all aware that our churches are locked tight, with no remission for good conduct in sight. Graveside funerals are the only services permitted and these are rendered even more traumatic than usual for all involved by the much-reduced attendances permitted and the required social distancing. Spare a prayer for the members of our Ministry Team and for the undertakers officiating at these even-more-than-usually emotional services. However, on a brighter note, as you may be aware, we have been streaming daily services on the Dymock Church website ([www.dymockchurch.net](http://www.dymockchurch.net)) and Sunday services on the Benefice website ([www.zymology.net/leadonvale](http://www.zymology.net/leadonvale)). Bob has even had the Dymock Choir Zooming together to provide anthems for the services. It's been a steep learning curve for all but he's made it work!! Additionally, the first post-Sunday service virtual on-line coffee meeting took place on Sunday 17 May and will be followed by others. See [www.dymockchurch.net](http://www.dymockchurch.net) for details.

Church finances have been hit very hard by the loss of income consequent upon the lockdown and we hope parishioners will maintain their contributions one way or another throughout the lockdown. Talk to your local friendly Church Treasurer! While church income has halved, our bills have basically stayed the same; electricity, insurance and, of course, our parish share payments. The parish share bill still has to be paid to pay clergy stipends and all sorts of other central costs and we don't know, at present, whether all nine parishes will be able to pay their share in full.

Reverend Kat Mepham was due to be installed as priest-in-charge of the Leadon Vale Benefice on 22 June. Unfortunately, even if lockdown had not stopped her move, she contracted Covid-19 some weeks ago and has suffered a recurrence of symptoms since. However, she is now on the mend but progress is obviously slow and, whereas she is looking forward to the move, she has no idea yet when that might be. Keep her in your prayers. Notwithstanding that, at the last Benefice Council, we started preparations for her arrival and each parish was requested to provide a written briefing. By and large, these have been provided and the complete Benefice brief sent to Reverend Kat. This will ease her arrival and shorten the time needed for her to settle in and get to grips with the issues left by Tudor Griffiths.

Owen Westall is now well settled in as our Children and Families Worker and has been working flat-out during the lockdown. Being very IT-literate, he has started doing on-line active RE lessons, following aspects of the school RE curriculum. Additionally, he has streamed various Bible stories for young children on his own Facebook site and links are available both on [www.dymockchurch.net](http://www.dymockchurch.net) (Video

Stories for Children) and on [www.zymology.net/leadonvale](http://www.zymology.net/leadonvale) (Meet our Children and Families Worker).

Having just started the expansion of the Windcross Parish Magazine to all nine Leadon Vale parishes, lockdown has stymied hard-copy distribution of the magazine because our printers could not obtain the paper. However, Terry has done a brilliant job in producing our on-line magazine. Well done Terry!

**Mike Poulter**

## **Christian Aid Week 2020**

**Christian Aid Week**, 10 – 16<sup>th</sup> May went ahead, albeit in a very different format from the usual house to house collection. At the present time it is responding to Coronavirus outbreaks in Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean. Christian Aid is working together with partners and faith leaders to inform people about the risks, offering hygiene and hand washing sessions, equipping health facilities with supplies and promoting training to front line aid workers. It is also providing food packages to some of the most marginalised families and ensuring protection for women affected by domestic violence.

It is also continuing its work with the Rohingya community which has been displaced by violence in Myanmar. Millions of people have recently been displaced because of floods and landslides in India, Bangladesh and Nepal and aid is needed to rehouse and feed these people.

A big thank you to those people who donated in a response to an email request but this was sent to only a small number of people in Dymock. Do look at the Christian Aid website for 2020 to see the full extent of their valuable aid work. I realise that in the present virus crisis many people have limited finances and there are many appeals by charities for all kinds of help but, do please pray for the work of Christian Aid and do please donate on line at the Christian Aid website, if you are able, to enable their work to continue.

Dymock has been very supportive in the past of the work of Christian Aid and I hope that this will continue despite the present challenging times.

My thanks for your anticipated support

**Ruth Clowes**

Dymock Christian Aid Co-ordinator

He who throws mud loses ground.

**Adlai Stevenson**

## Services at Home



During the current coronavirus situation, we've gone on-line with daily services produced by members of the Ministry Team and videos for young children produced by our Children and Families Worker, Owen Westall

**For a service every day go to:**

[www.dymockchurch.net](http://www.dymockchurch.net) – then click on 'Service at Home' or 'Video Stories for Children'

**And for a specific Sunday service go to:**

[www.zymology.net/leadonvale](http://www.zymology.net/leadonvale) – click on 'Information about the Leadon Vale Benefice

then 'Click to Enter' then 'Service for (date)'

If you follow the suggested times, we can all do it together as a benefice and so remain *'The Body of Christ'*.

**Roger Parker**

## A New Poem by Max Boyce

Fans of Max Boyce will be delighted to know that he has written a poem about Covid-19 and its effects on Swansea. It's in Max's inimitable style that made him a favourite of mine, and millions of others, back in the 1970s in South Wales. Like me, Max started his working life as a colliery electrician, employed of course by the NCB.

I was lucky enough to attend one of his concerts in the Berwyn Centre (now long gone) in Nantymoel, when recordings were made for a new album, even though the Berwyn Centre was, disappointedly, never mentioned in the sleeve notes!

I still have the LP that I later bought, featuring that night, and I casually told friends and family that I was on Max's new record. Well, I'm sure I could recognise my applauding and cheering, but people with less tuned ears than mine never could!

The link below will take you to the new poem, read by Max for the BBC.

<https://www.facebook.com/bbcradiowales/videos/max-boyce-poem-when-just-the-tide-went-out/561421931155761/>

**Terry**

## A Poem from Offa Tree News, January 03

I almost went to church last night  
But couldn't find the time.  
So much to do in the garden,  
To have left it would have been a crime.  
So I dug and hoed and weeded  
And went wearily to bed,  
But I made a resolution  
I'd go next week instead.

I almost went to church last night  
But some old friends of mine came,  
And to have closed the door on them  
Would have been an awful shame.  
So we talked and chatted and gossiped  
Until the goodbyes were said,  
But I made a resolution  
I'd go next week instead.

I almost went to church last night  
But my favourite programme was on,  
And by the time it was finished  
The time for church was gone.  
So I sat before the telly  
Until the set was dead,  
But I made a resolution  
I'd go next week instead.

I almost went to church last night  
But I left it rather late,  
And lack of punctuality  
Is a thing I really hate.  
So I sat before the fire  
Took up a book and read,  
But I made a resolution  
I'd go next week instead.

I almost went to church last night  
But a certain preacher was there,  
And for his kind of preaching  
I didn't really care.  
So rather than go to church  
And come back with a heavy head,  
I made a resolution  
I'd go next week instead.

I almost went to church last night  
But found it was too late.  
The church was locked and silent  
And "For Sale" was on the gate.  
Oh, the remorse, which now I felt,  
The little church was dead,  
And I – Yes I – had killed it  
By going next week instead.

**Anon**

When I quoted this poem at Roger's Men's Breakfast in early March, little did I realise that all places of worship, churches and chapels would be closed by the end of the month. Let us all hope and pray that soon they will be open again, and let us all resolve not to make excuses but attend our local places of worship faithfully each week.

**Victor Newman**

Twenty-two acknowledged concubines and a library of sixty-two thousand volumes, attested the variety of the inclinations of the Emperor Gordian, and from the productions which he left behind him, it appears that the former as well as the latter were designed for use rather than ostentation.

**Edward Gibbon**

First left, go along the corridor. You'll see a door marked Gentlemen, but don't let that deter you.

**F E Smith**

## **Zoom to 2021**

And so it turned twenty twenty  
A year that was destined to give plenty  
With weddings and birthdays  
On Sundays and Thursdays  
There wasn't a day left empty.

In January there was a flood  
The start that wasn't so good  
Leaving plenty to shovel and ponder  
Out with the floods and in came the virus  
These times are sure sent to try us.

Also this signalled the end of young farmers  
It's safest so the virus can't harm us  
No more laughs and jokes  
No more Thursday night capers  
As now we've all turned to great savers.

So bring on three weeks of isolation  
Local news coverage with Harry Gration  
With an hours run down the lane  
It's certain life won't be the same  
Twenty twenty is a whole new ballgame.

We now can't all sit in the same room  
Instead a new life, video conferencing by zoom  
Who would have thought  
That this is the new Saturday night  
Our social lives have seen a sad plight.

The show of farming must go on  
With equipment that's new and bygone  
All we need now is rain  
Who knew that's what we'd say  
When January was wet every day.

**Christopher Bird** – Beacon YFC

Sent in by Sue Reeves

# KPM



[www.kempleymarket.com](http://www.kempleymarket.com)

CIC No. 10770868

**KEMPLEY  
PRODUCE  
MARKET**

...FOR FOOD  
LESS TRAVELLED

## Clapping for our Local Producers



The Kempley Marketeers are missing you all. We look forward to being able to welcome you back as soon as it is safe to do so.

In the meantime, Maggie has been working with our producers behind the scenes; and volunteers have been collecting and distributing goodies.

Charlotte, together with her colleagues at Newent Market, has been providing a much appreciated service to our local communities. They deliver practically everything you could possibly want, no price rises or delivery charge, and always with a smile.

So please – when you clap on Thursday – add a couple more for our Local Producers who are pivotal in supporting us in these challenging times.

Our strapline, *'For food less travelled'* has never felt more relevant.

For more information please contact: Maggie Bligh on 01531 890332

**Louise Earll**

# No Mow May

## 2019 results are an interesting read

See: [www.plantlife.org.uk/everyflowercounts/2019-results/](http://www.plantlife.org.uk/everyflowercounts/2019-results/)

### The first ever National Nectar Score shows that:

- **The average lawn produced 12 grams of nectar sugar per day**, enough to support 1,088 honeybees.
- When combined, all the lawns in the survey produced a whopping 23 kg of nectar sugar per day. That's enough to support 2.1 million – or around 60,000 hives – of honeybees.

### Lawns showed a big variation in the average nectar they produced:

As previewed last month, and now with wide support from local people who have left 15% of their lawn to grow flowers for the bees.

[www.plantlife.org.uk/everyflowercounts/2019-results/](http://www.plantlife.org.uk/everyflowercounts/2019-results/)

**In a big surprise, flower and nectar sugar production was highest on lawns cut once every four weeks.** This gives 'short-grass' plants like daisies, selfheal and white clover a chance to flower in profusion, boosting nectar production tenfold.

**But areas of longer unmown grass were more diverse in their flowers**, with plants like oxeye daisy, field scabious and knapweed increasing the range of nectar sources for different pollinators and extending nectar availability into late summer.

**These findings pave the way for new guidelines on how to manage our lawns.** Rather like a Mohican hair-cut, we suggest keeping two different lengths of grass:

- Plant bluebells in an area that gets plenty of sun during winter, which is when they begin to produce leaves.
- Bluebells don't need to be fed as long as they have winter sun.

**Join in** - survey your lawn – count the flowers in a 1m square

[www.plantlife.org.uk/everyflowercounts/](http://www.plantlife.org.uk/everyflowercounts/)

Enter your data 23 -31<sup>st</sup> May 2020

By taking part in this **brand new citizen science action**, we will show you how much nectar the flowers in your lawn are producing.

The more wild flowers you have in your lawn – and the more types of wild flowers – the more nectar will be produced. If you #SayNoMow and leave areas of your lawn unmown, you're likely to have many more wild flowers and lots more nectar.

**Chris Bligh**

## Article from Mercy Ships Newsletter



**Doctor Michelle White**

Only a few months ago, Paediatric Anaesthetist Michelle White was serving the people of Senegal on board the Africa Mercy, the world's largest charity-run hospital ship. Now she is back home in the thick of a health crisis of a different nature, one she never imagined in all her years working with fragile health systems overseas.

For the past 15 years, 49-year-old Michelle White has sailed the high seas, serving as a Deputy Chief Medical Officer, Medical Capacity Building Director, and Anaesthesia Supervisor on board a Mercy Ship.

Since August 2019 Mercy Ships had been involved providing more than 1,400 specialised surgeries, healthcare and training in the Port of Dakar. Until COVID-19 shut the borders and made travel and the programmes on board the ship impossible.

For several years, Michelle has also worked as a Consultant Paediatric Anaesthetist at Great Ormond Street Children's Hospital in London where she now works overtime in the race against the virus. Michelle says that the same motivation which compelled her to serve in developing nations steadies her in the battle to keep her part in NHS's system from buckling under the strain of coronavirus.

"Today, our city is on the frontline," White says. "I've spent my last 15 years investing in fragile healthcare systems in Africa and have faith that it's possible to tip the balance if we stay focused on the simple things. With this fight, that means staying home, rigorous personal hygiene, helping one another and not taking the gift of our nation's health infrastructure for granted.

"We are all in this together, no matter which country or city in the world we live in, and together we are crying out to God for mercy and help in our time of need."

“I am practicing being thankful every day. I am thankful that I am alive and have a roof over my head, food on the table and a job – many people in Africa where I worked with Mercy Ships don’t have that. Being on the frontline in the NHS during the coronavirus crisis there are many things to be thankful for. I am thankful as I cycle to work that the roads are empty, it makes cycling more of a pleasure, I am thankful for the blossom on the trees, I am thankful for my colleagues and for people pulling together in incredible ways. I think this is what Paul meant when he wrote in Philippians 4, telling us to rejoice and not to be anxious but to pray with thanksgiving and think on things that are pure, lovely, admirable and praiseworthy. And I don’t find that I have to look very hard to find things to be thankful for. And when I am thankful, I find fresh hope and renewed comfort in a God who loves us and wants to engage with us and have mercy on us in this time of need. So, my thankfulness turns to prayer with confidence that my God is there and that helps me stay hopeful at times like these.”  
(Sent in by Victor Newman)



## View from the Pew

April saw the 56<sup>th</sup> birthday of our son Anthony, (Tony) and so my wife sent him a card with our love and best wishes. However, this year she also sent him a computerised ecard which featured jolly cartoon graphics, and musical variations on Happy Birthday. The electronic email will raise a smile, but I imagine that the card by post (snail mail) will activate his mind in other ways.

This caused me to mentally compare modern communication with traditional methods, and I wonder if the new method of transmission, itself has changed the value we writers and readers put on the words?

The pre-designed ecard was created so that a customer has only to complete a few boxes; pay an on-line fee, and press 'Send.' The 'card' itself, being untouched by human hand, exists only as an agglomeration of transitory electrical pulses, predestined to disappear a short time after being opened. But, because the message itself is 'alive' for so little time, I wondered if it thus becomes easy for the recipient to undervalue the feelings and thinking behind the message? Does the message. "With Love from Mum and Dad" written on a 'snail mail' birthday card, give a greater sense of enduring love compared to that of the instant ecard? I reckon it does.

Talking of enduring feelings during Covid19 lock-down, reminds me of the enduring value of religious texts, music, buildings and religious services. All of which are affected by a government which wisely banned gatherings of people, and advised leaders of the community and industry to find appropriate ways of making a two metre distance rule effective. Shops and businesses were quick off the mark, as were NHS workers if not their managers. Staff managed to make beds and medical resources available with their swift response. Mind you, sending elderly sick folk into Care Homes was not the best decision they made. Pubs, Cafes and Restaurants, did not have enough two metre spaces and closed. Churches and other religious establishments, despite having space for private prayer changed their minds a few days later and decided to lock their doors. To my generation, banning gatherings and the two metre rule seemed sensible especially as the guidelines are changed as more data comes in. We adapt to the situation as we have adapted to change throughout our lives. We are also very adept in four of the virtues of Stoic philosophy, e.g. we value and are keen on Prudence, Justice, Fortitude, and Temperance.

Not so the TV news channels. Their newscasters seem to have an obsessive fear of what 'might' happen tomorrow. So predictable and dire is their choice of news that I turn off after the five minute headlines. This means I miss all the negative speculation and despairing pseudo-intelligent prattle. Reporting is one thing, their incessant speculation is another.

What, I wonder, is happening in their heads as they introduce a situation as 'unprecedented' but then demand that a government spokesperson give them details of what is going to happen next?

In unprecedented times it is the role of Leaders to first set a course, a direction. Modellers, planners, analysts, programmers, schedulers, implementers and administrators follow. In real life, action by cleaners, labourers, growers, barbers, electricians, farmers, builders, et al, comes well ahead of news reporters who seem to indulge themselves and annoy the populace by idle speculation. In any case, it is for Historians to research and debate whether or not a leader's direction was the appropriate one. They have much better hindsight after the event, than gossipers have at the present time.

And talking of unprecedented events, I mused on how Radio Four might have reported August 15, 1620. On that unprecedented day, a boat named Mayflower left Southampton bound for the new world. Everyone aboard knew their direction was west against prevailing winds, but none knew when they would arrive. As it was; they made landfall 66 days later, albeit not where they hoped to be.

I wonder if the radio on-board news team would have interviewed Master Christopher Jones and his crew and demanded guarantees and detailed plans in advance for every day of the journey. Would they have insisted on daily progress reports and questioned why the Coxswain's comments yesterday were at variance with what the poop deck steward said last Wednesday. Why, they might ask, will not the first lieutenant reveal what plans there are in the event that the wind direction should shift hither and yonder, and furthermore, what contingencies are there, should a storm come in from the north-west. And, finally; "because we are running out of time," what provisions are there for the passengers should they die or be taken prisoner by an armed Spanish warship?

Was I to have been on board the Mayflower, the people I would want around me would be competent experienced mariners not folks skilled only in using rhetorical devices to report and speculate on a decision before it had time to be fully implemented. Such people have their place, but it is not during unprecedented times.

Talking of which, a friend sent me the historical tale of a wealthy happily married man who had an exciting month long dalliance with a vivacious Italian lady from Padua. Nature took its course, but they agreed an amicable parting and that he would give her and her offspring full lifetime support. But to avoid embarrassment back home; she would send the details on a coded postcard.

In due course it arrived and was handed to him by a puzzled wife. He read it, turned white and fainted. It read: ....

**Spaghetti - Spaghetti - Spaghetti.**  
**Two with meatballs one without**  
**Send extra sauce.**

To see more Views type [www.viewfromthepew.co.uk](http://www.viewfromthepew.co.uk) into the 'search' box of your search engine. Or, type <https://viewfromthepew.co.uk> into the address bar at the top of your computer screen.

When you are on the site, go to the left column and click View from the Pew.

**Peter Wells**

## Opening of New Pre-School at Ann Cam CE School in Dymock

**Little Daffodils** (previously known as Happy Turtles), a pre-school for children from the age of 2 years old has opened at Ann Cam C of E Primary School in Dymock, only a short drive from Newent and Ledbury.

A dedicated and experienced team of early years staff welcome children, their parents and visitors with **respect**, **warmth** and **friendliness**, and are **thankful** to share the fantastic resources and facilities of Ann Cam School.

We aim to provide all our children with a high quality, inclusive early year's curriculum, cared for in a safe setting, so they flourish and achieve well and are fully prepared for the transition to school.

If you would like more information, or would like to book a place ready for September, please contact Mrs Wendy Churchill at [wchurchill@anncam.gloucs.sch.uk](mailto:wchurchill@anncam.gloucs.sch.uk)

**Cath Williams**

## Water Quiz Answers

- 1 River Mersey
- 2 River Weaver
- 3 River Wye
- 4 Loch Awe
- 5 River Forth
- 6 Loch Lomond
- 7 River Exe
- 8 River Camel
- 9 River Dee
- 10 River Severn
- 11 River Avon
- 12 River Orwell
- 13 The Wash
- 14 River Tame
- 15 River Teme

- 16 River Evenlode
- 17 River Tyne
- 18 River Tees
- 19 River Humber
- 20 River Tay
- 21 River Usk
- 22 Rutland Water
- 23 Menai Strait
- 24 River Douglas
- 25 River Torridge
- 26 River Test
- 27 River Clyde
- 28 River Piddle
- 29 River Wyre
- 30 River Trent

## Common Sense – an obituary

Today we mourn the passing of a beloved old friend, Common Sense, who has been with us for many years. No one knows for sure how old he was, since his birth records were long ago lost in bureaucratic red tape. He will be remembered as having cultivated such valuable lessons as:

- Knowing when to come in out of the rain;
- Why the early bird gets the worm;
- Life isn't always fair;
- And maybe it was my fault.

Common Sense lived by simple, sound financial policies (don't spend more than you can earn) and reliable strategies (adults, not children, are in charge).

His health began to deteriorate rapidly when well-intentioned but overbearing regulations were set in place. Reports of a 6-year-old boy charged with sexual harassment for kissing a classmate; teens suspended from school for using mouthwash after lunch; and a teacher fired for reprimanding an unruly student, only worsened his condition.

Common Sense lost ground when parents attacked teachers for doing the job that they themselves had failed to do in disciplining their unruly children. It declined even further when schools were required to get parental consent to administer sun lotion or an aspirin to a student; but could not inform parents when a student became pregnant and wanted to have an abortion.

Common Sense lost the will to live as the churches became businesses; and criminals received better treatment than their victims.

Common Sense took a beating when you couldn't defend yourself from a burglar in your own home and the burglar could sue you for assault.

Common Sense finally gave up the will to live, after a woman failed to realize that a steaming cup of coffee was hot. She spilled a little in her lap, and was promptly awarded a huge settlement.

Common Sense was preceded in death,

- by his parents, Truth and Trust,
- by his wife, Discretion,
- by his daughter, Responsibility,
- and by his son, Reason.

He is survived by his 5 stepbrothers;

- I Know My Rights
- I Want It Now
- Someone Else Is To Blame
- I'm A Victim
- Pay me for Doing Nothing

Not many attended his funeral because so few realized he was gone.

If you still remember him, pass this on. If not, join the majority and do nothing.

# St Anne's, Oxenhall

[www.stanneschurch-oxenhall.org.uk](http://www.stanneschurch-oxenhall.org.uk)

## **Sunday Services**

Although Churches are closed you can join with the congregations in the Benefice by worshiping in your own home. An order of service is being produced each week, so if you would like a copy please contact Lizzie James, or you can access a version on the Leadon Vale Website which includes Hymns and Music which can be played from the service by a single click.

<https://zymology.net/LeadonVale/index.htm>

## **Drop in for Coffee**

As we are unable to meet at the moment you might like to sit down with a cup of coffee on the first Thursday of the month and telephone someone you would have met there, In fact, why not do it every Thursday while we are all social distancing

## **PCC Finances**

Thank you to everyone who has so generously made 'collection plate' payments to Oxenhall PCC either by cheque or bank transfer using sort code 30-93-48 and account number 02987448. We have a volunteer to project lead the Parish Giving Scheme and will be sending out information in due course.

## **St Anne's Churchyard**

In 1998 Newent History Society did a survey of the churchyard and now 22 years later I am endeavouring to update the record sheets and inset photographs. I am aware that not all graves are marked with a headstone and that further burials and interments of ashes are not always recorded on the headstones. Unfortunately, this information was only known by a former churchwarden who is no longer with us. If you are aware of such a grave it would be extremely helpful if you could contact me.

Lizzie James, 01531 821089, [mailliz@btinternet.com](mailto:mailliz@btinternet.com)

## **Support during the coronavirus epidemic.**

John Teire is co-ordinating information in Oxenhall Parish on who might need assistance. Information on volunteering or for requesting assistance being co-ordinated by the Gloucestershire Community Hub can be found on this website [www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/gloucestershires-community-help-hub/](http://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/gloucestershires-community-help-hub/)

**Lizzie James**

## Old Church Records

So, what are the benefits of being in 'Lockdown'?

Perhaps a chance to sort out paperwork that has been ignored for many years! In a box at the bottom of a cupboard there were minutes & other material related to Oxenhall PCC as I was PCC secretary for many years.

So, what did I find?

### The Church Carpet –

When was the red carpet bought and how much did it cost? A question often asked and something I think about when on cleaning duty.

Oxenhall Church Carpet 1972  
£183 Collected

Purchase of carpet	£187.27	
Discount allowed	14.27	
Payed for carpet	173.00	
carpet sweeper	4.00	
	<u>177.00</u>	
money in Building Society	6.00	
	<u>£183.00</u>	

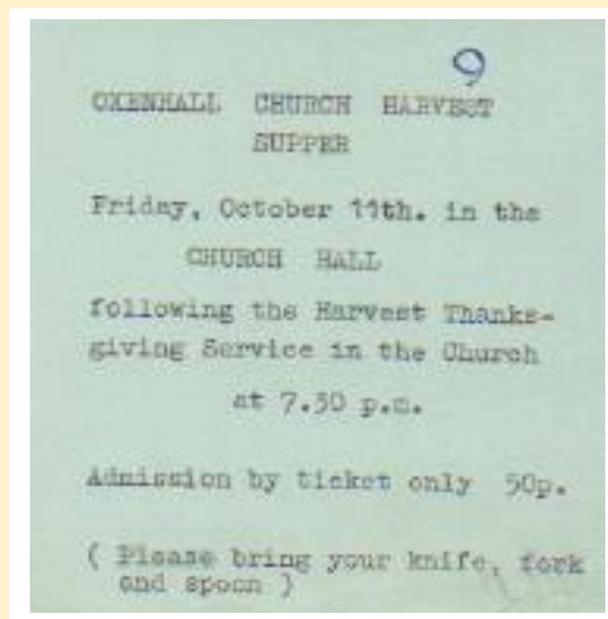
According to these details I discovered it was purchased in 1972 for £187.27.

A discount for £14.27 reduced the cost to £173.00.

A carpet sweeper costing £4.00 was bought at the same time.

### Harvest Suppers

How many people attended Harvest Suppers in the 1970s and what did they eat?



The total cost for this list of purchases for a Harvest Supper on 3rd October 1973 was £14.77. I assume as there 60 people as were 60 bread rolls ordered and they would have had three slices of meat each. Puddings were easy-5 large tins of fruit cocktail & six red jellies. Obviously, the amount of cider was reconsidered as, towards the bottom of the list '2 more cider' was added.

Oxenhall Harvest Supper	
Wednesday Oct 3 <sup>rd</sup> /73	
120 slices cooked shoulder ham	3-40
60 slices " braised beef	2-43
60 bread rolls (Tostys)	£1-35
1 1/2 lbs butter	30
2 1/2 lbs cheese	77
6 packets cheese biscuits	27
5 large tins fruit cocktail	25p
6 red jellies	30p
1 bottle orange squash	13½
1 " lemon "	13½
4 large cream	£1-00
12 gts bottle cider	£2-40
1/2 pint beer	24p
1pt vinegar	8p
washing up liquid	8p
x 2 more cider	40
1 cucumber	15
Revised total	£14-77

M.B. Lissold

Something to bring a smile to all our faces:

### An Irish Blessing

May the frost never afflict your spuds  
 May the leaves of your cabbage always be free from worms.  
 May the crows never pick your haystack.  
 If you inherit a donkey, may she be in foal.

**Kath Rees**

## Ramblings of a Locked-Down Man

One of the things about being self-isolated is the fact that you think a lot more about both yourself and the world outside your own little plot.

I unashamedly have debates with myself as I cut the grass or do other tasks around the place. So far, these debates have been in silence, but it worries me a little that I might accidentally start leaking all sides of my debates to the world in general, or at least to Eileen, the dog, the cat the hens or whatever wildlife is about at the time. Thank goodness we have no parrots flying wild in Dymock – can you imagine if my thoughts were spread far and wide by those feathered recording devices!

Another worrying thought is: are these debates a sign of my impending senility or a sign that it is already with me? I used to hold the view that talking to oneself when older was normal, because as you get older it's hard to suffer fools gladly, so obviously you speak to the wisest person present. I'm afraid that this is just one of my many debates that haven't been settled yet!

When in isolation you spend quite a bit of time thinking about what it was that put you there, and your thoughts and prayers go out to those whose isolation has to be spent in an ICU, far from friends and family. And special thoughts go out to those who never recovered to be able to leave hospital.

Then, your thought processes start to examine what is known of the Covid-19 virus, and what started this terrible time we are enduring. If you believe Donald Trump, it was a virus 'manufactured' by a foreign state with the intention of causing chaos in an unprepared world, which could then be exploited by any nation that was prepared for it. Or you can believe the version that says it originated in an unlicensed 'wet market' selling all types of meat from animals that we in this country would find unacceptable.

For the record, an unlicensed wet market is normally accepted as any establishment that sells meat which has not been examined by vets, or other experts, and declared as fit for human consumption. This is certainly very dangerous, because most of the viruses that have come to terrify man have been mutations of animal viruses, which have allowed the disease to be transferred from animals to us.

Unfortunately, viruses mutate randomly at a very fast rate because, unlike us they don't have a stable DNA structure: in fact they don't have DNA at all. This is why Flu vaccines have to be reformulated annually as health organisations try to second guess what mutations will occur in any part of the world.

Then your mind starts to think about the scientific knowledge we have regarding any of the diseases that could cause our present situation. As a very ordinary person with little education (and that was gained many decades ago!) I know very little of the facts behind these matters, but even I know that this type of pandemic, and the inability of our drugs to fight it, has been warned of for many years.

Darwin's Theory of Evolution made this obvious a long time ago, and work done since, and practical experiences, have confirmed it many times over.

But it isn't enough for scientists (and remember that the word science means knowledge) to repeatedly warn us – there must be the political will worldwide to combine forces and put forward the money for the necessary work to be carried out. And the results must be available to all of mankind!

In the short time since we knew of the Covid 19 mutation, society generally has performed marvellously in the search for a cure, but carefully planned preparations would have been far better!

Thinking in general of preparation for mankind's future problems forces my brain to think of the environment, both its spoiling and its future. There are some now who still ignore or deny the man-made problems of pollution and global warming! A very interesting book that was published in 1972 was titled *The Limits to Growth*, and it was a report from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology commissioned by the Club of Rome as part of their Project on the Predicament of Mankind. The report explained how global population, agriculture, resource-use, industry and pollution interacted with each other, and unless there was a concerted attack on all the problems at once, the result would, in just a few decades, disrupt the state of equilibrium that we need to survive.

I hope that we have not yet reached that critical point in our history, but I think it's very close, and we should get our heads out of the sand and act. The ability of nature to come back, if allowed, is demonstrated in many ways in our world today. Locally, DyFRA's work in the Centenary Glade, detailed in this magazine, shows how a little thought and a lot of hard work can help to reverse a man-made decline in our bio-diversity. And who can fail to have noticed that during our lockdown, and the ensuing reduction in terrestrial and aviation traffic, the air that we all have to breathe has become cleaner; we don't need scientific analysis to prove it – we can taste the difference! As a friend pointed out to me during a phone conversation, "I've never smelt the May blossom as strong and as sweet as it is this year."

We, the human race, are a sociable lot, and obviously it will be far better for us all when we can get back to the state of normality that we are used to. But it begs the questions – what will tomorrow's normal be like, and when will it come? As you will have gathered by now, I believe that we're in this situation mainly because of our reluctance to collectively face our problems and sort them out for the benefit of all.

But can we rely on our politicians, our union leaders, our scientists, our medical personnel, our religious leaders, et al, to get together and do the right things for us? I believe we can, but only if we tell them, repeatedly, that this is what we want for our future and the future of mankind.

There is a light at the end of the tunnel, and it's not an oncoming train, it's the sun! Keep safe & keep smiling.

**Terry**

## Local Planning Applications

**P0568/20/GPDE** - Prior notification for a single storey extension across the rear of the original house to provide downstairs bedroom/bathroom/living. (General Permitted Development Extension) - Hanover Green Farm, Redmarley

**P0489/20/FUL** - Conversion of existing stables and tack room to form two guest bedrooms and home office ancillary to main dwelling - The Stables, The Green, Redmarley

**P0467/20/FUL** - Erection of a detached self-build dwelling and car port with associated parking, landscaping and works - Playleys Place, Playley Green Redmarley

**P0048/20/DISCON** - Discharge of Condition 09 (external lighting) relating to planning permission P1623/17/FUL - Land at Park Farm, Redmarley

**P0455/20/TCA** - Works to a Silver Birch to crown lift to 1.8 m. above ground level and reduce the height as shown in the submitted imagery and work to one Laurel to crown reduce by 0.5m - The Old Orchard, The Green, Redmarley

**P0454/20/TCA** - Removal of x 2 branches from x 1 variegated Maple as shown in the submitted imagery, removal of x 1 branch from x 1 Norway Maple as detailed in the application and height reduction of x 1 Holly to 2.5 m. above ground level - The Old Orchard, The Green, Redmarley

*To view the full details of these applications, or to check the progress of any application, log on to the Forest of Dean DC web site and go to planning.*

**Quite often, planning applications are not validated in time to be inserted in the magazine. For your own protection and peace of mind it might benefit you to log onto The Forest of Dean DC planning applications and search your own parish's list of applications on a regular basis.**

**Your parish council should be doing this on your behalf, but many sets of eyes are better than one. It's too late when the application you dreaded is approved.**

**The cut-off for the July magazine (hopefully on paper) is**

**Thursday June 18<sup>th</sup>**

**Keep Safe**

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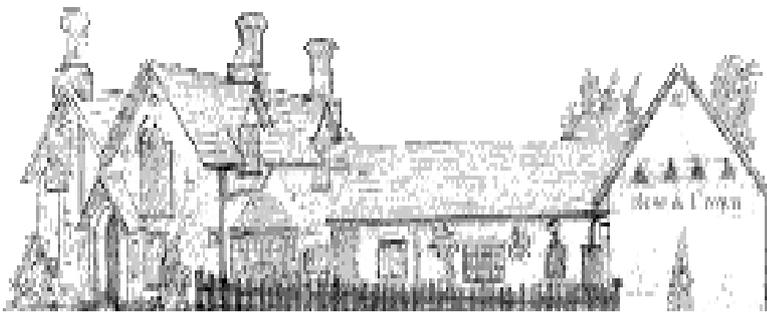
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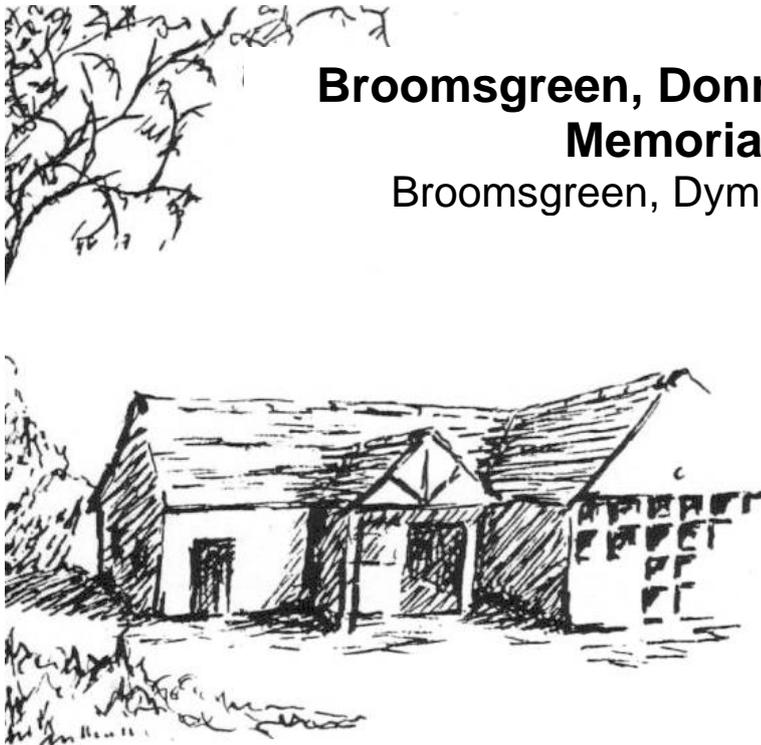
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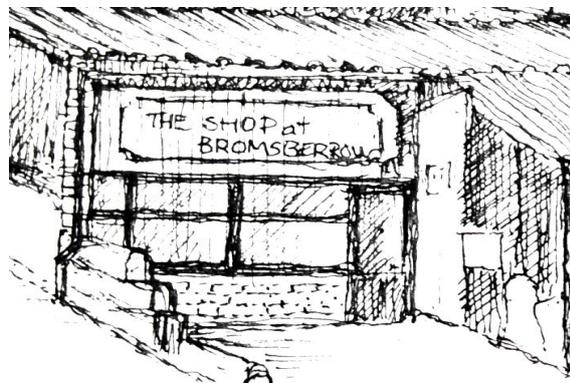
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