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- What about saving energy?
- How low do you have your heating thermostat set?
- Do you use heat exchangers?
- Have you cut down on your use of the car?
- If you have an electric car, how easy is it when we live in a rural area?
- Have you taken up cycling for local journeys?
- How is climate change affecting the way you garden?

Monday mornings, MMM Guilsborough
Monday evenings Knitwits Guilsborough
Tuesday evenings, Creaton Singers
Thursday morning, Indoor bowls, Creaton
3rd Friday of Month—Hopewell Cafe
Hollowell
Sunday am and Tuesday pm - Tennis G'boro

For our part, we have taken a look at the paper used to print Village Link and contacted our printers to discuss the options and costs of climate-friendly choices. As a community publication dependent on advertising income and donations, we have a responsibility to keep costs low while being as climate-responsible as possible. Readers tell us they still like to receive a paper copy, so we will continue to print, but we've now switched to a lighter weight FSC accredited paper, which combines recycled paper with paper produced from responsibly managed forests. For more information visit: www.fsc-uk.org

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CLIMATE FEATURE—Trees

VILLAGE LINK

is a bi-monthly publication delivered free of charge to households in Cold Ashby, Cottesbrooke, Creton, Guilsborough, Hollowell, Teeton and Thornby. It is produced and distributed by volunteers. Due to restrictions of time and space there is no guarantee that copy submitted will be used. All funds received from advertising go towards printing costs.

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Wherever possible **please email** your contributions to.
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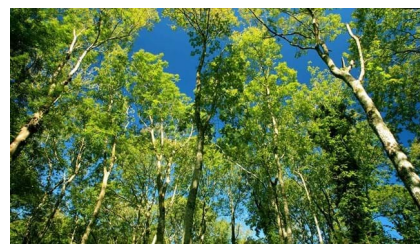
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DEADLINE FOR NEXT ISSUE:
Tuesday 1st March 2022

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If we were looking for one thing to do, as opposed to 'stopping' doing something, to help the fight against climate change, then we probably can't go wrong with planting trees. The benefits of trees are well understood. They lock up carbon, they reduce pollution, they lessen the effects of flooding, and support people, wildlife and livestock. Also, as studies have shown all too frequently over the pandemic period, they contribute to the mental well-being of us all.



Woodland cover in the UK is an average of 13% and the Woodland Trust suggest that we need 19% in order for the UK to meet its carbon net zero target by 2050. Tree cover in Northamptonshire is even poorer at approximately 5%, so if no better incentive was needed, we should be looking at planting trees.

The Cottesbrooke Estate has an active woodland expansion scheme, planting over 20ha of new woodland in the past ten years – that's about 36,000 trees – including 4ha in 2021 alone. The Estate has a patchwork of over 87 separate small woods, in total more than 9% of the land, and these are connected by hedgerows creating important wildlife corridors and sanctuaries. Oak and Ash are the dominant species but Ash Dieback (*Hymenoscyphus fraxineus*) is affecting trees of all ages. This disease has to be managed carefully and a programme of felling and restocking the woods with native and resilient broadleaves is underway across the Estate to ensure a sustainable future.



What can I do?

There are many schemes that are promoting tree planting and one of the higher profile ones is The Queen's Green Canopy to mark Her Majesty's Platinum Jubilee. The focus of the scheme is to plant sustainably, creating a legacy in honour of The Queen. It started last year when planting could take place between October and this coming March. Creton has planted a native cherry on The Green and Guilsborough has planted an Oak on the playing field as part of their Jubilee celebrations.

As this planting season draws to a close, don't feel that you have missed out. The Queen's Canopy website has lots of information about how to prepare for the next season (October onwards) as choosing the right place and the right tree can take quite a bit of research. There is also information for schools, community groups and others who would like to plant a tree for our future.

You might also consider a community orchard. Listeners to The Archers will instantly realise the benefit of bringing communities together to share in the annual cider crop and even though Joe Grundy is no longer with us, his spirit is. There are a few community orchards in Northamptonshire villages and Northamptonshire ACRE has recently set up one in the grounds of Hunsbury Hill Farm. There is a Community Orchard: How to guide on the Government website and there are a number of helpful organisations such as The Orchard Project.

To find out more about these schemes, use the links below or go to the Village Link website and use the links there. Don't forget to let us know what you are doing to fight climate change. Further information:

- www.queensgreencanopy.org
- www.woodlandtrust.org.uk
- www.cottesbrooke.co.uk/estate
- www.theorchardproject.org.uk

COLD ASHBY NEWS

St Denys Craft and Gift fair

A very successful day was had by all at our Christmas Craft and Gift fair held on 20th November in the Village Hall. It was well attended by residents and visitors from far and wide. Trade was brisk and all being well, the stallholders have booked to come again in 2022. Our grateful thanks to everyone who supported this event, where £500 was made for church funds.

St Denys Tree of Remembrance



A large crowd gathered at 6pm on Saturday 4th December to celebrate the lighting of the Tree of Remembrance in St Denys churchyard. The tree was adorned with 119 bulbs which were purchased by residents old and new in remembrance of loved ones who are no longer with us. A total of £685 was raised for church funds. Following the lighting of the tree, complimentary mulled wine and mince pies were served at the Village Hall kindly donated by the newly reformed Village Hall trustees. It was a lovely evening where residents could remember others, catch up with friends and neighbours and celebrate the beginning of Christmas. Thank you to everyone who supported this event and the Tree of Remembrance.

Cold Ashby Advent Trail

Once again the residents of Cold Ashby did themselves proud with their spectacular advent windows which were lit daily and really brightened up the village throughout December. A lot of thought and effort went into the window displays and it was a joy to walk round the village after dark and see them all lit up. Chris Sellers in particular wishes to thank all the volunteers who decorated their windows. Their efforts were very much appreciated.

Cold Ashby Village Hall

Our much loved Memorial Hall has been given a welcome new lease of life thanks to the newly reformed Village Hall committee. Throughout December, they hosted a range of Social Evenings for the villagers which were not only well attended but also enjoyed by all who came. It was so lovely to see villagers enjoying themselves again as a community and supporting this historic and important village building. Thanks

YOUR CORRESPONDENT

Cold Ashby has a new Correspondent in Fiona Gunn Stokes. Our thanks to John Hesk who has collated your stories and news over the past few years. He continues to help with delivering Village Link to your doors, together with Roger Miller. If you have stories, photos, events etc to share with readers please contact Fiona on: fionagunn-stokes@hotmail.co.uk or phone 07488373629. And give John and Roger a wave when you see them!



goes to all those who supported the events or bought raffle tickets in aid of Village Hall funds. More community events are planned for 2022 and more information about these will be available in the coming year.

Playing Fields—2021 Year In Review

2021 was a difficult year with so many limitations on what people could do. However, as society opened up after lockdown, two major events are worth reviewing.

In 2019, at just 26 years old, Shaun Taylor suddenly collapsed at home and passed away. That morning the air ambulance and crew arrived and did all they could to save him. The family wanted something positive to come out of Shaun's tragic death and decided to hold a fun-day in September 2019 which raised an astonishing £5,000. Although, it was not possible to hold an event in 2020 due to Covid lockdowns, in September 2021 they organised their second fun-day with raffles, fudge sales, craft fayre, sponsored bike rides and sponsored reading challenges.

For those who aren't aware of this family's fund raising on behalf of The Warwickshire and Northamptonshire Air Ambulance they want to share with you why the charity is very close to the hearts of all the family and why they have raised so much money to help the air ambulance. So far the running total is almost £17,000.

If you would like to donate to support the Taylor family's fundraising efforts you can donate at <https://theairambulanceservice.org.uk/ways-to-give/give-in-memory/tribute/shaun-taylor-210/>

Thanks to a grant from the Winwick Wind Farm Fund, and a sizable contribution from their reserves, Cold Ashby Playing Fields Association (CAPFA), undertook a project to install power and water infrastructure to the side of the playing fields. A trench was dug along the entire side of the playing fields to contain armoured cable and potable water pipe. The power was connected to 5 roadside steel quality cabinets so as to allow power to be provided at any of these points. The water pipe

COLD ASHBY NEWS

ends in a standpipe by the forth cabinet. This allows us to provide hygienic water and power to outside catering for large events.

The installation was completed towards the end of October, just in time to stage our annual family bonfire and fireworks night which serves not only our village but several other villages in the vicinity. This event was a huge success. Due to other events being cancelled and (we assume) post Covid lockdown enthusiasm, we hosted around 45% more people than we have ever managed before. Our catering for this event could not have coped without this new infrastructure. A happy Covid safe night was had by all.

CAPFA have, thankfully, now been able to resume our "social evenings". Once a month we show a film at one of these events and some Fridays, we open the pavilion as a place for parishioners to meet while the pub in Cold Ashby remains closed.

The one major setback from 2021 was the way Covid disrupted many sporting and celebration events. As a result, fewer people are using our Multi Use Games Area and our pavilion. The MUGA is suitable for futsal, 5-a-side football, junior hockey etc. The pavilion is a large cosy room suitable for birthday parties etc. Both can be hired at very reasonable rates. Please contact us by message on our Facebook page. <https://www.facebook.com/ColdAshbyPFA/> and like our page to keep in touch with local events at the playing fields.



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COTTESBROOKE NEWS



Bingo Bangers and Mash Quiz Night

The Cottesbrooke Village Hall hosted a fun evening of bingo, a quiz and delicious bangers and mash in October (above). There was a full house and the atmosphere was lively. The big winners of the night were village residents Mike & Trudie Newman and Neil Bird, who won the quiz in an exciting tie-breaking finale.

Christmas Fair

Many thanks to all who came out to enjoy the merriment of our annual Christmas Fair in early December. Mulled wine and mince pies were enjoyed alongside a fab array of stalls from local makers.

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Playing Fields Association

Creaton Quiz Night was back as the main event of the social calendar for 2021. Quiz master Rod Goldberg had been working on some of the best questions for over 2 years, the competition was fierce, with one of our regular teams winning the top prize and the newcomers enjoying the spirit of the evening and taking home the beans. The new Covid safe catering format of bread and cheese was organised by Mark and Jill Wollven and I have never seen so much butter to spread on a French stick. Sally Goldberg organised the most amazing raffle prizes and everyone appeared to go home with a prize or two. Everyone was asking for additional events, so let's see what 2022 brings?

Creaton Walkers

The sun shines on the righteous which must be why the Creaton Walking Group have escaped the torrents of rain which have been falling! The November walk from South Kilworth included an encounter with a flock of sheep having their feet picked out, followed a little later by 2 herds of very inquisitive and lively cows. Sticking together worked and the photo shows the relieved walkers!



The December walk was from Sibbertoft to Welford and ended with 16 people enjoying a delicious Christmas lunch at the Red Lion in Sibbertoft. A great celebration.

The annual New Year's Day walk this year was to Blueberry and near Lamport and a good chance to walk off the festivities of the night before! January's walk was from Pitsford to Holcot and Moulton before returning to Pitsford.

If you enjoy walking, walks are about 8 miles over footpaths. We meet at Creaton lychgate at 10am on the second Saturday of the month. Next walks are on:

- Saturday 12th February
- Saturday 12th March
- Saturday 9th April

Creaton Singers

December was a joyous and busy month for the Creaton Singers! Welford Christmas Tree Farm invited the singers to perform on

the first weekend in December and despite the cold and wind many visitors stopped to listen and even joined in with the singing, especially the children. It was a great start to the Christmas season.

On 19th December the singers were delighted to be invited to lead the congregational singing and to sing a carol at Cottesbrooke Christmas Carol Service in the church.



After almost 2 years of isolation and cancellations it was a real pleasure to put on the annual concert on the Tuesday before Christmas, starting with carols round the Christmas tree on the Green and at Mary's house to wish her Happy Birthday, followed by a concert in the Village Hall. Everyone was very enthusiastic and generous to the voluntary collection for Macmillan Cancer Support, raising over £100. All in all, a hectic time, but so wonderful being able to sing together and bring pleasure to others.

With Christmas well and truly over the Singers are focussed on learning new songs for their next concert. If you are interested in joining this friendly group come along to the URC on Creaton High Street on any Tuesday at 7:30pm.

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CREATON NEWS

Over The Counter

Simon Robinson has stood down from his role as Operations Director after 4 years dedicated to getting the shop up and running and operating smoothly. We all owe Simon a huge debt and thank him most profusely for his dedication, commitment, sense of humour and knowledge. He will be missed - but he has promised to still be a volunteer. Phew!

So a new chapter opens in the Community Shop as we welcome Duncan Steward who takes up the role of Manager from January 1st. Duncan hopes to meet everyone really soon so do make yourself known to him.

Christmas was very busy for both the Post Office and the Shop, with more orders than last year and several people opting not to stand in queues at the butchers and at the supermarket but instead order all their food and drink from the shop.

Christmas may come but once a year but Creaton Village Shop provides orders for collection or delivery all year round. Why not phone or email through your order?

Massive thank you goes to all our customers for your continuing support and also a huge thank you to the staff and volunteers for their hard work, particularly during the month of December.



New products are coming in regularly so do pop in and see what's arrived. And remember, if you don't see something you would like, please ask about it, as often it is possible to supply this. It is also important to remember that the Shop remains dedicated to supporting local suppliers.

Finally, but very importantly, Creaton Village shop is a Community Shop and relies as much on the community to staff it as it does for them to shop here. If you have 2 hours to spare once a week or fortnight, do join this great team as a volunteer. It is a very rewarding way to spend your time and you get to meet and work with some really interesting people.

Creaton WI

Our meeting on 9th February will once again be on Zoom. Grainne Purkiss will be returning as our guest speaker, as her talks work very well on Zoom. This time it is "A Beginners Guide to Modern Art" and Grainne will be showing images of, and discussing, a range of paintings.

Non-members are most welcome to join us. To receive a Zoom invitation link, please contact President, Daphne Clark, 505546, or email wicreaton@gmail.com.

Creaton URC

You are warmly welcome to join us for our Sunday Worship and Junior Church.

Sunday	February	
6th 11am		Rev Geoff Townsend
13th 11am	Worship & Holy Communion	Jon Heard
20th 11am		Rev Geoff Townsend
27th 11am		Rev Craig Muir

	March	
6th 11am	Worship & Holy Communion	Rev Geoff Townsend
13th 11am		Jon Heard
20th 11am		Lindsey Cole
27th 11am	Mothering Sunday Joint Service with St Michael's	Rev Geoff Townsend

Poppies coffee shop is now open two days a week from 10am to 12noon on Wednesdays and Fridays only.



Spring can't be that far away, can it?

Creton Parish Council Contact Details

We are in the process of interviewing prospective candidates for the role of clerk. Whilst we recruit a replacement clerk, you can contact Creton Parish Council by email at creatonpc@gmail.com or by telephone on 07795 412321.

Agendas and minutes of meetings are available on the village website www.creaton.org.uk. The Parish Council also has a Facebook page.



Meetings are held bi-monthly. Please check the parish council website for details of future meetings and agendas.

Parish Council Meeting Dates

Meetings will continue to be held on the second Tuesday of the month (bi-monthly) at 7.30pm. The date of our next meeting is 8th March 2022 in the Village Hall. Details are subject to change depending on government public health guidance.

Queen's Platinum Jubilee Tree

After staking out a proposed site for the Jubilee tree on the village Green, and noting any feedback, we have bought a native cherry (*Prunus Avium Plena*) from Ravensthorpe Nursery, and we have had the tree planted. It is hoped that by planting this tree in the winter, the roots will have had a chance to mature and develop before the summer dry weather. We propose to mark the jubilee with a plaque to celebrate the Queen's coronation later in the year. We took advice as to which species of tree would best flourish in that particular location. Hopefully it will bring lasting pleasure to all those who see it whether that be the pure white double flowers in pendulous clusters in the spring or when the green leaves turn red and orange in autumn.

Bird Boxes

Reacting to a proposal by one of our parishioners, and as a result of the rewilding initiative that so many expressed an interest in, we are looking at placing bird boxes in and around the churchyard. Watch this space and we will keep you informed as this project takes shape.



Planning Applications

Please visit the Daventry section of the West Northamptonshire Council website for full details of all Planning Applications: www.westnorthants.gov.uk

Parish Council Vacancies

We have vacancies for Parish Councillors. If you can give 1-2 hours of your time a month to help make decisions about how various matters in Creton are managed and funded, then please make contact. If anyone is interested in joining us, please contact James Hill, jameshillcpc@gmail.com, Grooms House, Grooms Lane, Creton, NN6 8NN or call 07795 412321 to discuss any application. As a Parish Council we have the ability to make, change, or influence outcomes in our community. Contact us for more information about what is involved, the day-to-day tasks and projects we have in mind for 2022.

In the meantime, a Happy New Year to you all!



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GUILSBOROUGH NEWS

Cricket in Guilsborough

Haddon CC is based across three grounds in Guilsborough, West Haddon and East Haddon running four junior sides, one ladies' side and six men's teams across Northamptonshire County and Rugby and District leagues. The junior section caters for children from 5 to 15 years old, with a variety of programmes, training and matches from February to September each year. In preparation for the 2022 season winter training will be running for both adults and juniors (age 9 and upwards) at Pitsford School from February. The club is always keen to recruit new players across both senior and junior sections, we welcome players of all levels of experience and ability, if you or your children would like to give it a go for the first time or you are an experienced player looking to return to the sport please contact junior.cricket@haddoncc.co.uk or Jim Houghton on 07748920176 for more information.



square. CCTV signs have been erected at both entrances to inform individuals that those entering the sports field are being recorded. It is hoped that the CCTV will deter further vandalism and theft occurring.

Volunteers

The GPFA relies on donations and fundraising to maintain the sports field for use by clubs, schools and individuals. It is planned to raise awareness of this to the village, and more news of this will be published in future Village Link editions. The GPFA relies entirely on a few volunteers to a) manage the use of the facilities, b) organise village fundraising events, c) administer the maintenance of the pavilion, tractor shed and equipment, and d) explore and obtain other sources of funds. The GPFA would be delighted to hear from those who have the time, energy and skills for these roles, who should contact the GPFA secretary, Graham.Byars@hotmail.com, 01604740545.

CCTV

Vandalism and theft has occurred at the Guilsborough Playing Field and sports field over the last few years, resulting in some cases in thousands of pounds worth of damage to buildings or equipment. There are intruder alarms on the pavilion and tractor shed and security floodlights outside. However, these have not prevented some theft and vandalism occurring. When insurance claims are made, the following year's insurance increases. Hence, our insurers have welcomed the recent initiative by the GPFA to install CCTV at the sports field. There is now a 4-camera system with recorder, that scans both entrances to the pavilion and tractor shed, and 2 cameras that scan towards the entrances and the cricket

2021

The GPFA has survived financially this year and last, by only carrying out essential expenditure. However, it has only just over 12 months of funds remaining, as it has not been able to obtain funds from its normal fundraising activities. Nevertheless, there have been different regular activities at the sports field, with a) cricket training or games by seniors or juniors during the week and at weekends in the spring and summer, b) junior football played at most weekends, c) use by Northampton Sport for competitive schools competition as well as d) individuals who use the keep-fit equipment and field for personal fitness training, and e) youths and parents who use the cricket and football nets for informal practices.

Guilsborough Tennis Club

at Guilsborough Academy



GTC play on Guilsborough Academy's courts, in daylight, out of school hours. Club sessions are on a Tuesday night (under lights in winter), and on a Sunday morning. Members can use the courts at weekends and school holidays and after 6pm when there is enough daylight.

We have Family, Individual or Student categories of membership, which include at least three complimentary club coaching sessions from an LTA coach. All enquiries to Sarah either by phoning 07917 608238 or email: SarahDalzell57@gmail.com.



A NEW HOBBY FOR 2022

Would you like to join a singing or dancing group?



Would you like to learn to dance or join a singing group in Guilsborough?

Can you already sing or dance and would you like to join a group of like-minded people to share your expertise?

I would like to set up both these groups in Guilsborough Village Hall and would like to know what interest there is in participating and helping.

Please contact me on 07711 335771 or

eve@weycotthomes.co.uk to register

your interest

Eve Wooldridge



GUILSBOROUGH NEWS



PRIMARY SCHOOL

The end of the Autumn term this year was non-stop at Guilsborough C of E Primary School, with many fun festive activities taking place! Although again we were somewhat restricted by COVID and ensuring things could be done as safely as

possible, the children still continued to take part in many festive events.

Our Nativity play by Reception and Year 1 children was recorded for the whole school to watch in their bubbles and what a treat it was! I'd like to thank all those involved in putting this perfect production together.

The children also really enjoyed seeing Santa and I know their special gifts put a magical smile on all faces. Thank you to our wonderful PTA for organising this and Santa for finding time in his very busy schedule to visit us.

We had a very proud moment for our school in November 2021 - we won the Northamptonshire Education Awards **Primary School of the Year!** This is an amazing achievement in such a difficult year. Thanks to the children who spoke so eloquently when interviewed about what they loved about our school. The video brought a lump to my throat! We also want to congratulate the staff, parents and community who have helped the school to be what it is and so that we were in contention for and eventually successful in achieving this wonderful award.

We have lots to look forward to in the Spring term, including curriculum days, sporting festivals and trips (all being well). To find out about all of the exciting things we are doing at our school and for any important updates, please see our school website www.guilsboroughprimary.co.uk and our Twitter profile @guilsboroughpri.



CAROL SINGING THANK YOU

Thank you to everyone who joined the carol singing before Christmas, to those who donated and to the Evans' for their hospitality. We raised £150 for the Northampton Association for the Single Homeless (NAASH) who have expressed their gratitude for the contribution.

MMM



Monday Morning Meet

Guilsborough Village Hall

9 – 11am every Monday

(excluding Bank Holidays)

All welcome, baby – OAPs.

Baby & toddler toys for youngsters.

Meet for a chat, knit, hot drink & cake.

Only £2/adult - includes refreshments.

Children are free.

We will need to adhere to government Covid guidelines during the session.

For more information contact: Janet 01604 740640



SCHOOLHOUSE DAYCARE

We can now officially announce that School House Day Care is open in Guilsborough next to the primary school.

We have renovated the building to offer care from age 2 upwards all year round from 8am-6pm.

We also have an amazing Holiday Club with new themes each term. February holidays is Farms and Animals. We have a trip booked to Mini Meadows plus a day where two baby lambs are joining us to be looked after and fed by our mini farmers.

We also offer before and after school service available with drop off and collection done by us. We can help with homework and spellings and provide a hot dinner at a small cost.

On Tuesday mornings we run a tots group from 9-11am £2 includes food and drinks for the kids.

Our website is www.shdcguilsborough.co.uk for our gallery and virtual tour, find us on fb or contact shdcguilsborough@gmail.com

Paving the Way for a Bright Beginning

GUILSBOROUGH NEWS

GUILSBOROUGH Music & Drama Society



Around the World in 80 Days 31 March – 2 April

For our next production Roger Brandon-Jones has adapted Jules Verne's novel, *Around the World in 80 Days*, into an extravaganza of drama and music.

Performances will take place at 7.30 pm at Guilborough Village Hall from Thursday 31 March to Saturday 2 April.

Tickets will be on sale from end February – visit www.gmads.co.uk or call Frances on 01604 740549.

GMADS celebrates 50th anniversary – memories wanted

It's 50 years since Guilborough and District Choral Society staged its first ever production of *The Mikado*. GMADS would like to hear from anyone who can share memories of early shows, has photos, programmes or any other memorabilia.

Please call chair Dorothy Whittaker on 01788 510392 or email dorothywhittaker123@gmail.com

Details of celebrations will follow soon.

PARISH COUNCIL NEWS

The Parish Council has set its 2022/23 precept (our funding which West Northants Council collect on our behalf); it is the same as last year plus an increase in line with inflation.

Many of you will have noticed a number of trees being planted around the village. They're all Japanese Cherry Trees and are donated to the village as part of the Sakura Cherry Tree Project.



Platinum Jubilee: save the date

The 70th anniversary of the Queen's accession to the throne falls on 6th February 2022. However, that date is also 70 years since the death of her father, King George VI, and is therefore not one our monarch wishes to celebrate.

The first weekend of June has been chosen for the Platinum Jubilee weekend, as with previous jubilees, with the summer month offering a better chance of good weather. **The celebrations begin on Thursday 2nd June but we want you to keep Sunday 5th June for our local celebrations.** More details in the next edition of Village Link.

Community Governor Vacancy

Join our Board of Governors and help us to achieve our Aims and Values



The Governing Body works to:

- Raise standards
- Monitor and evaluate progress of Academy priorities
- Support the Principal and staff
- Act as a critical friend
- Account to all stakeholders for the Academy's performance and decisions



Desirable Skills:

- Some business experience preferred

Being a Governor can be enjoyable, stimulating and rewarding. We can offer:

- A chance to develop skills in strategic management
- The opportunity to work with our team of governors and staff in continuing to improve our Academy
- Training to develop an understanding of specific Academy management issues
- A sense of achievement in making a difference to our Academy
- The pleasure of helping students reach their potential

**If you are interested in
applying, please contact
Mrs Ponting -
Governance Manager on
01604 740641 or
email:**

governorclerk@guilborough.northants.sch.uk

HOLLOWELL & TEETON NEWS

BIRDING NOTES:

BRAMBLINGS

If you find a flock of Chaffinches while you are out and about this winter, it's worth taking a closer look to see if there are a few Bramblings amongst them.

A generally uncommon winter visitor in the UK,

there are good numbers present this year. The Brambling is an invasive species, subject to periodic irruptions probably caused by shortage of food, particularly beech mast, on their usual home territories in Northern Europe and Scandinavia. This is in fact the best winter I can remember for seeing this species. In October there were up to 300 birds present at Harrington Airfield, an exceptionally high count. Around that time huge numbers were recorded in coastal locations in the UK and the Netherlands as they moved down the North Sea.

Similar in size and structure to the Chaffinch, the Brambling, scientific name *Fringilla montifringilla* ('mountain finch'), is beautifully marked and coloured in shades of orange, grey, black, white and buff, with a conspicuous white rump, contrasting with an almost completely black tail – this can at times give an almost piebald appearance in flight. The white rump is often visible as the birds fly up from the ground into the cover of a hedgerow bush or tree. The male and female have subtly different plumages in winter; the female Brambling is marked and coloured rather like the male, but greyer overall and slightly duller. In breeding plumage, the male is even more striking, with an all-black head and back, this fades in winter to a grey/black, almost snakeskin effect.

The presence of Bramblings is often revealed by their calls, the most usual in winter being a loud nasal, buzzing 'zzhree-up', uttered in flight or from a perch; I recently heard two roosting birds at dusk near Hollowell Reservoir, calling to each other from cover in the top of conifers.

Some of the best places to look for Bramblings are expanses of 'cover crop', wildlife plantings or rough, weedy areas in farmland. Such a habitat between Ravensthorpe Reservoir and Top Ardles Wood has over the last few weeks attracted a large mixed flock, including Linnets, Greenfinches, Reed Buntings and Chaffinches, with up to six Bramblings amongst them. Other favoured habitats are avenues of beech trees, and larger areas of woodland. You may also be lucky enough to see one in your garden: they will readily come to bird-feeders or scattered seed.

I am now collating records of birds seen in 2021 for inclusion in the Northants Birds annual report; please feel free to contact me at joncooknorthantsbirds@gmail.com if you have anything you'd like me to include, or see my website joncookbirding.wordpress.com for more about my work as county bird recorder.



TWO CHRISTENINGS

Hollowell Church was the happy scene of two village baptisms of babies born during lockdown. William David-James Singleton was born during the first Covid lockdown and was baptised at St James Church on 7th November. Here he is with his proud parents Suzy and Ian Singleton and his older sister Leah.



In December the Heap family had a wonderful day cele-



brating Rannoch James Heap's christening. His mum Amy says, "We were very grateful and fortunate that many local village friends came to enjoy and witness the service with us."

Congratulations to both families.



VACANCY ON THE PARISH COUNCIL Teeton Ward

Hollowell & Teeton Parish Council has a vacancy for a parish councillor for Teeton Ward

Expressions of interest **are welcomed** from anyone from Teeton who is over 18 years old and has an

Interest in the community.

As a councillor **representing your community** you will help keep it a great place to live and work. You will be supported in your role and will be expected to **undertake training**. You should be comfortable **working electronically**. You should have a positive outlook and a **can-do attitude** and be willing to **work as part of a team**.

If you are interested in joining the council, **please contact** the Clerk, Gillian Greaves, for more information on 07771980598 or by e-mail at pc-clerk@hollowellandteeton.org.uk

The Parish Council ordinarily meets bi-monthly in the evening on a Wednesday. If you **care about your community** and would like to help to make a real difference, then why not...

Become a Parish Councillor!

You will be invited to attend a council meeting and say briefly why you wish to join the council. There will then be a vote of the existing councillors.

HOLLOWELL & TEETON NEWS

AN ADVENTURE IN SARAWAK

In the summer of 1988 when working at our High Commission in Kuala Lumpur, Chrystal and I were invited to represent HM Government at the 25th anniversary celebrations of Sarawak's independence. The State Government's Guest of Honour was the highly respected, Malay speaking, Sir Alexander Waddell, a retired member of the Colonial Service who in 1963 had led the territory to independence as its last Governor.

Our programme included a visit to a native Long House, where families of Dayaks lived together under one roof in an 'open plan' community. Besides an interpreter, our companions were two Americans from New York who claimed to be "antique dealers" to the Governor of Sarawak. They emphasised their connection with him by, rather bizarrely, wearing Malay national dress.

The Chief of the Long House came out to greet us wearing a turban made from a Union Jack, which I assumed to be in our honour. He was carrying a cockerel and a ceremonial knife. After a brief speech of welcome he suddenly slit the cockerel's throat and sprayed its blood on the ground around us. Our interpreter indicated that this was for purification purposes. I was absorbing the significance of this ritual when he whispered to me "before entering the Long House you must now kill the pig to drive out evil spirits."

I saw that a piglet had been tied down on the steps leading to the Long House and it dawned on me that this was the poor creature that I had been told to kill. I demurred, pleading that the Governor's antique dealers were more senior to me. They in turn asserted a religious exemption, claiming to be Muslims. I was handed a spear and with Chrystal looking on, and gritted teeth, I plunged it into the piglet. There were squeals, but

thinking of Queen and country, I ignored them and I boldly stepped over the piglet and mounted the steps into the Long House.

Inside, the Dayak families were waiting to greet us with music and dance. Sir Alexander Waddell arrived and interpreted. By this time barefoot, we all sat cross legged on the wooden floor. Food was brought from a large iron pot hanging from the roof above a fire, and placed on mats on the floor in front of us. As I recall, it was a kind of stew that we ate with our fingers; it may well have contained the late piglet. A local alcoholic brew was served in plastic mugs to wash it down, a powerful-tasting concoction that I faced with some apprehension.

The evening, well-oiled by the Dayak brew, passed convivially with much laughter, singing and dancing. When it came time to bid farewell, a couple of our hosts took handfuls of soot from beneath the cooking pot and, rushing up to us, smeared the stuff all over our faces. Thus blackened, Sir Alexander assured us that we would all be freed from any evil spirits that might accost us on the way home. He was right: our journey home by river, road and air to Kuala Lumpur was uneventful. But, just as a precaution, we didn't wash off the soot until the following morning.

Merrick Baker-Bates



CHRISTMAS EVE CAROL SERVICE "Joy to the World"

Christmas Eve is always a magical night and the carol service in St James Church in Hollowell was an uplifting part of that experience.

Despite the mini wave of Covid cases in the village and the requirement that facemasks be worn indoors, a good number of people gathered for a traditional service of readings and carols, led by a festively cheery Rev. Caroline.

We were grateful to organist James Bonsor, who travelled from Holcot to lead the singing of much-loved hymns. As we left the church, exchanging Christmas greetings with friends, I think that we all felt a sense of peace and Christmas joy. After such a year it really did feel like a blessing. CM

VILLAGE HALL EVENTS

The Village Hall Committee was very sorry to have to cancel Cafe Christmas due to rising Covid cases in the village.

We have made some plans for 2022. Please save the dates for the following events at which we very much look forward to seeing you all:

- **Saturday 5th March, Village Hall Breakfast**
- **Saturday 23rd April, Steam and Whistle Pub and Quiz Night**

VILLAGE LOTTO WINNERS

The winners of the Village Lotto for November and December are as follows:

Amanda Thomas, Crawford Craig, Sean Cooksley, Helen Brown, Ian Brown, Merrick Baker-Bates, Jane Eaton, Rachael Cook.

HOLLOWELL & TEETON NEWS

JACQUIE RYCRAFT OBITUARY

March 1948- Nov 2021

The village was very sorry to hear the news of the sudden death of Jacqui Rycraft in November. Jacqui was a founder member of the Hollowell Steam Rally committee, and for many years served as clerk to the Parish Council. She could be relied upon to be at the forefront of many village events, often serving teas in the village hall, with a lifelong love of music, she even recently joined the East Haddon Hand Bell ringing group. These extracts come from her daughter Helen's recollections:

Mum was born in March 1948 in Stockton on Tees and she weathered many changes of home and school, as our grandfather moved between jobs and towns to stay in employment

Our mum was influenced by her father to be resourceful and independent. He was a clever man, a wizard at fixing things and making do. She described the time where he gave her an old radio to 'play' with. She was told if she could fix it, then it was hers to keep. Unfortunately, he forgot to tell her that mains electricity needed extreme caution, and she received a shock so violent that it threw her across the room! However, it didn't prevent her from spending a lifetime mending and fixing everything. She studied at the Notre Dame high school in Northampton, and at 16 took herself off to boarding school to study for A levels. As a senior student at a tiny school, she fondly remembered sneaking off to the shops, or climbing out of the dormitory windows for a smoke. She had several part time jobs, including at a local greyhound kennel and as a librarian on the mobile library vans.

Mum loved to socialise and would meet up at the Blisworth hotel with all her friends, which is where she met our dad, Chas: they married in July 1969. Dad was a fantastic carpenter, and mum could sew, and turn her hand to DIY; together they built a canal boat, which was to be their first home on the Gayton Arm, in Blisworth.

When mum and dad found out that they were expecting their first baby, Helen, they moved to the quiet, friendly village of Hollowell. They had a second child, Giles, two years later and the Laurels became the home they would share their entire lives.

Mum stayed at home to raise us, and we have fond memories of the many hours she spent playing with us and caring for us. We went on many farm holidays and mum would pack up supplies of home made cakes and woolly jumpers. She was scrupulously organised and would plan for every eventuality. Giles remembers her writing his name on his banana for his school packed lunch, much to the amusement of his school friends.

Mum was a skilled seamstress and spent many hours volunteering at Guilsborough primary school. She loved teaching the children to sew finger puppets and toys whilst they chatted to her.

In 1985, mum and dad joined a small group of villagers who were intent upon a project to raise enough money to fix the church roof. Allen Eaton, with his connections to the world of steam, put together the plan; Mum helped with admin and letters.

Dad involved fellow vintage motorbike owners, and his friends in the Ariel owners club; and, after many, many hours of painting signs, organising auctions, building fences and drawing up plans, the Hollowell steam rally was born in the summer of 1986. Mum loved being a part of this team, and would not miss an opportunity to sing herself hoarse on a Saturday night in the beer tent with her friends. Mum really enjoyed the camaraderie of the steam rally team, and she and dad made many lifelong friends.



Mum loved technology; she was one of the first parents at our school to buy a little home computer, and would spend many hours tinkering with programming. She often gamed late into the night on her little spectrum computer. She used her tech skills to access recordings of music, audio books and films, and she would present her grandchildren with the most marvellous collections of fun and exciting stories and films to enjoy. She had an amazing collection of folk music and took delight in sharing the craziest songs with her grandkids.

The loss of Dad hit mum hard, but she maintained her links with the rally group, went on walks to collect sloes to make sloe gin, and had her youngest granddaughter over to stay. She was delighted to be a new member of a handbell group in East Haddon and was excited to have the chance to try something she'd always admired.

Mum, you left us a freezer full of out of date food (you never wasted anything!). And we might have trouble rehoming the boxes and boxes of technology, tablets, memory sticks and old laptops that you were determined still had life left in them! Your sudden passing left your computer illegally downloading copies of TV programmes to share with the family and that made us smile! True to form until the very end.

Learn to drive
with
MERRICK
School of Motoring
est. 1980

A cartoon illustration of a man with glasses, wearing a suit and tie, holding a large red letter 'V' in front of him. He has a cheerful expression.

Merrick Bowles, DSA ADI
01604 740138
Towing instruction also available.

THORNBY NEWS

THORNBY VILLAGE HALL

"BRILLIANT Christmas faux stained-glass window creations." Just one of the tributes for the twelve first-time designers from around the region who had great fun creating these eye-catching Christmas back-lit window panels in Thornby's Christmas workshop.

Want to have a go yourself next Christmas? Look out for the notice in Village Link next November.

Many thanks to you all who attended, helping raise vital funds for our Village Hall.



PLATINUM JUBILEE CELEBRATIONS

As a Village we will be celebrating the Queens Platinum Jubilee. Look out for more details and get involved in the arrangements to ensure a fantastic celebration for us all to enjoy together. Please give any donations or unwanted items for a raffle and huge tombola to Alex (Warriner House).

Thornby Village Hall Hire

Fully equipped and newly decorated hall with a capacity to hold 40 people. Ideal for intimate gatherings, childrens parties, courses, talks and meetings etc.

Tables, chairs and gazebos available for use on and off site.

Hire charge £10 per hour

Contact Alex Todd - 07872839199

Thornby Merry Christmas Event

Happy New Year to all !!

On behalf of the Village Hall Committee we would like to say a huge thank you to you all for your support to our Thornby Merry Christmas Event. Many of the villagers bought tickets that couldn't attend but still happy to contribute and to all that were able to join us. Your generosity meant we had six Christmas Hampers in the raffle! A truly enjoyable evening full of smiles and laughter. The lucky prize winners

were -

- 1st Prize T Taylor.
- 2nd Prize M Stacey.
- 3rd Prize C Parkinson.
- 4th Prize L Okendon.
- 5th Prize G Bennett.
- 6th Prize M Sawford.



Above is Tommy Taylor, 1st Prize winner



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MESSAGE FROM REVEREND ALLISON TWIGG, THE UPLANDS GROUP OF CHURCHES

CHURCH NEWS

As I settled down to write this letter on a grey, wet and sleety January morning, it was hard at first to summon up the willpower to think of a positive message. Yet this afternoon the sun shines and the world seems just a little brighter. In my garden I have just found the first primrose of the year and I have been reminded that although the world around me may sometimes seem overwhelming - I can still find joy in the little things. So, I will try to focus on those little things rather than bemoaning the weather, or the fact that we enter a third year with Covid around us, or despite having made noble New Year's resolutions - I still haven't managed to run round the block never mind a marathon!

I was given a wonderful coffee table book called *Lost In Translation* by Ella Frances Sanders. If you have in your mind a great academic tome, don't! This book is a wonderfully small book with pictures - my kind of book! The subtitle of the book is *An Illustrated Compendium of Untranslatable Words from Around the World* and so the book is just that - a book filled with words which are so often bound up within the culture it is born into that it doesn't fit that neatly in English. So my word for us this February is from modern Greek - *meraki*. Sanders describes the word like so; "Pouring yourself wholeheartedly into something such as cooking, and doing so with soul, creativity, and love." A trio of wonderful words which is vital for any community - soul, creativity and love. Three words that are bursting with God given energy. What else can we feel called to do within our communities but to pour ourselves wholeheartedly into where we live, breath and have our being - showing soul, creativity, and love?

I can be filled with joy at the beauty of the countryside that surrounds our villages. I delight in being a part of the life of these communities. Our churches, schools, our pubs, our shops, village halls and many other parts of our communities make our villages

great places to live in! However of course, at this time, some of us have found it harder to pour ourselves wholeheartedly into the life of our communities while heeding the governments words of caution about meeting together in larger groups and wanting to protect ourselves and those we love. This is a really hard time to know how to pour ourselves into life with soul, creativity, and love, when so much of what we know has changed. Yet the way in which our communities threw themselves in to Advent Windows, carol singing events and services and celebrating Christmas showed us that there is still joy in throwing yourself into things too and for this I give great thanks to all involved.

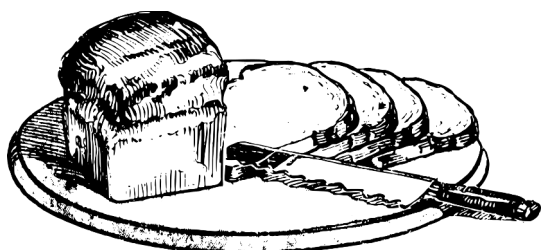
And this is the key I think, as we move forward facing the challenges of our current situation, to find new ways to practice the art of *meraki*. Pouring ourselves wholeheartedly into all we do, but with a particular focus on what we can do, rather than what we can't do. Sanders in her book remarks that "When you're giving your all, the end result is usually a great one. The concept of *meraki* has obviously grown up around the Greek culture, which seems to emphasise a thoughtful kind of passion and an appreciation for the small things". I know I can get myself stuck thinking about the things that I cannot do, rather than perhaps the small but life giving things that we can do. My challenge is to focus on the smaller things in life - the things that we can do, rather than the things we can't. As cliché as that might sound - will you join me?

Or of course another good word from this book is *Pisan Zapra* - a Malayan word which refers to the time needed to eat a banana! I am sure this could provide helpful insight for a community at this time too, but I'm not sure how yet!

Reverend Allison



Lent Lunch 2022



Saturday 12th March 12 - 2pm.

Guildsborough Village Hall,
High Street, Guildsborough.

Offers of soup or cheese are welcome.

Tickets :£6 Adults, £3 Children

Available from Janet: 01604 740640



LOOK OUT FOR THE 300 DAFFODILS PLANTED
IN THE CHURCHYARD THIS SPRING.



90 simple white lights were lit on the trees by the churchyard gate over the Christmas season to remember loved ones. Each light shone as a symbol of comfort to all.



SHROVE TUESDAY-1st MARCH

Shrove is an interesting word, a form of shrive which means to obtain absolution for one's sins, something that Christians do prior to the fasting period of Lent. **Shrovetide** was celebrated in the week up to Lent and Shrove Tuesday, the day before the start of Lent, was when sugar, flour, eggs and butter were used up. Pancakes exist all over the world and it seems each culture has its own unique take on them. They are served for breakfast, lunch, and dinner all over the globe and appear as crepes, potato latkes, Irish boxty, Russian blini, Welsh crampog, Indian poori, Hungarian palacsinta, and Dutch pannenkoeken.

CHURCH ROTA

Uplands Group Of Churches – Service Planner February and March 2022

	6 th February 4 th before Lent	13 th February 3 rd before Lent	20 th February 2 nd before Lent	27 th February Next before Lent	2 nd March Ash Wednesday	6 th March Lent 1	13 th March Lent 2	20 th March Lent 2	27 th March Mothering Sunday
Cold Ashby	Green	Green	Green	Green	Purple	Purple	Purple	Purple	Purple
		10.00 Group Service Hollowell		9.30 BCP Communion			10.00 Group Service Spratton		9.30 BCP Communion
Cottesbrooke	11.00 BCP Communion					11.00 BCP Communion			
Creation	9.30 CW Communion		9.30 BCP Communion			9.30 CW Communion		9.30 BCP Communion	11.00 With URC
Guldborough	11.00 CW Communion		8.30 BCP Communion	9.30 CW Communion	9am Holy Communion	11.00 CW Communion		8.30 BCP Communion	9.30 Mothering Sunday
			Brunch@11 5.00 BCP Evensong					Brunch@11 5.00 BCP Evensong	
Hollowell			11.00 BCP MP	11.00 CW Communion				11.00 BCP MP	11.00 CW Communion
Ravensthorpe	8.30 BCP Communion		9.30 CW Communion	11.00 Worship for All		8.30 BCP Communion		9.30 CW Communion	11.00 Worship for All Mothering Sun
Spratton	11.00 Worship for All		8.30 BCP Communion	11.00 CW Communion		11.00 Worship for All		8.30 BCP Communion	11.00 CW Communion
Thornby	9.30am BCP Communion					9.30am BCP Communion			

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Paul Chant
Branch Director



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EweMove respects any existing sole agency agreement already in place with another agent.

Daventry Museum's new exhibition, **Life and Memories of a Childhood in Daventry**, opened on Saturday 8th January 2022. The museum is free to visit. Opening hours: 9.30 – 1.30 Tuesday to Friday and the first Saturday of the month 10 – 4. www.daventrymuseum.org.uk Tel: 01327 301246



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**SAME MAN,
NEW VAN!**



CHRISTMAS PICTURE WINNERS

The 2021 winners are pictured below receiving their festive prizes ... and in a first for the competition, Chris Benbow has sold her artwork to an admiring villager (who wished to remain anonymous) in return for a charity donation.



Prizes were given before Village Link was distributed (just!), and the winners were all very appreciative and surprised.



ALPHABETICAL ADVERTISERS

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Advent trails around the villages

CREATON



BBC's Tom Percival (l) talked to David Winter (r) when Radio Northampton came to see the Creton Advent Windows.

COLD ASHBY



GUILSBOROUGH



HOLLOWELL



CHRISTMAS POLYGON

The answer was: WENCESLAS