

# **Great Bentley Parish News**

**Produced by the Community  
for the Community**



# **MAY 2021**

# Village Information

## St Mary's Church

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Great Bentley, CO7 8QN. Telephone 07848 872018

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## EDITORIAL

As usual I am writing this at rather a late stage in the production of our magazine, its actually 22nd April and Earth Day. What a lovely surprise to see members of staff and pupils from our Primary School on Look East tonight. So far it has been a very dry month with few of the customary April showers but far too many night frosts. This has taken its toll on farmers and gardeners alike and is getting somewhat drastic. I love my garden and allotment but they can be a little challenging especially the latter. I was feeling quite smug as the beetroot seedlings were just emerging and I had high hopes the parsnips would follow. Tonight I went to water as I do most days, only to find that the regular moisture had encouraged a mole which had tunnelled all through the rows. Wildlife is wonderful but can be a challenge. I am growing lots of plants for my stall so if you have any to spare please bring them along for the 15th or 29th May.

You will read how one Aingers Green resident rescued baby hedgehogs which were cared for by Rosie at Wildlives and have now been returned and re-released, free to roam and enjoy themselves. See page 34. I also have a feeding station which my hogs visit every evening and I am becoming more than a little obsessed with trying to spot them at night time. The only reason I knew they were there was because of the hedgehog poo which is dotted around the garden, very rarely do they willingly show themselves. (Two tonight!!).

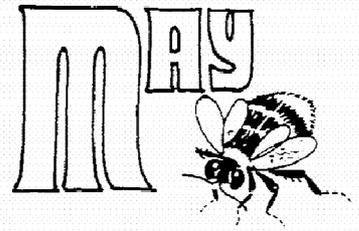
Congratulations to Tom Fairweather who celebrated his 100th birthday at the end of March. We conclude his abbreviated war memories this month and wish him well.

Having published the article on Rose Allin by Sarah Perry last month it seemed an incredible coincidence that her book "The Essex Serpent" is being filmed in the area. My friend and I walked from Thorrington to Alresford one lovely sunny afternoon recently and our path was temporarily blocked by a very polite security lady, who asked us to wait for a few minutes until the filming had taken place. It is starring Tom Hiddlestone and Claire Danes who were on the edge of the saltmarsh enacting a scene before our very eyes.

We have been asked to publicise the Weald Park Country Show which is to be held on 22/23 May in Brentwood. To **WIN A FREE FAMILY TICKET**, just email me [marymaskell@sys3internet.net](mailto:marymaskell@sys3internet.net) and your name will be put into a hat and first one drawn will win the tickets. Good luck everyone.

May is a magical month steeped in tradition, when everything in the natural world springs into life. Never would you imagine that there can be so many shades of green but this freshness does not last too long, so make the most of it. In one of his books Monty Don writes; "*When I die I shall go to May. It will be green. Not environmentally correct green, for things will just be, without measurement or judgement, but actually the colour green in all its thousand shining faces.*"

Enjoy this lovely month,  
**Mary Maskell**



## 2021

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### Front Cover

Looking towards  
Bentley Country Park  
and Martins Farm  
to the right

### DISCLAIMER

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## THE MONTHLY LETTERS - MAY

Dear Friends,

This past Sunday was census day. Lorna and I are currently working our way through all seven seasons of the TV show 'The West Wing'. (Well, Lorna is working her way through them – I'm reworking my way through them for the umpteenth time!) Early in the first season there's an episode where they're considering an upcoming census. One of the characters, comments "I think the problems that we're going to face in the new century are far beyond the Wisdom of Solomon, let alone me. But I think the right place to start is to say - fair is fair. This is who we are. These are our numbers." On the surface of it, the census is about counting numbers. Yet, in reality, it is about far more than that. It is about enabling things like ensuring areas are properly and fairly represented in our democratic institutions, and about ensuring that resources are fairly distributed across the nation. It is not about simply counting numbers but using those numbers to help us understand who we are and how we might then face the challenges we encounter now and in the future. In other words, it is not about numbers but about ensuring that individuals, families, and communities are properly represented and resourced in their own contexts.

Alongside the census on Sunday, the Tuesday of this week marks a year since the UK entered its first lockdown to try and cope with the Covid pandemic. The numbers in relation to Covid are stark – more than 145,000 UK death certificates have mentioned Covid since the first cases were identified here. The global death toll is estimated at more than 2.7 million. Yet each of us will know that this situation is not about total numbers. No, it is about each individual who has died, and the many, many more individuals, families, friendship groups and communities who have been affected by those deaths and by the disease itself – and of course, that includes the family that lives here in the Manningtree manse, whose direct experience with the disease was thankfully mild. The writers of the Bible frequently marvel at the enormity of the universe. They marvel at the fact that the number of grains of sands on a beach or stars in the night sky are numberless. Of course, scientists today can give you an estimate on both those figures, but the numbers are so large that the scriptural point remains – in comparison to the universe our singular existence seems insignificant. Yet the wonder of it all, the writers remind us, is that to God neither we, nor each grain of sand nor star in the sky, is insignificant. We matter deeply. We are loved with a love that is even greater than the greatness of the universe.

As we count the numbers of people in the UK, as we reflect on the numbers of those who have died or been affected by Covid, as we begin re-opening our buildings and consider the reality of the numbers of those who interact with our churches, let us remember first and foremost that each of those people is someone overwhelmingly loved by God. If we remember that then maybe we might also find the wisdom to face the problems of today and tomorrow.

**Shalom, Rev Tom Osborne**

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One of my dad's favourite sayings that I have found myself saying quite a lot recently is '*slow but sure wins the race.*'

As we are slowly coming out of lockdown, I have found myself reflecting on the last year - I thought I had coped well with it just being me and my dogs for the majority of the time. It was only when we were able to be back in Church on Easter Day, for the first time since mid-December, that I truly realised just how much I had missed everyone. Hearing the clear responses to the prayers and all of us worshipping together was better than I had ever anticipated. Thank You!

I know we do still have a long way to go before all restrictions are eased but we have definitely started the journey. We have to be sure that we continue to follow the rules because '*slow and sure wins the race!*'

Every blessing

Sharon





**GREAT BENTLEY  
METHODIST  
CHURCH NEWS**

**FOOD BANK**

**Greetings to you all**

We welcome you to worship at Church or on Zoom with us during May. We continue to pray for relief from the Virus. We expect to start meeting for worship again in Church on the 2<sup>nd</sup> May. Those wishing to, can still share with us on Zoom to see and hear the service in Church. If you would like to come along or join by Zoom, please ring 01206 250087 so that we can make arrangements for numbers.

Morning worship will be held at **10.30am** unless otherwise stated.

The leaders of worship are set out below: -

- May 2<sup>nd</sup>**     **Rev Tom Osborne**  
                  **Holy Communion**
- May 9<sup>th</sup>**     **Rev Dr Chapman** Chairman of the  
                  **Beds, Herts and Essex District**  
                  **(Our equivalent of the Bishop)**
- May 16<sup>th</sup>**    **Robert Taylor**
- May 23<sup>rd</sup>**    **Peter Wright, Pentecost**
- May 30<sup>th</sup>**    **Local Leadership, Trinity Sunday**

All other activities to start up as the Government decrees.

**Each week the following events are normally held at our Church.**

**Ring these numbers for more information.**

- Messy Church once a month after school 250087
- Luncheon Club Alternate Tuesdays 12 Noon 251330
- Parent and Toddlers Group Thursdays 9-15 a.m. 251537
- The Adventurers Club. Fridays 7 p.m. Ring 250087

**MIRIAM PARKINSON (Miri)**  
**8.5.1941 - 4.2.2021**

George Jason and David would like to thank everyone that has sent their kind wishes and sympathy in the sad loss of a loving wife, mum and granny.

Miri will be greatly missed by all that were fortunate enough to have known her.

Rest in peace Miri.

The container for the food bank is at the back of the Church.

Food required

please:

- Tinned vegetables
- Tinned potatoes
- Tinned tomatoes
- Rice (not pasta)
- Tinned fruit
- Tinned custard and rice.
- Biscuits, cereals
- Coffee, sugar
- All toiletries
- Washing liquid/ powder/ washing up liquid etc



- Toilet rolls
- Kitchen rolls
- Dog and cat food

**ROTAS FOR ST MARY'S CHURCH  
FOR MAY**

**Reading Rotas**

- 2nd May - Annabel Stearn
- 9th May - Chris Aplin
- 16th May - Lynda McWilliams
- 23rd May - Mary Maskell
- 30th May - Mandy Miles

**Prayer Rota**

- 2nd May - Vicar
- 9th May - Carol Kerridge
- 16th May - Nicky Justice
- 23rd May - Wendy King
- 30th May - Vicar

**Cleaning Rota**

- 1st May - Edna Black
- 8th May - Linda Hayes
- 15th May - Bev Adams
- 22nd May - Jennie Moss
- 29th May - Rosemary & David Branch

## FRIENDS OF THE GREEN

Since our last Parish News contribution work has been carried out on Forge Lane and The Path to cure the flooding problems. This was a problem that had been ongoing for many years and raised by many people. Three years ago I met with Parish Councillor Bill Herbert and a Highway rep to discuss the problem and supplied photos after which an agreement was made for this work to be put on the agenda. Finally it has been completed after money had become available.

We also raised the question of the uneven block paving around the War Memorial which had become a trip hazard during services. The Parish Council agreed there was a problem and work was arranged and completed last month.

For some long time we have been involved with trying to get some white lining carried out in the Cricket Club corner with a hatched path marked out to assist the public to access the post box and notice boards especially the elderly! Our application to the highways department including a map, (despite being supported by our Parish Council) was turned down using a number of unconnected excuses. We understand that an application has been put in by a resident to remove the central information sign in this area as it was looking uncared for! I guess a lot of us are looking uncared for during the past year! This sign was handed over to the Friends of the Green to use for village information. In the past it has been used to assist in promoting new businesses in the village as well as maps etc. The area in this corner has recently been turfed following our request and is looking far more tidy than of late! This part took longer to complete as the ownership of the land had to be established and thanks to the Parish Clerk for her work behind the scenes to clarify this part. When we have a bit more freedom we will tidy up and clean the maps and notice boards in this area as most have been supplied by the Friends of the Green!

We have been asked if there is to be a garage sale this year. We will make this decision in the coming month subject to rules in place at the time.

We hope to restart the monthly litter pick gatherings on the Green at the first opportunity. In the meantime well done to those who continually go out and clear our roads and Green especially those that tidy up Heckford Road and Plough Road Aingers Green area.

Finally we welcome input either positive or negative from the public and remind you that we exist for the protection and enhancement of the Green.



**Michael Dorling chairman. 01206 250799**

### My Time Working in Savile Row During the 60's

My feature in last month's magazine cut off the name at the bottom so in case you're wondering who is the "mystery person", it is me!

**Jill Drew**

### HELLO

My wife (Jan), my son (Joe) and I (Rob) have recently moved to Great Bentley, Hill Crest on Thorrington Road, and would like to say 'hello' to all our new neighbours throughout Great Bentley via your wonderful Great Bentley Parish News. We moved here last month and have really enjoyed reading this month's parish magazine.

We are looking forward to walking around Great Bentley and visiting the local pub and restaurants and other such venues nearby when we are all able to do so.

Wishing you well  
Many thanks  
Rob, Jan and Joe.

### WELCOME & FARWELL

We welcome Jan, Joe and Rob to  
Thorrington Road,  
Daniel Yssel and Stewart Milburn to 6  
Larkfield Road  
and belatedly, Nik and Jan to Cedar  
Gables.

We say farewell to John and Mirain but  
welcome to Julia who has moved into  
their house.



# ST HELENA HOSPICE

From everyone at St Helena Hospice we hope you were able to make the most of your Easter weekend, however you celebrated, and that you were able to take advantage of the ease of lockdown restrictions to spend time with your loved ones.

Although we opened our doors to our first patient on 20th May 1985, it was 35 years ago on 11th April 1986 that Queen Elizabeth, The Queen Mother visited the Hospice for the official opening ceremony. Doreen Hill worked as assistant cook and was in attendance that day with a very important job to do. Doreen said, *"She stopped to talk to so many people, so I had to keep making fresh pots of tea because I thought I can't give her stewed tea! I'd practiced my little curtsy, and she said 'oh yes, a very important job'. Then I poured the tea. I wouldn't be able to do it now, I would have been shaking!"*

Caroline Vergo is our infection prevention and control consultant. When Covid-19 came knocking on our door, we were extremely lucky to have Caroline's expertise and experience as our infection prevention and control consultant. Our first Covid-19 patient was admitted to the hospice on a Sunday afternoon in March 2020, and Caroline was on site within an hour to assist and advise our staff. She stated, *"I have aimed to bring about a greater understanding of infection control and its application not just in clinical care but the other areas that impact on the health and wellbeing of patients and staff."*

Following the easing of lockdown restrictions on Monday 12th April, which includes the opening of non-essential retail, we're pleased to say all our shops will be reopening. We can't wait to welcome you all back.

We want to say a big thank you to the local companies that have generously donated £100 to become one of our Spring Sponsors, helping to keep our Virtual Ward service running this month, which supports patients in the last weeks of life, in their own homes.

## BENTLEY IN BLOOM

Orders for 22 baskets have been placed with Deans! These have been ordered by our group for display in customers own gardens and will be delivered around the 2nd or 3rd week in May! We hope that they will be displayed where the general public can see them which will help to off set the lack of the normal village baskets on telephone poles etc ! We were pleased that the number of baskets is only 7 or 8 short of the past village displays .

Michael Dorling - Chairman .



## A SILLY JOKE

"Gosh, it's raining cats and dogs," said Suzie looking out of the kitchen window.  
"I know," said her mother who had just come in, "I've stepped in a poodle!"



## GREAT BENTLEY TUESDAY AFTERNOON CARPET BOWLS CLUB

Great Bentley Tuesday Carpet Bowls Club NEEDS YOU As life is beginning to return to some form of normality the club is hoping to resume playing on 6th July in the Village Hall.

Anybody interested in an enjoyable afternoon with like minded people are welcome, no experience required, the first two weeks are free after that it's £2 ( tea and biscuits) a week.

For further information please contact the Club Secretary Hilary on 07535107335.



### Sessional Leaders St Osyth Priory and Parish Trust

#### Role Description

The Trustees are seeking to appoint two enthusiastic and creative people to be part of the team in the newly established Education Centre in the Priory grounds. It is an exciting opportunity as they would be supporting the implementation and delivery of high quality Education Programmes which focus on the historic and natural landscape of St Osyth Priory.

The Trust is committed to outdoor learning and providing experiences that are fun, stimulating and interactive for the children who will visit the Priory from March 2021.

The expectation is that the successful candidates will lead some of the educational activities. There will be excellent in house training.

Pay range: Scale 5 11.27 per hour

Start date: 8<sup>th</sup> June 2021

Contract type: Part time, 10-15 hours per week, term time only.

Contract term: Annual:

Application closing date: 12<sup>th</sup> May 2021

Interviews to be held: TBC

For additional information and job description please contact [laura.chesover@prioryeducationcentre.co.uk](mailto:laura.chesover@prioryeducationcentre.co.uk)



## PRODUCE AND PLANT STALL

We will be outside Mary's house,  
Caldew Cottage, The Green on  
Saturday 15th and Saturday 29th May  
10am to 12 noon

We would be grateful for cakes, jams  
etc and also veg and flower plants that  
you may have spare.

All proceeds to the new magazine  
printer.

Look forward to seeing you.

(If wet, in Mary's garage.)  
Covid restrictions will apply.

## The Sparrowhawk

From chasing the hedgerows,  
To soaring the sky.  
The sparrowhawk hovers  
With fiercest of eye.

Its wings beating faster  
Than heartbeat can claim.  
Suspended - as magic -  
A moment in time.

Slate grey its plumage  
Dull orange its bars,  
The square tail out fanning,  
It hunts near and far.

With sudden releasing  
It dives to the ground,  
The sunlight revealing  
The prey it has found

In the blink of an eye  
It flies into the blue,  
And our resident hawk  
Disappears out of view.

J.M.



# NEWS FROM THE OAKS



Hello everyone

Okay let's get comfy, coffee and biscuit time while we tell you all of what we have been up to.

Well we've been enjoying the sunshine and we have also celebrated a big birthday! A 90th in fact! So what better way than to have our own little music concert with a singer coming to sing in our garden. This was what we all needed and we even treated ourselves to a glass of Buck's Fizz and of course cake. A fantastic day that was had by all.

The Easter bunny came to us, although we're still trying to work out how he got in and also with so many Easter eggs! We reckon down the chimney. So with a little help from the wishing washing line at Tesco's Highwoods where the kindest of people donated some lovely Easter eggs, some of which we received, and we are beyond so thankful, but with chocolate comes fitness so of course we're continuing with the FABS workout sessions.

Oh yes, we have also been so kindly gifted some lovely smelling wax melts from a small business and they smell absolutely beautiful. We've also been gifted 2 lovely bags, a personalised shopping bag and a leather handbag by a wonderful company called Olivia & Gray who make beautiful handbags. These companies as well as others that we have previously mentioned were contacted to see if they could bring smiles to each and every one of us so the handbags were provided to the glamorous ladies here who love to always have their handbags with them.

We've enjoyed the usual singing and dancing so we apologise to the neighbours, we will try and keep the noise down.

We had the Grand National come to us! No, there were no real horses here unfortunately as we haven't got the space but we had fun with a horse racing game, in fact a lot of fun!

**One last thing before we go, our flowerbed boat is all finished so we are ready for some flowers to be planted, so if you would still like to donate any plants we would be ever so grateful as this is something we are all so looking forward to doing, we have our gloves ready and a manicure waiting for our green fingers after the gardening is done. So garden and sunshine we're waiting for you. If anyone wishes to donate to our flower bed just give us a call we would love to hear from you.**

Anyway it's been lovely chatting to you all we'd best get on there's lots of singing to do. We can't wait to tell you more next month

Lots of love from us all at The Oaks X

## Community Spirit

Recently, during lockdown, I took on the challenge to 'do' 11,000 steps every day of March to raise money for Target Ovarian Cancer. It seemed to me that there would be double the benefit as I might make £200 (maybe my family could get me there!) for the charity to raise awareness of the difficulty in recognising symptoms, and I would ensure myself of a degree of fitness at the same time – not to mention the joy for the dogs.

I happened to mention this to a friend in the village, also a church member, who said 'send me the link, I would like to contribute'. Naturally reticent about asking for money I was grateful for the gesture and duly sent the link when my Just Giving page was up and running. Unbeknown to me, this very good friend 'pinged' an email with the link to various friends, mainly within the church community, but by no means all, just letting them know what I was doing and giving them the chance to donate if they wished. Suddenly my total was rising and at first I didn't know why or how. A word to my friend answered that question. Subsequently, as the month wore on more friends in the village were told and more donations flooded in. I was quite overcome, as I had left the village two years ago after living there for thirty years. I continued as a member of the church community but after a year of lockdown and restrictions thought it unlikely that Great Bentley would still regard me as one of its own.

I have always known that Great Bentley has an amazing community spirit and that certain people in the village are natural leaders, but to have been the recipient of such a spirit of goodwill two years after leaving is very humbling and I want everyone in Great Bentley to know how much every single person in Great Bentley is valued and helped, especially when the 'chips are down'.

In the end my total was £3506 and there will be another £733 in Gift Aid. Great Bentley contributed more than £700 of that total plus some Gift Aid, and there were many anonymous donations too. On the final day, March 31<sup>st</sup> a group gathered in smaller groups of six and walked the circumference of the Green as a gesture of support. So, two things come to mind: firstly, what an amazing village and church community and secondly, **a heartfelt thank you** to all who contributed or wished the walkers well.

**Penny Evans-Jones**



# Wildlives

## Wildlife Rescue and Rehabilitation Centre

'Catkins', Frating Road, Thorrington, Colchester CO7 8HT

[www.wildlives.org.uk](http://www.wildlives.org.uk)

Opening hours: n/a 07802 767016

Outside of Wildlives' hours, please call the RSPCA on 0300 1234 999 or log on to our website for advice on what to do with a sick animal until we are open again in the morning. **See the web site for extra pictures too!**

**May 2021**

Welcome to Dennis, below, who was rescued by GAR (Greek Animal Rescue) from a life of cruelty and neglect; when Rosie saw his photo she fell in love. As several of the Wildlives dogs have recently passed away, there was room for a new family member. He arrived very nervous and anxious but after only two days he has already found his feet and is settling in. Thanks to all the hard work by GAR, Dennis has found his forever home.

Another seven rabbits arrived, thanks to the hard work of Yasmin from Thorrington whose neighbour dug up two litters of blind, bald rabbit kits. Under guidance she put in all the hard work to rear them successfully, and they came to Wildlives to prepare for their release, which went well as they all hopped off into the undergrowth at the selected release site.

Mother foxes usually prepare several earths to raise their litter, so that they have backups if one is disturbed. Wildlives received a call about four newborn fox cubs who appeared to have been abandoned. The caller was advised to wait a while and check back later, and sure enough the vixen had been to collect her babies. Another was found in the middle of a lawn, and placed in a low box on a hot water bottle, being very careful only to handle him with gloves to avoid getting human smell on him. His mother successfully collected him.

Mizzle the fox cub was found by someone out for a walk in Rushmere Country Park. She was about 48 hours old, and cold and wet. She was taken to Ryder Davis vets, and collected from there by Brian, a Wildlives volunteer. She is thriving and full of mischief.

**TAKEN FROM "100 YEARS, A CELEBRATION OF GREAT BENTLEY PRIMARY SCHOOL"  
COMPILED BY JOYE WATSON - Cont...**

**1943**

October 28 - "I have now issued ... extra coupons - 20 for children who qualify by age, and height, or weight or size of shoe."

**1944**

July 12 - "Mr James called re absentees. He was notified of some who were pea picking and chased them off the field."

**1945**

May 8 - "Due to the end of the war in Europe ... the School broke up for 3 days following instructions from the office."

May 11 - "School reopened. Many have taken an extra day."

September 17 - "Many at Frating took holiday because Colchester schools were closed VJE Day."

September 22-29 - "Thanksgiving Savings Week £139.10".

September 26 - "Open Day for inspection of New Kitchen".

October 31 - "The Tarpaving work commenced in the School yard."

December 21 - "Children absent to see shops, some to shop or purchase."

**1946**

January 28 - "(-) brought a supply of plimsolls for P.T. 78 pairs."

January 29 - "A fierce gale blew down the school green house completely wrecking same."

July 20 - "(-) 13+ is running in SAA (all England) County Championships at Eton today. Representing Essex in Relay and Girls 100 yards".

September 10 - "3 floors finished (Brazilian Teak) and smoothed by this date. It is a very good job - the best job that has been done to this school."

December 6 - "I have had a lot of the duties of caretaker to do this week with help of my son, and boys of the school. If this occurs again as it may I shall ask for the closure of the School until a proper caretaker is found."

December 16 - "Mr Firbank visited re acquisition of land for a County Primary School. Present + 2 more acres."

**1947**

January 24 - "School is now on the telephone".

February 18 - "Fuel situation is still critical but school canteens allowed to use electricity at the normal times."

February 26 - "Boys removing piles of snow in PT lesson as it can be done i.e. when soft."

March 5 - "Further heavy falls of snow. Roads blocked."

March 21 - "All snow has gone."

August 31 - "New Classroom (H.O.R.S.A. building) finished."

**1948**

February 20 - "35 scholars and teachers 13-15 years travelled to see Repertory Comp. at Colchester present Macbeth."

March 4 - "The County Film Van visited. Films shown (1) The Amazon (2) Goal Keeping (3) National Savings".

May 20-28 - "Senior scholars taken to see "The Immortal Lady" by Clifford Box given by The Children's Theatre Ltd at St Helena Sec. Modern School."

September 17 "(-) stuck a trouser button up his nose at 3.35pm and as neither he nor teacher could remove same I sent him to Dr Atthill who removed same within 15 minutes of being pushed up the nose. Boy attended School next day, no complications."

November 30 - "Foggy weather has continued for at least one week. Have closed School at 3.30pm. on two last days on account of this to allow scholars to get home in daylight."

**1949**

March 30 - "Took 62 scholars to see Scott of the Antarctic at the Regal Cinema + 3 adults."

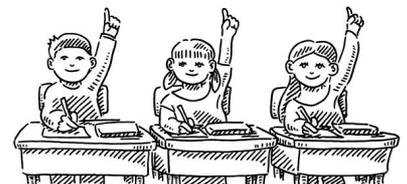
May 12 - "24 scholars and 2 teachers visited Children's Theatre at Co op Society Hall Colchester to see the play 'Tobias and the Angel'. Educational visit.

June 9 - "Visit Essex Agricultural Show Audley End Saffron Walden. Took 40 Senior Scholars + 2 teachers."

June 23 - "20 Juniors visited St Helena Sec. Modern School to see the play "The Emperors New Clothes" presented by Playmakers, a group of Essex Teachers."

**1950**

January 12 - "Presentation of 200 parcels from the Federal Government of Australia Canberra. A short ceremony was arranged at which Mrs G. Wright and Mrs A. Lord and Mr Wadley were present".



## Mr David Darlington January 1977 - August 1995

The liaison between the school and the village continued to flourish. The children sang and danced at various events, they helped at flower festivals, entered a float in the Carnival and for a while brought the May Day Celebrations back to the Green with the crowning of a May Queen and dancing around the Maypole. The villagers in their turn, made valuable contributions to lessons in the classroom and a number of O.A.P.'s accepted the invitation to dine with the children on a regular monthly basis.

In addition the clubs organised by the staff, parents and friends came either at lunchtimes or after school to implement others - chess, drama, pets, gym and gardening.

The PTA continued their hard work in organising events which raised money to buy equipment for the school. In times of cut backs in educational spending this was indeed a most appreciated boost to funds.

The School pursued their caring attitude towards others. The produce from their Harvest Festivals was taken to the Seven Rivers Cheshire Home until it was decided a few years ago to share it with the Old Folk of the village. Eight sacks of sugar and rice were collected for the Band Aid Appeal. £130 was raised for the St Benedicts School, Colchester, Kids Aid project and at the concerts given at school, the money collected was usually donated to Barbardo's.

Closer links were forged between the Primary and Secondary Schools and many old pupils returned to Great Bentley for Child Care Courses or to take part in the Project Trident Scheme.

We are apt to think that winters nowadays are milder than in the past, but on three occasions the school was closed due to the weather.

15 February 1979 - "One foot of snow in the playground." (School was closed for two days).

13 - 19 January 1987 - "School closed due to snow ... ten foot drifts in Plough Road with 2 cars buried underneath".

16 October 1987 - "School closed because of 110 mph winds. Very little damage occurred to the school fortunately, although one member of staff had her house hit by a tree."

The only other closures were due to a strike, and when the school was used as a Polling Station for a General Election before the New Village Hall was built.

It was during the Headship of Mr Darlington that schools entered the "Age of Technology". This gave an entirely new slant to the way in which the children worked. In 1983 the school took charge of its very first computer, and over the years, additional computers were obtained so that every child could have access to one in their own classroom. The School's first Fax machine was installed in September 1995.

The other big change was the introduction of the National Curriculum in 1987. At an initial meeting to discuss these documents it was recorded that - "All members of a group expressed their fears about the Government's future plans for the Education Service." However, after many alterations to the original suggestions, it would appear that it is here to stay.

The pupils were now developing a greater awareness of their own environment. In 1986 with - "donations from organisations and individuals" each class planted a tree around the playing field and in 1988 a pond was dug out by a band of willing helpers, to enable the children to make their own studies close at hand.

In 1986, one of the children's studies, namely "The Oak Tree Project" not only taught them a great deal, but also brought its own reward. Through the hard work of the children and those who helped them, they won a holiday in Florida for their outstanding work.

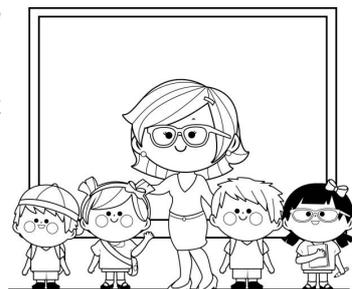
After hearing they were the regional winners, they spent a weekend in London with the other five finalists. On Saturday they were shown around the National History Museum by Dr. David Bellamy and had a party in the evening. On Sunday Dr. Bellamy announced the winning team. Over 900 schools had participated in the competition, and the winners were - Great Bentley County Primary School.

On 24 October 1986 - "... the ten children and two staff departed for their week's prize holiday in Disney World Florida. A fantastic and memorable week was had by all concerned with visits to the Magic Kingdom and the Epcot Centre.

Later Mr Darlington was requested to set up a display of the Oak Tree Project at County Hall, Chelmsford so that it could be seen by members of the Education Committee.

On 5 November 1986 - "... members of the Parish Council (called) to discuss the proposed cabinet which is to be presented to school in recognition of the success in the Oak Tree Project."

In December, the oak cabinet duly arrived and was put up in the main entrance of the school. In March of the following year The Oak Tree Group went to the Thames TV studio at Teddington, where they all met Dr. Bellamy again and the programme was broadcast live. It was recorded on video tape to give a permanent reminder of a truly wonderful achievement.



*To be contd ....*

# PET NOTES

With the government's roadmap out of lockdown underway many of us have been spending more time in our gardens. Here are my tips for keeping your furry loved ones safe whilst enjoying the fresh air.....

Keep compost and food waste bins out of reach as moulds can produce deadly mycotoxins. One of the most upsetting moments of my career was euthanizing a West Highland White Terrier at 5am having fought tirelessly to save him since 8pm. Soon after raiding his owner's compost bin he began having a seizure and sadly he did not respond to treatment. Prevention is most definitely the key.

Fertilisers, insecticides and weed killers should be stored safely as ingestion can cause anything from vomiting and diarrhoea to seizures.

Lots of garden plants can pose risks to your pets' health but it's often the bulbs that pose the biggest risks, for example, daffodil, lily and spring crocus bulbs.

Not a concern for now, but later in the year please be aware that acorns and conkers are poisonous when ingested in sufficient quantities.

Rat poison and slug and snail pellets are extremely toxic to pets. If you have any suspicion your pet may have consumed these, seek veterinary attention as an emergency.



If your garden is home to any mushrooms, it can be very difficult to distinguish which are edible and which are highly toxic.

I have treated countless dogs and one cat (my own of course!) for bee and wasp stings. A sting on the paw hurts, a sting in the mouth can result in airway-blocking swelling and a few pets will suffer anaphylactic shock. Always seek veterinary attention.

## Dog proof your garden:

Raised beds and clearly designed pathways help to keep dogs out of flower beds and protect more delicate plants. For areas where dogs will be letting off steam choose hardy plants or shrubs that can withstand a bit of battering.

Ensure fencing is secure with no gaps or holes to prevent dogs escaping. Look at your pet's habits too — are they a digger? If so, give them an area where it's ok to dig and encourage them to use it by hiding toys or treats in it, rather than the lawn.

Bring on the sunshine.

Stay safe everyone.

**Dr April Young MRCVS**



## Great Bentley Wine Tasting Group

For further details please contact Colin on 01206 252157 or e mail [zindhum@hotmail.com](mailto:zindhum@hotmail.com)

The wine tasting group established in August 2012 continues to hold enjoyable and informative evenings. For details please contact the above. Free advice available too, so please do contact me.

**Fancy being part of an on-line wine tasting from the safety of your home then please do get in touch? Two clicks and you are in. It's free and great fun!**

### LOCKDOWN

It's been a very long time since we could all go out and have a meal together with a bottle of wine in a restaurant or wine bar. When we choose a glass of wine in a bar or pub, we think nothing of paying £4 - £5 a glass for a rather inferior wine. When we venture into a restaurant we will often be faced with spending between £25 - £40 a bottle for rather average wine. Did you know restaurants mark up their wines at between 250% and 400%?

**So why do we all gasp when I recommend a wine at say £12 a bottle (equivalent to £2 a glass),** when we drink at home with no driving to worry about, or taxis, or arguments as to who's turn it is to drive?

So once again I encourage you to go out and spend a little more on a bottle of wine for drinking at home and make the wine your night out. Is spending £15-£25 really a lot when you have no restaurant mark ups, baby sitters or taxis to pay for? Your evening will be transformed with a decent bottle of wine, you can relax and savour it knowing you have nowhere to go afterwards....what's to lose?

You will also find if the wine is better than you normally drink, the flavour in your mouth will last longer, meaning you will not need to keep picking up the glass to refresh the palate because finer wines linger on the palate. Its a bit like eating a decent bar of chocolate with high cocoa rather than a cheap and cheerful bar.

With a finer bottle of wine to enjoy you will naturally want to drink less because the wine delivers more (think of the benefits of less of a headache the next day). Its also true that finer wines are likely to affect you less than cheaper wines because they invariably contain less additives.

The message remains the same **'DRINK LESS, DRINK BETTER!'**

Here are my recommendations for this month which are guaranteed to please you and remember even at £18 a bottle, it is still only £3 a glass! All of these can be ordered and delivered to your door by Waitrose cellar on line, but you may also be able to find some, or all of them in your local store.

### **Gewurztraminer, Paul Blanck, Alsace, France £14.99**

Lovely spicy fruity wine finishing just off dry. Great on its own or with Thai food.

### **Verite Viognier, Laurent Miquel, France £18**

This is a revelation, It's dry, yet there is so much going on with intense peach and apricot this will both amaze and surprise you. Viognier is one of the greatest white wine grapes in the World and this one should not be missed.

### **Lafou, Terra Alta, Spain £11.99**

Recommended before for its soft mellow and smooth palate. This is an exceptional red wine from Spain and offers amazing value for money

### **Samos Muscat. Greece £8.99**

Exceptional value for money. This is rich, intense, sweet and honeyed. Absolutely delicious and one of the greatest wine values in the world. Rush to buy this, drink very cold and sip slowly on its own, with shortbread biscuits, fresh peaches, or apricots.



As always I would love to receive some feedback, so do get in touch please.

## **A FEW NOTES FROM YOUR DISTRICT COUNCILLOR**

We were all deeply saddened to hear of the death of the Duke of Edinburgh.

The Chairman of Tendring District Council, Cllr Dan Land has sent a letter of condolence on behalf of the council. He also stated that "On behalf of Tendring District Council he expressed our sorrow at the Prince's passing, and how he knew many residents felt the same way."

Members of the public are invited to sign the Essex County Council electronic book of condolence, which is available via ECC's website at [www.essex.gov.uk](http://www.essex.gov.uk)

Due to COVID-19 restrictions, there will be no physical Book of Condolence at Clacton Town Hall

### **TENDRING LEISURE CENTRES SET OUT ROAD MAP FOR RE-OPENING**

Leisure Centres in Tendring are open in line with the government roadmap.

Outdoor grass sports pitches are available to book in line with the requirements of each sport's national body, the re-opening of further leisure services is subject to the roadmap 'not before' dates and may change depending on the situation.

Leisure Centres are now open, offering gym sessions, lane and family swimming plus junior swimming lessons, and youth and disabled club activities. Racket sports are also permitted for single households or bubbles, with the exception of squash.

From the 17th of May fitness classes will resume as will adult swimming lessons, and the flume at Walton-on-the-Naze Lifestyles can be used again. Racket sports are expected to be open under the rule of six, except squash – where national body guidance is awaited.

Existing leisure memberships will be free for May, as the January payment taken before lockdown was introduced will cover the costs. From June, memberships will be at 75% rate. Annual memberships have been extended to account for the months of closure.

### **THE NEW A120 – A 133 LINK ROAD – Re RAPID TRANSIT**

I thought you would be interested in the information relating to the new Link Road, from Tendring's perspective, for the Garden Communities Local Plan Part 1. A virtual exhibition for the proposals may still be available to view at [www.essex.gov.uk/link-road-and-rapid-transit](http://www.essex.gov.uk/link-road-and-rapid-transit) A planning application was due to be submitted at the end of April.

### **NEW HOMES IN JAYWICK SANDS GO ON THE MARKET**

The ten new homes in Jaywick Sands have been completed.

Five of the new homes in Lotus Way will be council housing, and tenants are being identified for the properties in the coming weeks, while the other five houses will be sold.

TDC has adopted a Local Lettings and Sales Policy for the houses, meaning priority for the council homes will be given to people from the local area. Meanwhile the properties for sale will be prioritised for local people and key workers.

Opposite the housing development, work is underway on a £2million scheme for a covered market and business units. Ecological surveys have begun on the site as part of the Essex County Council and TDC initiative.

The market project received £1.972m from the South East Local Enterprise Partnership (SELEP) from the Getting Building Fund (GBF).

TDC has also committed, through its Housing Strategy, to building 100 further homes in Jaywick Sands.

### **HORSES AND BEACHES**

Following the recent events regarding the alleged ban on horses using the beaches within the district during the summer months, the Leader of Council – Cllr Neil Stock, has made a public statement to clarify the position.

"This decision had been made by officers without the knowledge or consent of the Cabinet at Tendring District Council. This was wrong and for that I can only apologise. Furthermore, I have requested the Chief Executive to ensure a full and thorough investigation be undertaken to find out the events surrounding this and ensure it does not happen again, therefore, on behalf of Tendring District Council I can confirm that there is no ban in force preventing horses using the District's beaches, including the one at Frinton. Although, I am pleased that the local equestrian community are now developing their own code of practice, in consultation with the Council, which will minimise the risk to public safety and ensure compliance with local byelaws."

The Council is proud that whilst access to beaches for horses is relatively rare in this country, riders have always been able to use the Essex Sunshine Coast. By working with the riding community on a code of conduct to preserve public safety, we are confident that we will be in a position to preserve this long into the future.

The Council can use enforcement powers under the byelaws to maintain safety, although it is hoped that by the Council working together with the community this will not be necessary.



## **FOOTPATH NUMBER 8 – ST MARY’S FARM**

There have been several concerns related to me regarding the closure of part of footpath number 8, which goes across the railway into Birch Avenue from the bridleway.

The path is temporarily closed due to the building work being carried out by CALA homes, and therefore it is not a safe walkway at present, hence the reason in the interests of safety County Council has given permission for the path to be temporarily closed. The farmland has a crop growing, and where people are walking in the farmland the crop is being damaged. Neither is the farmland a safe walkway due to the close proximity of the building works.

The part of Footpath 8 that goes from the bridleway to Aingers Green is now open.

Another concern has been related regarding the use of a farm track from Aingers Green Road through to Lovers Lane. In case residents are not aware, this track is for the use of farm workers and farm vehicles only, it is private property and therefore not a public footpath or public right of way.

**Please** do not hesitate to contact me if you have any concerns; I am always very pleased to help and hear from you.

[Cllr. Lynda McWilliams](#)

[Tendring District Council](#)

[Ward Councillor to the Parishes of Great Bentley, Little Bentley and Frating  
and the Cabinet Member with the portfolio for Partnerships.](#)

Tel. No. 01206 250732

Mobile 07564 613603

email: [lynda@boblyn.co.uk](mailto:lynda@boblyn.co.uk) or [cldr.lmcwilliams@tendringdc.gov.uk](mailto:cldr.lmcwilliams@tendringdc.gov.uk)



## **NATURE NOTES**

Some readers may recall my previous reports of a large hybrid Black Poplar that grew from a discarded clothes prop. It had reached a height of seventy feet in little over 35 years. Sadly, in March it had to be taken down to an eight-foot stump and will be kept as a low pollard with a barrel-like trunk some six feet in diameter.

Rot had been found in its base so safety issues made this work necessary as the risk of it coming down and causing damage in heavy winds would increase as the rot steadily spread. This tree like an unplanned child was not intended to grow in the position it is in, beside a tin shed that its pole was lent against. Sprouting to life after at least two years severed from its originating, now lost, parent tree. In this time of more planned tree planting forethought is needed as to their ultimate size and position. Similarly, this applies when letting spontaneous seedlings to grow on that is often a better way to increase tree numbers.

The story of this poplar's hybrid vigour has been described before. Our native Black Poplar is much declined for various reasons though disease not among them. Its straight grained wood was valued for planking and young trees taken by settlers to USA. Quite by chance hybrids arose with a closely related North American poplar and some progeny brought back to Europe.

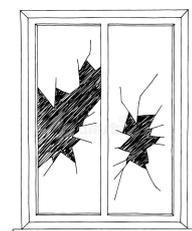
The skill of the climbing tree surgeons bringing down the huge almost vertical boughs in short sections was impressive using a network of lines and pulleys both to move themselves and the cut material.

The ship's mast of a tree has been humbled and a favoured high song-post and resting place for birds much reduced but the remaining stump lives on to resprout and be periodically pruned even its trunk may slowly hollow out.

**DRB**

## **A STUPID JOKE**

A stupid glazier was examining a broken window. He looked at it for a while and then said: "It's worse than I thought. It's broken on both sides."



# SCHOOL NEWS

## Year 3

Year 3 brought LEGOLAND to Great Bentley. We started the day with creating stop start animation.

Watch some of our creations! Next, we worked in teams to create the strongest LEGO bridge. The winning team 'Lego Stackers' bridge held a whopping 6000g! Our runners up 'Lego Masters' bridge held a fantastic 5000g! In the afternoon, we got to create our own LEGO creations to inform our instruction writing. Finally, we had popcorn and fruit shoots and watched the LEGO movie. Although, we could not go to LEGOLAND we had a fantastic day!

## Year 4

In Science we conducted an experiment about melting! We all planned our own experiment with our own questions! Some of our questions were:

How long will it take to melt?

What temperature was the object when it was melted?

Which object will take the longest to melt?

In DT this term we made our very own cars! We spent a lot of time planning them in our groups! Here are some of our final pieces!

See all about our recycling scheme on page 18.

# FOOTBALL CLUB NOTES

Training resumed on Tuesday 30<sup>th</sup> March in line with the continued easing of covid lockdown. With the Colne Sports Centre still closed, we were grateful that the clocks had gone forward on the 27<sup>th</sup> and we were able to get in just under a hour on the green. 36 players turned up, keeping Gumby, Ritchie and Brains busy.

All 3 teams had friendlies on 3<sup>rd</sup> April. The reserves kicked off at 1.00pm on the green against Brightlingsea Town. Winning 4 -1 with 2 well taken goals from Elliot McMillian. Goalkeeper Trevor Kirk making a fine penalty save.

At 3pm the 1<sup>st</sup> team kicked off against Colne Rangers reserves. We pretty much controlled the whole game but just could not put the ball in the net. Final score 0 – 0.

Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> April the Border League cup competitions commenced. The 1<sup>st</sup> team played in the league knock out cup, away at Wethersfield. Alexis Pryke scoring the only goal of the game, with GB not looking at all convincing against a team from the lower leagues.

The reserves hosted Dedham Old Boys reserves on the green. We won 2 – 1. GB scorers were Ollie Lawrence and Bailey Farley, who came off the bench to claim the winner.

The “A” team having drawn a bye in the Tommy Thompson Cup played a friendly at Wormingford, losing 1 – 3. Harvey Evans scoring our consolation goal.

The next rounds of the cup competitions were to be played on Sat 17<sup>th</sup>. The 1<sup>st</sup> team travel to Thorpe Athletic to play in the 2<sup>nd</sup> round of the KO cup. The reserves host FC Clacton “A” on the green in the quarter final of the reserve KO cup.

We are currently wating for confirmation of the kick off times for these games because of the statement issued by the Essex FA that matches could not be played between 2 00 pm and 4.15 pm as a mark of respect for the funeral of the Duke Of Edinburgh.



Results of these games will have to be covered in next month’s mag.

Follow Great Bentley Football Club and Border League Football on Facebook and Twitter for all the up to date information.

**Stay Safe. Follow the Bulldogs**  
**Mel**

## DEADLINE FOR JUNE MAGAZINE

### SATURDAY 15th MAY

Material to Mary Maskell, Caldew Cottage, The Green, 250524 **AND**  
Carole Allington, Poplar House, Station Road, 251086.

Please mark all material - “Parish Magazine”

email: [carole@pncallington.co.uk](mailto:carole@pncallington.co.uk) **AND** [marymaskell@sys3internet.net](mailto:marymaskell@sys3internet.net)

**IMPORTANT - PLEASE SEND ALL INFORMATION TO BOTH OF US**

**Great Bentley Website:** [www.greatbentleyparishcouncil.co.uk](http://www.greatbentleyparishcouncil.co.uk)

## GREAT BENTLEY PARISH COUNCIL

Community Resource Centre, Village Hall Plough Road CO7 8LG

Contact the Clerk on [clerk@greatbentleyparishcouncil.co.uk](mailto:clerk@greatbentleyparishcouncil.co.uk) [www.greatbentleyparishcouncil.co.uk](http://www.greatbentleyparishcouncil.co.uk)

Due to Government advice regarding Covid-19 the Community Resource Centre is still closed. Parish Council meetings are successfully being held virtually using Zoom. Agendas will be placed on the Parish Council website no later than 3 working days before the meeting. If you wish to join the meeting please email the clerk.

Meeting held 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021:

### **Planning Applications Considered**

The planning applications shown in the table below were considered by the Planning Committee. If you wish to make a comment on these or other planning applications, you should log on to the Tendring District Council website. Follow the link: <https://idox.tendringdc.gov.uk/online-applications/>

21/00219/DETAIL Mr M Rollings - Hills Residential Construction Ltd	Variation of Condition 1 (Approved Plans) of Approved Planning Permission ref: 16/01912/DETAIL (Proposed erection of 50 dwellings, garages and associated works). Variation to include the moving of LEAP (Locally Equipped Area of Play) within the site	Admirals Farm Heckford's Road Great Bentley Colchester Essex CO7 8RS
21/00288/FUL Mr and Mrs Smith	Erection of single storey rear extension (following demolition of existing conservatory)	28 Larkfield Road Great Bentley, CO7 8PX
21/00320/FUL Mr and Mrs Smith	Erection of single storey rear extension	28 Larkfield Road Great Bentley, CO7 8PX
21/00362/FUL Mr and Mrs May	Erection of part single storey and part two storey rear extension (alteration to Approved Planning Permission ref: 20/01781/FUL)	4 Weeley Road Aingers Green CO7 8NB
21/00418/TCA Mr and Mrs Plummer	2 No. Unknown species - fell, 1 Leyland Cypress - cut back to improve visibility, 3 No. Leyland Cypress - fell.	The Burrow, Plough Road Great Bentley, CO7 8LG

Land South of Weeley Road: A discussion was held regarding a response to the consultation invitation from Taylor/Wimpey regarding the proposals for the development of 136 houses and open space. The subjects discussed included mix of housing, tenure blind, access and egress to the site and impact on neighbouring properties. It was proposed to ask for a pre-development discussion with the Developer.

Noticeboard: The triangular noticeboard near the Plough is to be removed and replaced with a Village of the Year sign.

Inconsiderate Parking Opposite Tesco: For 6 months the Parish Council is to monitor the situation, gather evidence and if it is decided that a kerb or other solution is necessary it will be put forward to the Local Highways Panel. Residents are asked to report incidents to the clerk.

Southside track: The Councillors are going to put forward proposals about how the surface can be improved at the next meeting.

Future Meetings: To follow Government guidelines, the date for the on-line Zoom Annual Parish Council Meeting will be on 6<sup>th</sup> May 2021 at 7pm. The Planning Committee meeting and the Parish Council meeting will follow immediately after. There will be no Annual Parish Meeting this year.

## GREAT BENTLEY RECYCLE SCHEME

Great Bentley Recycle Scheme managed by volunteers at Great Bentley Primary School - can be found on Facebook under this title.

At the primary school a small group of parents started last year (2020) a recycling group which piggy backs one of the recycling streams a school in Clacton already has set up. (Streams are limited and currently all in use in the Tendring area). They kindly take our packaged recycling and send it into the various recycling schemes and Great Bentley Primary school earns a small amount of money that supports all our children, teaching staff and in turn the community. (Money goes straight to the school so no chance of any recycling the money anywhere else!)

The parents and school felt this was a positive area to develop not for the money but to educate the children about the planet and how to manage the materials we take for granted, which can be recycled if we make a little effort to sort and send.

The scheme is in its infancy and we are starting small until we can manage more. We currently take

- \* crisps and multi pack packaging
- \* cakes, biscuits and crackers wrappers
- \* sweets and chocolates wrappers
- \* Pringles tubes, lids and foil seal (no other brand).

IF YOU COULD HELP BY SORTING THE WRAPPERS FIRST THIS WOULD BE AMAZING ESPECIALLY WITH COVID CURRENT RESTRICTIONS this would go some way to safeguarding the spread.

What we don't take

- \* stretchy plastic such as bread bags and other bags
- \* cheese wrappers
- \* toiletries
- \* pet food pouches

Tendring Recycle scheme take far more than us and there are various drop offs in the village so please pass these onto this scheme.

Just to show you what we can achieve this photo shows:

15kgs of crisps, 8kg of confectionary and 6kgs of Pringles all ready to be sent off which earns us roughly £40

BINS CAN BE FOUND AT THE FRONT OF THE SCHOOL.

**Claire Lukey**

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## FRINTON FESTIVAL

Friday	28th May	7.00pm	The Barbican Piano Trio
Saturday	29th May	6.00pm	The Farmstead
Sunday	30th May	4.00pm	Milwidsky/Havlat
Monday	31st May	5.00pm	Trout Quintet



Visit : [www.frintonfestival.com](http://www.frintonfestival.com) to book tickets and further details.

# SESAW NEWS

There's an unusual sight – Kenny still tucked up in bed at lunchtime! Seems the little chap is under the weather leaving the computer clear for me to give you a cat's eye view of life at SESAW.

Like most animal charities, we've had few dogs in since Covid. Those that have arrived are generally very needy, requiring special new homes. Rolo, a Yorkie cross and Nokie, a terrier cross, are not moving on anytime soon. The five year olds are great friends but trouble with humans. Both need special homes with someone prepared to give them time and space. An experienced owner will end up with a rewarding relationship with one, or maybe even two, of these dogs if they are the right person.

Some become permanent residents like Bobby, a terrier rescued from death row in a London dog pound. After failing to find his forever home he settled nicely with dear old Maisie, a springer spaniel who loved her life at SESAW despite health problems. Unfortunately we lost her last year but Bobby has a new long term pal. Bruno is a terrier chihuahua cross, people say he's a bigger version of Kenny which I can confirm. That pesky dog likes to sleep in the airing cupboard but he doesn't dare challenge me if I get there first!

Which reminds me, time to see if Little Lord Fauntleroy is up and about. Yes, as I approach the kitchen I can hear him yapping to greet me. Ollie (the Black) Cat.

Suffolk & Essex Small Animal Welfare, Registered Charity No.1124029, Stoke Road, Leavenheath, CO6 4PP. Tel: 01787 210888 [www.sesaw.co.uk](http://www.sesaw.co.uk)

## THE MONTH OF MAY

'Ne'er cast a clout till May be out' is an English proverb. The earliest citation is this version of the rhyme from Dr. Thomas Fuller, *Gnomologia*, 1732, although it probably existed in word-of-mouth form well before that:



"Leave not off a Clout Till May be out.

### Meaning:

'Cast a clout', although archaic, is straightforward. Clout is a noun, variously spelled as clowt, clowte, cloot, clute, but all meaning cloth or clothing. Here's an early example, circa 1485:

"He had not left an holle clowt, Wherwith to hyde hys body abowte."

So, 'ne'er cast a clout...' just means 'never discard your [warm winter] clothing...'

The 'till May be out' part is where the doubt lies. On the face of it this would mean 'until [the month of] May is ended'.

The Hawthorn is a common tree of the English countryside, and it flowers in late April/early May. It is known as the May Tree and the blossom itself is called May. Using that allusion, 'till May is out' could mean, 'until the hawthorn is out [in bloom]'.

## MORE MEMORIES OF MY EARLY CHILDHOOD IN GREAT BENTLEY

I was in the school playground when I first learned that King George VI had died. One of the older girls went round the playground telling everyone. The noise seemed to quieten after this news and we finished playtime and went into school. I remember Roz and I were full of the news when we got home. Mum explained to us that it would be a long time before we had a new sovereign and she would be crowned Queen Elizabeth II. She said it was going to be a very special event and the whole country would be able to celebrate. When you are nearly seven years old it is difficult to understand.

However life for my sister Roz and I carried on as usual though I remember Roz's best friend was very sad because the King had died on her birthday 6th February. We walked to school each day with Mum or one of the other Mums. We both stayed to lunch at school which we ate in the long wooden dining hut. We sat on benches at trestle tables. Before we ate we said grace and afterwards we had to sit up straight with our arms folded until everyone had finished.

The routine at weekend and holidays was different. On Saturdays as Mum helped Dad in the Shop Roz and I went to "Rambler Cottage" for the day. We enjoyed baking with my Nan who was a retired school teacher. We didn't realise but all the time we were cooking she was teaching us, as all the ingredients were weighed out very carefully. Lunch was always fish and chips. This came from the Fish and Chip shop in Station Road owned by Mr Skipper.

Sunday lunch was always a roast. We started with Yorkshire pudding and gravy. (I don't think this was a family tradition more to fill us up so we didn't need so much meat). In the afternoon we went to the Methodist Sunday School.

Dad came home for lunch between 1-2pm as he closed the shop. During the holidays we dare not stray too far away in the mornings so we were not late. I remember on a Monday we always started off with suet pudding and gravy followed by cold meat and potatoes. For sweet we had the other half of the suet pudding with jam or syrup.

The summer holiday went very quickly. We played with our friends but Mum always knew where we were or could see us. I remember playing "What's the time Mr Wolf" in the road opposite our house on De Vere. There wasn't much traffic in those days. We also played "Tin Tan Tolly" round the houses. This was a form of hide and seek where you had to reach home without being seen.

It wasn't long before we were back at school and back to our routine. I am sure I asked Mum lots of times when were we going to have a Coronation celebration. I am sure one reply was next year after Christmas. This was our second Christmas in 6 Colchester Road. We made paper chains and decorated the lounge diner. We had a real Christmas tree with a fairy on top. The tree was very special as it had candles on it. These were in little clip on containers but the candles were only lit after dark and with the other lights out. This was for a very short time but to us it was quite magical. Money was still tight but our parents were very thrifty and we had some lovely homemade presents. I think this was the year we both had dolls cradles. We also had a pillow case at the foot of the bed with oranges, nuts and some sweets. (It wasn't until years later that we were told that the cradles were made from tomato chip boxes that Mum had padded out and covered).

It was surprng how quickly time went before the Coronation which we were told was going to be on June 2nd. In the meanwhile Mum, Dad and some of the neighbours were planning the "Celebrations". The village apparently divided into three areas, the Green and Plough Road, Aingers Green and Colchester Road, Sturrick Lane and De Vere Estate. One of the fund raising events I remember was a dance in Mr Sanis' barn at the bottom of Sturrick Lane. This was held the week before the Coronation. Our Nan came to be with us while Mum and Dad went to the dance. I remember Mum had a lovely new dress. It was a greeny turquoise colour with large black leaves on it. It had a flared skirt and a lovely wide black patent belt. During the evening Nan walked with us down to the barn so we could see the dancers through the gaps in the barn door.

On the Coronation Day itself Mum, Dad, Roz and I went down the road to the home of Mr Beasley at Hill Crest. There we watched the whole event on television. This was the first time we had seen a television. Both Roz and I remember that Mrs Bowler (Mr Beasley's housekeeper) served egg sandwiches to us all. One of my memories of the procession is that of the Queen of Tonga riding in an open carriage in the pouring rain. I knew we had Coronation Day June 2nd off school but I can't remember if we had the Monday off as well so we could have our party. On the other hand we might have had the tea party in the barn at Sturricks on the actual day. However we had a lovely time. We all sat on straw bales at trestle tables covered with white cloths. Each child was presented with a bible to commemorate the occasion.



**Barbara Fookes**

## GREAT BENTLEY CRICKET CLUB

Hopefully when you read this issue we will still be on the roadmap out of lockdown. Friday night training started on 23 April (pre-booking compulsory still at this stage). There are one or two fixtures on the Green this month, warming up slowing, June, July & August are fully planned out.

Friday nights: Colts Training 5.30-8.00pm

Fri 21 May – *Provisional date* for Clubhouse to open (one-way & toilets only)

Sun 16 May: T30 Mens Home v West Bergholt. 1pm start

Tue 18 May: U15 Home v Copford (friendly) 6pm

Fri 25 June – *Provisional date* for Clubhouse fully open

You can follow us on Facebook @ GBCC BAR for updates and information.



Membership is now due: £15 per family or couple and £10 single per year, Forms available from: [gbccbook@gmail.com](mailto:gbccbook@gmail.com)

Are you interested in playing cricket in beautiful surroundings? Whatever your age, whether you are a competitive player, a bit rusty or would just like to meet new people and have some fun, why not come and join Great Bentley Cricket Club.

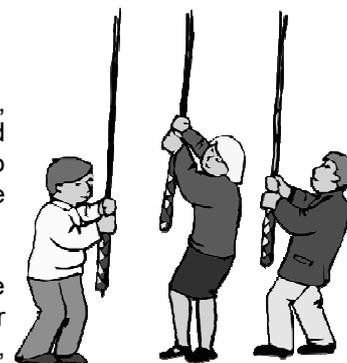
We have great facilities on the biggest village green in the UK run by a committee of local residents, dedicated to keep the game of Cricket a part of the village life.

For more information, come along to the Club House on The Green, or email Peter Giles [peter.giles@uwclub.net](mailto:peter.giles@uwclub.net) or Carol Kerridge: 07748 802690 [kerridgecarol@gmail.com](mailto:kerridgecarol@gmail.com)

## Bell Ringing Update

It doesn't seem possible that it is over a year ago that I thought to myself 'oh well, I expect this virus will be finished within a couple of weeks!' We've all missed ringing the church bells so much over the last year and I know from listening to others and reading the comments on social media that many villagers miss the sound of them ringing on Sunday mornings.

We haven't been able to ring due to legal restraints and precautions, and the need for common sense and self protection. When we rang every other week for services in the summer of last year, it was achieved using strict social distancing, wearing masks and washing and sanitising hands. For us, restrictions have been even more strict due to the realisation that the virus is spread very easily through aerosol transmission, i.e. breathing, coughing, sneezing etc. Ringers use a certain amount of exertion which means deeper and perhaps more rapid breathing which increases the risk of transmission. The other factor affecting our ringing band is the personal decisions we make regarding the risks.



The good news for us is that most of us will have had our second vaccination by the middle of May so should be able to ring in a restricted way, i.e. a reduced number of bells, wearing masks and maintaining safe distance. Let's hope?

Many of you will have heard a single bell rung to celebrate Easter Sunday prior to the service. In addition, a single bell was rung half muffled on Saturday the 17th April at 14.30 in memory of HRH Prince Philip the Duke of Edinburgh prior to his funeral service.

**Roger Carey-Smith**  
07422 880921

# Surgery News



## May Opening Hours

Due to the two Bank Holidays in May we will be closed on Monday, 3 May and Monday, 31 May. Patients can request urgent medical care as normal by phoning 111 when we are closed.

## Covid Vaccination Programme

We have now invited everyone over the age of 50 for their first Covid vaccination. If you have not booked your appointment yet then please contact us on 01206 250691 and speak to one of the reception team who will be able to organise this for you.

For those patients who had their first vaccination at the Surgery we can assure you that we will contact you to book your appointment for your second vaccine within 12 weeks of the first one.

The next Group to be invited will be Group 10 for anyone aged 40-49, followed by Group 11 for those between 30 and 39 and finally Group 12 for those patients between 18 and 29. We are inviting patients in strict group order as per the Government guidelines.

## Opening Up

Now that lockdown is easing and things are starting to open up we want to make sure that we keep both our patients and staff as safe as possible. In order to do this if you are coming in for an appointment please remember to always use the hand sanitiser provided at the door and ensure you wear a face covering. If you are queuing up for reception then please make sure you keep your distance from any other patients in the queue.

With that in mind we would also ask that as we only have limited space in our waiting room that patients do not come in more than a couple of minutes before their appointments to help keep the waiting area as clear as possible.

We appreciate all your help with the above.

## Patient Participation Group Meetings

At the time of writing the Newsletter there isn't a Patient Participation Group meeting planned in May.

**Sue Mitson – Operations Manager**

## **Mistake No.1**

### **A sailing story**

We were sailing in a race week at Burnham on Crouch, way back in the 80s.

There was no marina, to step ashore from a yacht, so we had to hail a launch to take us ashore for the evening.

We ended up at the Royal Burnham Yacht Club, in the disco area, called the Snake Pit! It turned out to be a boozy evening, and very enjoyable, so we stayed longer than we had planned.

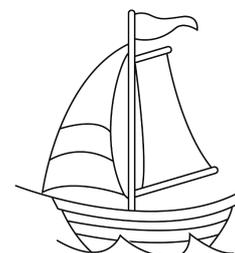
The launch service stopped at 11pm, but by the time we staggered out looking to get back to our boat, moored in the river, it was well past midnight.

We thought we would borrow one of the private dinghies, still on the jetty, and return it in the morning, when the launch service resumed, and before our next race. We got back to the boat safely, and slept soundly the rest of the night.

Bright and early the next morning, we got up, and were about to take our borrowed dinghy ashore, when to our horror, we saw the words "Police" on its stern, where dinghies generally have their name. In our haste the previous night, we had "borrowed" the police launch! We got it back to the jetty, with no-one the wiser, and went on to win our race that day.

We kept very quiet about our escapade that night for a very long time!

**D.S.**



## TENDRING PRIMARY SCHOOL RECYCLE SCHEME

As we all continue to ease our way back to some kind of normal life again, I'm pleased to say that Tendring Primary School Recycle Scheme is gradually edging its way back to some kind of normality as well.

At the time of writing, we now have a limited number of drop off points which are open again, but as it is still not possible for our volunteer sorters to gather at our main sorting hub at Tendring Primary School yet, the way in which we operate has had to change. For this reason, we are currently taking just one waste stream at a time, and the drop off point hosts are sorting, packing, boxing up and dispatching from their own homes. It is a process which is not possible for all however and hence the limited drop offs we can offer for the time being. The numbers are increasing all the time though, so do please check our Facebook page for the latest news and announcements.

With regards to the drop offs, unfortunately it will not be possible to reopen the Moors Close drop off point in the future due to a change in circumstances. We are deeply grateful to the family however, for all their help in the past. We will update you with regards to local availability as the reopening process continues.

In connection with thoughts of local recycling availability, we were delighted to read that the village is about to gain a Tetrapak bank next to the glass recycling bins near the Cricket Club. This will be a wonderful addition in the quest to keep items out of landfill.

If you are unsure as to what a Tetrapak is, they are the waxy kind of cardboard cartons, designed for items such as long-life milk, fruit juices, soup and tomato products such as passata. These banks (bins) tend to be extremely popular and often become full very quickly which can be a problem, but due to the specialised lorries which are used for collection and the distance they have to travel, the banks can only be emptied on a 3 – 4 weekly basis. To maximise the space available however, we can all help to create more space by flattening the Tetrapaks before visiting the bank. They flatten perfectly and it really can make such a difference.

Unfortunately, it was wrongly stated on the Spotted: Gt Bentley Facebook page recently that we are able to take Tetrapaks through the Tendring Primary School Recycle Scheme, **which, sadly, is completely wrong. Please DO NOT send Tetrapaks into the Scheme as we do not have any schemes or outlets for them. These can only be recycled through the banks as mentioned above.**

In the same (very well meaning) post it also stated that we are able to take ANY recycling through the Scheme. **Again**, as much as we would like this to be otherwise, **this is completely untrue** and it really does create enormous difficulties for our volunteer sorters when items come into their homes, which they can often do nothing with other than to place them into their own personal refuse as you can imagine. It is equally difficult of course, if landfill items are sent into the school. Both our usual Facebook page (**Tendring Primary School Recycle Scheme**) and website (on [www.tendringprimaryrecyclescheme.weebly.com](http://www.tendringprimaryrecyclescheme.weebly.com)) provide a wealth of details with regards to what we are able to take, so please do have a look.

Thank you all for your continued support as ever.

**June Barker**

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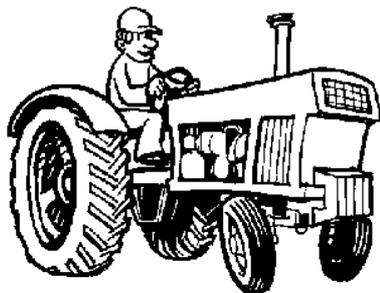
**WE STILL HAVE ADVERTISING SPACES.**

**PLEASE CONTACT**

**MARY MASKELL - 01206 250524**

**Email: [marymaskell@sys3internet.net](mailto:marymaskell@sys3internet.net)**

## FARMING DIARIES



It has come to the time of year when the cereals and oilseed rape crops start to rapidly grow away from the winter. The bright yellow of the oilseed rape flowers contrasts nicely against the deep green of adjacent cereal crops. The crop of oilseed rape provides a very important food source for a number of different bee species. If you find a footpath through these yellow fields or even a footpath which runs parallel to a field of oilseed rape and you listen carefully, you will hear the buzz of the bees. These bees play an important role in pollinating the flowers resulting in the formation of pods.

These pods will develop and expand and the seeds inside which turn black are harvested for a number of uses. You may have noticed in the local farm shops you can buy oil which has come from oilseed rape. Many famous chefs like using rapeseed oil when cooking for a number of reasons including its taste but also the oil has one of the lowest levels of saturated fats compared to other oils. In comparison to olive oil, rapeseed oil has approximately 50% less saturated fat showing that it is a healthier option. The majority of rapeseed oil you see on the shelves in the farm shops and supermarkets is made using British rape seed. The oil can also be used for biofuels as well.

Cereal crops such as wheat and barley, at the time of drilling, have 100% yield potential. From the moment they are planted in the ground different factors such as the weather, soil type, the availability of nutrients, pests, weeds and diseases will begin to rapidly decrease the crop's potential yield. In order for farmers to produce the highest yielding crops they can they need to protect the crop from the impact of the factors just mentioned. In the autumn (for a winter grown cereal) farmers will apply a pre-emergence weed control spray – this is the first port of call after drilling to prevent the growth of weeds which would otherwise compete with the crop for light, nutrients and moisture. More weeds may appear later in the autumn but, due to the weather they may not be able to travel with their sprayer on the land due to it being too wet, so a further spray application in the spring when the weather improves would follow. Fertiliser as mentioned in last month's column would be applied to the crop to give it a kick start to get it growing away as soon as the temperatures warm up. As the temperatures do rise disease pressure increases due to the warmer and damper conditions as a result of spring showers. This would exacerbate any disease which may have appeared in the crop over the winter months and /or may encourage the spread of disease in the crop. Photosynthesis is the way in which a plant uses energy from the sun light which is absorbed by chlorophyll in the plant to convert carbon dioxide and water to make energy. The presence of chlorophyll in a plant gives its green colour. When a plant, be it in the field or in your garden at home has a disease on it you will notice that the leaves lose their green colour meaning that they are not producing energy used for growth and development to their maximum capacity. If farmers can prevent and control any disease coming into their crop they will help maintain the potential yield of a crop. You may wonder how farmers optimising yield affects our day to day lives, if yields are dramatically reduced due to diseases, pests, lack of the correct nutrition and the weather there would be a shortage of wheat and barley to make into bread or beer which would result in the cost of these items increasing due to the shortage in supply of the product used to make them. In the arable farming year the next two months are the most important with regards to diseases to ensure the crop stays greener for longer, thus helping farmers achieve as near to their 100% yield potential.

You will also have noticed many 'ridges' appearing in fields ready for planting potatoes. Potatoes are a very important crop to the local area and you will see many a tractor and planter in the field over the coming weeks soon to be followed by irrigation pipes and irrigators.

**Vicki Brooks**

### **THE WEALD PARK COUNTRY SHOW**

[www.wealdcountryshow.co.uk](http://www.wealdcountryshow.co.uk)

**22nd and 23rd May**

**Weald Country Park, Brentwood, Essex, CM14 5QS**

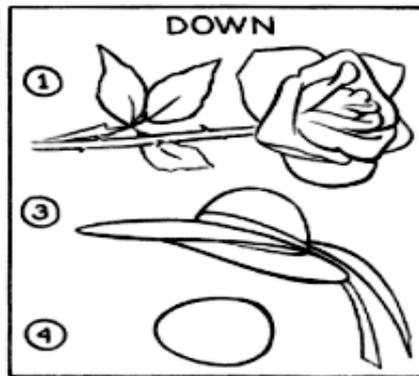
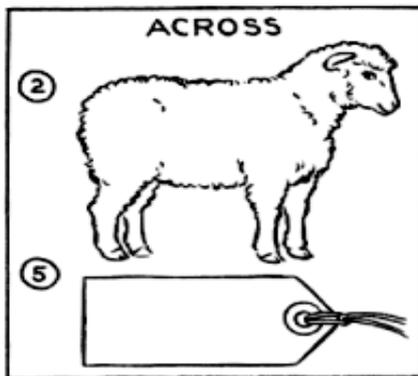
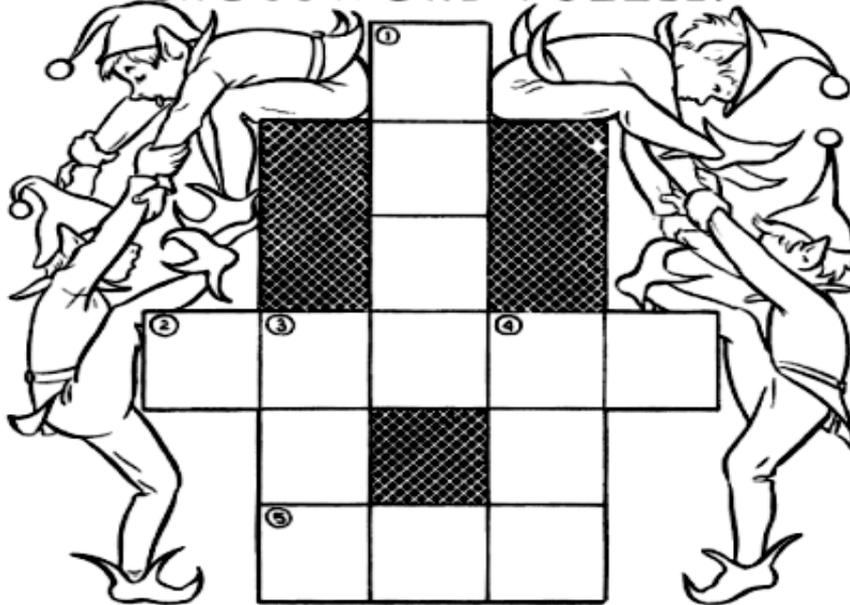
Free Parking: Dogs Welcome: Adults £9.50: Children £4.50. Under 5s free (online discounts)

Festival of Cars: Falconry: Barrel Racing: Dog & Duck: Wrestling: Chainsaw Competition:  
Acrobatics: ~The Zulus: Abba Tribute: Foodmakers area: Festival of Dogs: Circus Aerial Displays:  
Rural Crafters: Kids come along and meet Classisaurus our T-Rex Dinosaur: Punch & Judy: Gemma's Petting  
Farm: Rides and loads more fun:

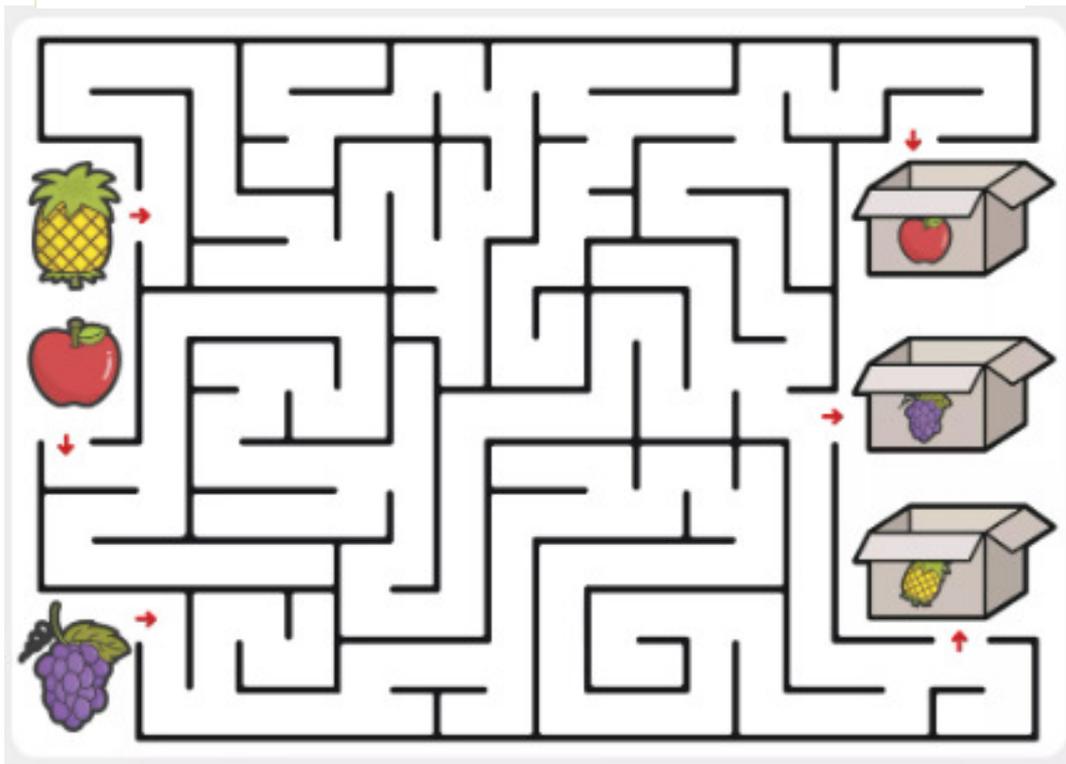
**To win a FREE Family Ticket see page 1**

# Children's Page

## CROSSWORD PUZZLE.



Rainey@urk3.com





## COOKERY CORNER

### DESSERTS FOR SPRING EVENINGS

#### **Banana splits with hot sauce**

These amounts will serve four.

4 small bananas      4 maraschino cherries  
4 scoops each of strawberry, chocolate and vanilla ice cream      60g pecan nuts      90g plain chocolate  
425ml double cream      2g butter      75ml golden syrup      125g caster sugar      2 tsp vanilla extract  
2 shallow sundae dishes

Chop the chocolate and the nuts and set aside 1tbsp of caster sugar. To make the hot fudge sauce, put the chocolate, 175ml of the double cream and 2tbsp of the butter into a saucepan over a low heat until it has melted. Add the syrup, 1tsp vanilla extract and 100g caster sugar, stirring constantly over a medium heat. When almost boiling, turn the heat to low and simmer for 15 minutes without stirring. Leave to cool for 5 minutes before using. To make the vanilla cream, whisk the remainder of the double cream with the reserved 1tbsp of sugar and 1tsp of vanilla extract and set aside. Peel the bananas and cut in half lengthways. Put two halves of banana along the sides of each dish leaving a space in the middle to put one scoop of each flavour of ice cream into each dish. Top with a spoonful of whipped cream, a sprinkling of chopped pecans and lastly, a cherry. Serve with a jug of the hot sauce to pour over the top.

#### **New York cheesecake**

200g digestive biscuits      270g unsalted butter      145g caster sugar      4 large eggs      30g plain flour  
60ml milk      ½ tsp vanilla extract      675g soft cheese      425ml sour cream      2 large lemons  
1tbsp icing sugar

This is a very rich, dense cheesecake with a crunchy biscuit base which should cut into ten to twelve servings. Use unwaxed lemons and a full fat soft cheese if possible, and vanilla extract which is less processed and has a stronger flavour than vanilla essence. Lightly grease a 23cm diameter springform cake tin. Beat the eggs, and juice one of the lemons, after finely grating the lemon zest. Crush the biscuits in a plastic bag or a food processor until you have fine crumbs. Preheat the oven to 190 degrees. To make the base, gently melt 100g of the butter in a saucepan, then stir in the crumbs and 75g of the sugar. Spread the mixture over the base of the prepared tin, pressing down lightly. Stand the tin on a baking tray and cook in the preheated oven for 8 to 10 minutes. Remove and leave to cool. Reduce the temperature to 160 degrees. To make the filling, beat the remaining butter and the rest of the sugar in a large bowl until pale and fluffy. Gradually beat in the eggs and mix in the flour, lemon zest and vanilla extract thoroughly. In another large bowl, beat the cheese until smooth, before beating the milk in gently. Then gradually beat in the butter and sugar mixture. Spoon this over the biscuit base and level the surface and bake in the preheated oven for an hour and a half.

Now make the topping. Put the sour cream, icing sugar and the juice of the second lemon into a large bowl and beat lightly. Chill in the fridge until required.

Remove the cheesecake from the oven and increase the temperature to 190 degrees. Pour the topping over the cake, level it out and put it back in the oven for about 10 minutes or until set. Turn the oven off, leaving the door ajar to allow the cheesecake to cool in the oven to stop it cracking. Chill for 2 hours before serving.

**Knickerbocker glories** ..... As a holiday job at a beachside cafe, I spent hours making these for summer tourists, using a variety of soft fruits and ice cream flavours.

Spoon 3tbsp chocolate sauce into a tall soda glass, then a scoop of ice cream, followed by crushed fresh fruit, followed by more ice cream and fruit until the glass is almost full. Top with whipped cream, toasted almonds and a glace cherry. Eat with a long parfait spoon at an outdoor cafe in the sun, preferably on your own!      M.E.



# It's a Colourful Life!



1. Which British Prime Minister was brought up in Kirkcaldy, Scotland ?
2. Which French Cardinal born in 1585, was known as the Red Eminence?
3. Which English artist painted 'The Blue Boy'?
4. Which 20th century artist had both a blue and a rose period of work?
5. Which river is China's second longest after the Yangtze?
6. Which sport do the Green Bay Packers play?
7. In which children's book does Violet Beauregard appear?
8. Which army was established in Russia following the 1917 October Revolution?
9. Who stars in the 2003 film 'School of Rock'.
10. Which Irving Berlin song did Bing Crosby perform in 'Holiday Inn'?
11. What are 'Purplebricks'?
12. Professional name of U.S. singer-songwriter born Alecia Beth Moore?
13. Who wrote the 1962 novel 'A Clockwork Orange'?
14. In heraldry which colour is sable?
15. Eric Clapton, Ginger Baker and Jack Bruce formed which rock group?
16. *Sciurus Carolinensis* is better known as which woodland animal ?
17. How is the disease yellow fever transmitted to humans?
18. Anna Sewell's well-loved horse?
19. The White Witch appears in 'The Lion the Witch and the Wardrobe' by which author?
20. Pugwash was the captain of which fictional pirate ship?



1. Gordon Brown 2. Cardinal Richelieu 3. Thomas Gainsborough 4. Picasso 5. Yellow  
6. American Football 7. Charlie and the Chocolate Factory 8. Red 9. Jack Black  
10. White Christmas 11. Estate agents 12. Pink 13. Anthony Burgess 14. black  
15. Cream 16. red squirrel 17. mosquitoes 18. Black Beauty 19. C.S. Lewis 20. Black Pig

### Thomas Arnold Fairweather - Part 3

Life was monotonous until one day they were called on parade and told that they would be going out on working parties. That same day Tom's group went by train to Muhlberg, and three days later they arrived at Radeburg station, the last part of the journey from Dresden was in style, by normal passenger train. Here at Radeburgh they were off loaded and were marched about a mile out into the country with two Germans in charge of them. Before long their destination came into view. It was a brick-works with their living accommodation within the factory; It consisted of two long narrow rooms below, with separate toilets at one end and another small room for their two guards, and one big room above where they would sleep in two-tier bunks.

Soon they settled in and began to do 8.5 hour days, being employed at tasks to which they seemed best suited. They found that the German workers were very good to work with, many of whom had sons who were prisoners of war, but unfortunately in Russian hands, where no Red Cross was recognised. There were no youngsters anywhere, all the German workers being beyond middle age, or should have been retired. Rations were similar to that received in Italy, but when the parcels caught up with them they were much better off. They were always carefully watched by one of the guards, and counted.

For their work, the prisoners were paid in 'lagergelt' paper money which they used to buy a barrel of beer each week. Not beer as our boys knew it, but the Germans drank it as it came from their canteen, and in any case there was nothing else to spend it on. Then much to everyone's surprise they were told that they could send some money home, and as Tom had 75 Marks saved up he thought that he would do that, because it seemed otherwise to be valueless. With German thoroughness one of the guards, named Schlichtenhorst, duly wrote a receipt which Tom has kept amongst his souvenirs. In due course Tom's mother Elsie wrote to say that she had received £5 from him, which at the time was a significant amount. Tom found this event rather astonishing considering the circumstances.

From time to time Allied planes would be seen passing over, although they could not tell whether they were British or American. The sirens would sound and the prisoners were supposed to take cover, but it was never taken seriously until the night of 13 February 1945 when they were made to go into their shelter. It was the night when Dresden suffered its fire storm from an RAF raid. At about 10pm they stood on the steps of the shelter watching the glow from the fires some 20 km away.

Rumours were coming in about the Russians getting nearer, and the Germans were very frightened people. They didn't mind the British or the Americans but thought the Russians terrible people. It was now 14 April 1945, and they were not to know that the end of the war with Germany was just 24 days away.

They woke one morning to be told that they were on the move to Radeburg station; all 49 of them along with their two guards. A Scot amongst them had acquired a set of bagpipes via the Red Cross and at the station he was marching up and down playing them as though the war had ended.

The German civilians couldn't understand what was going on, and possibly they may not have heard the bagpipes before. The train took them as far as Dresden, then they were on foot, walking still with their guards, through what was left of Dresden.

It was an unforgettable journey through lovely countryside with hardly anything on the road. Tom thinks that they looked a motley crowd, generally in British uniform. Battle-dress with a red triangle painted on their backs and above one knee, but not the tidiest of people.

May 8th dawned and they were on the move again, on foot, and soon found themselves on roads thronged with people, refugees, all walking with their pathetic loads being carried on whatever they possessed, prams, dog-carts, wagons, but no cars. Amongst the throng were German soldiers. No one knew where they were going, just trying to keep out of the way of the Russians. Late in the afternoon the sound of planes was heard and two Russian planes came over; low enough for their red stars to be seen, and they terrorised everyone by opening up with their machine guns. Fortunately they were alongside a wood where they took cover, using a tree each as the planes came in, first from one direction and then from the other. It was so frightening that Tom saw trousers being dropped and realised the awful truth about what had happened to some of them. At least Tom was spared that.

Tom and his mates wanted to get away from it all so they set off across the fields, and eventually found a place to settle down for the night; the night of May 8th 1945. They were just outside a village and the next morning one of the Anglo-Indians took a walk there and came back to say that there were Russian troops there but that the war was over. It had officially ended at midnight May 8th/9th, although the British and American forces had stopped fighting well before that. The Russians carried on until midnight, which is why they were terrorised the previous day.

Free at last! A bit of an anti-climax; they didn't know what to do, just wandering about. By this time it was getting late in the afternoon and they were passing a block of flats. Tom cannot recall whether they were invited in or not, but they found an unoccupied apartment, fully furnished and with food in the larder. Apparently it had been vacated by a German couple, someone else afraid of the Russians. They settled in and discovered that they were in Czechoslovakia a place called Kommern. It was so nice to find a complete home, sleep in beds, listen to the radio and avail themselves of the food. It was still only May 9th, the day after the war finished. They were free, but Tom has since been asked "who released you" to which he has always had to answer "no one" because of the events described above.

Whilst enjoying this life of comfort they would daily hear broadcasts that all P.O.W.s were to report to the nearest camp, but they were in no hurry to do so. Eventually they made some enquiries to find that there was a camp not too far away. So on May 14th 1945 they reported to this camp and checked in. Two days later they left, this time the transport was a train. It was quite a nice journey with nice scenery, finishing up at Falkenau where they met the Americans for the first time. They were given a quick interrogation, name, rank, number, unit, and Stalag number. At long last, after just two days, and they were on their way again, driven to the airfield in lorries and put onboard Dakotas and flown to Reims, after refuelling 40 miles north of Metz. They stayed at a camp just outside Reims for two days, then taken by lorry to Berry-au-Bac to another airfield. Here was a wonderful sight with batches of P.O.W.s dotted about, and Lancaster Bombers that were coming in and taking off within minutes, no comfort, just squatting where they could. They couldn't see out, except the two near the front who gave a running commentary. Soon they were over the Channel, and then England came in sight, followed by a landing at Dunsford aerodrome in Surrey.

The next day they went to Horsham to be kitted out, issued with leave passes and then home to Great Bentley. It was now May 24th 1945 and Tom thought that good going considering that on May 8th they didn't even know the war was over.

## THOMAS FAIRWEATHER

After spending time at home on leave, Tom spent another year in the Army being moved to several barracks all over England. Some of the time he was guarding Italian POWs which seems quite ironic.

He attended a friend's wedding in Devon where he met the groom's sister, Cicely whom he married on 26th December 1945. He then remained in Devon and settled in Pinhoe, near Exeter, where they had two children.

He worked as a carpenter for a funeral company and also a kitchen fitter until his retirement in 1968.

Sadly, Cis died from cancer in 1981. She was only 58 and he lost his only grandson who died aged only 37.

Left living alone, he divided his time between Pinhoe and Princetown where he stayed with his daughter, Daphne and her husband. Overlooking Dartmoor Prison, he would keep an eye on any activity like the lights going on or the inmates going out to work on the farm.

He enjoyed doing jigsaw puzzles and making Lego models. He rarely spoke to his family about his experience. He moved where he celebrated his 100th birthday on 25th March

He read a lot of second world war history but into a care home in Princetown in 2020 2021.

Most of his extended family still live in Essex and Suffolk. Thorrington and all his nephews and nieces live locally.

His youngest sister, Hettie lives in

A belated "Happy 100th Birthday Uncle Tom" from all the

family and sending you lots of love.



**Great Bentley Pre-school**  
[www.greatbentleypreschool.co.uk](http://www.greatbentleypreschool.co.uk)  
[information@greatbentleypreschool.co.uk](mailto:information@greatbentleypreschool.co.uk)



I hope everyone had a lovely Easter break and managed to enjoy some long-awaited time with loved ones.

We would like to say a big thank you to The Oaks Residential Care Home in Aingers Green who surprised all the children with an Easter Egg before we broke up, this was such a lovely kind and thoughtful gesture and certainly put an extra smile on all the children's faces.

The children made a lovely 'thank you' display for them and we are looking forward to hopefully taking some of the children to visit them when it is safe to do so.

### **Outside Area**

During the holidays, our staff and some of their family members, gave up lots of their time to revamp parts of our garden. The end results are amazing, and Allison and I cannot thank them enough.

We now have a fabulous sensory walking wall, a brand-new bug hotel, a permanent balance beam structure, planters to grow and explore more.

different vegetables, flowers, herbs, etc. and much more.

It is a brilliant transformation and use of space, and as you can imagine the children loved it. Well done team, it's been amazing seeing how far.

much the children have enjoyed and gained from it so

Thanks for reading

Julie Wiles

Many people have considered planning a holiday in the hope that they might see something different, perhaps in search of an adventure or sought to look upon a scene which others may not have witnessed. With modern technology this appears to be totally achievable when sitting in one's lounge in front of a computer screen, just as I thought when lured into thinking I could go in search of some of the most glorious landscapes in Western Australia. On one such occasion many years ago, I thought I could explore the outback in a hired vehicle, convinced that I was capable of doing so although having no experience of the planning and preparation involved. My naivety resembled that of attempting to ski a Black Run in the Alps using an upturned plastic dustbin lid.

The Gibb River Road, one of the most diverse forest wildernesses in the northern Kimberley region of Western Australia remains even today an off-road driving challenge. From Broome to Kununurra is 700 kilometres of shuddering corrugations, in reality a nightmare journey of four days duration, one of raw torture which, after a while, robs the experience of any enjoyment. The gravel surface destroys tyres, as only the best quality can tolerate the ceaseless punishment leaving lesser examples prone to failure, as we found to our cost. We survived the journey which sounds rather swashbucklingly heroic but truthfully our arrival in Kununurra was due, not to my off-road driving skill but undeniably more to good fortune and the intervention of two benevolent police officers.

Our tyres became an issue as we entered Mount Barnett roadhouse, an aboriginal community which had small air-conditioned cabins for rent, a perfect forest billabong haven following that scorching second day. Having parked, I noticed that one rear tyre had lost air during the journey so removed a spare from the roof of the vehicle and began the wheel change, alone in what I thought to be a camp totally deserted. Suddenly a police officer was standing nearby who became fairly aggressive whilst disdainfully inspecting the vehicle declaring that it was not to go anywhere until he had looked further. I argued that it was a hired vehicle which directed his wrath more towards that company rather than at me. We were joined by the second officer, a sergeant who advised that I make contact with the next roadhouse, Drysdale Crossing where there was a garage and alert them that I needed my tyre situation to be all-terrain compliant. Our plight showed my abject failure to appreciate what was required in order to drive these remote tracks, that plight made plainer when the officers further noticed that amongst a range of items I lacked, I had neither a two-way radio nor satellite phone. In the event of a breakdown on the Gibb, a passing vehicle happens very rarely. Having finished changing the wheel I enjoyed a shower after which and armed with a few cold beers we went to the camp kitchen where we were soon joined by the two officers, also staying the night and without going into any great detail, had one of the funniest evenings of our trip, thoroughly entertained by their fascinating stories and local knowledge.

The following morning before leaving and to my utter dismay, the second rear tyre was totally airless so I began the procedure again, removing the one remaining spare wheel from the underside of the vehicle whilst Mirain phoned ahead to Drysdale Crossing to enquire about new tyres. During the wheel changing task, one of the officers arrived at my shoulder and, picking up the wrench he completed the wheel change for me, casually informing me that they had to leave shortly as they were on duty at the river crossing. With an element of haste, the officers boarded their truck then disappeared down the dry track, the billowing red dust lingering eerily in the stillness of the tall gum trees. The parrots' objection shattered the silence.

Having no spare wheel, our journey to Drysdale was worrying so it was with great relief when we pulled into the roadhouse for the night. However, parked at the entrance was a police vehicle inside which sat the same two officers. They waved us to stop. I was to talk to Tom they said, the owner who would return our vehicle's tyres plus one spare to off-road standard but before leaving for Kununurra the following morning we were to report to the sergeant at the crossing for a final check. The officers were at the bridge and on duty in readiness for a difficult day ahead for them as there had been a serious incident which needed their attention. Early that following morning and thanks to Tom's endeavour, our tyres met with the sergeant's approval. Relieved, we left for Kununurra.

A couple of weeks later on the main highway back to Broome for our flight to Perth we were stopped at a police road block, a routine licence check after which they waved us farewell, but on moving off, a senior officer selected our vehicle for further enquiries. He approached the driver's window and asked where we had been and if we had experienced any difficulties. We talked. With a strange smile and even stranger suggestion, he invited us to join the police group for lunch at a nearby roadhouse. 'Come and join us,' he insisted, adding, 'Oh, by the way, two of my colleagues from the northern Kimberley police region send you their regards!' We smiled in realisation.

Today, I regard our adventure as an example of my inept foolhardiness involving Mirain in a dangerous whim, the outcome of which, without the help of two police officers, could have been frighteningly different. This was policing at the very highest level, a display of care and supervision far beyond their remit but for me it was also a glimpse of how disasters occur, an act of imbecility which I have neither forgotten nor shall I ever forget.



## Essex & Herts Air Ambulance is blazing a trail for the environment

On the eve of Earth Day 2021 (22<sup>nd</sup> April) Essex & Herts Air Ambulance (EHAAT) is excited to announce the steps taken to date and further plans to reduce its impact on the environment.

In what EHAAT believes is a first for a UK air ambulance charity, it has carried out a thorough review of its carbon footprint and sustainability, and is now looking at how it can achieve a net zero impact.

The first stage of this process was to engage a carbon consultant and work with them to calculate the charity's carbon footprint for the year 2019-20. This involved capturing the data on the fuel used under Scope 1 of the Greenhouse Gas Protocol (fuel used in aircraft, vehicles, heating buildings etc) and Scope 2 (Fuel used indirectly as a result of the charity's activities, such as in the production of purchased electricity).

James McInroy, EHAAT's Head of Workplace and Infrastructure, said: "EHAAT is committed to making the very best choices for the environment, our people and the community. We have reviewed all areas of the charity and calculated our Carbon GHG (Green House Gas) footprint. With long term sustainability and carbon impact forming our decisions across all areas of the charity, our objective is to reduce our carbon footprint and achieve a net zero impact".

One of the first beneficiaries of this trailblazing work is EHAAT's new airbase at North Weald, which will become operational this summer. The building was designed with environmental considerations as a priority.

These include:

- The building has been designed to current BREEAM ratings and has achieved an energy performance certificate (EPC) grading of A, the highest possible.
- Photovoltaic panels on the roof means that the building generates more electricity than it uses. The excess is sold to the national grid.
- Electric vehicle charging points enable users of electric vehicles to charge them.
- Motion sensor lighting inside the building means lights are only active when areas are occupied, reducing electricity consumption.
- Additional steps such as improved waste segregation and recycling and Eco boilers are also being installed at the charity's airbase and its headquarters in Earls Colne, as well as its charity shops across Essex and Hertfordshire.

Over the coming year EHAAT will take steps to further improve sustainability and the organisation's carbon footprint.



## THANK YOU

Thanks to Norman Dorling for finding and looking after my mobile. You're a star Norm

DM

# PARISH MAGAZINE PRINTING MACHINE

Our trusty black and white printing machine had its 5th Birthday in February and has so far printed **over 3 1/2 million pages**. It is performing well but in all honesty we have to face the fact that it will probably need replacing in the next 12 months. Most of the money raised from Great Bentley Parish News goes to support the church (after the expenses for ink and paper have been covered), and this has been especially appreciated over the last year with no major fundraising events able to take place.

The cost of a new machine will be £4,000 plus VAT so it would be great if we could raise some more money with the Saturday Produce Stall. We have received a grant of £450 and a further £60 from the sale of marmalade, sweet peas and rhubarb so that's a good start. If we could raise half the money required that would be amazing.

**To start us off we have 2 items for sale.  
All proceeds to the new printer**

Green riser/recliner lounge chair in full working order with matching armchair.

Measurements:

Seat width 20"

Seat depth 20"

Seat height 20"

Overall width 33"

Overall depth 34"

Overall height 42"

Recliner needs another 18" when reclined.

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**Please ring Mary on 01206 250524**

**STOP PRESS .....**

**As of Sunday 2nd May Services in St Mary's Church, Great Bentley will commence at 9.30am**

## A Story of hedgehogs in my garden

For several years I have been putting out supplementary food at night for the prickly slug and pest eating friends that inhabit mine and my neighbours gardens especially during dry periods when some of their natural food is in short supply, then regularly see them visiting the area under the bird feeders where they clear up most of the seed and nuts spilt by the birds and on the lawn and garden looking for slugs and worms etc. Unfortunately various cats also visit my garden at night and usually eat any food put out for them before the hedgehogs can get to it.

Last July I built a hedgehog feeding station from a piece of old corrugated asbestos roof and some pieces of wood from my garage, to keep the cats away. I set up a small automatic wildlife camera to check if it worked and found that a cat could get in and steal the food so made some modifications to the entrance which solved that problem.

On December 13th I saw a small hog wandering around during the afternoon apparently not well, caught it and brought it into the warm put some food and water in its box and next morning took it to Wildlives at Thorington to be properly examined and cared for. Unfortunately it passed away two days later so it was obviously unwell.

On the 15th (after dark) I caught another weighing only about 200 Grams. Too small to hibernate if it turned cold. So on the 16th took that along. That evening yet another one appeared, caught it, warmed and fed it and took on the 17th. Nothing that evening so job done, all rescued, or so I thought.

However on the 18th two more turned up, only slightly bigger at about 350grams but still not big enough to overwinter (around 600 grams is the suggested minimum weight to see them through hibernation) so grabbed them, warmed them up and fed them and took them to Wildlives on the 19th. This is getting a habit now!

On the evening of the 19th. About 11.30 just before going to bed looked out into the garden and ANOTHER two wandering around the patio, so I ran out dropped a towel on one to keep it still and managed to catch the other one, before it disappeared under a bush. Both weighed about 300 grams. By now I had run out of cardboard boxes so emptied my recycling box and put them in there with a hot water bottle etc. ready for another trip to Wildlives in the morning. I eventually got into bed about 1am. That's a total of SEVEN small hedgehogs in less than a week! Judging by their sizes I suspect two litters but no sign of the adults until about a fortnight later when a really large one was seen and left to do its own thing.

February 19th I had a phone call from Wildlives, I can collect two of the hogs I took in for rescue, as they are now big enough to hibernate if it turns really cold again. Went along in the morning and received FIVE ready for release after dark. Took them home in two boxes and put them in my shed until it was dark. About 7pm put the boxes in the wild area at the bottom of my garden where they could wander away when ready. Checked ½ hour later all gone! Two days later so had the food from the feeding station and every day since. I regularly see one or two but don't know which is which. They all look the same to me!

April 17th I had another phone call from Wildlives, the last (and smallest) hog had now gained enough weight to be released so could I collect it in the morning. Went along at 11.30 and collected Hedgehog number 7 ready to release after dark. I carefully put the box in my shed (the quietest and least disturbed place) to await darkness.

Went to the shed at 8.30 and heard scratching noises coming from the box containing the latest hedgehog to be released, obviously impatient to return to the wilds. Took the box to a secluded area and laid it on its side so the occupant could just walk out when it was ready. Checked half hour later and it had gone and was now somewhere poking around under the bushes doing what hedgehogs do. So there we have it, six baby hogs had a medical and were cared for throughout the winter thanks to a little help from me and loads of food and care from WILDLIVES at Thorington who do amazing things for our wild birds and animals that need help. (And are always pleased to receive donations so that they can continue looking after our wild animals and birds in need).

See their regular article in this magazine for more details of their never ending work for our wild animals and birds.

**John Merison**



## GARDENING NOTES



Hanging baskets and containers are extremely popular in our gardens brightening up our houses, walls and fences. They offer versatility and endless possibilities allowing you to create a classic or contemporary look for both a small or large garden. You can plant them with annuals, perennials, bulbs, small shrubs or grasses. Choosing a theme is a great way to make more impact as each container or basket links to the next one. The easiest way to achieve this is through a common colour, but using different plants.

It is not difficult to grow in containers or baskets. The DIY stores and nurseries have many specially made containers. They may include self watering systems, usually a reservoir incorporated into a bottom half of the container with a wick system to take the water up into the compost. If you are using standard pots there are a few things to consider. Traditional terracotta pots always look nice. They do however allow the water to evaporate from the compost through the walls of the pot, so they need more watering. You can reduce this problem by lining the inside of the pot with say a polythene bag and perhaps including water retaining granules in the compost before planting. Don't forget to leave drainage holes in the bottom. The plastic copies of old fashioned terracotta pots are now much better and you can make them more realistic if you paint the outside first with a bonding agent such as Unibond then roll them in fine peat or sand or dirt to roughen up the outside which allows green algae and mosses to form to give the impression of a vintage pot.

When filling your container with compost do not forget to cover the drainage holes with a layer of broken pot and perhaps a layer of coarse gravel or stones. This allows any excess water to run out of the bottom of the pot and not waterlog the soil by blocking up the holes. There are special container compost mixes, but try to use a mixture of general purpose compost, horticultural grit and some John Innes soil compost. This will give the pot contents some body and weight to help stabilise the container. Whilst you are mixing the compost together add some controlled release fertiliser granules which feeds for several months, so that you do not need to water with fertiliser every week.

Use an occasional feed with liquid fertiliser during the season as this gives the displays a boost. Water your plants well before transplanting from their individual pot into the container. Take care not to damage the roots when planting and make sure you have compost firmed all the way around the root ball. Water lightly once the planting is finished as the water will help small particles of compost to coat the roots of the various plants, speeding up their growth. Keep them in a sheltered place for a few days to let them settle, and give some protection if the plants are of a tender nature. If it gets cold immediately after planting and before it gets established, its growth is checked and it can take several weeks to recover.

The traditional contents for containers are usually flowers, but how about a shrub? Perhaps you could try a bit of topiary, trimming your plant to various shapes as it grows. You can cheat by using a wire frame or use fast growing ivy to cover the wire mesh. How about some ornamental grasses, they make fantastic perennial potted plants. Plant each pot with a single variety for the best effect and watch them as their colours and form change throughout the year. They also help to give a little green oasis of calm when stood amongst the pots of brightly coloured annuals. Mulch the tops of the containers with some chipped bark, gravel or coconut shells to conserve moisture and keep the weed growth down.

On the vegetable front why not try a tomato plant such as "Tumbler" (Mary Maskell has Maskotka tomato plants for her stall) or even a dwarf runner bean such as Hesta which has pretty white/red blossoms, as well as very tasty beans. On the more fruity side what about a strawberry pot. Stand one pot on an upside down pot to allow the strawberries to hang down. Grown like this it is easier to cover a plant with netting to keep the birds off and they look great on a patio when both in flower or in fruit, so they give pleasure twice over, once to look at, then to eat.

May is the time of year when lots of vegetables need to be sown. You may, of course, have already started some of the first sowings like the early potatoes, and you can plant the main crops now whenever you like. Now it is also time to plant crops like the second crop of broad beans. Peas can also be sown several times during the year so it's a good time to get started (if you have not already done so). Early carrots can be sown as well as parsnips.



# WHAT IS MAY DAY?

## Origins of May Day

May Day has its roots in astronomy. We're (about) halfway between the spring equinox and the summer solstice! It's one of the Celtic cross-quarter days, which celebrated the midway points between all solstices and equinoxes of the year.

As with May early holidays, May Day was rooted in agriculture. Springtime celebrations filled with dance and song hailed the sown fields starting to sprout. Cattle were driven to pasture, special bonfires were lit, and both doors of houses and livestock were decorated with yellow May flowers.

It evolved to speak more to the "bringing in the May" with the gathering of wildflowers and green branches, the weaving of floral garlands, the crowning of a May king and queen, and the setting up of a decorated May tree, or Maypole around which people danced. Such rites originally may have been intended to ensure fertility for crops and, by extension, for livestock and humans, but in most cases this significance was gradually lost, so that the practices survived largely as popular festivities.

## The Maypole Dance

Wrapping a Maypole with colourful ribbons might be the most known tradition that still exists in some schools and towns.

Originally, the Maypole was a living tree brought in from the woods with much merrymaking. Ancient Celts danced around the tree, praying for good crops and fertility. For younger people, there was the possibility of courtship. If paired by sundown, the courtship continued so that the couple could get to know each other and married weeks later on June's Midsummer's Day. This is how the "June Wedding" became a tradition.

In the Middle Ages, all villages had Maypoles. Towns would compete to see who had the tallest or best Maypole. Over time, this Old English festival incorporated dance performances, plays, and literature. People would crown a "May Queen" for the day's festivities.

The strict Puritans of New England considered the celebrations of May Day to be licentious and pagan, so they forbade its observance.

However, the Maypole dance became a common rite of spring at colleges from the late 19th century through the 1950s. Seen as a wholesome tradition, this celebration of ten included class plays, Scottish dancing, Morris dancing acappella concerts, and various cultural dancing and music displays.

In the 1960s and 1970s, interest waned; the May Queen and her court became more of a popularity contest. Today the Maypole dance is mainly celebrated in schools as a fun spring tradition and sometimes medieval festival.

## So What Does "Mayday" Mean?

The term "Mayday" is not related to the "May Day" spring festival, but instead comes from the French phrase M'aidez, which means "Help me". If you hear "Mayday" repeated three times, it is an urgent distress call of the highest order. To signal that you need help but are not in a life-threatening situation, repeat the phrase "Pan-pan" three times when calling for assistance.

So now you know all about May Day. As colts and calves kick up their heels, seedlings seek the sun, and birds call for mates, we humans may join their revels for one day: during spring's "May Day" festival. Even serious-minded folks can put work aside to enjoy Nature's exuberance.

