



WEETING VILLAGE LIFE



June 2021
Edition 34



Keep You On A-Wombling Folks!



The Parish Council would like to thank all our Weeting Wombles who help to keep the village free of litter and any small fly-tipping.

If anyone would like to join their happy band, please contact one of the councillors listed on page 9 in order to be provided with rubbish bags, gloves, hoops, pick-sticks and high visibility jackets, along with safety information and details about where to leave the full bags.

Village Re-cycling

Do you ever wonder what happens to the contents of the bottle and clothing banks near the Bowls Club? Well, they are weighed every time the banks are emptied and each year Breckland District Council pay the Parish Council the value of the total collected.

This money can then be used towards any projects within the village, such as replacing play equipment.

This year, from 1st April 2020 to 31st March 2021, the total raised was **£2,106.56**, so WELL DONE EVERYONE and keep re-cycling your glass and clothing!



Editor's Contact Details:

Sue Nairn
Sixpenny Tithe
Park View
Weeting, IP27 0QD



01842 810212
wvl@btinternet.com



Editor's note:

A list of the clubs and organisations in the village can be found in the centre pages of Weeting Village Life along with details of who to contact if you would like to make enquiries. Most of the clubs have room for more of you to come along, so have a look and see if anything takes your fancy!



Weeting Village



Quest

Solve the Clues



Follow the map



Win a prize



Enter a team for only **£5.00 per family** on **Saturday 21 August**

The Quest begins at **St Mary's Church 2.00pm.**

Prizes will be awarded to the fastest 3 teams and a raffle drawn at 4.00pm.

Refreshments will be available from 3.00pm – 4.30pm

See Rector's Report on page 8 for further details

Thank You John

Over the past few years, John Reay has been a familiar figure around the village as he went about his role as Handyman for Weeting Parish Council, picking up litter, fixing fences on the Play area and a host of other tasks. He has decided to take more time for himself and has now left the Parish Council's employ.



We would like to thank him for his many years of working for the village and wish him all the best in his future endeavours. Thank You John for all that you have done.

To book the Village Hall for meetings, parties or other social functions, contact Angie Page on 01842 814147



School Report



In Chestnut Class we have been learning about lots of different superheroes. The children thought about what makes someone a superhero. After listening to the story "The Snail and the Whale" the children identified that a superhero helps people when they have a problem. The snail helped rescue the whale when he got stuck on the sand. The children used playdough and clay to make their very own snails.



The children listened to the story "Superworm" and then made their very own Superworms. They used words like "super long", "super stretchy" and "super wiggly" to describe what Superworm looked like.



The children have been getting busy in their garden this term. The school received a huge box of seeds and plants from our "Field to Fork" EDP token collection and the children have enjoyed planting out strawberries, tomatoes and



In Beech Class we have been focusing on Kenya and learning all about Africa as a continent. The children have also found out we have seven continents and five oceans. We have written our own stories based on Handa's Surprise using our knowledge of apostrophes, adverbs and



We have also been studying traditional African art and the children have created their own patterns,



African masks, Maasai necklaces and a silhouette painting of the Savannah.

In RE this term we have been learning about Pentecost and how the apostles were filled with the Holy Spirit that enabled them to speak about



God in every different language leading to 3000 people being baptised in a single day! We threw a



birthday party for the Church to celebrate this event and made decorations.

Beech Class continued to challenge themselves in Maths as we learnt about fractions and found out how to find $\frac{1}{4}$, $\frac{1}{2}$ and $\frac{1}{3}$ in shapes and amounts. We have also learnt to count in fractions!



In Oak Class we have been focusing on Elizabethan England. The children have been writing letters, in both informal and formal styles, in the roles of Elizabeth I and Shakespeare.



The class have been reading the plays Romeo and Juliet, Hamlet and Macbeth and then using scenes from the plays to support learning in History, Art and Geography. The children have created diary extracts, imagining themselves as a noble character living in Elizabeth I's court and meeting Shakespeare.



In History the class have thoroughly enjoyed learning facts about the reign of Elizabeth I, finding out about exploration and trade in the Elizabethan era and the attack of the Spanish Armada. The children have been researching their own information about Sir Walter Raleigh, Sir Francis Drake and life in Elizabethan times.



Over Easter, the whole school community took part in the Diocese of Ely Lent Challenge around the theme of "hope". Based on the theme of Captain Sir Tom Moore's 100 steps challenge, each class identified 25 sponsored challenges ranging from singing songs to bouncing on trampolines! As a result of the children's hard work, friends and families very generous sponsorship and a donation from Weeting Parish Council we have raised an amazing £1262.00. The children have chosen to create a memorial garden to remember the difficult times we have all encountered during the Covid pandemic and to remember Captain Sir Tom Moore. Weeting Parish Council have very kindly donated a piece of ground on Parrot's Piece to the children and we are aiming to start digging and planting to create a special space for all our village community to enjoy.



We have undergone some big changes over the last couple of months at the pre-school. We would like to thank the staff who have left us for their hard work over the many years they have devoted to the setting. We wish them all the best in their next endeavours!

We would also like to thank the families of the pre-school for their patience and support over that unsettled period.

We are excited to welcome a new management team, who are already making some exciting changes and developments!



The children have had lots of fun planting strawberries, broad beans and sunflower seeds and have been learning how to care for these plants and seeds.



There have been lots of mini beast hunts, painting pictures of mini beasts and creating a brilliant bug hotel for them to live in!

Jack and the beanstalk and The Very Hungry Caterpillar have been very popular stories during these topics and the children have enjoyed re-telling them!

Over the May half term, the children took part in a sponsored "Ready Steady Listen" listening to as many stories as they could to raise money to buy new equipment for the setting. Thank you to every who took part!

We have spaces available for 2, 3 and 4 year olds, please call 07027 690968 for more information.

We are looking for new committee members and a new committee chairman. If you are interested in supporting the pre-school in either of these roles, please contact a member of the committee via email treasurer.weetingpreschool@hotmail.co.uk

Our AGM will be held at Weeting Village Hall on Monday 19th July at 7.30pm.

CLUB SPOTLIGHT



Plans for our next performance at the Brandon Festival in August are well underway. Despite the cold, wet and windy weather in recent weeks we started holding socially distanced

rehearsals on our usual Tuesday evenings in an open barn, where four of our younger members have been learning a dance choreographed by our very own Mia McDonald.



Now the weather is warmer and the daylight hours longer a few more members are meeting in an outdoor setting to rehearse a song and a sketch that will both be performed at the Brandon Festival. Why not come along on 21st August to see the polished versions on stage and to visit our children's games and information stall where you can chat to some of our members and find out more about our group.

Shoestring's next pantomime is still planned to take place in early 2022 and we are now recruiting children from age 11 upwards and adults to join our group to take part in any way from acting through technical sound and lighting, set, props and costume design to front of house and stage management roles.

Our usual rehearsal venue is the IES School in Crown Street, Brandon, where we are hoping to return shortly for our 7pm – 10pm time slot each Tuesday. We are waiting to hear if the school will allow this before the summer holiday break. However, if you have an interest in amateur theatre, please do get in touch now and we will start your enrolment as soon as we recommence rehearsals at the school.

For more information contact our Secretary on 07985 376465 or email shoestringsecretary@hotmail.com.

ART FOR PLEASURE

The sun has finally made an appearance as if to confirm better days ahead. Mother Nature appears to have shaken her fist at us and made us sit up and think more about this wonderful world we live in.

In our art group we try to replicate the beauty around us by painting, flowers, trees, birds and animals. We even appreciate what the human race has achieved with designing and building splendid ships, cars and buildings. We are proud of some of our pictures, but we have not had the chance during lock-down to enjoy the company and friendship that painting in the village hall gave us.



Hopefully we will be able to start meeting again in the village hall on Thursday 1st July at 10.30 am. We should be able to bring in summer flowers from our gardens to sketch and paint with the help and encouragement of our friends again.

I personally would like to express my thanks to all the younger members in the villages who worked throughout the pandemic, the postmen and women; the supermarket delivery drivers; the farm workers; and countless others who provided our essential needs while we isolated ourselves. Not forgetting the NHS who were fighting the virus.

So, although we are mainly pensioners meeting every Thursday morning, we welcome any age group that would like to enjoy drawing and painting in a friendly group. Whether you have painted before or always wanted to give it a try, come along. Our members are of mixed ability, some never having painted before they joined. We work in a variety of mediums, but we mostly enjoy the friendly encouragement we get from each other.

Further details can be obtained from:-

Beryl Pountney, Club Secretary – Tel no. 01842 828750

Terry Kimpton, Club Chairman – Tel no. 01842 819732

Weeting All Star Performers

Hi everybody, you know I think I say this every time but isn't the time flying by again? Here we are in June already, although I did write this report at the end of May when the weather was bad, so I am hoping that as you read this you are all sitting in the garden sunning yourselves.



We have been through some awful times haven't we, but I am sure, just like me, you are now feeling much safer because you have had your jabs - hooray for the government and the clever scientists. How lucky we are that we live in this country where we have people in power who are doing their best to look out for us - not everything

right, but they try.

Anyway, on to the WASPs. We, of course, will be the last ones to get back to normal because of the close contact, both with our actors and more especially our wonderful audience as without them we cannot function. We have kept going all through last year and this by using "Zoom" in which we have sung songs and read through old scripts and now new skits which we hope to use in the next production.



With that in mind we are hoping to start rehearsals at the end of this month with a view to having a show sometime in September. All this of course is what will happen during the following months with the virus, but nothing ventured nothing gained so we are going to give it a go.



We have been lucky in as much as the Tesco "Bags for Help" fund finished just as our group was to take part, so this year Tesco wrote to Karen our treasurer to say they had awarded us with some monies and now we are going to use that to upgrade our sound system.

So, as you have all been doing very little and seeing so few friends and neighbours for months, and now with things taking a turn for the better as long as we are careful, how about coming to the village hall on a Friday evening and joining in with us? We are a friendly group and we welcome everybody and if you have never been on a stage - no problem! Neither had we before we joined, but we laugh and have fun as that is what we are all about - to have fun and to give fun and to make our audience laugh.

So do not forget, Weeting Village Hall every Friday evening from end of June - time 6.30 pm onwards. Come and have a chat.

Carole



are looking for new members aged 11+

Do you like to act, sing and dance?

If you do, then Shoestring Theatre Company could be the place for you

We meet every Tuesday evening, put on 2 shows each year and appear at other events in the town

Contact our Secretary for more information
shoestringsecretary@hotmail.com
07985 376465



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CLUB SPOTLIGHT



As you may know COVID-19 has had a real impact on our Society, as it has on many others, what with not being able to put on a Christmas Panto in 2020 or a Spring production this year.

We hope things are on the way to getting back to some sort of normality and we will be glad when we get back to putting on shows for the community as we have missed you all.

We had planned to put on The Little Mermaid panto in Nov/Dec 2020 but it was felt that with all the uncertainty surrounding social distancing etc making this very difficult to rehearse safely we now hope to be performing this Nov/Dec 2022. Over the last couple of months, the committee have had some very 'interesting'



Zoom meetings to discuss what we will be doing in the future, we do hope that everyone will be happy to get together again soon.

Members and the committee have been adding material to the HATS Facebook Page and trying to keep in contact with our members to keep the interest going.

Our plans for Spring 2022, is to put on a kind of 'welcome back' variety/ talent show. The details haven't been properly discussed yet and we plan to get together for a 'face to face' committee meeting when it is safe for us to do so to finalise everything.

As with most societies and businesses, we have still been paying for things like NODA membership, insurance etc so it would be nice to be able to put money back into the account to cover these necessary expenses.

So, fingers crossed that all our plans go ahead and we can get back into the Hockwold village hall and be entertaining everyone once again! In the meantime, please check out our website to see pictures of our past shows and look out for any updates. <https://www.hockwoldamateurtheatricalsociety.com>

Hope to see you all soon,



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CLUB SPOTLIGHT

Fengate Art – Exhibition Update

I am sure everyone in the village is saddened by the news that this year's Steam Engine Rally has had to be cancelled. However, this year's Art Exhibition is still scheduled to take place on Sunday 18th July 2021 at Weeting Village Hall.

Throughout the year, Fengate Art students have embraced the lockdown opportunities that the time has afforded and continued to work at their art, without the help that lessons would have provided in the past, achieving the high standard of work for which they have become famed.

This year sees the 21 year Exhibition to be held by the students, displaying a variety of mediums and a wide range of subjects and is the highlight of the students' academic year before the summer break.

A great deal of care has been organised to ensure everyone is safe, for both students and visitors alike and, given the restrictions that are in place on the day, will probably still require visitors to be checked at the door on entry, where, if the tests are negative, everyone will be welcome. At this stage it is thought too that masks will still be worn and, in that case, no-one will be allowed into the hall without one. I am sure social distancing will still be the order of the day too.

To mark this special occasion, the exhibition will include two demonstrations on "How to Use Acrylics", with help and advice if required. Details will be on the posters and entrance to the exhibition will be Free of Charge. There will be a number of money raisers going on all day which will include a very large raffle and also the opportunity to make donations to our chosen cause which this year is the Stroke Unit Support Group at the West Suffolk General Hospital. Those who are still in the Hall at the end of the day are advised of the amount of the money raised, although we do accept donations which sometimes arrive after the event.

However, it is only after the Government's advice to all of us whether the rules will see the end of the restrictions or not on June 21 and we must all wait and see what happens. Should their decision be in our favour all our plans will be put in hand, including extensive advising. But, if the restrictions have to be extended for a few more weeks (I hope not) the only consolation will be that it will be for the safety of all of us, and our exhibition will be postponed. Fingers crossed!

Rosemary Jacob



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Memories of a Weeting Childhood

By John Holledge

My dad ran the village store and post office for many years. On a Saturday I would deliver boxes of groceries to people in the village on my trade bike, my little terrier dog would run alongside on the outward journey but would ride back to the shop in the basket. He would lean to the right or left as we went round corners much to the amusement of people on the roadside. Sometimes he would spot a cat and that was it – he would bail out of the basket, hit the ground running and give chase as the cat ran away. However, not all cats would run away - sometimes there would be a stand off and quite often Terry would get a hiding and would come home with a bloodied nose. He would sit in his basket and sulk until the next time and then he would do it again. On a day trip to Hopton on Sea, he would stick his head out of the car window to sniff the air and on one occasion, he spotted a cat on the footpath. He immediately bailed out of the car, but soon found he could not run at 50 miles an hour! My dad looked in the rear-view mirror and saw him turning somersaults in the road behind. The cat just walked off when we stopped to pick Terry up – he had lost quite a bit of hair and would not need his claws clipping for some time, but apart from that he was not too bad and lived to fight another day (and this he certainly did)!

Always being interested in making things, I used to do fretwork shapes from plywood using plans I bought from HOBBIES of East Dereham. There were all sorts of shapes and things to make. I did most of this in my bedroom and my mother used to get mad about all the sawdust over everything. I clamped the plywood to the windowsill to enable me to cut out jigsaw puzzles, but, unfortunately, I cut into the windowsill and curtains as well and this was the last straw! My father had a shed made for me by Mr Armsby, a carpenter in the village, where I could do my sawing in peace; I still have that shed and it is as good as ever even though it is now 65 years old.

If you think aircraft today are noisy flying from Lakenheath over the village doing circuits and bumps and other training exercises, you aint heard nuffing! In 1953 we were blessed with the presence of the world's biggest

bomber, the Convair B36j. A monster of a machine, it had six piston engines and four jet engines, its propellers were 19 feet in diameter and at full power the tips of the blades could break



the sound barrier and produce a howling roar that could be heard for miles, plus sound waves would shake windows, Venetian blinds would rattle and vibrations could cause items to fall off shelves. Because of a silly design fault, the engine would sometimes overheat and catch fire and this happened to one aircraft returning to base at Lakenheath. It flew round and round the village trying to use up remaining fuel, smoke pouring from one engine and waiting for the runway to be foamed, then landed safely and the fire was quickly put out. The USAF had 380 of these monster aircraft in service and they could reach any target on earth without having to refuel, but not enough fuel to come back if the distance was too great. The idea was to fly out, do the business, bail out, let the plane crash and the crew would take their chances. Thank God this didn't happen and they were never used in anger. Their greatest loss was due to a tornado that wrecked 50 planes on the ground, many of which were repaired, but the end had come for such a giant, slow aircraft and their place was taken by the much faster and smaller all jet engine B47. Many American families lived in the village and the children attended Weeting School.

Thank you Alan

Several months ago, during some stormy winds, the flagpole on top of St Mary's Church, Weeting, broke its moorings and collapsed to one side.



Anyone who has had the privilege of ascending the tower will know just how much of an effort it is to get onto the roof, but, thanks to Alan York, the flagpole is secure again and the Union Flag is flying proudly once more.

Unfortunately, there was no wind on the day I took this photo!

Helping To Save Lives

CPR



Step-by-step

Performing CPR while waiting for medical assistance can greatly increase a person's chance of survival from cardiac arrest.

FREE CPR COURSE

Wednesday 7th July
8pm
Weeting Village Hall

Contact Naomi To Book Your Space

Gaynor's Walk All Over Cancer Update

In our last Village News, I wrote an article about my daughter Gaynor who was diagnosed with cancer a year ago last March. She walked in excess of 10,000 steps every day during March 2021 to get some money for the Cancer Research Fund. I am very glad to say that, through her family, neighbours and friends, she raised £681. She is most grateful to all who gave and in particular to a gentleman called Peter who came to my door with a donation on behalf of his wife.



Gaynor is still receiving treatment, but we are very pleased to report her doctors are very pleased with her progress.

She is a very busy lady using all of her time as a seamstress and over the last year has been inundated with work, from Bridal dresses to Prom dresses, together with alterations to trousers, skirts, drapes and curtains etc. The picture shows her having a rest in the garden during this very nice weather.

Carole Wilkins

WEETING VILLAGE HALL NEWS

Hi everyone, so here we are halfway through another year, and at long last we are able to open the doors to the Village Hall. By the time you read this most of the clubs and groups should be back in the hall, so welcome back everyone hope you are enjoying your meetings and making the most of the nice clean bright areas in the hall again.

Some clubs have fallen by the wayside and have disbanded so there are some slots that are now readily available for anyone wishing to hold a regular gathering. Or do you wish to join any of our wonderful groups? Contact details can be found in this magazine plus write ups about the various groups – We have quite an assortment from Art, Judo, Knit & Natter, Weeting All Star Performers, Street Dancing, Line Dancing, Carpet Bowls, to name but a few and we are always looking for new members to join in.

Due to COVID 19 pandemic, the Village Hall Committee have not been able to meet and are long overdue for an Annual General Meeting, once we are able to organise one, we hope that some new members will come forward and join us to help keep this lovely hall open.

On behalf of Village Hall Committee
Karen Scott, Treasurer

CLUB SPOTLIGHT

What's Happening At FIT CAMP With Naomi?

We have had a very busy few months playing catch up after COVID but we are so HAPPY to be back out on the field, come rain or shine, enjoying fitness together again. We have been so lucky to be able to return to outside group exercise and it has been wonderful to see old and new members having fun whilst getting fit. We have been building up our stamina all over again and getting back to a variety of fun filled workouts.

Alongside our normal training, some members, have been taking part in group training walks as we have our 50km Broads Walk Challenge to get ready for. Some have fundraised for amazing charities to walk the 30+ miles and we are all very excited to be taking part. It's great to look forward and hope to book onto other group events and fundraising activities very soon.

Finally, FIT CAMP is leading a FREE CPR training course in the village. It's so important to be able to get as many local people involved and take away a tool that is crucial to helping save lives. The course is open to all and if you wish to book a space (as they are limited) please feel free to pop me a message on 07506 246786. If we see this is a popular course, we hope to run it again later in the year.

Post Script:

Here are photos of our intrepid Broad Walkers, taken before and after the event. We all finished - a few sore bodies, but a huge sense of achievement.



Molly Edwards

1928 - 2021



It is with great sadness that we learned of the death of Mrs Molly Edwards who passed away peacefully in West Suffolk Hospital on June 3rd 2021, aged 92 years..

Molly was born in Tivetshall in South Norfolk in 1928 and married her husband, Eric, in 1957, eventually moving to Weeting and having her children, Sandra, Colin and Lorraine. They first lived in one of the railway cottages, then The Towers and finally moved into Park View over 50 years ago, with Molly working as a driver for Vic Grass' taxi service for some time. Sadly, her daughter, Lorraine, died at the tender age of 19 years in 1987.

She will be remembered by many of Weeting's residents for her involvement with the Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal, raising funds to support our serving and ex-service men, women and their dependents and she worked tirelessly every year ordering, distributing and accounting for all the poppies and wreaths sold in this area, finally retiring in 2016. She was also the Standard Bearer for the local Women's section and had attended the Festival of Remembrance at the Royal Albert Hall as a spectator.



The private family funeral will take place on Monday 28th June 2021 at Breckland Crematorium, although flowers are welcomed and donations for the Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal may be made online at www.markskinnerfunerals.org.uk, or sent to Mark Skinner Funeral Service, London Road, Brandon, IP27 0EW, telephone 01842 810534.

The cortege will leave from Park View at approximately 10.15am if anyone wishes to pay their respects along the route.

Molly will be greatly missed by all her family and friends.

Rector's Report

Isn't it great to see the sun and feel the warmth after such a wet and chilly May? The garden is springing to life – a riot of both colour and of course the ever present weeds which need attention. We all feel like we've emerged from hibernation, even though we're not yet out of the Covid woods.

Yesterday the St Mary's Parish Parochial Council [PCC] had our first face to face meeting since the first lockdown. Zoom had been a great blessing in keeping people connected but how lovely it was to meet in person, with a cuppa and a biscuit and share ideas and plans for the future.

First, a brief update on the building. We now have permission from the Diocese to go ahead and repair the main porch which has been closed for some time as the ceiling is dangerous with falling plaster. The cost of this work is over £6,000 so we need to source grant money in order to be able to afford to proceed with the repair and this is a 'work in progress'. Hopefully, a couple of the grant bodies will help out soon so that we can go ahead with the work and have a functional main entrance to the church once more. The **National** Church of England – what I call "Church Central" may be well resourced financially, however this 'resourcing' does not extend to the grass roots, especially rural parishes so we do have to be proactive in locating the funds to effect even basic repairs to country churches such as ours. And we are not alone – this is a huge problem for rural parishes nationally. Norfolk Churches Trust have just launched a pilot scheme to assist struggling rural parishes such as ours with advice regarding maintenance and sourcing grants for repairs and I'm glad to say that our Benefice has been chosen as one of the two 'pilot' groups. Weeeting hopefully will benefit from the advice offered and hopefully the porch repair will form part of this scheme.

The PCC are really keen to take up where we left off last March when the first lockdown scuppered our plans for an Easter Coffee morning at the Bowls Club following on from the fantastic Valentine's Quiz night last February when the Village Hall was packed to the rafters. They have come up with a number of plans for some community social events starting on the afternoon of **Saturday August 21st from 2-5pm** with a "Village Quest" – a kind of teams 'time trial' hunt for 'clues' around the village. May the best team of detectives win! Jo Nordan has produced a poster ad for this WVW edition giving details. This should be a fun afternoon for family teams or groups of friends racing to solve all the mysteries – first teams over the line scoop the prizes. There will be refreshments – lots of cake – and a raffle. Start and finish at St Mary's Church.

In September we're planning a **Mad Hatter's Tea Party at the Bowls Club on Saturday 25th September from 2-5pm**. There will be a range of usual and unusual tea and coffee blends plus 'cream teas' with plenty of sandwiches, scones and cakes – all homemade. There will be a competition for the 'maddest' hat and a monster raffle. There will be a **Quiz night** in October – Covid variants permitting – in the village hall run by Paul and Sue Garland. There will be a hearty supper and bumper raffle and the evening will be themed around Harvest and Halloween. The date – a Saturday in late October hopefully will be confirmed. We also have some ideas for Christmas – see the next edition of WVW for more details.

Church and Grounds spruce up morning

The Church and grounds have been looking a bit tired and tatty after being locked down for so long. The PCC are proposing to have a parish 'spruce up' morning on **Saturday 10th July from 9-12am**, disposing of rubbish and giving everything a good deep clean. There will be refreshments for dusty workers – tea, coffee, squash and of course plenty of cake to fuel hungry workers. It would be great if a few extra people could come along and volunteer to give the church and grounds a good bit of 'spit and polish' even for an hour or so.

I hope everyone has a wonderful summer, even if we're taking 'staycations' this year. Keep safe all and I'm really looking forward to seeing many of you at some of our Summer/Autumn events this year.

Every blessing

Joan Horan
Rector St Mary's



St Mary's Church



Rector: Joan Horan (Tel: 01842 828034)
Churchwardens: Julianne Young (Tel: 01842 813581)
Tommy Saward (Tel: 01842 813601)

Regular services are as follows:

Second Sunday of the month: Service of The Word @ 11am
Third Sunday of the month: Eucharist @ 11am



MOBILE LIBRARY

15th July 2021
12th August 2021
9th September 2021

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Parish Council Notes

Since the last edition of Weeting Village life, the Parish Council has continued to hold its meetings using ZOOM, a Computer Application that allowed us to all "meet", each of us being in our homes. The legislation which was one of the emergency provisions to enable Councils to meet in this manner came to an end at the beginning of May. We had anticipated that all the Regulations etc. would have come to an end on the 21st June, so we had adjusted our meeting dates to allow us meet face to face without having to maintain the Covid Social Distancing and other rules governing the conduct of meetings. So, after our last meeting in April we set the date for the next Parish Council Meeting to take place on the 24th June. We now know that we will still have to conform to the Covid regulations covering Public Meetings and despite this, we are looking forward to being able to meet face to face once again!

Many of you will be aware that back in 2019 Dignity Funerals submitted a Planning Application for a Crematorium with Memorial Garden, Car Park etc. in ten acres of land in the Northwest corner of Mill Farm at Weeting. Breckland District Council refused this application on several grounds including need in June 2020. Subsequently, Dignity submitted an appeal against this decision to the Planning Inspectorate. This Appeal was heard by the Planning Inspector, Guy Davies BSc(Hons) DipTP MRTPI over four days starting on the 27th April. Both Dignity Funerals and Breckland District Council had engaged Barristers to put the cases forward and the various experts of both sides were examined. The Decision of the Planning Inspector was delivered on the 1st June and the appeal was dismissed. The Planning Inspector decided that the need had not been established and that it would be of limited benefit locally as there were other Crematoria within reasonable distance. Additionally, it would cause significant harm to the landscape and the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside.

Currently, there is an application pending submitted by Tavalera Developers for 140 dwellings on land on Mill Farm. It is unlikely that this application will be decided on before the Autumn as additional information was required of the Developers.

Also pending is the application for 76 dwellings on land to the east of Lynn Road. This is an amendment to an application for 54 dwellings was granted.

On the 20th May an application (3PL/2021/0652/F) was submitted for three new dwellings to be built on land at New Lodge which is the house next to the school. This application can be viewed on the Breckland District Council website.



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?? Who's Who ??

Weeting Parish Councillors

Cllr Margaret Burlingham	01842 811177
Cllr Tom Childerhouse	01842 811469
Cllr Clodagh Drewry	01842 815073
Cllr Margaret Lister (V-Chair)	01842 810467
Cllr Mike Nairn (Chair)	01842 810212
Cllr Sue Nairn	01842 810212
Cllr Sarah O'Donnell	01842 550603
Cllr Bernard Smith	07985 902188

- Please contact Margaret for street lighting problems
tjchilderhouse@btconnect.com
clobagh-drewry@hotmail.co.uk
margaretlister11@gmail.com
mike.nairn@btinternet.com
sue.nairn@btinternet.com
sarah.odonnell28@gmail.com
bernardsmith7@btinternet.com

Weeting Parish Clerk

Mrs Pauline Angus 07392 004834

clerk@weetingparishcouncil.org.uk
50 Brecklands, Mundford, Norfolk, IP26 5EG

Breckland District Councillor

Cllr Sam Chapman-Allen 01953 688522
Cllr Robert Kybird 01842 753132

sam.chapman-allen@breckland.gov.uk
robert.kybird@breckland.gov.uk

Norfolk County Councillor

Cllr Fabian Eagle 07450 679838

fabian.eagle@norfolk.gov.uk

Member of Parliament

Mrs Elizabeth Truss 020 7219 3000
House of Commons
SW1A 0AA

elizabeth.truss.mp@parliament.uk

LOCAL CLUBS AND ORGANISATIONS

CLUB	CONTACT	LOCATION	DAY AND TIME
Adult's & Children's Street Dancing	Micha 07841 474400	Village Hall	Monday 4.30 - 6.30pm. Wednesday 4.00 - 7.30pm. Thursday 6.00 - 9.15pm
Art For Pleasure	Beryl Pountney 01842 828750	Village Hall	Thursday 10.30am – 12.30pm
Bingo	Angie Page 01842 814147	Village Hall	Tuesday Open at 6.30pm Eyes down at 7.00 - 9pm
Brandon & District Classic Vehicle Club	John Maxim 01842 811032	The Ram Brandon	2nd Monday 7.30pm
Brandon & District Camera Club	Denise Whiting 01842 862079	Baptist Church Brandon	Alternate Wednesdays 7.30pm
Brandon & District Society of Model Engineering	Dave Moore 01842 811996	The Ram Brandon	1st Wednesday 7.30pm
Brandon Speaker's Club	Gary Sander 01842 814679	Function Room, The Ram Brandon	2nd & 4th Wednesday 7.00-9.30pm
Carpet Bowls	Heather 01842 815406	Village Hall	Friday 10.00 – 12 midday
Children's Dodgeball	Sam 07944 531757	Village Hall	Monday 5.00 - 6pm
Feltwell Golf Club	Denise Whiting 01842 862079	Feltwell Golf Club	
Green Bowls	Sue Windget 01842 812094 Carol Newman 01842 815089	Bowls Club	Friday 6.00 – 10pm Sunday 12 midday – 4.00pm
Gun Club	Andy Goldsmith 01953 886501	Weeting Gun Club	Alternate Sunday January to October
HATS	Gary Sander 01842 814679	Hockwold Cricket Pavillion	Tuesday & Thursday 7.30 - 9.30pm (during rehearsal periods)
History Group	Julianne Young 01842 813581	Various - call to check location	Last Thursday 7.30pm
Indoor Archery	Mike 07894 904090	The Dome, Mildenhall	Saturday 12.30 - 3.30pm
Judo	Donna 07738 381970	Village Hall	Saturday 10 - 12midday All ages – novices welcome
Keep Fit	Dorothy Kent 01842 810378	Village Hall	Monday 10.00– 11am (except Bank Holidays)
Knit & Natter	Vivien Muir 01842 810003 Doris O'Grady 01842 812323	Village Hall	Last Monday of the month (or previous week if a Bank Holiday)2.00 – 4.00pm
Line Dance	Rita Thompson 01842 815550	Village Hall	Friday 2.00 - 4.pm
Methwold Theatre Club	01366 727526	The 21 Room St George's Complex Methwold	Tuesday 7.30pm
Model Car	John Abbott 01366 385452	Village Hall	Alt. Wednesday 7.00 - 9pm
Pool	Carol Newman 01842 815089	Bowls Club	Tuesday 7.00pm
St Mary's Church	Julianne Young (Churchwarden) 01842 813581	St Mary's Church	See list of Service times
Shoestring Theatre Company	Jill Hopper. 07985 376465	IES Breckland School Crown Street, Brandon	Tuesday 7.00 - 10.00pm
Thetford Singers	Sue Naim 01842 810212	Methodist Rooms Tanner Street Thetford	Wednesday 7.30 – 9.30pm
W.A.S.P.s	Carole Wilkins 01842 550919	Village Hall	Friday 6.00 - 8pm (during rehearsal periods)
Weeting Saxon Football	James Langley 01842 811627 James.langley1990@gmail.com		
Weeting Steam Rally	Wendy Young Rally Co-ordinator 01842 810317		Monday - Friday 9.30am - 2.30pm
Weeting Walkers		Meet at The Saxon pub car park	Tuesday 10am
Weeting Weenies	Marie Stubbins 07960 756455	Village Hall	Wednesday 10.00 – 12 midday (school term time only)

Summer Gardening



I'm writing this article on 4th June, the UK is still under social distancing measures and foreign holidays remain in the distant horizon. Meaning the vast majority of us are once again spending much more time in our gardens. Thankfully the weather has now improved, the frosts of April and wet May long forgotten as our garden plants finally spring into life.

There are almost ¼ more gardeners in the UK now than there were before the pandemic. We've got time on our hands; we're depressed; we want to be connected to life, growth, possibility. This is leading to a series of new gardening trends as people search social media for new ideas. One trend (I've not seen here in Weeting) is Cardening.... the art of gardening in your car! Social media is full of images of cactus and plant pots on dashboards and/or a boot full of flowers. Some people have said that Cardening reduces their 'road rage'. It's not an idea I can see catching on, can you imagine the insurance claims? "Sorry my cactus blocked the view"

One trend I do like is combining crafts with gardening, macramé plant pots for instance. With the shortage of composts, and in particular growbags, I'm using "Plarn" (recycled single use carrier bags cut into strips then crocheted together) to make some tomato planters. I'm not sure the results will be very stylish or insta-worthy but the plants will be happy and I'm reusing something that would otherwise end up in landfill which makes me happy.

In early summer the routine maintenance of feeding, watering and deadheading plants begins. Ensure any trees or shrubs planted in winter are not suffering during dry periods and give them a good soak if necessary. It's also time to think about the seasons ahead, and in preparation for winter colour sow hardy seeds including Sweet Williams, Wallflowers & Pansies. Once any birds have fledged the nest (usually by late July) make the first trim of yew, and leafy hedges such as beech or privet.

Come mid-summer it's really important to keep on top of weeding, feeding deadheading and watering. If you have a pond, keep it aerated and the water level topped up. Remember to use de-chlorinator if using tap water. In dry weather raise the height of your mower blades as longer grass will stay greener. I'm not a believer in watering the lawn (unless it's newly seeded or new turf) due to the amount of water required – even for my small lawn. It's not a bowling green, and any brown, dead patches will recover when it rains. Healthy lawns tend to recover quicker but if it doesn't re-grow I'll simply re-seed a few patches in the autumn.

In late summer, pay attention to ericaceous plants grown in pots such as rhododendrons and azaleas. If the weather is dry feed and water the plants as the flower buds for next spring will be developing. It's also time to take semi-ripe cuttings of a wide range of hardy climbers, shrubs and trees. Semi-ripe cuttings are selected from healthy, undamaged stems from this season's growth. The base of the cutting should be firm whilst the tip is still flexible, take cuttings in the morning to avoid wilting. There are three main types of semi-ripe cuttings however in this article I shall just detail the basic method. Simply use a sharp, clean tool and cut just below a leaf to leave a prepared cutting of 10-15cm (4-6") in length. Immediately put the cuttings into a plastic bag to reduce moisture loss. Remove the lowest leaves and the soft tips from the cutting. Dip the cutting into hormone rooting powder, then insert the cuttings into suitable sized containers filled with seed compost. Water well and allow to drain before placing the container in a greenhouse, or cover with a clear plastic bag, and leave to root in a warm, light position out of direct sunlight. Rooting is quick in summer, however fungus and rots can cause severe losses. Regularly removing diseased material and ensuring good ventilation can help prevent any problems.

However, In Summer the most important job to do is to enjoy your garden; heady scents, glorious colours, an abundance of fruits and vegetables and hopefully more sunshine. What could be more enjoyable and satisfying than surveying the results of your hard work throughout the year?

Rachel Sobiechowski BSc(Hons)

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Weeting Speedwatch How did it all begin?

Several years ago, a young Turkish gentleman was killed on the Weeting bends. About a year later two 19-year-old ladies had to be cut out of their car, in the same place as the previous incident.

As a resident of Peppers Close and a qualified first aider over the 50 plus years of living here I have sadly attended countless numbers of road traffic accidents, now known as road traffic collisions. Apparently, we do not have accidents anymore, only collisions.

To promote safety in our village following the young ladies' collision, I asked the Parish Council about the possibility of setting up a Speedwatch team, after a few months I was informed that this would be allowed. I was notified that I would need set this up and lead the team. This was not what I had envisaged, but someone had to do it. A team of ten volunteers came forward and were trained by the police. We were instructed where to locate, how to operate the cameras, etc and we are still operating over four years later.

It is quite interesting to read the negative comments on social media after we have conducted a Speedwatch session. The comments include the following: "We have placed our signs informing the general public of the Speedwatch monitoring in the wrong position, the signs are too small, we are standing in the wrong position, we are holding the cameras wrong, and we are hiding in the bushes etc." Please be reassured that we are following instruction from our training. We are always looking for new volunteers. If you would like to join our team, please contact the Weeting parish council, full training would be provided.

We have five sites in the village, all identified as potential incident spots, our main one being on the Weeting bends in the 30mph limit, leading directly from a 60mph limit from Brandon. Our findings have shown that many vehicles approaching the Peppers Close junction do so at over 70mph. One driver's speed after slowing down was captured at 76mph. We could assume that their speed on the Brandon to Weeting straight was over 80mph.

In a 30mph limit you can be booked at 35mph and in a 40mph limit at 46mph. If a vehicle pulling out of Peppers Close is hit at 60-70mph, the likelihood is that there would be serious injuries or fatality. At 30-35mph you would still have time to stop.

On the Methwold approach in to Weeting, we recorded a van driver travelling at 77mph in front of the garage in the 40mph limit. From Hockwold in to Weeting the bend tends to slow vehicles entering Weeting down. These speeds entering our village are not acceptable. As drivers no doubt at times we have all exceeded the speed limit but do we all need to reflect on this and reduce our speed thus reducing the risk of harm to our fellow villagers.

Just past the Weeting bends is an extremely dangerous pedestrian crossing approaching from both directions, this is a favourite spot for our enforcement officer who on one occasion booked 116 drivers in a one-hour session.

Our Speedwatch average is 26 drivers per hour, most travelling at over 40mph, usually we find at least two of those drivers live in the village. Come on Weeting residents, you should know better.

In the early days we received rude gestures and sadly some verbal abuse, thankfully nowadays we find that people are more supportive of our cause, and we tend to get many thumbs up and positive comments. The parish council have also supported us further by supplying us with a body cam.

To conclude, hopefully we have encouraged people to slow down and think about their speed whilst travelling through our village and who knows we may have saved the life of one of your friends or loved ones.

The Speedwatch Team

CLUB SPOTLIGHT

Bowls Club



Our bowls season has at last been able to go ahead this with government guidelines in place of course. We are holding in-house competitions which are proving to be a great success and good fun. The Ashill League games are also able to go ahead and we hope we will do well this year. Come to the club for further details or see one of our committee members:

Carol Newman - Treasurer 815089

Sue Windget - Secretary 812094

Whether you would like to bowl or not, we would be happy to see you. Or if you have always fancied having a try, come along and have a go.

We are also planning, hopefully, (Covid permitting) events to take us through to the end of the year.

We have our regular monthly karaokes which are very popular. If you want to take part or just watch, you will enjoy some good entertainment.

24th July - Back by popular demand Marc Jacobs Live. You will be treated to an evening of great entertainment.

7th August - Caribbean night with reggae music. Fancy dress

2nd October - Peaky blinders night

(A not to be missed night). Fancy dress set in the 1820's - 1940's

30th October - prepare yourself for a great fright night of fun (fancy dress)

5th November - bonfire night party with food. Disco (fancy dress). Be inventive

There will be more information to follow for the rest of the year.

We are taking memberships to join our friendly club. You don't have to play bowls to join. You can just enjoy some great evenings or have a quiet drink in our bar. There are friendly staff waiting to greet you and make you welcome. We are open at the moment on Friday evenings. Saturday evenings and Sundays from 12.00 midday and when we have home bowls games.

What are you waiting for, come along and be prepared to have a good time

The committee
Weeting Bowls Club

Calling All Clubs!

If your club would like to submit a report, advertise an event and / or include photographs in the next edition, please contact the editor (details on front page). Similarly, if you wish to add your club to the list in the centre page, or change contact details, days, times, etc. please let the editor know.



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Below are 10 outline maps of Countries (not to scale).
Can you identify them? Answers on page 13



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John said 'There is so much walking information on the web, but it is difficult to find. Walking in Norfolk (part of the Walking in England suite of websites (www.walkinginengland.co.uk) – one for each county in England) has brought it together in one place so whether you are walking from home, or away on holiday, you will be able to find a walk suitable for you'.

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John Harris
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Weeting Steam Engine Rally & Country Show

Fri 16, Sat 17 & Sun 18 July 2021 10am - 4pm



Following an emergency committee meeting with Rally Chairman and Trustees, it is with much sadness in our hearts we announce yet another cancellation of the Weeting Steam Engine Rally & Country Show. The 2021 rally will not be going ahead.

It has not been an easy decision, but with the current situation due to the Indian variant of Covid and talk of the Government lockdown easing possibly being pushed back later than 21st June, along with spiralling costs due to the pandemic and unclear advice from the local council, cancelling is our only option.

We want to be able to put on a good show and these added risks would prevent us from doing so.

We have a duty of care and responsibility and the health and safety of our exhibitors, traders, volunteers and the general public is a priority, especially regarding the concerns of a resurgence of the virus, due to the variant strain and unvaccinated persons.

We are very aware of the added impact our event would have on local services, the NHS and all emergency services and do not want to further stretch their capabilities or put extra strain on anyone involved.

We very much appreciate and congratulate all key workers and their efforts throughout this pandemic, over the past year or so it has changed the way we live our lives and go about normal routines.

Our section leaders are aware of this decision and will shortly be contacting all exhibitors about 2021 entries, with a letter and invitation to exhibit at our 2022 rally.

Traders, Craft and Food stands and Camping will be contacted about your 2021 entries.

Again, this is not the outcome that any of us involved in organising the Rally had hoped for, and we're sure you all feel the same. The decision to cancel has been hard, but as many of you are aware this past year has very much been out of the ordinary.

We would like to thank you all for being patient with us in making this decision and going forward for next year we hope to come back stronger and better than ever.

We wish you all the very best for the rest of the year and can't wait to see you all in 2022, our Rally being held on 15th, 16th and 17th July 2022.

Yours sincerely,
Trustees of the Weeting Steam Engine Rally.

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(the church on Station Road, Hockwold cum Wilton)
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OPEN DAY

Sunday 04 July 2021

10-4pm

- Come and see our work in the churchyard
- ❖ Discover our future ideas for bringing St Peter's back into community life
- > Hear about our future fund-raising events

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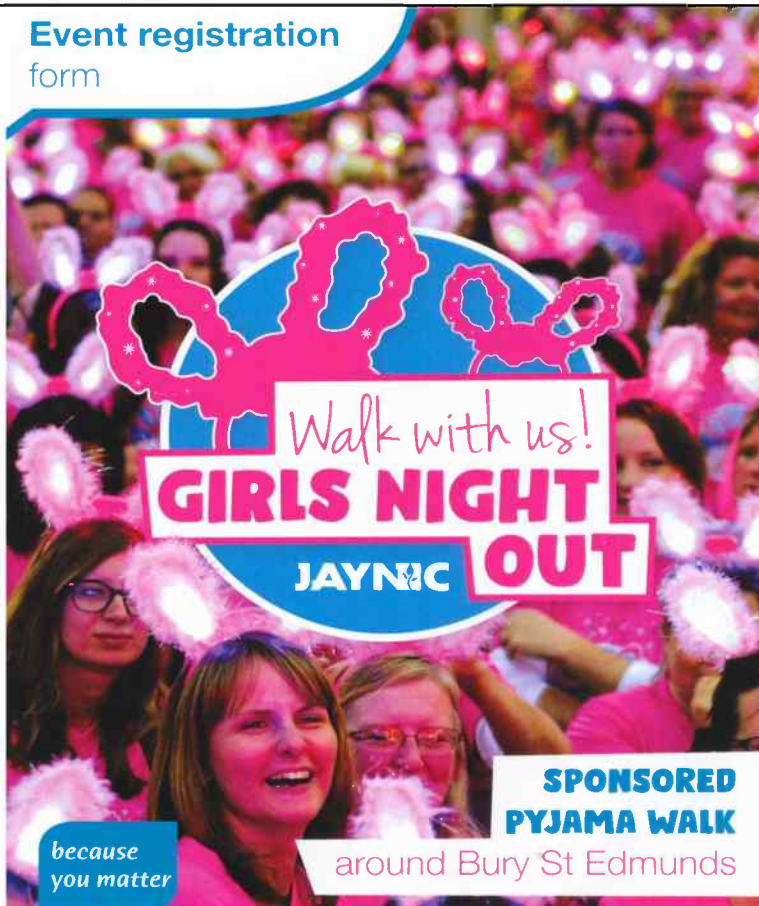
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Saturday 11 September 2021

Editor's Note:



The next edition of Weeting Village Life will be published in **September 2021**. If anyone would like to submit an advertisement, article, photo, etc for consideration to be included, the deadline for receipt by the Editor will be **Friday 27th August 2021**. I look forward to hearing from you.



Just a Reminder

The problem we had a while back with dog mess around the village seems to have improved considerably, but just occasionally there is the odd mishap.

Please make sure you take a plastic poop bag or two when you take your dog out, pick up their mess and put it in one of the many red bins available. The dog walk and castle areas are favourite places for this and please remember that dogs are not allowed on the playing field or children's play area.

Thank you for keeping the village clean.

Animal Warden Services
Service With Action



**Dog fouling is not only unpleasant
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Although we recognise that most owners are responsible and clean up, we are calling on everyone to join our fight against irresponsible dog owners.

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The 3 top excuses...

No 1. "I didn't see my dog foul"

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No 2. "I forgot to bring a poop scoop with me"

You are responsible for your dogs actions and this excuse will not get you out of a ticket.

No 3. "I was going to pick it up on the way home"

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Answers to Picture Puzzle on page 13
1 - Cyprus. 2 - Norway. 3 - USA. 4 - Mexico.
5 - Brazil. 6 - India. 7 - Spain. 8 - Egypt.
9 - Iceland. 10 - Chile.

Weeting Success Story

My name is D M Barton. This is my author name and I'm here to talk about my writing.

I've always enjoyed writing. The earliest story I can remember was about a boy who got lost on the moon and watched rockets flying past. It wasn't very realistic, but you can't expect spot on science-fiction from a young boy. My first completed story was about a secret agent. A clear rip off of James Bond but he did have a robot for a partner.

I guess what sparked my interest in it all was reading the old goosebumps books by R L Stine. Loved reading those growing up. I took a break both from writing and reading until I found a series of books by Keri Arthur. Paranormal books involving vampires, werewolves and witches. That sparked my interest in writing again and I decided to take it seriously and try and make a career out of it.

So, I knuckled down and bounced around from book to book. Not really finishing most of them. Trying to find my perfect place. I wrote and enquired to agents and publishers once I had "finished" stories. It wasn't until I cut down almost half of my favourite book that I got interest.

Going through that process really taught me about my own view on my work. Taking a good look and realising that it's not all perfect. It's not all needed. Helped me see when a work in progress was really finished. Deleting whole scenes and characters was good for the story. Plus, it meant I had a lot of material for the sequel all ready to go.

The thing I love about writing is building something from scratch. Obviously, you pull from your own experiences or places you like to visit. Or places you want to visit. But you build your world the way you want it. Create characters and their personalities. Conflict and friendships. The way you see the story playing out.

The best part is making the big events. The entwining character arcs. These are more fun for me when it involves supernatural elements. Love using creatures that you've probably heard of like vampires and witches. Werewolves and shifters. I've also created some of my own. Slight twists like mindwalkers who can get into people's minds.

Then there are leechers. These beings can leech from a supernatural creature. Getting their strengths but also their weaknesses. Gaining thirst if a vampire hasn't fed in a while. Or having to deal with the beast form of a werewolf on a full moon.

And this is where my character Bethany comes in. Not only do you follow her journey into finding out that the supernatural world is out there. But you also follow her journey in finding out who she is. Mimicking the feelings and emotions that teenagers go through as they find themselves and their place in the world. Using relationships and friendships. All kinds of support to get there. Not to mention some cool action as well.

I've got three books published at the moment with the fourth currently at the publishers. Working on the fifth at home in my spare time. It's truly an amazing feeling seeing your books out there. Hearing positive feedback. Getting excited when you've been sent the new cover art. I've loved this experience so far and hope it keeps going.

That's where the readers come in. So, if you like the supernatural. A kick-arse main character who doesn't back down from a fight. My books are available in paperback from online stores like Amazon. Also, in ebook format for your kindles, tablets and phones.

The leecher chronicles series.

Moonlit Blood
Sunlit Blood
Burning Blood
Drowning Blood (2021)
Dead Blood (2022)

Will happily give any advice people are looking for. Things I've learnt through my experiences. Find me at www.facebook.com/DMBbooks



A Hidden Gem in Our Midst

Norfolk has many hidden gems that often go un-noticed and one of these must be Saint Mary's Parish Church at Houghton on the Hill close to North Pickenham, between Watton and Swaffham.



The church is Grade 1 listed and the only surviving part of a deserted medieval village apart from a nearby farm. There is evidence of habitation in the area as far back as prehistoric times, with Stone Age flint tools and a Bronze Age spearhead being found in nearby fields. The village was also located close to the Peddars Way which was certainly used by the Romans as a trade and military route. Later, there was a large Roman villa in the valley and, possibly, a temple was also located nearby. Many Roman stones and tiles were used in the construction of the church and the shape of the original chancel indicates that it may have been built in Roman times.

The village is mentioned in the Domesday Book and the present nave of the church was built at this time. Experts believe that the church, as it stands today, was built around 1090, although it has had a few alterations over the years, including a south aisle added around 1150 that collapsed in the 14th century and changes to types of windows and the length of the chancel. The original round tower was replaced by the present square one, again probably during the 14th century. In 1630 a wooden pointed steeple, capped in lead, was added, but this blew down in a gale in 1665. A 17th century land terrier records three bells. The fate of one is unknown, a second was sold to Swaffham in 1725 and the third was dismantled to sell for scrap, but thankfully returned later and rang-in the millenium. The church was damaged during the First World War when a bomb from a Zeppelin dropped close to the churchyard.

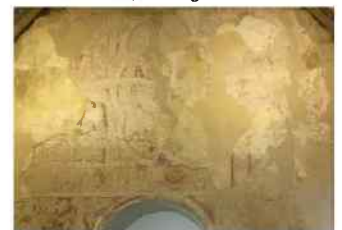
The village was the victim of new farming techniques and gradually the farmworker tenants moved out and their cottages flattened one by one over many years. The last marriage took place in the church in 1922 and services became less frequent after 1929 and by 1945 both church and village were abandoned. The last service was probably one held in 1944 for the USAAF who were stationed at North Pickenham airfield and they had used the tower of St Mary's to guide them home from their sorties.

Gradually ivy and brambles hid the church from view, much of the roof collapsed and danger notices were put up, although the occasional church youth group would tidy up the garden.

The tide turned in 1992 when the local Women's Institute stopped by the overgrown church on one of their regular local rambles. One member, Gloria Davey, was fascinated by the ruins and told her husband, Bob, about it on her return home. He was intrigued enough to visit the site and was shocked by the state of the building and the signs of recent satanic worship there. So, he began a relentless campaign to see the church restored to its former glory.

It was around the same time that Norfolk County Council began a programme of repairs to ruined churches in the county and included St Mary's on its list. The initial repairs to re-roof the building and make it safe were funded by Norfolk County Council, English Heritage and Breckland Council.

In 1995 the repair team noticed that fragments of extensive polychrome wall paintings appeared to survive on the walls and it was soon realised that, having been there for nearly a thousand years, they were going to require a good deal of specialist care. They were actually in remarkable condition, despite the historic structural changes, water ingress, green algae and penetrating ivy and bramble growth. Romanesque wall paintings are very rare and certain aspects of the iconography, particularly that on the east wall depicting the Last Judgement. Over the chancel is a triple mandorla encasing the Holy Trinity with God sitting on his throne holding the crucified Jesus on his lap with a haloed dove, depicting the Holy Spirit, flying above.



Bob Davey sold his antiques business in Swaffham and ploughed all his money into restoring St Mary's. For almost 30 years he attended the site every day, including Christmas Day, working in the building or grounds and welcoming visitors. He undertook much of the physical labour as well as conducting research into the history of the building and its village.

In 1998, St Mary's, together with Windsor Castle (following the fire there) won the prestigious Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors' award for building conservation and in 2005 Bob received the MBE for his work. He also met Princess Margaret and Prince Charles on separate occasions when they visited the church. The Friends of St Mary's Church Trust was founded in 1997 to maintain the building and its grounds and to seek funding to that end. It still acts in that capacity as no other funding is received, despite the church retaining its consecrated status.

Houghton on the Hill is a wonderfully peaceful area and the grounds are a great place in which to sit and relax and enjoy the birdsong, rarely interrupted by any traffic noise. The church is open every day between 2pm and 4pm, Spring to Autumn, and at weekends during the winter. Guides are on duty to tell you about St Mary's remarkable story, if you wish, or you can just view it on your own. Highly recommended.



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