

February 2021

50p

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Editorial



At the time of writing, we are in the first week of a new lockdown. The schools are closed and I'm putting my hand to being a teacher again. Which I admit, I've discovered I'm pretty useless at!

You're probably wondering why the front cover of February's issue has a festive feel – when Christmas is a couple of months behind us. Sarah and I received a wonderful letter from a local resident who wanted to pass on their thanks to the person who decorated a tree during December in Penwood. We soon discovered it was a family in Woolton Hill and upon our discovery the full story unfolded. Other locals added to the tree during the festive period, and an unknown resident even changed the batteries on the lights to keep them shining. The tree touched many locals and brightened many people's moods during their walk to the woods. The story reaffirmed to Sarah and I that we live in such a wonderful community. How lucky we are. We knew straight away that we had to put the special tree on the front cover for you all to see all over again!

I also wanted to draw your attention to the new Cleres' Community Library that a resident has launched on Facebook (full details inside the magazine). It's a new group where you can share information about books, CDs and games you're happy to pass on for free. The idea is that we encourage local sharing of entertainment materials (we no longer need) to help keep us all amused during lockdown. Do check it out.

My thoughts go out to every single one of you. Lockdown 3.0 certainly feels the toughest yet. However, there is hopefully light at the end of the tunnel. Kintbury and Woolton Hill Surgeries started rolling out vaccinations from 11 January. Let's try and keep our chins up and hold onto the hope that the vaccine will work and this time next year life will look very different.

Take care,
Abbie.

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Editor for March 2021

Abbie Dando, Meadowbrook, Woolton Hill,
Newbury, RG20 9AN
SpectrumEditorAbbie@gmail.com Tel 07477987943

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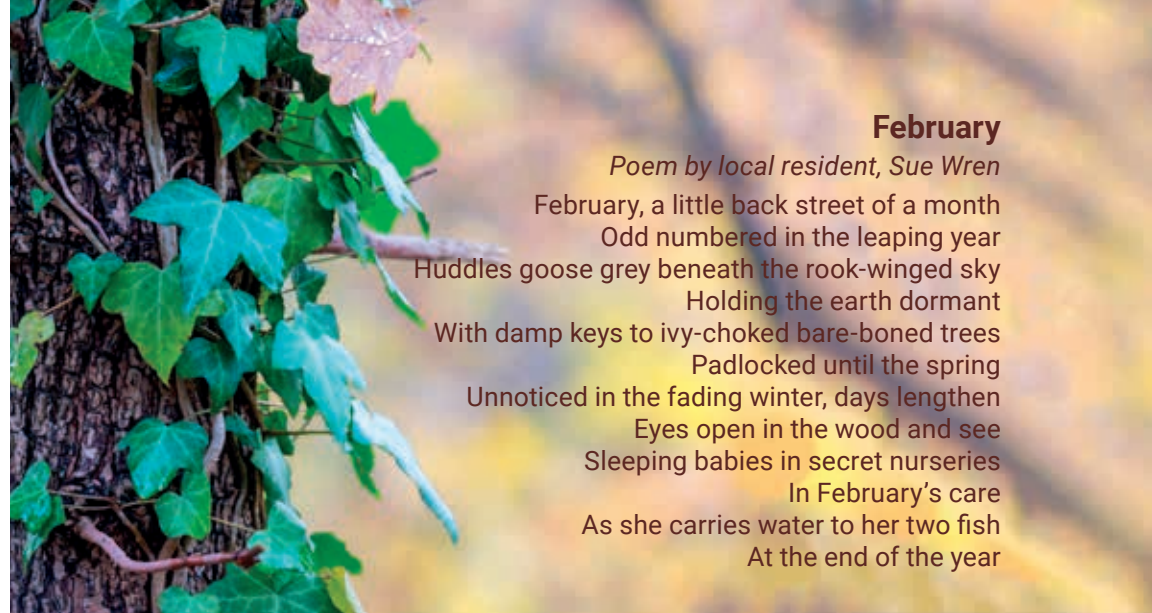
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February

Poem by local resident, Sue Wren

February, a little back street of a month
Odd numbered in the leaping year
Huddles goose grey beneath the rook-winged sky
Holding the earth dormant
With damp keys to ivy-choked bare-boned trees
Padlocked until the spring
Unnoticed in the fading winter, days lengthen
Eyes open in the wood and see
Sleeping babies in secret nurseries
In February's care
As she carries water to her two fish
At the end of the year

Out in the Mud

Poem by local resident, Moyra Harkness

Enjoying a short winter walk,
I'm sure it will do me some good.
But fields are so soggy
And terribly boggy
Which means there is plenty of MUD.
I squelch through the fields- it's so slow,
Be nice to speed up if I could.
My wellies get stuck
So I'm right out of luck
Cemented in inches of MUD!
I wrench free and head for the lanes.
Not squelchy but—Oh!- there's a flood!
I wade in and splash,
Give my wellies a wash
And clean away most of the MUD.
Such slippy leaves cover the paths.
Is it risky to walk through the wood?
I might see a deer
Could a squirrel be there?
Or I might again stick in some MUD!
So, keep to the lane; walk with care.
Avoid fields? I certainly should!
Small puddles are fine,
I've plenty of time,
Just steer well away from the MUD!!





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Kintbury & Woolton Hill Surgeries

COVID Vaccination Program Update

I am pleased to be able to tell you that we will be starting COVID vaccinations during the week commencing the 11th January. At the time of writing, we have not yet had exact confirmation of the dates, but by now many of you should have received your first dose of the vaccine.

Due to the nature of this vaccine, the need to minimise wastage, and the scale of the operation, we have joined forces with eight other Newbury practices including Lambourn and Hungerford and will be delivering the vaccine from the Grandstand building at Newbury Racecourse. We realise this is not as convenient for our patients, in that there will be a need to travel, but because of the delivery logistics and the need to deliver at scale we cannot do this from the surgery at this stage. Neighbourcare have advised us that they can help with transport for appointments for vaccination if required.

As soon as we have confirmation of the dates, we will start calling the first cohort which is the over eighties. Our housebound patients will be vaccinated by us, not the district nurses, and there are plans being drawn up to ensure that these, and also the care home vaccinations, are carried out as quickly as possible.

Please do not call us.

We will call you to book your appointment in order of priority according to the National Criteria which we are unable to deviate from.

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“BIG” Santa raised over £500 for The Children’s Society

IN THE month of December there were some activities that saw our local community raise some money for “The Children’s Society”. This started with the Christingle Service and then continued with Christmas lights and a large Santa being inflated on occasions throughout the month in Harwood Rise! A huge thank you to everyone who gave so generously – read on to hear the total we all reached!

The Christingle Service organised by the team at St Thomas” Church saw many families come together online via Zoom. Some great Christingle creations were made, and we reflected on the Christmas season, the message of the Christingle with Jesus “the light of the world” at the centre and also heard about the work of The Children’s Society. We were encouraged to give to help the work of The Children’s Society.

The Graham family decided that with all the restrictions, meaning some children missed out on organised visits to see Santa, they would bring Santa to the village! Everyone needed a bit of extra cheering up after a tough year, so an inflatable Santa appeared and a few more Christmas lights as well. As part of this activity, they decided to try and add a bit to the collection for The Children’s Society. Taking into account the weather conditions, the Santa was able to go up on three occasions and many, many people enjoyed seeing him during the day and lit up at night! There were lots of other brilliant Christmas lights in Harwood Rise thanks to others making a special effort and all sorts of great displays around the village which people included in their walks. A huge thanks to everyone who came along for some fun with Santa and who gave so generously.

The total that our community raised for The Children’s Society this year with both collections combined was £512.16, which is fantastic – thank you everyone!

Reverend Christine and her team will be doing another Christingle as always next year and providing further support to The Children’s Society, and due to the fun that we had this year, the Graham Family’s plans for something bigger and better next Christmas are already underway....!

Luke and Jenny (& Alfie and Mia)



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Our Unusual Christmas Ringing

Usually, Christmas is the busiest time of the year for St. Thomas' Handbell Ringers with a dozen or more engagements in the first three weeks of December in schools, care homes and other warm and welcoming venues. Not so in 2020.

Because of Covid restrictions, we had to stop practising at the end of March, but by September we were able to obtain permission from the Church Wardens to meet in a group of no more than six for socially distanced rehearsals in the churchyard. We became quite expert at gauging what the weather would do, contending with the wind which blew the music around however much we pegged it down and dodging intermittent rain showers to shelter under the spreading cedar tree, not to mention wearing enough layers to keep us tolerably warm for the duration. Our gatherings drew some attention, and even occasional applause, from passers-by and from children in the school playground.

And so, it occurred to us that we might still be able to arrange some performances after all by playing carols out of doors. At St. Thomas' Infant School we rang for the children who were lined up at a safe distance and joined in with humming and singing, waving their arms and even jingling their own little bells in time with the music. At Broadmead care home we stood in the car park while the residents, warm and cosy inside, gathered round the windows and sang along with great enthusiasm. To round off our season we were back in the churchyard positioned either side of the path to welcome the congregation to Not the Carol Service.

It has been a most unusual season for us, but one which was both memorable and extremely rewarding, for which we are most grateful to Genie for her tireless energy and enthusiastic leadership.

NB



National Women's Register



Our Christmas party, arranged for 16 December, was cancelled due to COVID. However, undaunted, the idea of walking in groups of six, followed by refreshments, became a reality. Luckily the weather was kind, and we missed the rain. One group walked in The Chase, the other along the lanes in Hollington. Afterwards each group went back to a member's garden where we had mulled wine and coffee to warm us up with mince pies, cakes and nibbles. It was a truly enjoyable morning.

In the evening, we held a Christmas party with a difference attended on Zoom by about eight members. Proceedings started with two festive quizzes, the first based on the words of favourite carols and

the other, much more challenging, on Christmas traditions in Europe and the USA. Then followed a game which provoked much merriment. Everyone had been asked to provide three statements about themselves, two true and one false, and the object was to discover which was the false one. Among the more unlikely experiences which turned out to be true were spending a night in a police cell, saving someone from drowning and visiting a brother in a foreign prison. Who knew our members lived such adventurous lives? Other games contributed to a lively and fun celebration. All that was lacking was the real-life contact with our friends and the delicious buffet food that we would normally share on such occasions.

We received positive feedback about the cake quiz. So here are a couple more clues to get those cakey brains working.

- Absorbent Queen.
- Floozy in the Trafford Centre.

Throughout 2020, our group has adapted to the current situation, maintaining regular meetings using Zoom and by meeting outside as permitted. Our programme will continue in this way for 2021. There is a central office for NWR which has also provided a variety of Zoom webinars such as the history of knitting and the life of a female pilot in the air force. There will also be further online sessions during the year. The postponed Diamond year celebrations have been moved forward, including a National Conference in Birmingham for 2021.



Our group in Woolton Hill is run locally under the umbrella of the National Group, meaning that we have support but can respond to the interests we all have. We have maintained friendship links, even though the opportunities to meet in person are curtailed at present, enabling our group to continue to thrive together. We look forward to times when we can schedule face-to-face meetings but until then we keep in touch via Zoom, WhatsApp and e-mail.

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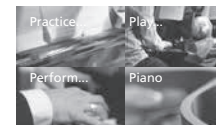
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How To Utilise Your Tax Allowances

The impact of the COVID-19 virus has meant many of us are reviewing our finances. To help local residents Chartered Financial Planner, Sonia Wheeler (who lives in Woolton Hill), has kindly shared her thoughts on the current tax year which ends on 5 April and explained what allowances are available to help you maximise opportunities you could take advantage of.

The autumn budget was cancelled which means there have been no changes to personal tax rates and allowances since April 2020, and with changes envisaged for the next tax year to help fund the cost of Covid, now could be a good time to review maximising the current allowances available.

The personal income tax allowance.

The personal allowance is £12,500 meaning that individuals can earn £12,500 before paying income tax. There are some caveats, such as people earning over £125,000 do not have a personal allowance.

The savings allowance.

It's often forgotten that in addition to the £1,000 savings interest allowance (£500 for higher rate taxpayers) there's a savings allowance of £5,000. Lower earners can therefore have £18,500 of tax-free income through the personal allowance of £12,500, the savings interest allowance of £1,000 and the savings allowance of £5,000.

Tax-free savings and investments.

A UK resident can put up to £20,000 per tax year into an ISA – an Individual Savings Account. All interest, dividends and gains made within ISAs are tax free. There are different types of ISAs; an investment ISA, cash ISA, Junior ISA, Lifetime ISA and Help to Buy ISA. The Junior ISA savings limit increased to £9,000 per tax year.

The dividend allowance.

If you have investments outside of an ISA tax wrapper that hold company shares either directly or through funds, the first £2,000 of dividend income is tax free. This is regardless of an individual's income tax position.

Capital gains tax.

If you make a gain on an asset, such as investments and property, each person has a capital gains tax allowance which is £12,300 for this tax year. Capital gains tax rates are currently lower than income tax rates, but this is under review and so assets with gains should be reviewed in good time before April 2021.

Pension contribution allowances.

An individual can pay up to 100% of earnings into a pension and obtain full tax relief subject to a contribution cap of £40,000 and this reduces (on a tiered

For The 2020/21 Tax Year

basis) if your income exceeds £240,000. If you are a higher rate taxpayer and you pay £10,000 into a pension, the government adds £2,500 to your pension and you claim a further £2,500 through your tax return. This is an uplift of 50% on your £10,000 contribution. Although it can appear complicated, utilising pension contribution allowances can be a valuable way to save for your retirement.

Tax efficient investments for higher earnings.

An individual can claim back income tax paid by investing up to £200,000 into a Venture Capital Trust (VCT). VCTs were introduced in the 1990s to encourage investment into new and early-stage UK companies. You can claim 30% income tax relief so an investment of £100,000 can reduce your income tax bill by £30,000. Enterprise Investment Schemes (EIS) also fall into the category of tax efficient investments for higher earners.

If you would like more advice you can contact Sonia, who runs local business Essential Wealth Management, at sonia.wheeler@essential-wealth.co.uk

Disclaimers: The value of investments and any income from them can fall as well as rise and you may not get back the original amount invested. HM Revenue and Customs practice and the law relating to taxation are complex and subject to individual circumstances and changes which cannot be foreseen.

Thank you from East Woodhay Artisans

East Woodhay Artisans would like to thank everybody who bought through our Etsy site this Christmas. We have been able to give a substantial amount of money to St. Martin's Guild for local causes.

Our Etsy account is now closed, and we are busy making things for the St. Martin's Guild fete in May.

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Come to Bethlehem

One of the popular features of a “normal” Christmas season is the annual Crib Service. The number who usually attend would have far exceeded the current social distancing rules, so it was decided to replace this with an event called Come to Bethlehem. Families were invited (by pre-booking of course) to replicate the Christmas journey, starting at the inn and then guided by the star to the stable to meet the Holy Family. Next stop was the grumpy shepherd, who had been left guarding the sheep while the others had gone to Bethlehem to see the baby. Further on the journey the families met the three kings before reaching the traditional crib scene and talking about what they’d seen with a guardian angel, who had a gift for each child.

A great deal of work had gone into the costumes and the backdrops for each scene, to complement the important story being revealed. Ingenuity still thrives in Woolton Hill!

Collections for this event and for the “Not the Carol” service were sent to Shelter, to support their work with the homeless.



The Clergy House, Highclere.

Dear friends,

This article is being written as the nationwide roll-out of two COVID-19 vaccines brings us hope that there is light at the end of the pandemic tunnel.

Sadly, the year 2020 brought more pain and suffering, heartache and grief, fear and distress, than probably any year in living memory.

Thankfully, during the past year, we have also seen courage and determination, inspiration and patience, commitment and compassion, such as we have not seen since the Second World War. The amazing achievements of 100 year old Captain Sir Tom Moore and Toby Hudgell a 6 year old boy with prosthetic legs – who between them have raised millions of pounds for N.H.S. good causes.

Covid-19 has taught us some important lessons – perhaps above all else that humanity is fragile and the virus knows no national borders. Even though governments across the world have been concerned with how “they” are doing in fighting the pandemic, we have, thankfully, seen an increase in international cooperation on several fronts – not least in the creation of vaccines. Maybe 2021 will see a greater willingness for nations to cooperate ever more closely in tackling another immense challenge to humanity. The environmental damage mankind has done, and continues to do, to our amazing earthly home. Some scientists say that the existence of new, deadly, viruses is linked to environmental damage. Therefore, it’s even more vital for political leaders to work together and agree policies which will help eliminate damage to the natural order.

Meanwhile the dangers posed by Coronavirus is now turbo-charged by a new strain. We are all feeling tired, frustrated, anxious, and for many their mental well-being is suffering but we do need to continue to be vigilant, caring for one another through behaving responsibly and following the government rules. We need to have patience whilst the immense task of immunising everyone is carried out. We need to be thankful for all the key workers and make sure we do not add to the existing heavy burdens placed on our N.H.S. I believe if we can become thankful people – for the gift of life, for nature, for friends and family, for those who have worked hard to create the vaccines now being rolled out and for those administering them—we will also be happy and more contented. Thankfulness is a precious gift to live by day by day, especially in these challenging times. Keep calm and carry on!

Canon Marvin.

From the Church Registers: December 2020

Funeral: may they rest in peace

10th December	Theresa Mary Winifred Chantrey	East Woodhay (West Berkshire Crematorium)
14th December	Peter Fisher	Ashmansworth (Andover Crematorium)
15th December	James Taylor-Dickson	Highclere
22nd December	John Paul Broughton	Woolton Hill (West Berkshire Crematorium)

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Church Services FEBRUARY 2021

A note about worship: *in this third lockdown we are still permitted to offer some worship in church, and we offer more online, via ‘Zoom’. If you would like joining details for **online services** please send your e-mail to coordinator.nwhb@outlook.com and ask to join the Rector’s weekly e-mail update with service details. Please note that worship ‘in church’ is held according to current regulations and wearing a face covering is mandatory. All our churches are open for private prayer on Sundays. Whether online or in church, most importantly our prayer continues... everyone is welcome... please join us!*

SUN 7th <i>2nd Sunday before Lent</i>	<i>All Together / Family Service</i> Parish Communion	<i>Online ‘zoom’</i> East Woodhay	9.30am 11.00am
SUN 14th <i>Sunday next before Lent</i>	Parish Communion <i>Morning Worship</i>	Woolton Hill <i>Online ‘zoom’</i>	9.30am 11.00am
WED 17th <i>Ash Wednesday</i>	<i>Holy Communion</i>	<i>Online ‘zoom’</i>	10.00am
SUN 21st <i>Lent 1</i>	<i>Morning Worship</i> Parish Communion	<i>Online ‘zoom’</i> Highclere	9.30am 11.00am
SUN 28th <i>Lent 2</i>	<i>Benefice Communion</i> Evensong	<i>Online ‘zoom’</i> <i>Online ‘zoom’</i>	10.00am 6.00pm

WED 3rd, 10th & 24th Morning Prayer 10.00 am *online ‘zoom’*

Rector: Revd Canon Christine Dale (*Rest day: Friday*)

The Rectory, The Mount, Woolton Hill, Newbury RG20 9QZ 253323

Associate Priest: Revd Canon Marvin Bamforth 254718

Readers: Mary Herbert 255700, Horace Mitchell 254677, Mike Sarson 07913 943504

Reader Emeritus: Rosemary Cahill 253306 **Lay preacher:** Angela Myers 254559

Did You See...

The Spectrum Editors received a lovely letter from local resident Sue Crick about the decorated tree in Penwood (see below). After a bit of investigation, the Editors discovered it was the Cageao family (who live in Woolton Hill) who took some decorations into the woods to bring some festive cheer.

Julie Cageao told Spectrum that her family enjoyed discovering a decorated tree in the woods a few Christmases ago, and that they wanted to take part this year. As the family went back to the woods throughout December, they discovered more people had added decorations to the tree, and a helpful resident had even changed the batteries for the lights to keep them shining. Julie also mentioned that another resident had decorated another tree too.

The front cover is a picture that was created by local, Lucy Starbuck Braidley, who discovered the festive decorated tree on her visit to Penwood with her family.

It was such a heart-warming story that we had to put the picture on the front cover for all the local Spectrum readers to see. What a wonderful community we have!

...the Festive Decorated Tree In Penwood?

Letter from Sue Crick:

Christmas Surprise in Penwood

Dear Editor,

I would like to give a huge thank you to whoever added fairy lights and baubles to create a Christmas tree in the deepest, darkest part of the Great Penwood. It was such a delightful surprise to come across this while taking a distanced walk through the woods with a friend. A generous gesture in difficult times that brought pleasure to us, and many more I am sure.

Sue Crick

Julie Cageao said:

We decorated a tree in the clearing in Penwood in December and today we went to collect our lights and baubles. Thank you to anyone who added decorations to it over Christmas. The kids loved looking for all the new ones. We'll definitely be carrying on the tradition next year.



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February 1942

Kingsclere and District Warships Week

As you probably already know our Warships Week takes place between February 28th and March 7th inclusive. Our area objective is to raise £62,000 to provide a Trawler-minesweeper. There is no need for me to stress the importance of this effort which is to assist the Navy on which we all depend for our safety and our food. Every penny saved and lent to the nation will help the Navy to continue the splendid work which they have done since the war began, so lend your money freely.

Our Group objective is £20,000, being slightly less than the one-third of the total the area requires.

E.C.Eliot-Cohen, St.Thomas" Magazine

(Fundraising events planned included three whist drives, two dances, a concert, a children's party, a children's entertainment, and a bring-and-buy sale—a busy time in the local halls!)



British Armed Trawler Minesweeping In The North Sea.



Local News during the Lockdown

We are pleased that East Woodhay Society is part of a group locally who are committed to keeping people informed of what is happening and also available to help us all through this difficult period. If you do not already receive or see the regular newsletter, please send me an email. The newsletters are also available at www.wooltonhill.com where we also publish the latest COVID-19 numbers for the local area. We are blessed that there are so many places to walk in the area and now there are so many signs of spring with snowdrops appearing on the sides of roads. The picture is from North End and just one lovely example.

Visit the Woolton Hill website for more ideas. Regular walking can really help with our mental as well as physical health.

The team at **East Woodhay & Highclere Neighbourcare** are also working hard to support our local community. The local support line to obtain help is **01635 745 600**.

By calling this number you can get local support with:

- The collection of shopping
- The delivery of medication on prescription from Woolton Hill Surgery
- Transport to and from medical appointments

including the vaccination centre

- Companionship and a friendly chat on the phone if you feel at all worried

COVID-19 Vaccines

The delivery of vaccines is now under way from the Grandstand building at Newbury Racecourse.

Housebound patients will be vaccinated by Woolton Hill Surgery staff.

Please do not call the surgery regarding vaccines as they will call you to book in your appointment in order of priority according to the National Criteria which they are unable to deviate from.

For the latest news see Woolton Hill website.

EWS Membership:

If you are supportive of what East Woodhay Society is doing and would like to be included in a monthly newsletter on local matters, then please join and become a member. Membership is now open for 2021 and is £10 for a couple/family and £6 for an individual. Just send me a note.

Mark Rand – Chair EWS

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East Woodhay Parish Council



New Year Message From The Parish Council Chair

Dear Parishioners,

As well as sending all good wishes and hoping that we will soon return to some sort of "normality", may I also send out a New Year thought for us all. I am immensely grateful to my fellow Parish Councillors who spend a lot of their time, on a voluntary basis, on matters around the Parish, always trying to improve things for the benefit of the whole community. Yet we are conscious that there are many more of you who might like to get a little more involved with the community and with our projects. There are many ways to achieve this and to help your parish—you do not have to join the council. If there is something locally which you would like to champion, bringing your own insight and energy to the project, then the Parish Council would be delighted to work in collaboration with you.

So, this new year, I call on all parishioners to continue the excellent community spirit of 2020 of "Help Thy Neighbour" and to contact the Clerk if they would like to assist or pioneer a local project that is close to their heart or area of expertise.

Please do get involved. It is our Parish—let's work together to make it an even better place in which to live and work for the future.

Kind regards for an exciting 2021.

Other news

Hard to believe so far but spring will soon be with us and with it comes the growth of vegetation. Winter has seen lots of the usual damage to trees and hedges and the fallout from this may be blocking up any ditches that may run along your property boundaries and new growth can easily weave into this and form a blockage. We wish to gently remind everyone with a ditch that it is their duty not to allow it to become blocked and prevent normal drainage, so we urge you to inspect and clear any ditches for which you are responsible.

Another useful act of civic responsibility that anyone can help with is the cleaning up of road signs which by this time of year have often grown a soft green patina. One broom and a bucket of water will work wonders and smarten up the whole neighbourhood. You don't need permission, it is your parish, so get out and polish your parish.

Phil

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The NEW Cleres' Community Library

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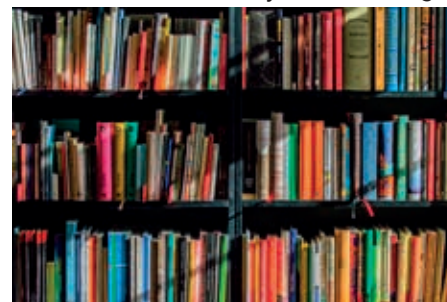
On New Year's Eve local resident, Barbra Frost, launched the Cleres' Community Library on Facebook. The idea behind the group was to enable locals to have a platform to pass their good condition books, magazine, games, CDs and DVDs on to other households for free.

At the time of writing the UK has just entered another lockdown, therefore Barbra's group will no doubt be welcomed by many households across the villages.

Barbra said about her new group: "I'm an avid reader and during the lockdowns this year I have spent a small fortune on buying new books to keep me going during the pandemic. Before coronavirus, I never used to buy new books, as I always used to go to libraries or get them from the second-hand book stall at our GP surgery, or the free charity book shop in town. But all of those are unavailable now and I have had to buy new.

I now have loads of books at home that I would normally pass on but have been unable to as all of the places are closed. I then thought of all of the free children's books that residents post on the main Cleres' selling page and thought we could create an online community library. It's aimed at Cleres villagers only and the idea is that all items are free and in good condition and could be collected by the person that wants them whilst on their daily walk around the village. It's not just for books, but for any item you would expect to find in a library—books, magazines, board games, CDs & DVDs.

We are also offering a service for elderly residents or residents who have limited mobility. If they see an item they want, we are encouraging the lister to drop it off to them. If the lister can't, then the person who wants the item can message the admin and we will try to help. I think it could work well in everyone's community and I will be sending it to NWN to get them to encourage other communities to set one up for themselves."



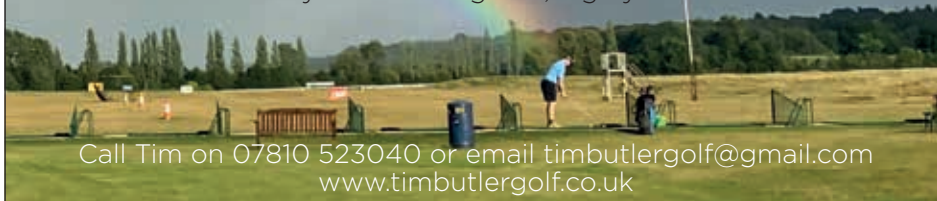
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East Woodhay Women's Institute



Now that the shorter month of February is here, we can appreciate the gradual lengthening of the days. I think of February as the in-between month with walks on bright days and the cosy warmth of our homes during inclement weather. February is a month when the WI has welcomed speakers from near and far. One year a Yeoman Warder of the Tower of London arrived looking resplendent in his navy blue and red uniform. Popularly known as Beefeaters the ceremonial guards were founded in 1485 by King Henry VII. The Yeoman Body of 37 men and women have had at least 22 years military service, reached the rank of warrant officer and been awarded the long service and good conduct medal. They are the eyes and ears of the Tower of London and each night at 10 p.m. the gates are locked in the Ceremony of the Keys.

Another popular speaker came to explain about assistance dogs and their training to help with practical tasks offering emotional support and independence to over 7,000 disabled people with a wide range of needs. We admired the work and achievements and adored the golden Labrador who quietly sat in the hall while his master talked and then on command carefully collected washing from the laundry basket and put it into the pretend washing machine before closing the door.

Horse riding in Montana by a lady who had previously spoken about the joys and perils of a petticoat pilot took us on another journey. She had decided that she liked the idea of being in charge of a light aircraft after

taking part in a tandem skydive in her fifties. This was after her saddle-sore ride on a horse while cattle driving in the U.S.A.

In contrast, Becky, a railway historian based at the Hampshire Watercress Line, spoke at another February meeting about the Southern Railway Servants Orphanage, the difficult days and the help that became available. The orphanage was founded in 1909 to accommodate 150 children whose fathers had died during their work on the railways.

On a lighter note, at the end of 2019 we celebrated our centenary. Meetings that year reflected on the past, to which in December, we added the traditional pantomime with historical facts and laughs supplied by John who had played the "Dame" for more than forty years. He displayed his wonderful costumes and wore a glorious hat/wig for our enjoyment.

Local speakers have talked about the history of our area with photographs of familiar places and people from the last century. The endurance of mountaineering, with beautiful photos of the route and wildflowers, was awe inspiring. Jewellery making, silk painting, flower arranging, and fine needlework all allowed us indulgent afternoons. We also enjoyed the delightful singing from the children of Bright Sparks Nursery and now look forward to arranging another full programme. Anyone who would like to join us would be welcome. Contact details are in Spectrum's Directory.

SB

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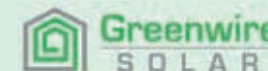


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Christmas At School

As it was leading up to Christmas my school decided to spread some cheer! On Friday 11th it was Christmas jumper day, so we all got to wear our festive jumpers to school! It was also Christmas lunch day! The lunch was so yummy! This year was obviously quite different so instead of having it in the lunch hall with all of the classes we had them in our normal classrooms. Before lunch we made Xmas place mats to put our plates on and eat to make it look fun and festive! A few days earlier we made Christmas cards for our families, you had to do a wash (background) with water colours and draw and cut out a background such as: snowy mountains, Christmas trees, animals and many more other things. I did a dark blue fading into a soft blue wash and mountains as my cut out and shooting stars with white pencil so they would stand out. On Thursday upper school had a class Christmas party! The party was different but lots of fun☺! This year we weren't allowed to bring in party food but that was ok because we played games – charades, heads down thumbs up, and dodgeball. Dodgeball is soooo fun especially when you're on the same team as your friends!

Thank you for reading. I hope you all had a safe and merry Christmas!

Daisy Humphrey

What a very busy month for W.H.J.S. We have been preparing for Christmas and celebrating with lots of festive activities and decorations. The Yew Tree Garden Centre kindly donated a Christmas tree which has been put in the hall and some of the children decorated it. We had a tasty Christmas lunch, Christmas Jumper Day and a theatre company came to school so we could watch a pantomime. The Friends of Woolton Hill Junior School organised a fun Christmas treasure hunt around the village, me and my family really enjoyed it. Cannon Reverend Christine Dale also came into school and did a Christmas service for us about the 4th Sunday of Advent. Each classroom decorated their doors and there was a lot of competition between Lower school and Upper school about whose door was best!

We had class parties where we played Christmas-themed games including pass the parcel and we watched a Christmas movie. The school council organised a Christmas gift bag sale and the children bought in money to buy gifts for their families.

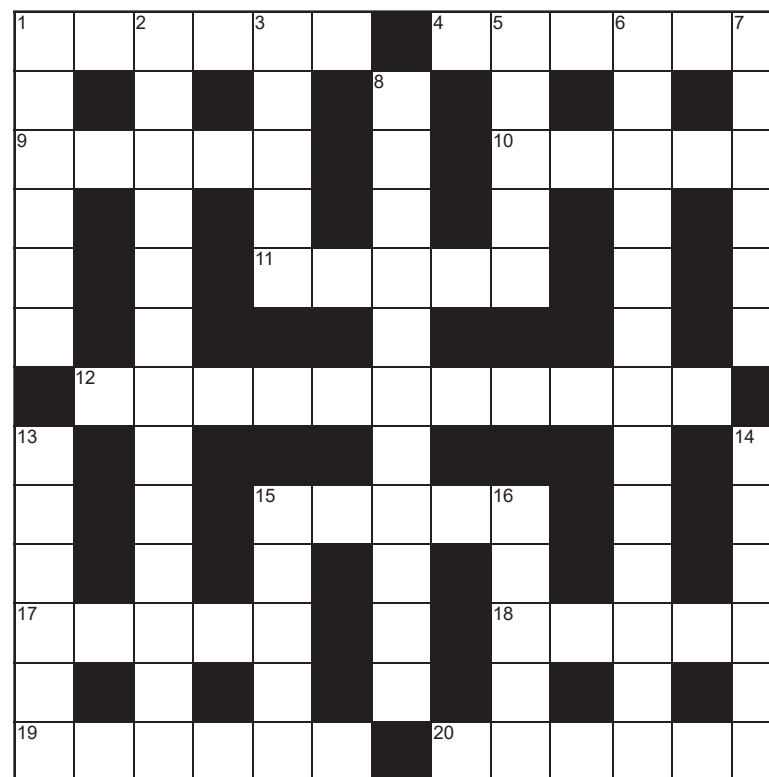
Before I go, here's a Christmas cracker joke for you.

Q: What's the best Christmas present ever?

A: A broken drum, you just can't beat it!

I hope you had a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Stay Safe,
Solly.



Answers crossword no 215
Across: 1 Haggis, 4 Belfry, 9 Aioli, 10 Rural, 11 Glory, 12 Articulated
 15 Alice, 17 Thine, 18 Valid, 19 Cognac, 20 Astral
Down: 1 Hearis, 2 Globetrotting, 3 Icing, 5 Early, 6 Fortune teller,
 7 Yellow, 8 Resolutions, 13 Exotic, 14 Bridal, 15 Arena, 16 Elves

Across

1. Patterned fabric is a mad ask (6)
4. Heartless campers noisy and hide the sun (6)
9. How to find a state of deep thought funny (5)
10. Agree silently that the cat is back on it (5)
11. Boorish person's whoop of delight (5)
12. See vain cat in company turning out for a job (11)
15. Ambles about losing direction, looking for lost sheep perhaps (5)
17. However you look at it, New York air is not dry (5)
18. Ship has room that can accommodate two inside (5)
19. Popular fifties dress with hairpiece on twisted leg (6)
20. Describe the rise of a perfume (6)

Down

1. What would Gran do if she could breathe fire? (6)
2. Hard not to hug a winter moth going crazy for something delicious (5-8)
3. Notice empty display looking a bit shabby (5)
5. Takes a lot to produce this game (5)
6. Feeling a bit awkward, will formal count be accepted? (13)
7. Poses as a person who would look after your house (6)
8. The men cannot be put under a spell unless they drop the ring (11)
13. So, before joining the right row there were feelings of regret (6)
14. If nut had a pulse to start with, it was not a true nut (6)
15. Royal loses head to learner but remains true (5)
16. Punches hosiery (5)



Well, in our December Zoom, we had a mixed visual presentation with John Negus, who gave us a talk on "undercover work". Mary and I had two rehearsals with John, which went smoothly, but on the night, we had interference with the picture. Afterwards I found out that his computer assistant for some reason also had the power point presentation up on his separate computer upstairs, and this caused a viewing problem.

But having got that out in the open, we were well entertained by John, whose encyclopaedic knowledge of plants is unsurpassed. As one of the youngest trainees at Wisley, he went on to have an inspiring career in everything to do with plants.

Indoor plants need balanced watering; if possible, facing East or North in summer and South in winter; try to water from below; feed more frequently than you might think; sometimes spray the leaves. On the exotic side, insectivorous plants can be a joy to nurture, and there are many with which to experiment.

Amaryllis is a plant often received at Xmas, and if you have been given one, challenge yourself in keeping it going for the following year. At the end of flowering, water and feed all through the summer and

cease in November. The plant will become desiccated, but do not despair.

Repot in new compost and start all over again to enjoy the new growth and flower.

With your winter Poinsettia remember that it needs darkness every day. Once finished flowering, place the plant in a black bag for three months during the summer, and then open up, put in new compost, water and place in daylight in autumn, with feed, to start your enjoyment all over again.

Lemon Tree potted plants can be a lovely addition to the home plant range but remember to nurture regularly

with different winter and summer feeds.

I was given some excellent advice on getting my Orchid to flower again. It has lots of green, but lacks flowers, but what I had failed to do was to feed it properly. The Stapletons have an excellent example, and clearly, I need to obtain advice from them!

Should anyone else have some good advice to help indoor plant growers, we would love to hear from you.

Nick



Kalanchoe Flaming Katy

WELL, here we find ourselves back in lockdown again, which was not the start to the new year we had all hoped for. The schools shutting again has been the biggest surprise (and shock), and as Abbie said, homeschooling is a tough job! I thoroughly applaud all the teachers in our schools for getting us through this. Having said that, it never ceases to amaze me how resilient and receptive to change our children really are, and we can all be very proud of that.

Despite the unexpected start to the year, this issue of Spectrum highlights all the wonderful events that still went ahead over the Christmas period. I'm so glad the children were able to celebrate Christmas at school, and that they enjoyed their Christmas lunches and other festivities. We went to the "Come to Bethlehem" tour at St. Thomas' Church. It was so well organised and so wonderfully done and my two children absolutely loved it. They especially liked the grumpy shepherd! These festive memories give us some cheer for the coming weeks ahead.

On another note, I'm very excited about the new Cleres' Community Library, being a bit of a bookworm myself, so I'm looking forward to swapping some books to keep me going through the winter. There's nothing better than curling up with a great book on a cold day!

With the rollout of the vaccine now taking place, there is definitely light at the end of the tunnel, so we just need to hang on to hope for a better second half of 2021.

As Canon Marvin said, we still have a lot to be thankful for.

All the best.

Sarah Allchurch, Co-Editor

<https://www.wooltonhill.com/spectrum>

Spectrum is a monthly community magazine serving East Woodhay and Woolton Hill. It is run by a committee of volunteers and is a not for profit publication.

Reports on village activities and articles of local interest are welcomed for publication subject to the discretion of the editor. Copy should reach the editor by the seventh day of the month preceding publication and should be a maximum of 500 words. In the event of pressure for space, the editor reserves the right to reduce the length of the article while attempting to maintain the style of the writer and retaining as much content as possible.

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Basingstoke & Deane Borough Council 844844

member: Clive Sanders (cllr) clive.sanders@basingstoke.gov.uk . . . 254839

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East Woodhay Parish Council Members: www.eastwoodhay-pc.gov.uk

James Mitchell (Ch) james.mitchell@eastwoodhay-pc.gov.uk 01635 254747

Susan Cooper. . . susan.cooper@eastwoodhay-pc.gov.uk . . 01635 254149

Graham Dick . . . graham.dick@eastwoodhay-pc.gov.uk . . 01635 255372

Martin Hainge. . . martin.hainge@eastwoodhay-pc.gov.uk . 01635 255793

John Heritage. . . john.heritage@eastwoodhay-pc.gov.uk

Paul Hurst (V.Ch) . paul.hurst@eastwoodhay-pc.gov.uk . . . 01635 254363

Phil Jarvis philip.jarvis@eastwoodhay-pc.gov.uk . . . 01635 254422

Mark Rand. mark.rand@eastwoodhay-pc.gov.uk . . . 01635 250898

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East Woodhay Parish Council continued

Karen Titcomb . . karen.titcomb@eastwoodhay-pc.gov.uk . . 07974 011065

Andrew Watson . . andrew.watson@eastwoodhay-pc.gov.uk

Amy White (Clerk) clerk@eastwoodhay-pc.gov.uk 07855 275336

East Woodhay Village Hall. Carol Stanley 01635 35859

. eastwoodvillhall@gmail.com

East Woodhay Short Mat Bowls Club Contact: Cathy Neller. 255589

East Woodhay Silver Band. Contact: Rosemary Gittins 07917 522180

East Woodhay Society Chairman, Mark Rand 250898

eastwoodhaysociety@gmail.com www.wooltonhill/ews

East Woodhay Twinning Association Helen Allen, Secretary . . 01635 250776

East Woodhay W.I. . Secretary: Pat Gibbs 07831 669 220

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Highclere Film Club Secretary: Chris Martin 253461

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Litter warden litterwarden@eastwoodhay-pc.gov.uk

MP - Kit Malthouse. 01264 401401

kit.malthouse.mp@parliament.uk. 2 Church Close, Andover, SP10 1DP

National Women's Register Val Burfield 255168

Neighbourhood Watch

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North End Jack Castle. 253537

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Distribution Chris Vane 253707

Advertising Michael Robinson 253004

Editors:

Abbie Dando SpectrumEditorAbbie@gmail.com 07477 987943

Mary Gulliver mary@TheGullivers.co.uk 254567

Kathy Scott (6pm-9pm) spectrumwh@outlook.com 254756

Jim Hannington seamusman3@gmail.com 07895637611

St Martin's Guild . . Secretary: Sarah Leventhorpe 255293

info@eastwoodhayfete.org.uk www.eastwoodhayfete.org.uk

St Thomas' Handbell RingersNicole Bentham. 255582

Woolton Hill & District Gardeners' Club Nick Harcourt 253546

Woolton Hill Argyle Football Club. . . Jon Dennis money.whafc@gmail.com

Woolton Hill Brownies . . . contact Maggie Russell - 2whbrownies@gmail.com

Woolton Hill Church Hall. 253546

Nick Harcourt, Charnwood Cottage, Broadlayings

wooltonhillhallbookings@gmail.com.07971 064087

Woolton Hill Pre-SchoolNicola Logan 254721

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Woolton Hill Village MarketClaire and Sally

www.whvm.co whvmarket@gmail.com

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