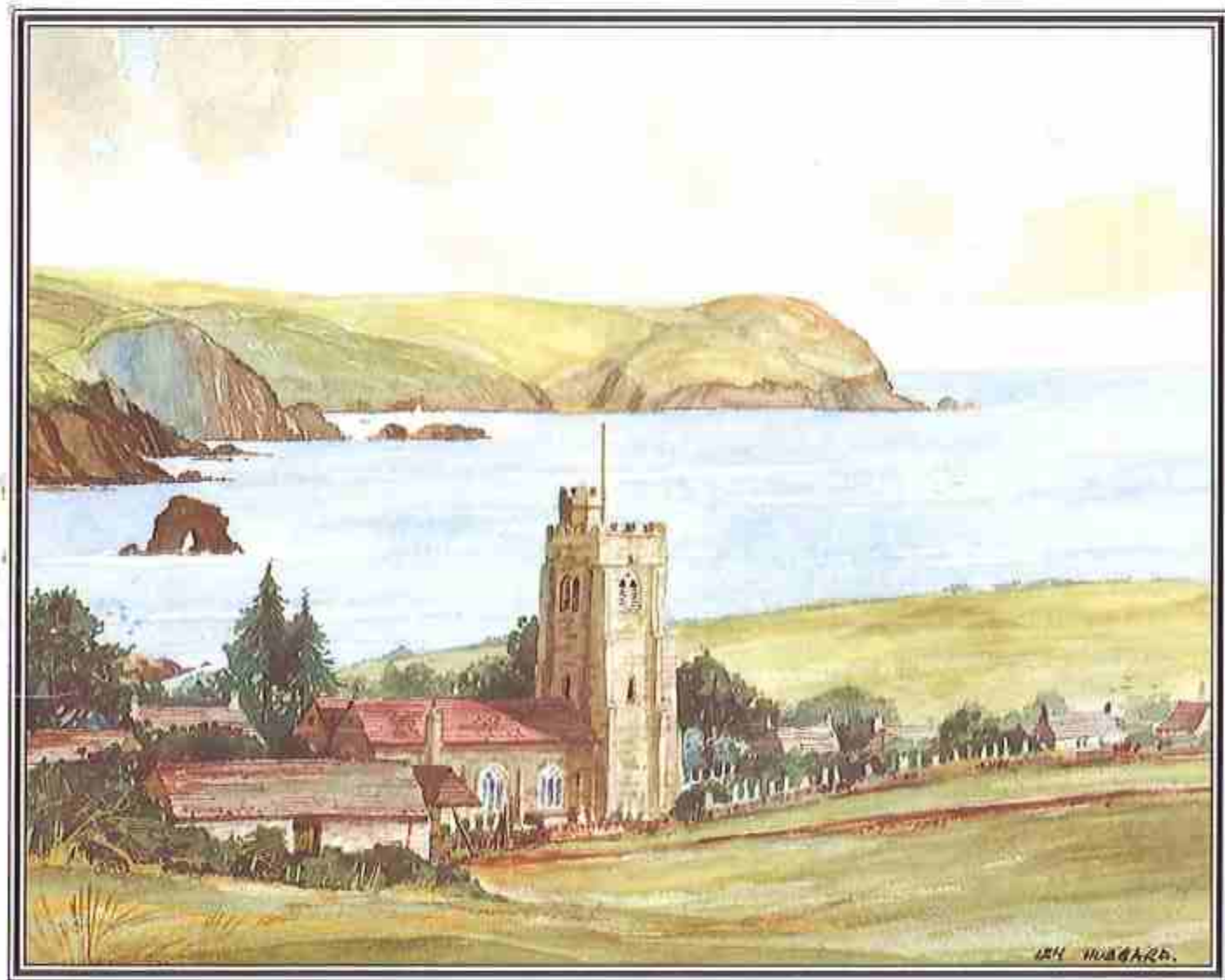


VILLAGE VOICE



DECEMBER
2000

JANUARY
2001

*A Merry Millennium Christmas
and a Happy New Year*



NUMBER 106
DECEMBER 2000 - JANUARY 2001

Our front cover provides readers with a unique opportunity to own a "limited edition" print of a watercolour by Len Hubbard, signed by the artist himself. All you have to do is provide your own frame!

The third millennium AD really does not begin until New Year's Day 2001, when the first two millennia will have been finally completed. Mind you, as AD years should properly be measured from 25th December rather than 1st January, there is perhaps even further cause for us to celebrate Christmas this year.

And so our front cover picture has All Saints at its centre, with an invitation to look forward and out beyond the village.....into the prospect of the next thousand years. Can we begin to imagine what it will be like a millennium hence? An immensity of change is certain enough, but will Thurlestone have retained any of the things we cherish today?

Will a Grose still host the visitors, and what remains of the links still provide a challenge to them? We may speculate endlessly about the future, but we can at least ensure that we value, enjoy, and protect our heritage in the here and now.

Meantime, have a very Merry Christmas! And a happy millennial New Year!

Founder Dudley Drabble

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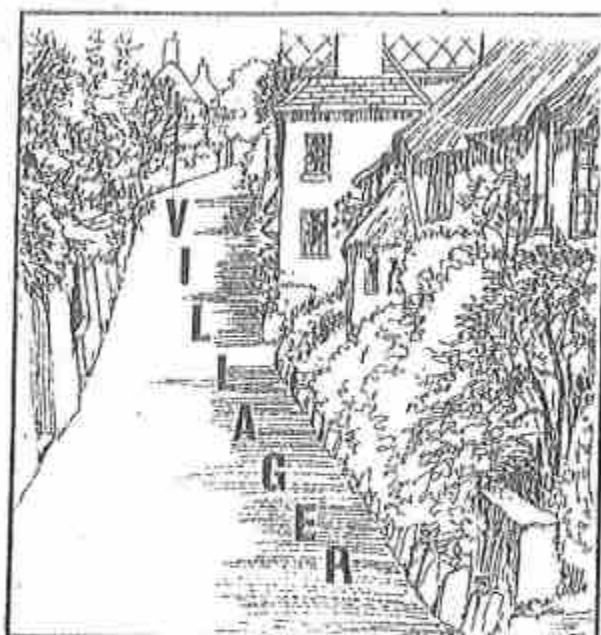
A VERY HAPPY CLAMPERS TO YOU

The following material was found by a postbox in the parish, folded and looking as though it had fallen out of a Christmas card. It is reproduced here without alteration, though names have been changed to protect the innocent.

"Dear All,

Well here we are again, sending you all the best and all the news from everyone at Wombles, down here in darkest Devon - and that is mighty dark we can tell you! You'll see from the sticky label inside the card that we have finally decided on a name for our retirement cottage - "The Wombles" (because we came from Wimbledon of course!)

Can't remember exactly what stage we had reached when I sent you our last Christmas round-up....well, anyway Henry decided to take early retirement. The Chairman was awfully nice about it, saying that they didn't know what they would do without him, though that awful Green fellow suggested in his speech at Henry's farewell party that everyone had been waiting for him to leave the company so that they could get on with things. I gave Green a piece of my mind I can tell you, though Henry suggested that I had got hold of the wrong end of the stick and that I went much too far - must have been the sherry.



Never mind, the important thing is that we are here full-time now, not just racing down to our holiday home for a few days' break at half-term and other holidays. We're residents at last! No we can hold our heads up high and not have those dreadful locals making remarks about half-price holiday homes behind our backs.

Course it's all very different from Town, but nothing that can't be put right. We've started attending all the local meetings and I've joined the WI. Yes, really, it's all very interesting, not a bit like the jokes people make about it. My jam won a prize at the last meeting, for being the least spreadable in the parish...fame at last!

Why are we going to all the meetings? I can hear you asking that, Juliawhy? So that we can improve things of course - traffic lights and street lights for a start. Mind you, we were quite surprised at how well the developments in Thurlestone itself turned out, quite tasteful at Homefield, and even better at Thurlestone Farm, where we've got a new post office and village shop.

The locals all call the Post Office "Clampers". I think it's some kind of Devon

joke. I mean there is a notice above the door threatening anyone who parks there with clamping and a £45 standard charge to unlock it, but I reckon that's cheap by Wimbledon standards - I never saw one under £50, did you?

But back to our campaign to improve the parish. Things are getting slowly better - they're going to paint double yellow lines right up the main street, which will give it a more homely look. But one of the older residents told me not to worry about them. All we have to do is get hold of one of those orange disabled badges and then we can be a real local, parking anywhere we like!

Oh, I am beginning to enjoy being a real resident. Henry is not so sure about things yet - I think he's still worrying that the Residents' Curse is going to strike us soon - so many people, even Green would you believe it, said they were going to come down and visit us. Apparently there is no cure for this curse, unless you go ex-directory and pretend to be out when anyone calls at the front door.

Henry is thinking of having a leper window built so that people can't hide outside the door where you can't see them from inside. They uncovered one in an old cottage down by the river the other day. Apparently, they didn't want visitors coming from up-country (local expression) even hundreds of years ago.

We are, of course, not sending this round-robin to Green and Co., nor any Christmas card either! I do hope Henry didn't give any of his little new address stickers to too many people at his farewell do - you know what sherry does to him.

I expect you heard that William, our eldest, is now a millionaire. Well he has done awfully well - after leaving Eton he set up his own Internet company - something technical to do with computers, not that I understand any of it. To be honest I don't

think he's actually a millionaire now. Henry said his shares collapsed, or something like that, and what a good thing William didn't offer to sell him any - well you can't refuse your children can you?

Talking of our children, I must tell you how well Emily has done. She's engaged to some musician. Not any musician. This one is the reserve drummer with The Swing - you must have heard of them. Apparently he's rolling in it. It's difficult to get Emily to speak clearly about a wedding date, she seems on a cloud of happiness most of the time.

Mustn't forget our youngest, Charles. He is becoming a top sportsman - he's skateboard champion of Kingsbridge, our nearest town. He's always practising on hilly roads round us. You'll never believe it, some people actually objected to him rolling down the village street. Said he might damage their cars. Well, it wasn't much of a scratch..... 'spect they were holiday-home owners, real residents like us wouldn't behave like that.

Merry Christmas and a Happy Clamping New Year from

"The Real Residents at The Wombles"

THURLESTONE
CONSERVATIVE ASSOCIATION

CHRISTMAS BAZAAR

Saturday 2nd December
10.30 am Parish Hall

*Cakes, Books, Bottles, Bric-a-brac,
Nearly-New, and Raffle*

Coffee & Biscuits
Admission free

Village News Round-Up

Parish Video Scoops Prestigious Award!

As we were going to press the news came in that the parish video **"Land of the Five Beaches"** had been adjudged the winner of the non-broadcast category in the Royal Television Annual Awards (Devon & Cornwall). The judges numbered eight, all of them BBC, ITV or independent film-makers, and came from outside Devon and Cornwall.

In presenting the trophy at a gathering in Plymouth on the 24th November, the chairman of the judges suggested to the 250 people present, all professionally connected to film-making, that should they contemplate making a similar sort of video, their first step should be to view **"Land of the Five Beaches"**. He went on to say that it was *"a wonderful example of community input and a most worthy winner of its category"*.

The trophy is on exhibition at Burwood Gallery (aka Len Hubbard's). Go and have a look at it. Without the support of local sponsors and fund-raisers who contributed some £12,000 of the total cost of £22,000, the video could not have been completed. *Three hundred parishioners were directly involved in its making. It is their trophy.*

Welcome Arrivals

We welcome the arrival in the parish of the following children:

Harry Way

Valleyside, Buckland, born 31.7.2000

Samuel George Rhymes

Island View, Thurlestone, born 12.9.2000

Maizie Crawford

Cutaway, Thurlestone, born 29.10.2000

Congratulations to all concerned!

Fund Raising

Following our publication in the last issue of the excellent fund-raising results from events in the parish over the past year, Hugh Cater points out that the great sum of £30,000 raised by one endeavour in 1999 was in fact undertaken by the **Bantham Sailing Club** and not as reported. Even better, the actual amount raised was £31,000, which sum was split 50-50 between the Bantham Surf Life Saving Club's building fund and the Macmillan Nurses Fund.

And that's not all the Sailing Club have been up to. In August this year they raised over £3000 by means of a lunchtime barbecue on Cockleridge Beach, in aid of CLIC (Cancer & Leukemia in Children). Hugh is particularly keen to send his most grateful thanks to those who gave the food, made donations and who helped in any way to make this remarkable result possible.

WRVS Books-on-Wheels Service

Carolyn Taylor says *"Do you love reading but are housebound or, because of disability, are unable to visit the local library? The WRVS Books-on-Wheels service will bring library books to your home. Audio books are also available for those whose sight is failing"*.

If you would like more details, please contact Carolyn on 01548-562033.

Wine-tasting in the Parish Hall

On the 9th November a wine-tasting evening was organised by **Gillian Marshall**, assisted by **Pat Crawford** and members of the parish hall committee, to raise money for the upkeep of the hall. **Chris Piper** was the toast-master and he introduced the assembled company,

numbering 54, to a variety of southern hemisphere wines (no French wines were on the menu in deference to West Country sensitivities).

A wide variety of reasonably priced wines, to appeal to all palates, was opened. He introduced each with a humorous commentary about the provenance and the distinctive qualities of the grape. Apparently it took the Falklands War to persuade the Argentinians to stop drinking their entire wine production and export some of it. It was noted that although facilities were available to "taste but not swallow", these were not much used. (He also introduced a useful range of tips, such as how to make a bottle of Chateau Lafitte taste like plonk - simply serve mint sauce with the lamb!).

The hall was looking at its smartest with candles on every table to help the taster evaluate the colour in their glasses, the 'waiters' wore floral waistcoats and bow ties, and **Kit Marshall** set the ambience for the evening with a relaxing prelude on the parish piano. Thanks are given to all who helped with the evening and particularly to those who provided an interesting selection of raffle prizes. A good time was had by all, and some £230 was raised for our parish hall.

Millennium Mugs

Millennium Mugs will be presented to the sixty-seven children in the parish who will be under seventeen years of age on 31.12.2000. This will take place at an informal ceremony in the Parish Hall on 11th December.

From early December a mug will be on display at the Golf Club, by kind permission of the Captain, **Julian Tregelles**, and one will be in the Post Office by courtesy of **Adrian Masters**. If you would like to purchase a mug (only £6.99) please contact **Veronica White** on 560236 or any of our Parish Councillors. (These Millennium Mugs would make excellent Christmas or birthday presents for all age-groups!)

The Parish Council would like to thank all those involved with this initiative, in particular **Len Hubbard** for use of his line drawings, and **Kendall McDonald** for his potted history of the parish.

On Air

Tune into BBC Radio Four on Sunday 3rd December at 2.30 pm. Local artist **Len Hubbard** is one of the guests on **Clare Balding's** programme "Ramblings", which was recorded on Leasfoot Beach. Len joins Clare and some other artists on a relaxed stroll whilst talking about local painting.

Distribution of Village Voice

Two years ago **Michael Taylor** master-minded the new scheme for delivery of Village Voice in Thurstlestone. He has now decided the time has come for him to 'retire' from the Village Voice team. We owe him a great debt of gratitude for the way in which he organised a new scheme of hand-delivery, covering every home in the village, and thus reaching those not supplied under the "delivery with the milk" system. He took on the challenge, promptly recruited his delivery team and got a super-efficient home delivery scheme going without any fuss.....rather similar to the sort of professional action he took to save our village Post Office-Shop when it was threatened with extinction.

A big "Thank You" to Michael from all at Village Voice, and we're sure from lots of our readers too.

Following an appeal in our last issue for someone to succeed Michael, we are delighted to say that **Bill and June van der Welle** and **Vicki Dent** have responded and they will be i/c deliveries starting with this issue. We appreciate this very much and wish you and your delivery team well.

We should not let this opportunity pass without remembering and warmly thanking our Bantam and Buckland distributor, **Jean**

Hurrell, who, single-handedly we believe, has carried out this delivery task in her local area for many years past.

New Leaflet Guides

Readers may have come across the very attractive, modestly priced, individual leaflet guides to some villages in the South Hams (e.g. Aveton Gifford and Ermington). Each map gives brief pictorial notes on items and buildings of interest and suggests footpath walks around the area. Production of these guides is generally undertaken by interested residents, with help from the District Council.

The Parish of Thurlestone Society (POTS) is now about to start work on a couple of leaflets for our parish - one for Thurlestone, and one for Bantham and Buckland.

The aim is not only to help holiday-makers; for they will also be useful to newly-arrived residents who will thus learn a lot about the area in which they've chosen to settle. And for those long-time residents who already know the area inside out, they'll be handy for entertaining our never-ending stream of visitors - just send them off with a copy and give them the pleasure of finding out about the area for themselves! It is hoped to have them out later on next year....watch this space!

St Luke's Hospice

Lindy Price and Jo Parkin have received an enthusiastic letter from St. Luke's Hospice. This says *"Many, many, many congratulations to you and your team of helpers at the Christmas Fair. If you could pass on our thanks we would be very grateful.....it was excellent working with you on this event"*.

Lindy and Jo say that *"The efforts of Thurlestone, through the selling of raffle tickets and the cake stall, produced £1282.50 and the day as a whole raised well over*

£3000. Nearly everyone in the village was involved in some way and Thurlestone, as usual, turned up trumps. Many thanks for your support!"

Emergency Life Support Training?

The Westcountry Ambulance Services NHS Trust, in partnership with the Somerset and Devon Health Authorities and the British Heart Foundation, aim to train a total of at least 13,000 members of the public - in rural communities which are outside the eight-minute ambulance response area - in the essentials of emergency life support. These will include recognition of heart attack, resuscitation and control of life-threatening haemorrhage. Training is free, each session will last for some two hours and is done in groups of about twenty.

They are appealing to parish councils, schools, and any village organisation to provide a venue and suitable contacts. If anyone in the parish is interested in having a course, please contact the SWELLS Hotline - 01392-261552 - and ask for **Louise Haydon**.

Surf Life-Savers hit the Jackpot!

Great news! After waiting patiently for three years the Bantham Surf Life-Saving Club has at last heard from the Sport England Lottery Fund that the application for money for their new club-house has been successful - to the tune of £173,353. *What a Xmas present!* The total cost of the project will be £225,000 and already the Club has raised £35,000 towards this, and also gained £10,000 from the South Hams District Council. A further grant may eventually come from the Council.

There is still more fund-raising to be done, but it is hoped that the new building will be up by May next year. This will include indoor training facilities, a duty lifeguard room, a first-aid room, changing and showering area, and much better storage facilities for their equipment and rescue boat.



THE VILLAGE INN

THURLESTONE

WHAT'S ON THIS CHRISTMAS

Tues 19th

Mike's Christmas Quiz

7.30pm

Weds 20th

HAPPY HOUR 6-8pm

Cocktails & Canapes

Thurs 21st

Christmas Carols 9.30-10.30pm

with Ringsbridge Silver Band

Sat 23rd

Christmas Draw

& Live Music

Christmas Eve Open 12-3 & 7-11.30pm

Join us for Mulled Wine & Mince Pies

Christmas Day Open 11.30-1pm

Boxing Day Open ALL DAY 11.30am-11.30pm

Weds 27th Village Inn Stuffed After Christmas ***PARTY!***

Sing & Dance away the excesses of Christmas with **LIVE MUSIC**

from **HOWARD JONES**

BUFFET FROM 7.30PM

NEW YEAR'S EVE CELEBRATIONS

The Village Inn NEW YEAR'S EVE *Party!*

The evening starts at 6pm with *Cocktail Hour*
followed by MUSIC & DANCING FROM 8PM

3 COURSE *New Year's Eve* DINNER £15 per person
7-9pm Bookings essential

Party into the small hours at the VILLAGE INN!!!

NEW YEAR'S DAY

HAPPY NEW YEAR

OPEN 12noon - 11PM



*We would like to wish
all our customers and friends
a very Merry Christmas
& Good Health and Happiness for the
New Year*

*From Sarah, Richard, Sharon, Jonathan, Andrew
and all the team*

KATE'S KITCHEN



Christmas is coming!

Now that we can buy our cards in September and order presents and Christmas food from mail-order catalogues even earlier than that, much of the magic of Christmas seems to have disappeared. But nothing can spoil the sights and smells of puddings, cakes and mincemeat made at home. Many cooks use recipes that have become a family tradition but for those who would like something different this year, here is a rich and deliciously fruity Christmas cake. Once you have assembled all the ingredients and chopped the fruit (an assistant would be useful!), it is very easy to make and will, of course, keep into the New Year if you are lucky enough to have any left until then.

A Rich Christmas Cake

10 ounces of butter	8 ounces each of ready-to-eat figs and apricots
10 ounces of muscovado sugar	8 ounces each of raisins and sultanas
5 large eggs	8 ounces of glace cherries
1 orange and 1 lemon	5 ounces of stoned prunes
5 tablespoons of brandy	4 ounces each ground almonds and candied peel
1 teaspoon of cinnamon	5 ounces of roasted, skinned hazelnuts
10 ounces of plain flour	1 teaspoon of baking powder

Grease and double line a 9 inch cake tin. Turn the oven on to 170° C, 325° F, Gas 3.

Beat the butter and sugar until creamy. Cut the figs, apricots and prunes roughly into quarters and halve the cherries. Mix them all into the butter mixture with the beaten eggs, ground almonds, peel, raisins, sultanas and the grated rinds and juice of the orange and lemon. Add the nuts, brandy and cinnamon. Then gently fold in the flour and sifted baking powder and spoon the mixture into the prepared cake tin, smoothing the top with a palette knife.

Put the cake in the centre of the oven for an hour and then turn the heat down to 150° C, 300° F, Gas 2 and cover the cake with a bit of greaseproof paper. Bake it for a further two hours and test it with a skewer to make sure it is cooked in the middle. Leave it to get cold before you turn it out. Then store it, wrapped in fresh greaseproof paper, in a tin until it is time to take it out, cover it with marzipan and icing or, perhaps, nuts and glace fruit.

If you have any dried fruits left over, they would be delicious stewed gently for a few minutes in a syrup of red wine and sugar with a flavouring of cinnamon and vanilla. Add a few chopped walnuts as the fruit salad cools and serve it cold with cream. **Happy Christmas!**

Pat Machin's

Xmas Puzzle Corner

CLUELESS CROSSWORD

Each number represents a letter. For example 1 = P, 2 = A, and 3 = T. Enter these letters where their numbers are shown in the grid. Then identify the letters for the remaining 23 numbers and enter them in the grid. When completed it should show a normal crossword grid. All 26 letters of the alphabet are used. *In this crossword, the outer squares will give the first words of a Christmas Carol.*

19	2	17	16	3	19	14	19	14	17	2	12	13	2	5
19		10			15		24		24			19		4
3	24	26	3		6	2	4	15	5		25	15	16	14
17		3		11		13		3		21		6		12
2			11	24	2	13	17	10	12	12	14			20
14	17	2		2		12		21		15		6	2	20
5		22	14	13	12	14	23		12	2	18	2		10
15		1		17			14			16		8		5
14		12	2	24	13		20	1	2	17	20	14		4
21	24	14		1		2		2		15		5	2	4
2			17	14	5	13	10	3	10	15	5			12
14		2		13		9		10		22		14		15
1	24	22	2		3	14	5	15	5		15	8	14	17
4		15			6		15		24			10		23
5	10	16	5	17	15	7	6	14	5	14	19	3	15	3

REFERENCE GRID

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
P	A	T										
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26

Roger Hind

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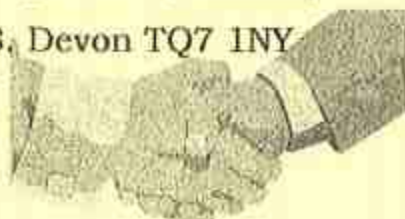
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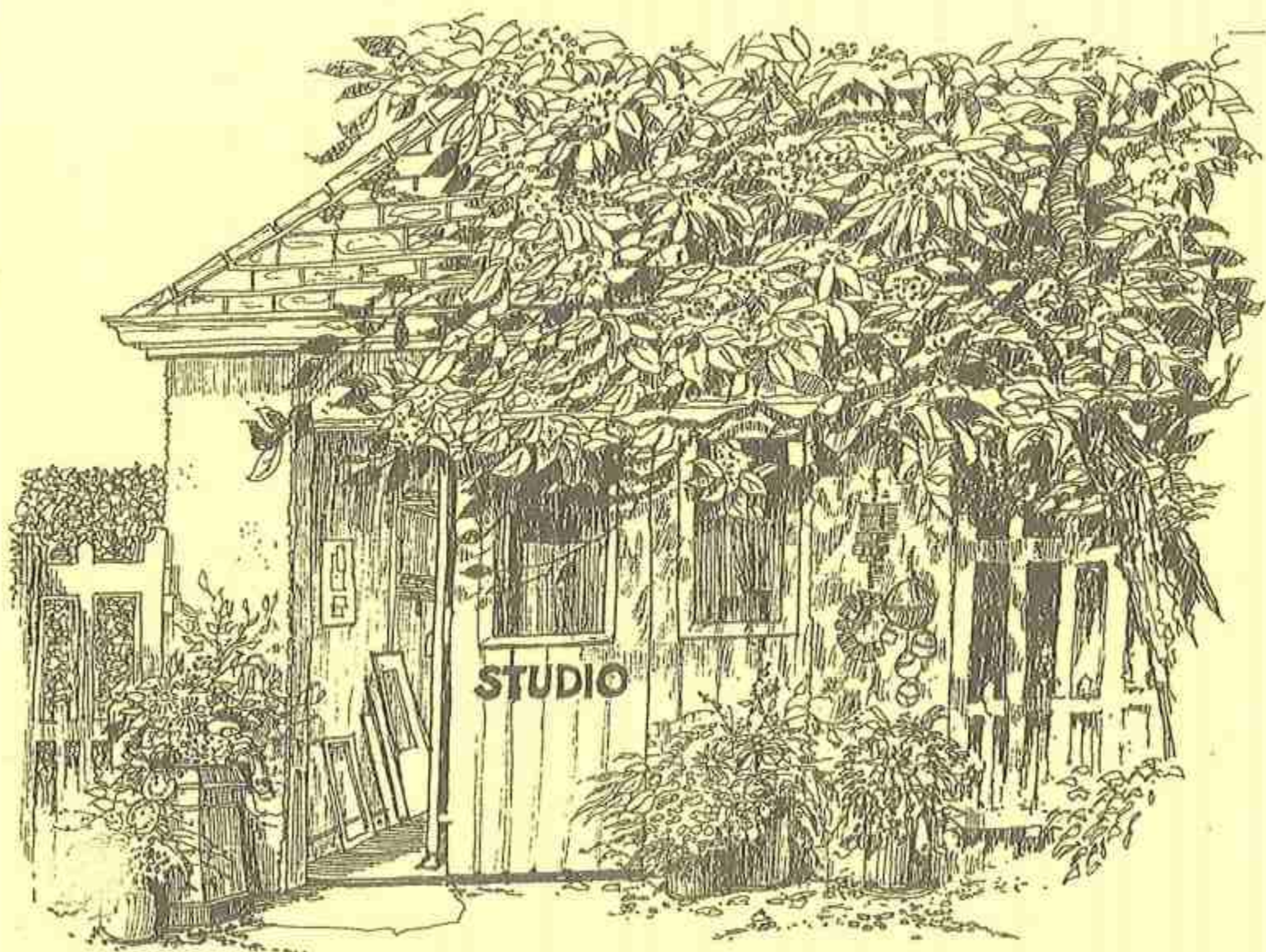
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POSTBAG



Dear Editor

Good British Fairness

We read with interest Hugh Croad's article, in the October-November Village Voice, putting the case for water-skiing on the Avon.

As he states, the right to water-ski is a statutory one. We would prefer it if water-skiing did not take place on the Avon. We could lobby to have the right removed, but that is all we could do.

Evans Estates supports the aims set out in the draft Avon Estuary Management Plan. One of its avowed aims is "to seek to reduce the environmental impact of water-skiing to a realistic minimum". To give a licence to place marker-buoys was felt to be incompatible with this view. Notice was therefore given that the licence would not be renewed. The Club was asked to ensure that the buoys are removed by the end of the licence period. In our view the use of words such as "decreed" and "demanded" do not fairly describe what has taken place.

As regards environmental issues, Evans Estates' overall plan for the future is to continue to strive to keep their property as unspoilt as possible and to protect the peace and tranquillity of what must be one of the most beautiful rivers in England, a place that future generations may enjoy in safety whether on land or water.

Yours faithfully
EVANS ESTATES

Dear Editor

Water Skiing on the Avon Estuary

The Chairman of the Aune Valley Waterski Club, in his article in your October-November edition, gives an interesting insight into the singular attitude of the local water-skiing fraternity. Regrettably, Mr Croad's comments ignore, totally, the existence and interests of the other Avon estuary users and he talks only about the interests of water-skiers.

"Villager", in your August-September issue reported, in his own inimitable way, the outcome of the Aune Conservation Association's survey. Notwithstanding "Villager's" total neutrality, Mr Croad deems it necessary to defend the environmental threat to the Avon estuary which he perceives to be the basis for the unpopularity of water-skiing. I wonder is there, inside every thinking water-skier, an environmental conscience?

Staying with the environmental subject for a moment - after all, Mr Croad raised it - am I correct in presuming that his reference to "a report from Devon Wildlife commissioned by South Hams District Council" is, in fact, the "Avon Valley Ecological Assessment Consultative Report" prepared for the South Hams Environment Service by Dr Peter Beale, Principal Consultant to Devon Wildlife Enterprises - in 1997?

May I quote from this report - under Section 5 "Management Needs" the last paragraph reads "...Prevent damage to any areas of saltmarsh and glasswort within the estuary (vulnerable to excessive power-boat wake)" and under Section 6 "Issues requiring resolution..." paragraph e. "...Use of power-boats is considered detrimental to the quality of the lower part of the AONB [Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty] ...".

However, moving on from environmental matters. It has to be a travesty that the sole navigable waterway between Bantham and Aveton Gifford is used for water-skiing. Fast-moving water-ski power-boats, towing a skier, mingling with much slower craft of all types ranging from little rowing dinghies, canoes, small inflatables, sailing dinghies to outboard or inboard driven cruisers/day boats, compares with organised sports car racing being permitted on the road between Aveton Gifford and Kingsbridge.

Although I know Mr Croad will stress the responsible attitude of his members and that, in addition to a capable helmsman, ski boats have a look-out, the engine size is limited and the wash isn't always that severe. I must tell him that not all ski boats observe the rules. (I suspect that, in his heart, Mr Croad knows this already).

There are many Avon Estuary users who have experienced near misses, heart-stopping moments, and sheer intimidation by ski boats and skiers, such as coming very close to other craft. It has happened to me - more than once - when I and any passengers have been well and truly splashed by a passing water-skier. Unfortunately not all of Mr Croad's fellow-skiers are as responsible or conscientious as, doubtless, he is.

It is not only on the water that the skiers make their presence unwelcome. Take your spouse, partner, friends, children or family to the lime kiln beach area, opposite Stiddicombe Woods, for some quiet sunbathing, swimming or a picnic. On the assumption you are there bright and early with the incoming tide, it will be only a matter of time before a couple, probably three or more speed-boats, usually packed with wet-suited water-skiers, sometimes with a dog or two, will arrive and take over your space. Your peace and tranquillity will be ruined and the incessant drone of the power-boat engines will add to your misery. Make no mistake, the water-skiers will not deign to respect your prior 'claim' and remove themselves to another spot - you will simply be overrun.

Life is no easier if you are afloat and, for example, planning to linger in the area of the lime kiln, Stiddicombe or Doctor's Wood by anchoring and bringing out the binoculars to watch the shelduck, egrets, heron or other birds. You may even have planned and brought an on-board picnic.

Forget it. You, your boat and any passengers will be so rocked by the wash from water-ski boats and skiers, coupled with the ever-constant engine noise, that your whole idea and plan will quickly lose its appeal and you will up-anchor and leave, dodging the skiers as you go.

By its very nature, the worthy sport of water-skiing needs a large, exclusive and uncluttered area and, by any standard, the Avon Estuary is simply not that, never will be, and therefore not the place for water-skiing.

Why is the sport in South Devon concentrated on the River Avon? The Dart and Salcombe/Kinsbridge estuaries are much more suitable with larger areas, creeks and inlets and secluded water stretches or, what about using a local reservoir, i.e., behind the Avon Dam?

The potential risk to others users of the Avon Estuary on passage between Bantham and Aveton Gifford, or

simply using the only navigable channel, from high speed water-ski craft and skiers is really unacceptable and the time has come to cease water-skiing on the River Avon.

Yours faithfully
ROWLAND COLE
Buckland



Dear Editor

Picnic at Shag Rock (aka the Lime Kiln)

I would like to respond to Mr Croad's letter in the last issue of Village Voice.

The Aune Conservation Association welcomes anyone who feels they can commit themselves to the objectives of our organisation, which include:
"The preservation of the essential character of the Avon Estuary, to protect its wild life and quiet amenities".

We do have some reservations as to whether the Avon is the right place for water-skiing in the South Hams. As one who learnt to enjoy the sport 45 years ago on the Canadian lakes, I know that the ideal location is a wide expanse of still water. The Avon has a very narrow navigation channel which is fast silting-up and this creates difficulties for safe navigation, especially by small craft and canoes for which the Estuary is ideally suited and which are in danger of being swamped by boats driven at speed.

There is also a concern that the section of the east bank, known as the Mud Walls, which is within the section permitted to the water skiers under the bye-law, is crumbling. Ironically there are open stretches on the Kingsbridge estuary, notably at Lincombe, which are already used for testing power-boats and which would be far better suited to the sport of water-skiing.

This said, I agree with Mr Croad that the vast majority of the members of his Club are courteous and respect the provisions of the bye-law under which they operate. The trouble, when it comes, is usually from rogue power-boats and from jet-skiers exceeding the 8-knot limit. In most cases it is impossible to prosecute because they carry no identification and because the patrol boat and radar gun are only available for two months in the summer.

The fundamental problems affecting the Avon Estuary are siltation and pollution. In both respects we and the water-skiers have an interest in putting pressure on the Environment Agency, who have so far failed to arrest the first and to root out the second threat to what is still a beautiful and tranquil environment

Yours faithfully
JOHN F. CRAWFORD
Chairman, Aune Conservation Association

Dear Editor

Appreciation

We are regular visitors to Thurstone and appreciate enormously your magazine Village Voice.

The beautiful art-work of Len Hubbard on the front covers, the inspiring-written Horswell Diary, Harry Huggins' articles on birds, the stimulating and sometimes controversial Villager, also the puzzles, book reviews, Tramps and Weather Wag - everything is first-class. Thank you!

Yours sincerely
MARGARET SAILE
Staffordshire

Dear Editor

Puzzling



First of all, thank you for all the hard work put in by the producers of Village Voice. I so much appreciate it and depend on it for village news.

In the October-November issue I read both Villager's and Citizen's articles and they puzzled me. Were they 'sending up' the public meeting on the 4th September regarding parking problems in Thurstone, or aimed at undermining the efforts to do something about the problem? It was only after reading the official minutes of the public meeting that I had a clearer idea of what actually took place that evening.

The articles left the reader with the impression it was all a fuss about nothing. Perhaps that was the intention - a great pity.

Yours sincerely
HILDA CLARK
Thurstone

Dear Editor

Fuel Crisis

It was interesting to read the Reverend Andrew Girling's comments on the recent fuel crisis in your last issue. I was disappointed to read subsequently that South Hams Councillors had backed a resolution calling for substantial reductions in fuel prices because of hardship in the local community. No vehicle-user likes paying more for fuel but pandering to populist sentiments will not solve any of the deep-seated problems affecting our rural economy and environment, which have been highlighted by recent events. The speed at which a handful of key protestors could cut off food supplies and essential services provided a harsh reminder of how vulnerable our lives have become.

Professor Bellamy once described town-dwellers as "urban spacemen" totally divorced from their life-support system. Ironically, we country-dwellers now find ourselves in the same position as successive governments which, obsessed with global marketing, have presided over the dismantling of much of the infrastructure which used to underpin our way of life. Local mills, bakers, abattoirs, butchers, milk producer-retailers, village shops and post offices have all been disappearing at an alarming rate. For many commodities our food chain starts in areas of the globe where we have no control over the methods of production or quality. We, like townsmen, depend on the centralised distribution systems of the supermarkets and its reliance on long-distance transport.

Lower fuel prices will solve none of the major problems affecting the countryside today. On the contrary, maintaining high prices will provide incentives for fuel economy and the research and development of alternative energy from our own renewable resources. This would not be subject to the vagaries of Middle-Eastern politics and would also be environmentally friendly. Some glimmer of hope comes from recent government announcements of money allocated to alternative energy. We must hope that this will be followed by significant sums of tax revenue being invested in rural regeneration so that we can look forward to a restoration of the viability and sustainability which used to be a fact of country life.

Yours faithfully
JOHN MONTAGUE
Aune Cross

SEAVIEW HOUSING PROJECT

Starter homes for young people

Citizen reports on the main feature of the Parish Council meeting of 9th October 2000

Andrew Fiske, the District Council's Housing Resources & Development Manager, was at the meeting to discuss the current situation regarding this project.

As those villagers who have been very patient over the past ten years know, the proposal is to build up to twelve starter homes for the youngsters of the village who need an affordable home in which to start family life.

Andrew Fiske's excellent talk did much to reassure and give those waiting for such a home a certain amount of hope, even if the houses may not be built for another three years.

There appeared to be two main problems:

Firstly, very few people have applied for such a home in Thurlestone. It is therefore most important that anyone interested should make that interest known to Parish Council chairman Peter Hurrell or to the South Hams Housing Department.

Secondly, the development costs would be very high. To build only starter homes is not viable and a suggestion put

forward was that a few houses for outright sale would be built, with a firm covenant imposed that they must be the main home of the purchaser and not allowed to become holiday homes.

This second point is a matter of discussion between the many interested parties, but the feeling of the meeting was that it would not be desirable, *as the land was sold and planning permission obtained on the grounds that the development was purely for starter homes.*

An update of the situation is planned for early in 2001.

In view of the increasing number of young children, there has been a request by two Seaview residents that the road should be designated a Children's Play Area, with the appropriate signing erected to warn motorists. This was considered to be extremely important with the increase in housing and the associated contractors' lorries which any new development will bring.

Citizen



FOR THE CHILDREN - OR THE GROWN-UPS?



'Tis the week before Christmas and every night
As soon as the children are snuggled up tight
And have sleepily murmured their wishes and prayers,
Such fun as goes on in the parlour downstairs!
For Father, Big Brother, and Grandfather too,
Start in with great vigour their youth to renew.
The grown-ups are having great fun, when all's said;
And they play till it's long past their hour for bed.

They try to solve puzzles and each one enjoys
The magical thrill of mechanical toys,
Even Mother must play with a doll that can talk,
And if you assist it, it's able to walk.
It's really no matter if paint may be scratched,
Or a cogwheel, a nut, or a bolt gets detached;
The grown-ups are having great fun - all is well;
The children don't know it, and Santa won't tell!

Anon

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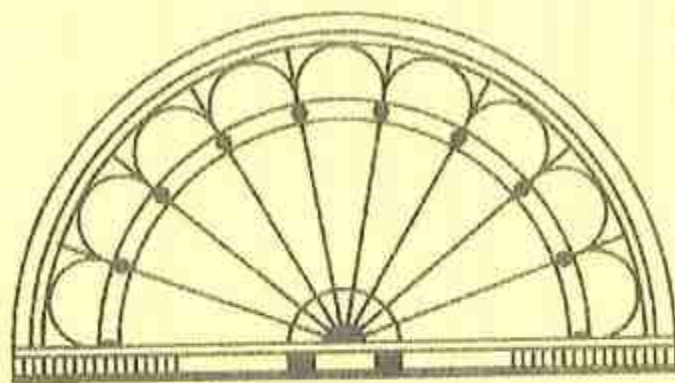
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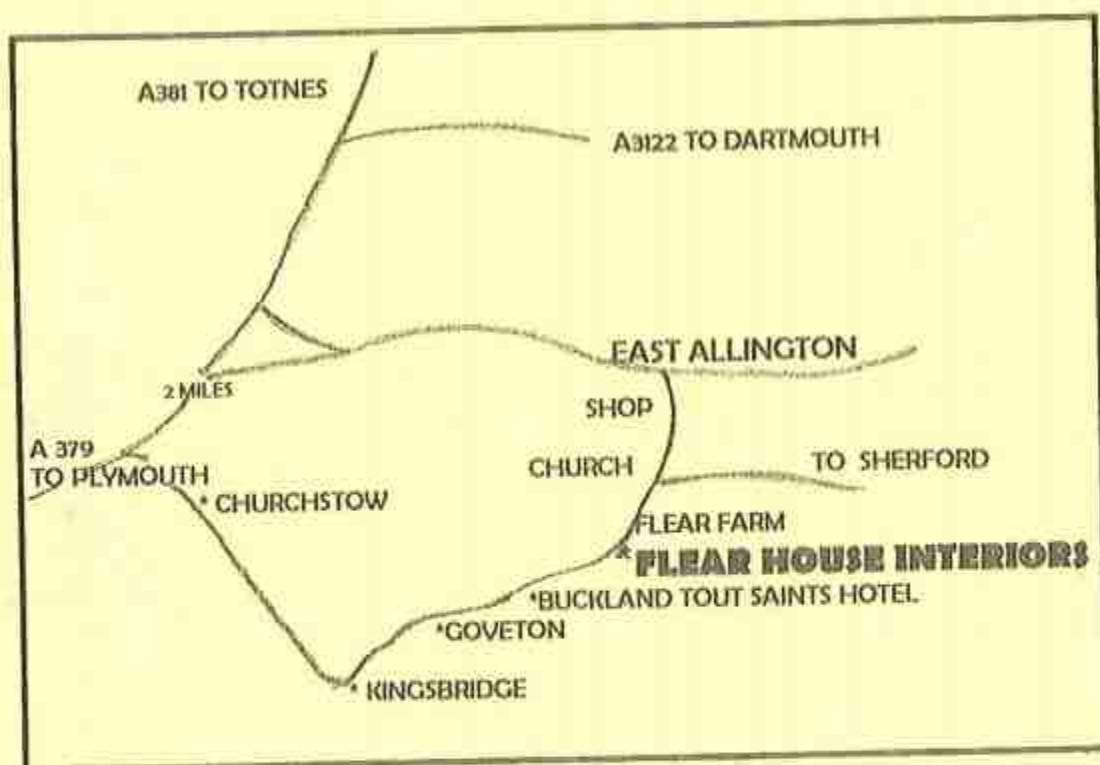
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All Saints



Priest in Charge: Revd. Andrew Girling 562219

Churchwardens: Graham Worrall 562016 & Liz Webb 560090

ANDREW GIRLING WRITES: O come let us adore him

Jesus was born into a carpenter's family. He would have learned there to take a rough piece of wood and shape it into something useful and beautiful.

There remains much roughness in our aggressive, acquisitive society. The rough violence of the inadequate youngster. The ambitious businessman riding roughshod over his colleagues. The rough and ready contact of one person with another which passes for relationships in our hectic, dash-about society. But worst of all, is the roughness within ourselves: the meanness, the selfishness, the insecurity and fear. Splinters which continually pierce the soul, where we know lie goodness and love longing to be freed.

There was roughness too in the stable: the splintered manger, the grimy uneducated shepherds, the dirty straw. Yet here love and goodness were born. A baby, whom it was said, would 'make the rough places plain'. A baby who, in later life, having learned to fashion furniture from wood, went on to transform men's lives.

For generations men have sought answers within themselves, but have so often found, only emptiness. They have sought answers too in new patterns and ideologies for society and have been disappointed. The roughness, it seems was too ingrained for such superficial treatment.

Is it possible, then, as people claim, that the answer lies in that little baby? His life was one of unique beauty and dignity. He brought health and hope where before there had been disease and despair. He calmed the rough waters of many turbulent lives and when his own body was torn by the rough wood of the cross and thorns, and the piercing steel of the nails and spear, he had nothing but love to offer in return.

It is just that love which has touched the hearts of so many men and women and fashioned them into a new beauty and usefulness. It is just that love, which has given them the strength and confidence to love in a rough and tumble world. It is just that love which we come to worship at Christmas, asking that he will remake our lives into something 'beautiful for God'.

O come let us adore him.

Andrew Girling



All Saints Diary

Church Services

Thurlestone

EVERY SUNDAY	8.00 a.m.	Holy Communion (said)
EVERY THURSDAY	8.30 a.m.	Holy Communion (said)

Thurlestone & South Milton

1 ST SUNDAY	JOINT FAMILY SERVICE at alternate churches,			
DEC 3 RD	10.30 a.m. South Milton	JAN 7 TH	10.30 a.m. Thurlestone	Searchlight Epiphany Play
	Toy Tree Service			
DEC 3 RD	6.00 p.m. Thurlestone	JAN 7 TH	6.00 p.m. South Milton	Holy Communion (said)
	Evensong			
DEC 10 TH & JAN 14 TH	SOUTH MILTON 9.30 A.M.		THURLESTONE 11.10 A.M.	
DEC 17 TH & JAN 21 ST	Family Communion		Matins	
CHRISTMAS EVE	Holy Communion (said)		Family Communion	
NEW YEAR'S EVE	NO MORNING SERVICE (except 8.00am Thurlestone)		Parish Eucharist	
JAN 28 TH	Parish Eucharist		Parish Eucharist	

Special Christmas Services

SUNDAY DEC 17 TH	6.00 P.M. South Milton	Candlelit Service of Nine Lessons & Carols
THURSDAY DEC 21 ST	4.30 P.M. Thurlestone	Crib Service } for the young and
FRIDAY DEC 22 ND	3.00 P.M. South Milton	Crib Service } young at heart
FRIDAY DEC 22 ND	6.00 P.M. Thurlestone	Candlelit Service of Nine Lessons & Carols
CHRISTMAS EVE	10.00 P.M. South Milton	First Communion of Christmas
	11.30 P.M. Thurlestone	First Communion of Christmas
CHRISTMAS DAY	8.00 A.M. Thurlestone	NO CELEBRATION OF HOLY COMMUNION
	9.30 A.M. South Milton	Family Service followed by Holy Communion
	11.10 A.M. Thurlestone	Family Service followed by Holy Communion

We look forward to seeing you at any of these services.

Homemade Soup & a Ploughman's

MONDAY DECEMBER 4TH & JANUARY 8TH NOON ~ 1.30 P.M. PARISH HALL
Everyone is welcome to come and enjoy soup and a ploughman's lunch

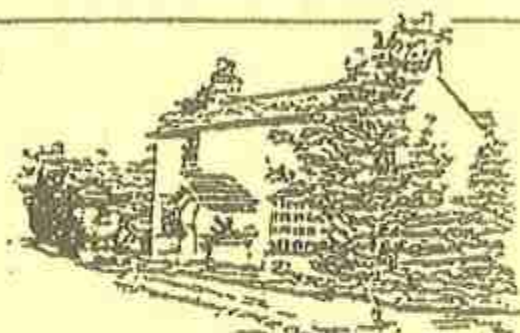
Coffee-Time

EVERY MONDAY 10.30 ~ 11.30 a.m. THURLESTONE PARISH HALL
Why not join us for a cup of coffee or tea and a chat? We should be very pleased to see you.

Love in a Box

A big thank you to everyone who filled a shoebox with presents for children in Eastern Europe who would not otherwise get any present at Christmas. We were able to send 54 boxes to *Children in Distress*. For the next issue I hope to have a report of their arrival in Romania and the other East European countries to which they have been sent.

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Has the Christian Faith meaning for today?

Talks with informal questions & discussion led by Andrew Girling.

Everyone is welcome ~ those who never go to church, regular church goers of any denomination and all those in between ~

Come along and bring your friends

You might find the answer to the question you have never dared to ask!

Monday 15th January South Milton Village Hall

Who is Jesus?

A figure in history?

A great teacher?

A fraud?

A man filled with God's Spirit?

Monday 22nd January Thurlestone Parish Hall

The Heart of Jesus' teaching

Out of date?

Out of touch?

A strong and profound understanding of human nature and its needs
and offering real solutions?

Monday 29th January South Milton Village Hall

The Crucifixion

Why?

What difference does it make?

Monday 5th February Thurlestone Parish Hall

The Resurrection

A figment of the Disciples' imagination?

A lie?

An historical event of eternal significance?

Monday 12th February South Milton Village Hall

The Holy Spirit

Emotional hype?

The experience of Jesus' love today?

Monday 19th February Thurlestone Parish Hall

The Church

Hide-bound?

Irrelevant?

The family of God?

Each session starts at 7.30 p.m. with light refreshments and a chance to chat. Coffee will be served after the talk for those who would like to stay, when there will also be a chance for questions, either shared or individually.

COME & JOIN THE

All Saints Carollers

in aid of our sponsored Romanian child, Viorica Melinda Sarkadi,
and "Children in Distress"

Monday December 18th

MEET AT 6.00PM IN THE THURLESTONE PARISH HALL CAR PARK
TO SING IN THURLESTONE, BUCKLAND & BANTHAM

Everyone is welcome to join the *All Saints Carollers*, the more the merrier
Enthusiasm is more important than your singing voice!!

It is only possible to sing on one evening this year and our priority will be to visit those who are unable to come to the Carol Service. Perhaps you might like to invite your friends and neighbours in so that we can sing to you all at once! If there are sufficient numbers of singers, we will split into groups so that we can visit more people. It would therefore be helpful (but not essential) to let Liz know that you hope to join us. Don't let this stop you just turning up on the night!

Could anyone offer us refreshments at the end?!

IF YOU WOULD LIKE US TO COME TO SING AT YOUR HOUSE,
PLEASE LET LIZ KNOW (560090).

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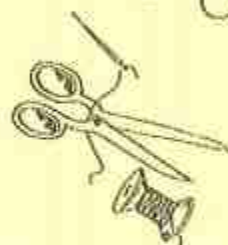
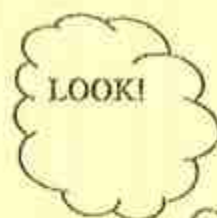
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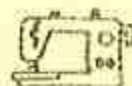
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WALKING OFFA'S DYKE

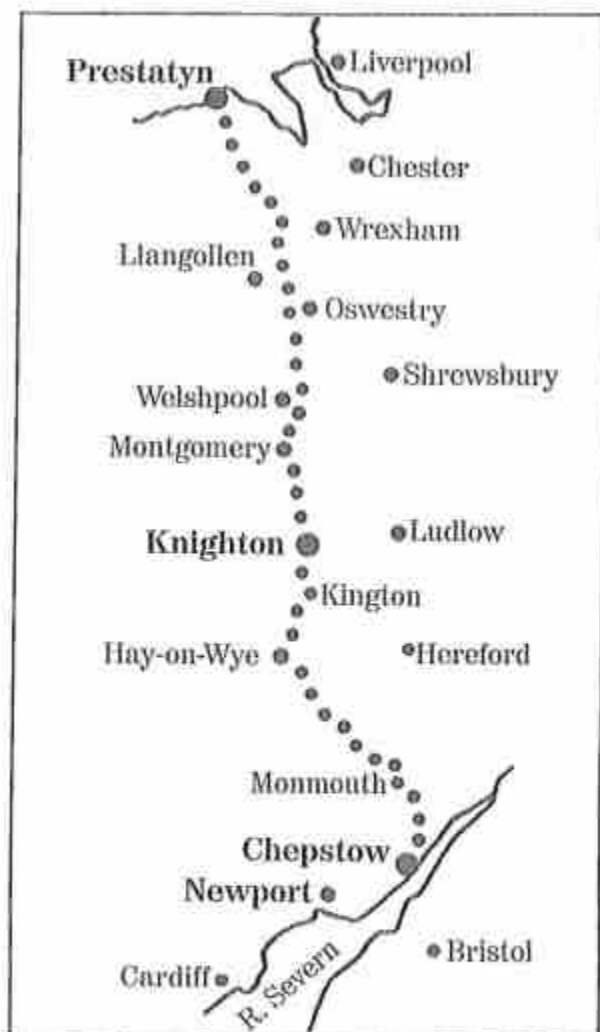
Between the 15th and the 27th September this year, Rosemary Stocken and Roy Tucker walked some 146 miles of the OFFA'S DYKE PATH. This is the Long Distance Path (LDP), which runs from Prestatyn, North Wales, to Chepstow on the Bristol Channel. Here is Rosemary's highly readable account of their journey.

Offa's Dyke Path is the only National Parks path which is based on a man-made rather than a natural feature. It was created in the eighth century by Offa, King of Mercia, to keep out the marauding Welsh. The massive dyke earthworks do not extend the entire 176 miles of the Path now, but where evident it is an impressive 20 foot deep cleft and to walk along the top of one side makes one feel incredulous that such a Herculean task was fulfilled by the King's forces with little more than picks and shovels. King Offa's intention, it would seem, was to hold his soldiers under cover of trees on the far side of the dyke while the attacking Welsh horsemen charged uphill - unaware of the dyke ahead - meeting a grisly death at the hands of the English bows and arrows.

The idea of walking this particular Path - supposed to be the toughest of all though we did not find it especially so - was born when we stayed with my sister and her husband, Sheila and John Bampfield, who live in Bronygarth, where the LDP runs alongside their garden. Over the years they have derived great pleasure from meeting walkers of all nationalities coming to them for B&B, so we thought "Why not us too?" We got a list of possible B&Bs near the Path from the Offa's Dyke Association. In some cases B&Bs are as much as five miles off the Path itself and, in such isolated areas, not so easy to find. We decided to make use of our two weeks holiday in September for the walk.

Somehow word got round and before we realised it fully Liz Webb and Joan Galloway were working hard on a sponsorship in aid of our parish church. Advertisements appeared and all of a sudden our uncomplicated and relaxed walking holiday turned into a sort of "do or die" project with its inherent stress!

So with many contributions promised, we took a train to Prestatyn, a North Wales coastal town. Loaded with a heavy rucksack each, containing one set of spare clothes, torches, knives, survival bags, whistles, first-aid, maps, compass, cash, thermos and a minimum of food, we departed the flat shore of Prestatyn at 2 pm and scrambled up the steep wood footpath to the hilltop. Below us were two lush golf courses, the River Dee, the Wirral peninsula (beyond which lay the River Mersey and Liverpool) and Anglesey. Wild flowers graced the track on either side and, by the limestone quarries, harebells,



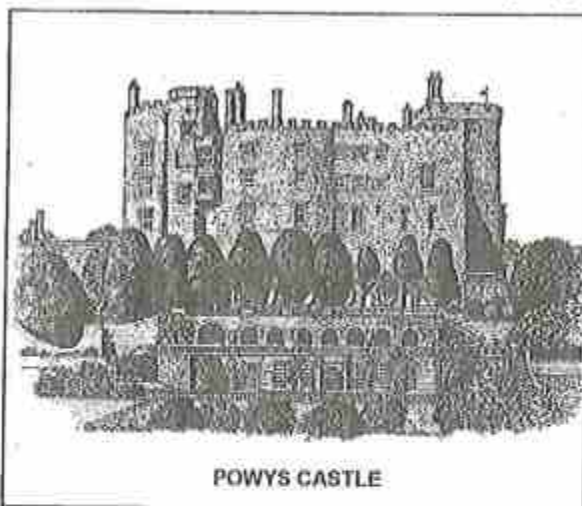
ragwort, honeysuckle, snowberry, dog-roses, bullums and blackberries. Ironically, this day's walk was the hottest of the entire twelve days. We wore shorts every day, so this left us with dry poplin trousers to put on in the evening when shorts were drying out. This half-day we had planned to cover only 8 miles, at which point there was an inn marked on our map. Little did we know that this inn had no accommodation! We reached it at 7.00 pm and the most helpful bar-ladies gave us a splendid meal, whilst ringing round friends who might put us up. As we finished eating, a delightful lady called Eirlys Jones, a farmer's wife, arrived and drove us two miles to their lovely old farm for the night. They could not have been more welcoming and kind and next morning, after a hearty breakfast, saw us on our way - armed with more apples than we really wanted to carry!

This was typical of every farmhouse or private house B&B establishment - always welcoming and friendly and providing huge breakfasts. Not so the inns, which, apart from the first one, were mostly cold, gloomy, and impersonal. A breakfast of dried egg scrambled on plain bread was not an appetising way to start the day. Only one allowed us to dry our sodden clothes and boots in the boiler-house.

One of the most stress-producing things concerned booking a B&B. We did not do this in advance because we just never knew how far we would walk each day and did not wish to upset some B&B provider by phoning late afternoon and cancelling, when another walker might have been glad of the accommodation. (In fact we only met about a dozen other walkers on the Path). We aimed to walk an average twelve to fifteen miles a day and with the B&Bs sometimes as much as ten or more miles apart some daily planning was needed. Thus each morning we would phone a B&B where we hoped to be that day and book. This had its own problems in that we could not get a signal on our mobile except on top of a hill and often we could not get a reply or were asked to

leave a message on an answering machine. Thus, we could be plodding late in the afternoon - often very wet - with no room ahead booked.

The LDP is famous mostly for its variety of scenery - no two days of walking being alike. With mountains, hills, heather moors, forests, river valleys and river crossings, a canal towpath and a general landscape of up hill and down dale - steep at that - we found something unexpected each day. The early views over the Vale of Clwyd and across to Shropshire's Long Mynd were beautiful, and we even found wild raspberries on the edge of Llanmynech golf course. On the moors, heather, gorse and old stone walls hid thousands of sheep and the ruined remains of ancient dwellings. There were red kite, buzzards and wild ponies. In the forests we saw green woodpeckers, pheasant, grey squirrels, and in the Montgomery Canal swans, mallards, coots and moorhens. Hazel nut and crab-apple trees straddled the paths and in the fields there were even more sheep, cattle and some horses. The Path is isolated, often remote, and twice we were confronted with Charolais bulls - once when we got lost and should not have been in his field anyway.



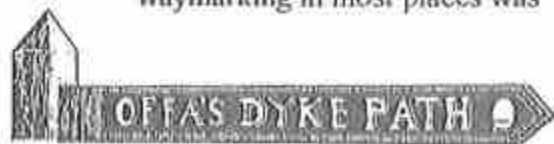
POWYS CASTLE

Of special interest were the occasional ancient hill forts; the red brick Powys Castle nestling on a forested hill overlooking the Severn Valley near Welshpool; the commemorative George III Jubilee Tower built in 1820 on Moel Famau and now in

ruins; the disused Montgomery Canal with its neatly-tended gardens round the former lock-keeper's cottages; two very tiny ancient churches, one near Churchtown the other at Capel-y-Ffin; the stark and beautiful ruins of the 12th century Augustinian abbey at Llanthony.

We spent an unforgettable night in a refurbished part of the ruin in a tiny tower bedroom complete with four-poster bed and approached by two flights of narrow spiral stone stairs. It was cold but dry, sparsely furnished and lit. We half expected that we might be sharing it with a pair of ravens as it was a bit eerie and very wet outside. We looked straight on to the massive tracery of highly sculpted stonework and huge pillars, many fallen over. A first-class supper was served on the monks' table using very old china and cutlery. We were surrounded by carved wood panelling, little stone window alcoves, and all manner of strange kitchen gadgets were hanging around the walls beside an old blackened fireplace. The old barns attached to the abbey are now used as a trekking centre for horse-riders.

The Path route is marked out with small white acorns painted on finger posts and the waymarking in most places was



excellent. We were impressed with how they had overcome the problem of peat bogs on Llandegla moor, where grouse were feeding and goshawk and peregrine falcons circling above. They had utilised dozens of huge old railways sleepers, two abreast on blocks, to make a dry walkway just a few inches above the black deep bogs for about a quarter of a mile. Woe betide anyone who lost their concentration and stepped off the bridging, for they would be sucked into the bog.

Of interest too was the way a "permitted path" had been obtained through the grounds

of Mellington Hall and its well-cared-for woodlands. Our surprise was to see a huge caravan park tucked away in a field almost completely sheltered from the public eye, in no way intrusive on the landscape and created with great sensitivity to the natural environment. However, the Path later crossed a farmyard - the filthiest we had ever encountered. With no other permitted way we were forced to wade ankle-deep in an overflowing muck heap for thirty yards, trying to watch where our boots were going and, at the same time, keeping a nervous eye on three large Friesian bulls tethered nearby.

Perhaps the most dramatic part of the Path was along the Panorama or Precipice Walk not far from Llangollen. The very narrow stony path embeds itself in the shale band beneath the huge limestone cliffs of Craig Arthur, so that you look up to see, spider-like, youths rock-climbing the face above, while down below is a very steep slope of scree. Not a walk for the vertiginous, especially as it extends nearly a mile and there is a little stone grave on it, with flowers. This exhilarating part of the walk was followed by the worst two-and-a-half miles...first along a narrow tarmac lane (tiring on one's feet) and then through what seemed an interminably dark, gloomy, uninteresting wood - silent, motionless and eerie.

Emerging in the fading light we decided to take a public footpath short-cut through a field to our B&B. The stile lay between a high hawthorn hedge with no view except dead ahead, but when I slid off the stile into the field I was faced with our second Charolais bull - who was not at all pleased to see me! We had to back-track.

One of the highlights of this part of the walk was our meeting with my sister and her husband, who walked along with us from the impressive canal viaduct over the River Dee near Llangollen to their home, gave us a very enjoyable day's rest and washed all our clothes and then accompanied us next day

along the Path as far as the Oswestry race-course, providing us with a super picnic lunch and glass of wine to see us on our way!

After thirteen miles of walking, Roy's leg was beginning to give him trouble and this was very red and swollen on reaching the inn at Llanmynech. A long hot bath relieved the pain and the temporary barmaid, very pregnant, offered him the ointment given to her for her own varicose veins. This helped greatly. As we walked along the Montgomery Canal and the early part of the River Severn, we noticed large areas covered in red-flowering balsam, which is now considered an obnoxious weed and fast taking over the indigenous hedgerow plants. It is believed to have come from China or Africa on imported plants.

There are eighty-eight wooden stiles to surmount along the Path, and we were much encouraged to see on one of them "Chepstow 123 miles" whilst on another was carved:

"There was a crooked man
Who walked a crooked mile
He found a crooked sixpence
Upon a crooked stile"

At another spot, near an old farm, a fresh water tap built into the wall had this poem:

"If you are walking Offa's Dyke
And this should catch your eye;
If your pack is feeling heavy
And your throat is feeling dry -
There's water flowing in this tap,
It's cool, it's fresh, it's free,
It may not be as strong as wine
But neither is the fee.
You may imbibe the elixir
Avoiding spill or waste
And having thus refreshed yourself
Be on your way with haste"

We met the poet's daughter outside her very remote farm, which was typical of all the high stone-walled buildings. You enter a porch full of boots, anoraks, sticks, and then the

sitting room where you are almost swallowed up in huge old-fashioned armchairs, surrounded by priceless antiques passed down through generations.....brass bedsteads, spacious bathrooms with seven foot baths, large gilded mirrors, pictures of venerable ancestors or prize-winning sheep and cattle, photographs and memorabilia covering families long gone on. Most, but not all, had television and means for making your own coffee or tea. We heard owls at night and it was always pleasant to wake up to a cock crowing and cows lowing.

At one farm, high and isolated on a hill, we were greeted by a very audacious barking West Highland terrier, who would barely let us through the gate. But he turned out to be a dear little chap who thought he was a sheepdog. With the border collie he would sprint along to collect in the cows and then eventually escort them out again. He would rush around between the cows' legs, getting bespattered with muck and mud. The cows would show him great affection by occasionally bending down and nuzzling his head or licking his back. The young owners of the farm, as it happened, were going out celebrating their wedding anniversary several miles away. Quite regardless of our being total strangers, they left us in charge of the house (we watched the Olympics on television) whilst they were away until the early hours of the following morning.

It was after leaving this farm that we somehow missed our route and this proved nearly disastrous. I voiced my concern "*I think we are right off our course, walking east instead of south*". Roy replied "*how on earth do you know that when it's raining and there's no sun to guide you?*" The last pointer showed this way". Me "*That was a long way back - we are definitely heading in the wrong direction, the trees are all bent towards the east*". Visibility was limited. We could distinguish nothing on the map. Luckily a lady drove past on her way to Sunday service. She was a local horse-rider

and knew the exact way to cross the fields and marsh to reach the Path again, pointing to a barn we must aim for, two miles distant on the skyline.

Whether it was the rain or the fact we had incurred an unnecessary extra two miles on top of the fourteen planned, I don't know. It must have affected my concentration, for as I swung my leg over one of the many little stiles, my boot caught on the barbed wire alongside and it unbalanced me. In an effort to stop myself falling headlong into a large muddy pool on the other side, I made a hasty grab at an invisible something to stop me. Unfortunately, it had to be another strand of barbed wire. My boot released itself but my leg then caught the barbed wire and I ended up actually on two feet but with a badly torn hand and leg, gushing blood everywhere.

With rain streaming down I was reluctant to open my pack and delve to the bottom to retrieve my first-aid kit, so with my hand held up as if I were clutching the Olympic torch, we made for the barn as quickly as possible. It was dry with just old wooden pallets strewn around. I spread out my hand and leg under the rainwater which was pouring down off the tin roof to try and clean the jagged flesh, and bandaged the wounds as best I could. My boot and sock were soused in blood....and we walked rather miserably towards Knighton.

After several miles we skirted an old farm and just nearby, on a tree bordering a lane, Roy spotted a notice **"Walkers! Tea and Coffee"**. We debated whether I should present myself in such a mess, but eventually knocked hesitantly on the door of a lovely old cottage draped in roses, wisteria, jasmine and passion-flower, wherein Mr and Mrs Sid Thomas were enjoying their Sunday roast lunch. In no time we were made welcome and Mrs Thomas settled us on a bench in the porch with tea and scones, while her husband (ex-Superintendent of the Birmingham Police Force, retired) finished his lunch. Then he came in to talk to us, staring unbelievably at

my bloodied hand and foot. With commendable understanding and efficiency he phoned the Health Centre locum doctor instructing him not to go out! Mr Thomas (aged 80+) bundled us into his car, drove a zig-zagging course down a streaming, muddy, rutted lane, and delivered me into the hands of a most charming young doctor who seemed to be delighted to have something to do. He took one-and-a-half hours to sew ten stitches in my hand and twelve in my leg.

Meanwhile, Mr Thomas refused to leave us and kept Roy company while waiting for me, then drove us to a first-class B&B run by a Polish lady he knew, whose husband was a keen walker. They made us so welcome, took all our wet clothes away to dry, washed out my muddy, bloody, boot and stuffed all our boots with newspaper. We skipped supper, glad to have a kettle in our room for making soup and cocoa and to eat the biscuits Dana provided. Fortunately, my wounds did not hinder me - except that the dressings got so wet and having a bath was tricky.

After Knighton we visited Cynthia Kinkead-Weekes (ex Gulls Cry, Thurstlestone) in her ground-floor flat in a large country mansion which stands among beautiful lawns, trees and gardens which are open to the public. Cynthia was poorly but contented, on oxygen for most of the time but looked after by her daughter, living nearby, and the district nurse.

We then walked up Hergist Ridge in brilliant sunshine, with extensive views west to the Brecon Beacons. Soon, however, the rain descended and we had to make an unscheduled stop in Hay-on-Wye for the clinic to redress my wounds. Most of the town appears to be devoted to book shops but we preferred to spend the evening attending the local cattle market, where sheep were earning much better prices than in South Devon. We sat in good company on a wall having our fish & chips.

Next day, in thick drizzle, we walked over to Hay Bluff intending to continue over the

2300 ft. Black Mountains. They were completely obscured by rain and heavy mist, and when we reached Gospel Pass it was obviously dangerous to attempt going higher into unknown territory. Strong, very cold winds on the Pass, together with rain beating against us, made it most unpleasant. No one was around except, unexpectedly, a film unit with lorries carrying equipment, generators, cameras on cranes, coaches converted into sleeping-eating accommodation. We could not discover what they were filming but their engineers and cameramen seemed to spend most of their time passing and re-passing us on the road down, forcing us into stream-beds and mossy walls, making us even wetter. The narrow Pass was just a river in parts, well over the top of our boots in the valley. The only human beings we saw were a farmer on a quad bike and the driver of a huge oil delivery lorry which, as we flattened ourselves against a wall, sent a two-foot wave of muddy water over us.

We had hoped to find accommodation in Capel-y-Ffin, but the Youth Hostel did not open until 6 pm and would probably not accept walkers in their seventies anyway! The "Grange" had a horse-riding weekend so we walked a half-mile to an advertised B&B but found no-one was there. We had already walked ten miles in the rain and the next possible B&B was a further five miles on, but at least we were able to phone and book in. In the meantime we were dying for something to eat and drink but there was no shelter until we came to the charming very old church of Capel-y-Ffin with its ancient gravestones and yews and well-preserved stone walls and neatly trimmed verges. Somewhat guiltily we made for the little porch, undid our packs in the dry and had a thermos of hot soup, a cheese roll and a Bounty Bar - the latter a bonus for Roy had spied it left on a wall, presumably by a walker when re-arranging his pack.

We sat on the wooden seat and watched a wagtail as it fluttered from one gravestone to another, pecking at insects in the moss.

Suddenly and unexpectedly a very tall, thin man appeared at the lych gate, dressed in red walking gear and holding an umbrella. He just stared at us and we felt a little uncomfortable in case he was thinking it was sacrilegious to munch our lunch in a church porch. He disappeared but then returned and continued to stare, saying nothing. Was he just a lonely soul wanting company in such terrible weather? Or waiting for the Youth Hostel a mile back to open? Or a ghost? We hoped he found shelter for the night. We looked inside the tiny white-washed building. It was wonderfully peaceful and decorated everywhere with fruit and flowers for this little hamlet's Harvest Festival. In gratitude for the temporary shelter it had afforded us, we made a donation to its continued upkeep.

That night, the 11th, as we tried desperately to dry our boots, clothes, and even our map, we heard there were flood warnings all down the Wye Valley. We had already experienced flooded fields and lanes and waterfalls tumbling down the footpaths, so decided reluctantly that it was not the sort of holiday ending we wanted. So with two days to spare and only 30 miles to complete the official 176 miles, we decided to pack it in. It was a sad decision but the continuous rain was spoiling any enjoyment and my wound dressings were seeping and sodden. In spite of the inclement weather we thoroughly enjoyed the experience and would like to repeat the walk.

We would like to thank all those who have so generously donated money for Thurstlestone parish church. Not all has been collected yet, but to date there is over £850. The Rector, Reverend Andrew Girling, is looking into the cost of installing a loop hearing-aid system in the church, so that those who are hard of hearing can plug their aids in and enjoy hearing sermons, lessons, and singing without impairment. For anyone who has not contributed but would like to, the Appeal Fund Savings Account is still open at the Post Office.

Rosemary Stocken

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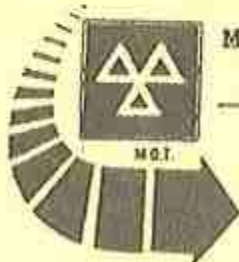
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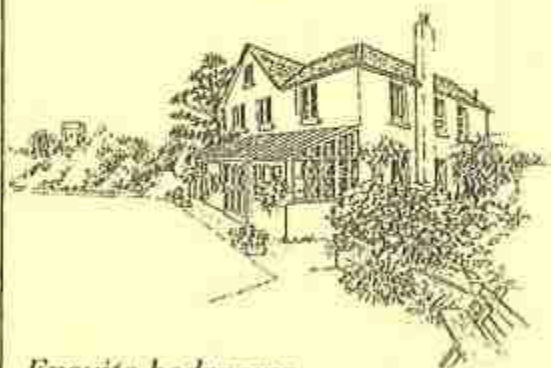
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NEWS FROM THE WI

Up-date on our activities

Colour and image and, harking back to old Sumptuary Law, the secret language of the clothes we wear, were the fascinating topics of guest speaker, **Janet Beveridge**, at the October meeting. Jane Pope was the volunteer for a colour test demonstration. Two new members, **Judy Teale** and **Fiona Jacobs**, were welcomed.

The Cheese & Wine evening held to raise money for the Macmillan Nursing Fund, our charity for the year, was enjoyed by 66 members and friends. It was also an opportunity to see the beautiful work in progress towards the cross-stitch Millennium Wall-hanging. A comic sketch starring **Wendy Neukirchen** and **Joan Booth** (based loosely on a Victoria Wood sketch about two lady hikers and adapted by **Val Brown**) brought the house down and rounded off a fun event.

As a result of this and other fund-raising events, £300 was sent to the Fund.

A new year starts

The November meeting was our Annual Meeting, when **Pat Clarke**, **Carolyn Taylor**, **Margaret Cullum**, **Sheila Ward** and **Pat Scarfe** stood down from the committee and **Pam Knight**, **Rosemary Durrant**, **Shirley Chapman** and **Jan Trender** joined it for the first time. **Pam Brewster** is the new President, with **Jo Parkin** the Secretary and **Rosemary Durrant** the Treasurer.

Programme and Speakers for 2001

January 11 th	A Birder in the Algarve (Harry Huggins)
February 8 th	Children on the Edge (Elena Bell)
March 8 th	Slapton Ley Field Study Centre (Chris Riley)

April 12 th	South Hams Spinners, Weavers & Dyers
May 10 th	Resolutions
June 14 th	Dancing for Zagreb National Ballet (Alexandra Pickford)
July 12 th	The Prince's Trust (John Crawford)
September 13 th	Small Fabric Gifts (Wren Loasby)
October 11 th	Adding Spice to your Dishes (Pam Wigfall)
November 8 th	Annual Meeting
December 13 th	Christmas Lunch

We also hope to have, amongst other things,

- # a Skittles & Supper Evening in February at the California Inn
- # a West Alvington blue-bell woods walk with supper at the Ring O' Bells
- # a guided walk round Slapton Ley in May
- # an outing to the Eden Project when it is all planted up in June
- # a summer Garden Lunch
- # Pub Lunches in February, April, and June

Keep an eye on the Information Table at WI for these and other events. If you are not a member of WI but would like to come and hear any of our speakers, or join in our outings, you would be most welcome. (This invitation includes gentlemen!) Contact **Jo Parkin** on 561215.

Don't forget the Area HE Christmas Mince-pie Coffee Morning on 7th December at Charleton village hall, 10.30 - noon, with interesting Christmas demonstrations too.

See you at the Christmas Lunch Party on the 14th December.

*Wishing all members and their families
a Happy & Peaceful Christmas*



WANT TO MAKE PROPER 'CLOTTED' CREAM?

Hubert Snowdon tells us how!

Cream is not 'made' really, but butter is. Whole milk* is stood in a receptacle for a few hours. The cream will rise, being lighter than milk. It is then heated. Easier than boiling an egg, because the milk must not boil. Hence the old, correct, term 'scalded cream' rather than the horrible imported word 'clotted' - now sadly accepted.

Here are the details. Take whole new milk, straight from the cow (warm) and tip it into a receptacle. Or you can take bottled Gold Top milk, or equivalent, tip it likewise and stand for a few hours for the cream to rise again. Milk from Channel Islands (Jersey or Guernsey) cows, or from South Devons have the highest butter-fat (cream) content. Not less than two pints will do for a trial run.

Treated or fat-reduced milk will not do.

After the milk has stood, the cream will rise as mentioned above. Now place the receptacle of milk over a suitable sized pan of water with the bowl *touching* the water. Place pan over heat and bring the water in the pan just near to boiling point. Simmer 25-30 minutes approximately according to quantity. **THE MILK MUST NOT BOIL** or the cream will go 'skinny'!

When done, the cream will crinkle and turn yellowish in colour. If in doubt, wait for the ring to break, i.e., the cream will shrink and break. Allow to cool, then lift the bowl off the pan of water carefully, so as not to slop the milk over the delicious cream. The cooler the better before skimming the cream off the milk. Place it in a fridge for two to three hours. Do not hurry it to gain most cream.

Use a skimmer or 'holey' spoon to skim off carefully and place layers in your very best dish to present Devonshire's best delicacy to

the table....dry creamy yellow crust on top, and all your own work. It should have a slightly hazel-nut flavour, seldom tasted today. Refrigeration destroys it. Serve with stewed fruit, fruit tart, cereals or - most important this - if served with scones and jam, remember that no true Devonian would serve common jam on top of their speciality.

A speciality is shown off on top of the jam!

[This might settle an argument or two! Ed.]

Use the scald milk as normal Silver Top, to which it will now approximate. For years after farming my wife and I used Gold Top, three or four pints twice a week, and ate cream daily. Now, because we are less active, we seldom make it.

If whole milk is unobtainable, may I suggest that with the present state of dairy farming any farmer would willingly sell you a cow and rent out a field to keep it in. Any bored 'long week-enders' could help by milking and feeding the cow twice every Saturday and Sunday whilst they are here. The cow's annual calf could be reared and fattened. Its dung could also be used to grow organic vegetables in the corner of the field.

Thus re-energised he or she may like to become a full-time small farmer....even a 'feather-bedded' one....or maybe lead a revolutionary recovery of the Devon small family farm and the way to a new golden age for rural Britain. The answer to the supermarket perhaps?

*** NOTE: If there is any fear of using untreated milk, have no doubt the scalding at 180 to 190 degrees F is a higher temperature than that used for pasteurising milk, which is 145 to 150 degrees F.**

KORNILOFF

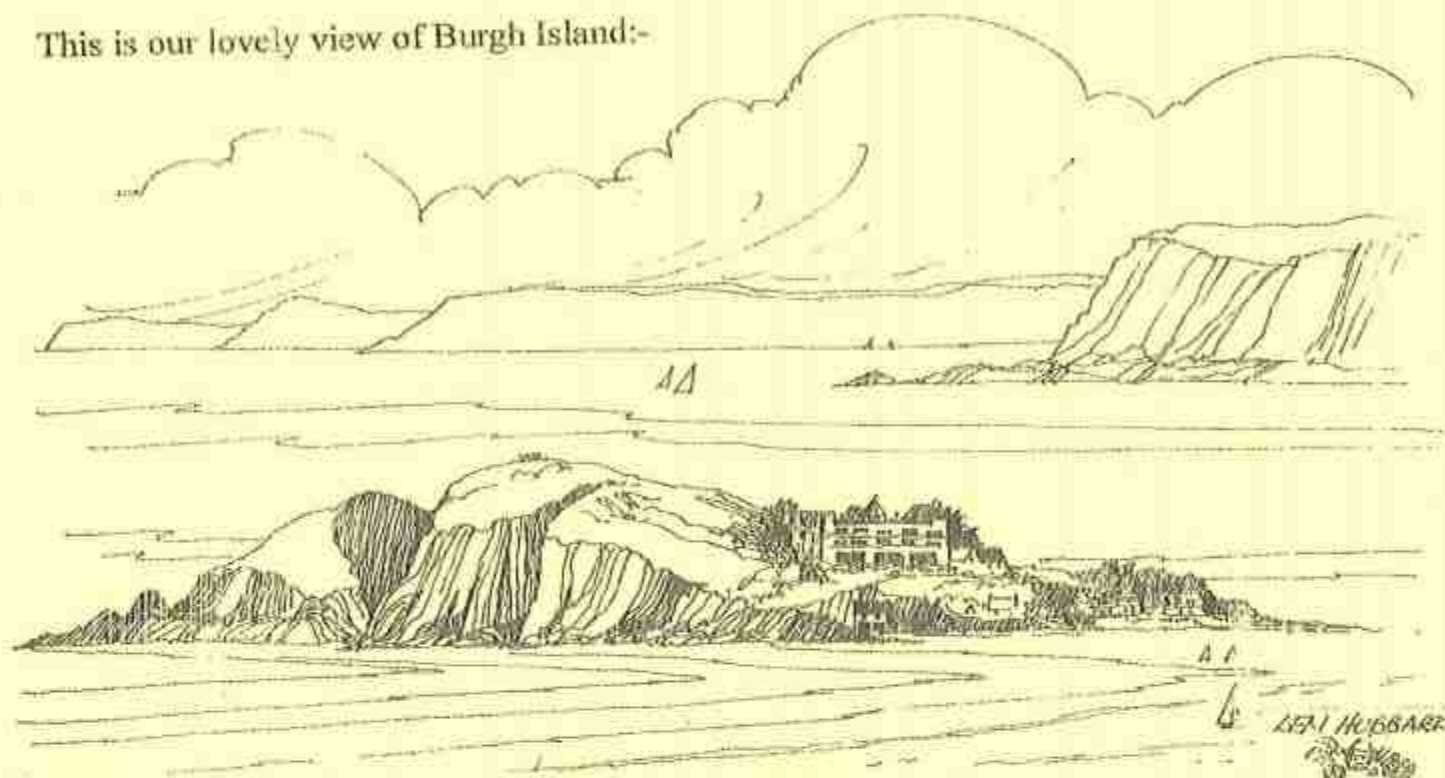
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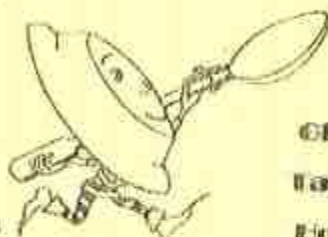
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HORSWELL DIARY

Compared with the devastation wrought by storms and floods in other parts of the country, we have been very fortunate indeed.

Even so, at the height of the gales, we feared for our trees as they thrashed and clawed at the demons tormenting them. The winds screamed through the woods, wrenching limbs and leaves from the trees, and slammed into the front of the house with relentless force. Pictures and furniture rattled against the walls despite their immense thickness and windows thundered in their sashes. The air was filled with golden leaves, luminous and bright against the leaden skies. They swirled through the air and fluttered at the upstairs windows like frightened birds, scratching at the panes.

By morning the lawns were a patchwork of fallen leaves, strewn with twigs and branches and saturated with rain. Our pond, once so low we considered building a small gangway for Ducky to reach dry land, was now brimming over uncontrollably. The springs that feed it were running so fast the drainage system could not cope with the overflow.

Across the garden water poured out of the culverts turning the broad steps to the lower lawn into Niagara Falls and the lawn itself into a flooded paddy field. A stray group of cattle added to the mayhem by wandering freely on a tour of inspection, slipping and sliding down the slopes and munching their way through the herbaceous border.

The dogs love the storms. They are energised and excited by their power. I find storms frightening and exhausting. I'm beginning to feel like one of those wayward socks that get lost in the

washing machine, battered and threadbare. I've lost count of how many wash cycles we've been through but it seems like we've been stuck somewhere between Soak and Fast Spin for a very long time.

The rising floodwaters of the past month have coincided with a rising level of discontent amongst motorists, hauliers, farmers and pensioners creating, quite literally, a groundswell of misery for all concerned. With their fields waterlogged, our farmers, already in desperate circumstances, now face the possibility of being unable to drill their winter crops. Sheep farmers are battling against the onslaught of disease. Families bravely try to salvage their homes and possessions from the floods and pensioners have to fight for what is rightfully theirs.

Our politicians spin and launder the facts while the country frets and feels the chill. Throughout Britain there are people struggling to cope with the destruction of their lives. The storms have abated somewhat after Mr Brown's Canute-like defiance of the rising tide, but the rot has set in. When the floodwaters subside many Britons will find their foundations increasingly eroded and the familiar structures of their lives close to collapse.

Thankfully no rain today and a patch of blue sky above the tulip tree. It frames a pair of buzzards wheeling freely on the rising air and a flurry of gulls blown inland from the sea. The autumn colours are spectacular this year. Guy Fawkes would be proud of their display. Glorious canopies of gilded leaves explode like fireworks against the sky, fanning out into glittering arcs of gold

and yellow, bronze and green. Briefly they hang suspended in time and space, shimmering fragments of autumn confetti, before flickering and falling finally to earth.

Small birds are clustering around the feeders, swinging gaily to and fro. Woodpeckers, tits and finches gather in the nearby shrubs to await their turn. Occasionally a magpie swoops down and scares them all away or a blue-winged jay screeches from the oak tree above. Wild pheasant have joined the peafowl on the doorstep to eat their corn and a shy wren hides beneath the overhanging rose.

Oh, the strangest thing has happened to Betty, our remaining peahen. *She is changing into a peacock!* We can hardly believe our eyes! First her brown neck feathers turned white and we thought it was simply old age. Now they have turned bright blue like the males. Even more extraordinary, she is now growing a male tail. We can't understand it at all. What is happening? It's certainly put me off eating peanuts.

Life at Horswell is never dull! We have an unwelcome guest living with us at the moment. He, or she, has a very large appetite and a liking for Italian food. So far it has eaten two packets of Amaretti biscuits, a packet of bread sticks, and a large hunk of Dolcelatte cheese. It's very worrying. Yesterday I found my husband looking under the bed. He thinks I'm keeping a Latin lover!

I assured him he had nothing to fear and that I'd heard loud scratching in the wall behind the kitchen dresser. Ratman was called. No evidence of the intruder's identity was found.

In the larder we now have a trap big enough to ensnare the Beast of Bodmin.

It is baited with finest Italian chocolate and crumbled Amaretti biscuits. I am terrified to use the larder. Every day the size of the beast increases in my imagination. I'm expecting horns and cloven hooves at the very least.

So far nothing has happened. Our visitor is obviously intelligent as well as a connoisseur of fine food. I've a feeling he's hoping to stay for Christmas.

Knowing he's here I wonder if our other guests will still want to come? Could he be the perfect excuse to have a quiet Christmas? Mmmm! I'm beginning to warm to him.....

Happy Christmas!

Prunella Dart

[Quite by coincidence Rosemary MacKay submitted the following bit of nonsense verse which we thought might be appropriate here, in view of the mystery guest referred to above, as it could throw some light on his possible identity. *Ed.*]

A TALE OF MAURICE MOUSE

My name is Maurice Mouse
I live beneath your house.

I run up to the slates
On very important dates.

On wintry days it's great
To go to the pond and skate.

When I come home my tail is numb
And then I eat up every crumb!

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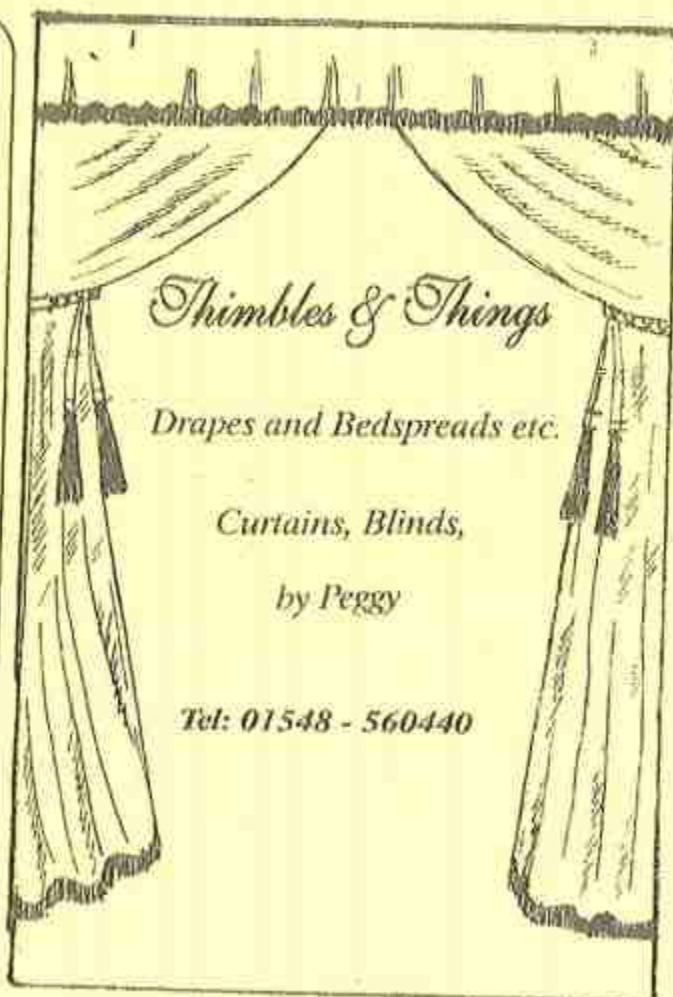
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HARRY HUGGINS HAS AN EYE FOR THE GIRLS

A gentleman Cirl Bunting is a handsome little fellow, mostly yellowy-olive, very dark grey on top of his head, a black stripe through his eye, black under his chin and reddish-brown on his wings. Easy to recognise. Not so his females and young ones: mainly yellowy-brown, very hard to tell from Yellowhammers unless you can see their rumps, which isn't easy - olive for Cirl Bunting, chestnut for Yellowhammer.

When we first came to Thurlestone, twenty-odd years ago, we could find about half-a-dozen pairs. They have gone. You find them by hearing the males sing - a dry rattling, unmusical sort of song - and by the soft whistling contact calls as families keep together. We haven't heard any of those noises around our parish for a long time.

It was not only here that numbers dropped - they fell elsewhere. Nineteenth century records show the birds as being "obtained" - that means shot to you and me - as far north as Yorkshire. The British Trust for Ornithology's *Atlas of Breeding Birds* referred to them as breeding sparsely over much of southern England, some in the Home Counties and some north of Bristol. For this atlas the fieldwork was done in the late 1960s and early 1970s. People walked around ten kilometre squares recording nesting birds.

They didn't necessarily have to find nests - often difficult and also illegal. Seeing a bird carrying food in for its young ones was just as good and far, far, easier. Humphrey Sitters published his monumental *Tetrad Atlas of Breeding Birds of Devon* in 1988. Most of the fieldwork for that was done in the late 1970s. When we came on the scene later, we were still chivvied out to fill what Humphrey considered were gaps. The BTO atlas was based on ten kilometre squares. Humphrey used tetrads, twenty five of those to a ten kilometre square. Humphrey himself did nearly 300 tetrads. One gentleman worked almost 400!

This atlas showed Cirl Buntings concentrated along the Devon coast from around Kingsbridge to the Exe. There was an outlying population of a few pairs around Wembury and some in north Devon. Humphrey noted in his remarks that a survey in 1982 found 130 pairs in south Devon and only 37 in the whole of the rest of Britain. We all scratched our heads and tried to think why they had declined.

It seems likely that in Britain the birds are at the northern edge of their range: it is really a species of southern Europe. When in 1973 we went on a birding trip to southern Spain there were lots of them. At least, the leader said they were Cirl Buntings, they just seemed featureless young ones to me. I had no idea what a Cirl Bunting looked or sounded like. We lived then in Essex where there was none. Our keener birding friends used to come to Devon to search for them, without success - they didn't know what to look for nor where to look.

But the ones they took to New Zealand didn't seem to do all that well, and failed to spread out like some of the birds which well-meaning but misguided settlers took to remind them of home. Song Thrushes may be endangered in Britain, but no way in South Island, New Zealand. And in North Island Indian Mynah-birds teem in squawking thousands. Now, if a new species gets there under its own steam (to do which it has to fly across an awful lot of



GIRL BUNTING

sea) it is welcome. But if someone releases something the authorities come out and shoot it down remorselessly.

We wondered whether as a species Cirl Buntings have a death wish. Some things seem to. Take Chinchillas for instance. Forty-odd years ago someone thought of a get-rich-quick scheme.....breeding Chinchillas. Nice furry little things from South America, a bit like guinea pigs. Folks got the Chinchillas. First they were going to sell the progeny to other people so they could breed Chinchillas. Ultimately I suppose the progeny would be banded on the head and made into fur coats which, in those days, was not politically incorrect. The Chinchillas settled the problem: unlike rabbits they just declined to breed!

People said that Cirl Buntings must be doing badly because of competition from Yellowhammers, a very closely-related species. It took George Montagu at Kingsbridge in the early 1800s to realise there were in fact two species. They had thought until then they were all Yellowhammers. So when we found Cirl Buntings we had to hunt about for Yellowhammers which might be competing. That idea proved nothing.

Oh, someone said, Cirl Buntings like to sing from elm trees and their decline coincided with the death of almost every elm in the country from Dutch Elm Disease. I don't suppose the big elms we used to see and climb in Essex have regrown. They take many years to get that big. But the smaller ones, like the hedgerow elms around the Thurlestone Hotel golf course, have grown up again. The Elm Bark Beetle brings fungus for its larvae to eat, and it is the fungus which causes the disease. The beetles bore under the bark, but not in the roots nor in whippy new stems - their bark is too thin to tunnel under - so once the disease gets less virulent the trees regrow from the roots. Though the elms returned the buntings did not.

Cirl Bunting is a farmland bird, and many other farmland birds have declined. Grey Partridge has almost gone, so has Corn Bunting, not that there have ever been

many, if any, of those in south Devon. Skylark, Yellowhammer, Linnet have all shown dramatic reduction in numbers. The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds decided to investigate; beginning with Cirl Buntings because there were so few of them. It wasn't much use looking into the state of something which though in a bad state in one area might be doing well in another. For Cirl Buntings there was just not another area.

So, a young gentleman - Dr Andy Evans - was sent into the field to see what he could find out, with aid from those of us who knew where the birds were to be found. He spent three years on this task at a cost of about £500 per pair of buntings. The first of his findings was that hatchling buntings are fed mostly on grasshoppers. These, in fact all insects, are a means of converting vegetable material into fat. Think of the Sedge Warbler, about to migrate to Africa in one hop which takes over forty-eight hours, which doubles its body weight in not much over a fortnight by eating aphids. For that matter, think what said aphids do to your plants. The grasshoppers are the rich diet which baby buntings, and partridges, and no doubt all the other farmland birds need.

I recall the late, and greatly lamented, John Eves, who was the Cundy's shepherd at Southdown Farm, Marlborough - he had been something in the city but gave it up to be a shepherd - telling us they had been spraying the fields. It was all right, he said, the agricultural salesman had assured him the birds would not be harmed - might just have slightly sore mouths, but nothing else. That might or might not be true. A salesman with his targets in mind is not going to say his products will poison everything for miles. But the spraying kills insects, and weeds which produce seeds, so what then do the birds feed on?



CHENOPodium ALBUM

I recall being taken partridge shooting when I was a kid. We stumbled about in potato fields, but you couldn't see the potatoes for *chenopodium album*, a green

weed about two feet high with its tops covered in little green seeds. It might have a fancy Latin name but in the vernacular it was *Fat Hen*. One can guess why it was called that. Even people used to eat it at one time, as a vegetable: *"Come along now, Nellie, eat up your nice Fat Hen!"* They used also to grind its stems into flour. How often do you see Fat Hen in a potato field now?

The chicks eat insects, the older birds live on seeds, like the Fat Hen, or grain left after harvest. Gilbert White of Selborne wrote about his old weeding woman. She spent her life weeding his garden, but each year after harvest she disappeared to go gleaning. In those days, the latter part of the eighteenth century, they didn't have combine harvesters. They had men with scythes. And no one had yet produced a grain crop which didn't lose some of its seeds when harvested. Much of it fell on the ground - for the weeding woman and the birds. I reckon it was much the same until recently - in the 1940s June and I used to go gleaning for grain for her parents' chickens. Now, on the day the combine harvester leaves the field at one end the plough comes in at the other.

The solution was simple. Encourage insects to flourish and make sure there were seeds and grain for older birds, especially during winter. But how do you do it? We thought that set-aside - paying farmers not to farm - would help and to some extent it has. But in October the local National Trust warden took a party of us to walk the new footpath at the Trust's recently-purchased Scobbiscombe Farm, between Kingston village and the sea. We came to a field. Scrubby weeds and bright yellow grass. Sprayed. *"What is this?"* we asked him. *"Oh, set-aside"*. The farmer is allowed to spray it to kill annual weeds. I don't know what the implications are for farming, but spraying makes it useless for seed-eating birds.

However, steps have been taken - by the RSPB and others - to get farmers to leave a strip of land next to the hedges around their fields for the weeds to come as they will. Maybe ten yards wide, with of course a crop in the rest of the field. The National trust

has arranged for this to be done on some of their farms. In the past I have complained about the NT being far too tidy! You expect a garden to be tidy and would not be very impressed if the gardens at Overbecks or Knightshayes Court were all weeds. But they were a bit keen on tidying up other land. At Prawle Point they carefully laid a hedge below the car park, and then wanted to clear the bushes on the slope above it. Luckily they were persuaded otherwise. Those bushes are about the best place I know to see a Cirl Bunting.

Towards the end of August we went to Snapes Point which the National Trust also owns. You park in the car park, walk down the stony lane and, after about half a mile, go through a gate on the left. Walking down beside the hedge takes you to the estuary. There, in a broccoli field, we found quite a wide strip of land which had been left to seed itself. There were butterflies. We saw at least ten Clouded Yellows - annual migrants which cannot survive the winter in Britain. *By the stony lane, in the hedge as we walked down and in the bushes by the river we saw or heard well over twenty Cirl Buntings. They were all thriving on the weeds left for them.*

It is reckoned that from fewer than 200 pairs the buntings have increased now to over 400. Some of this increase may be because people are looking harder. But they looked hard before. This figure is for Britain as a whole, not just our bit of Devon, although we have most of them.

They are not "out of the wood", maybe never will be. But they have shown that the conservation measures are on the right lines.



Harry Huggins

BOOKSHELF

No Great Mischief

by Alistair MacLeod
(Jonathan Cape £15.99)

This is a novel about a family of Scottish emigrants to Canada, written in the first person by Alexander MacDonald. It tells of his great great great grandfather, Calum Ruadh, who sailed from Moidart in 1799 bound for Cape Breton in Nova Scotia. He was accompanied by his second wife, his twelve children, the husband of his eldest daughter, and the family dog (which refused to be left behind). They endured great privations on the journey, during which his wife died and his daughter gave birth.

The story describes, with great feeling and intensity, the adventurous lives led by the clan and their descendants, from their early primitive homesteading through to mining and, in Alexander's case, an opulent professional career. Family loyalty runs deep, and is ever present, though not without some tragic consequences.

The dustcover describes the writing as "elegaic and haunting, rhapsodically beautiful with each word laid like stone". I do not think I can better that, so I hope I have said enough to whet your appetite.

GW

In The Place Of Fallen Leaves

by Tim Pears

This is a first novel by the author, who now lives in Oxfordshire. The setting for the novel, however, is the Teign Valley, in the long hot summer of 1984.

The language of this novel is at times lyrical and always apposite. It is the story of Alison,

a thirteen year old girl living on a farm with her whole family including grandparents and much older siblings.

It shows the wisdom of a girl on the verge of womanhood, and at times is reminiscent of the works of Thomas Hardy, as the author's feel for the rural life with its demands and frustrations are revealed to us through his graceful prose. It is a story both poignant and humorous, and is eminently readable.

MCH

Off The Map

by Jane Fitzgerald
(Green Books, Dartington £6.95)

The sub-title of this book is "Around the Dart, Avon, and Salcombe-Kingsbridge Estuaries", and is a must for every resident and lover of the South Hams.

It is aimed at encouraging people, wherever possible, to leave their cars behind and enjoy experiencing the countryside at a slower pace, making use of footpaths, bus routes, and water-transport. There are good clear maps and directions to follow for each estuary.

Places for picnics, kite-flying, bat-watching, plant buying, eating, and drinking are suggested, as well as child-friendly places to visit and activities to join in. Excellent notes on wildlife, local history, architecture, shops, as well as unconventional places to stay are all to be found within its covers.

It would make a most enjoyable Christmas present, and is well worth adding to your bookshelf, for your own, and your visitors', benefit.

PM

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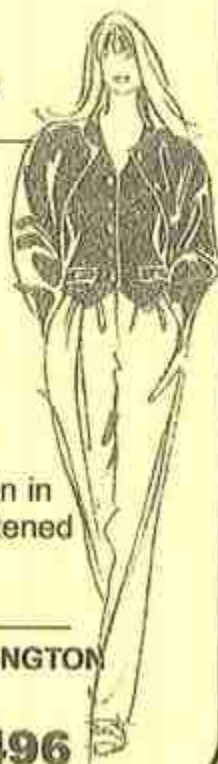
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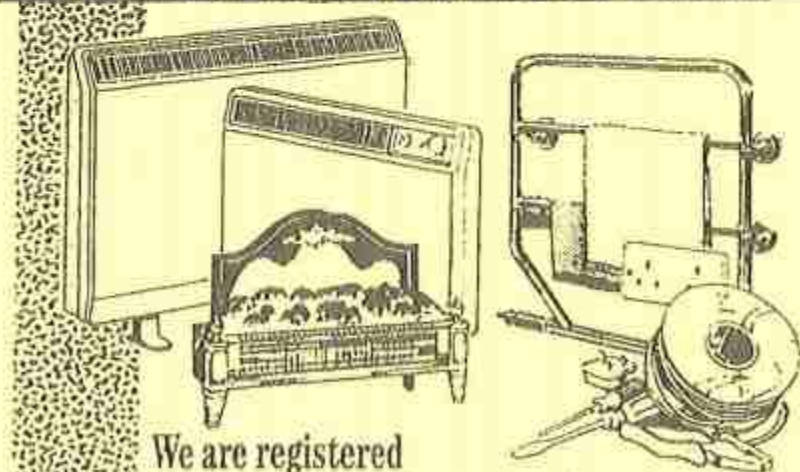
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IN YOUR GARDEN

This is the time of year we can allow ourselves the luxury of winding down our garden activities without too much of a prick from the conscience. With the shortest days and the longest nights soon upon us, we have the perfect excuse....and having to wrap up with extra jerseys and jackets, and pull on waterproof boots, make an added chore!

What we can do, though, before we go into semi-hibernation, is to make sure the greenhouse and paths are clean. The lawnmower may also be due for attention (they go so much better after a service!). Ask Maurice Blight at the garage if he will undertake this for you over the winter. Clean the garden tools thoroughly and get secateurs and other cutting implements honed and lightly oiled ready for pruning in 2001.

This is the time to appreciate the value of evergreens in a winter garden. The shrubs you treasured during the summer sometimes look pretty undistinguished when they are dormant and leafless. By including a few things in your borders, such as the small varieties of holly, mahonia and a small grouping of hebes, perhaps using a ground-cover of bergenia or small-leaved ivies, you can provide your garden with structure and make it look pleasing all year round.

Just because you are not actually working the land, don't miss the opportunity of a regular walk around the garden to see what you can find to make a small posy or two for the house. A few small flowers and pieces of foliage gathered from a winter garden and then tied into a posy never fail to cheer and amaze with variety. Put one on your kitchen window-sill to admire close-to.

Branches of yellow winter-flowering jasmine and forsythia can be picked when the flower buds show a tiny bit of colour, and the warmth indoors can coax them into an early flowering. Pick winter-flowering Algerian iris - the sort that used to be called iris *stylosa* but which now goes under the name

iris *unguicularis* - again when the colour is hardly showing, before they unfurl, and with a bit of luck you will beat slugs and snails which can sometimes make the flowers look tattered if they get there first. A pot or two of parsley and mint, put into a cold greenhouse or a conservatory now, and kept well watered, will be welcomed by the cook.

There is a *viburnum farreri* that has been flowering well in my garden for a month. The small flowers, pink in bud but opening to white, with a delicious scent, appear as if by magic, like small balls of cotton-wool on bare rust-pink branches, usually at the year end. Viewing it from the warm indoors, it appears to glow. It doesn't look nearly as elegant after its flowers go, but I would not be without it for the pleasure it gives at the year end. *Hamamelis mollis* (Chinese witch-hazel), *chimonanthus* (winter sweet) and *lonicera fragrantissima* (winter-flowering honeysuckle) are all shrubs whose modest flowers have a wonderful scent during the depths of winter and a few sprigs brought indoors are almost as good as a bowl of hyacinths for scent. *But the most looked-forward-to things for me in the garden are the first clumps of snowdrops appearing in the new year.*

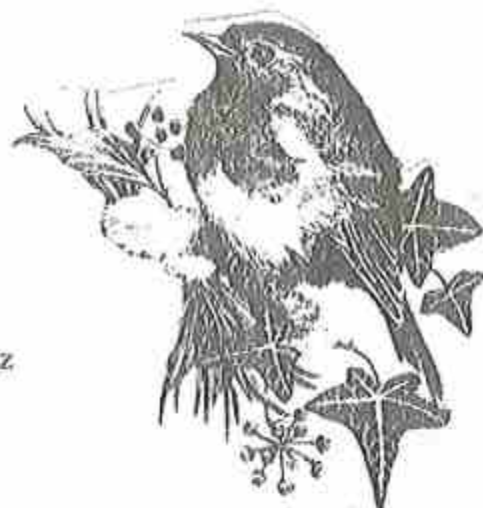
When you are roasting a joint of meat, or the Christmas turkey, don't forget to save the dripping. Reheated, then mixed with oats, seeds and any other suitable bits, poured into a container and then prised out when set, it forms a lovely "birds' pudding". Make a hole in it with a skewer then thread a piece of string through it as a hanger. The birds will enjoy this during the lean days when their natural food is in short supply. If you have any apples that have gone a little 'wrinkly', chop them up and put them in the garden - the blackbirds and thrushes will love you.

Have a happy and peaceful Christmas.....
and then it is roll on that first snowdrop!

Ladybird

NOTA BENE FOR MUSICIANS

- p** - piano (soft) - the neighbours have complained -
f - forte (loud) - the neighbours are out
Crescendo - (getting louder) - testing the neighbours' tolerance level
ff - fortissimo (very loud) - to hell with the neighbours
pp - pianissimo (very soft) - the neighbours are at the door
Dim - very thick
Obbligato - being forced to practise
Rit (and/or) Rall - coming up to the bit you haven't practised
Con moto - I have a car
Allegro - a little motor car
Maestro - a bigger car
Metronome - person small enough to fit into a Mini
Lento - the days leading up to Easter (with eggs and choes and things)
Largo - brewed in Germany (hence "Handel's Largo reaches parts other beers cannot reach")
Piu Animato - "If you don't clean that rabbit out, it will have to go!"
Interval - time to meet the players in the bar
Cantabile - singing (that is, drunk)
Con Spirito - drunk again
Cantata - a fizzy drink
Coda - served with chipsa
Codetta - a child's portion
Chords - things that organists play with one finger
Discords - things that organists play with two fingers
Suspended chords - for lynching the soloist
Rubato - ointment for the musician's back
Subdominant - "I can't play until I ask my wife"
Syncopation - bowel condition brought on by an overdose of jazz
Crotchet - knitting
Quaver - the feeling before a lesson when you haven't practised
Time Signatures - things for drummers to ignore
Collavoca - this shirt is so tight I can't talk
Professional - anyone who can't hold down a steady job
Flats - English apartments
A Tempo - in time
A Tempo de Café - Ah, coffee time!
Improvisation - what you do when the music falls down
Fugue - clever stuff
Prelude - warm-up stuff before the clever stuff
Opus - exclamation made when Moggy has done a 'whoopsie' on the carpet
Scales - fishy things
Trill - bird food
Virtuoso - someone who can work wonders with easy-play music



[Viv Vasby-Burnie sent in the above and thought it would be appreciated by the "not too serious musician". She spotted it on a linen tea towel at a friend's home and "felt compelled to save it before it was wiped away!" (Acknowledgements to Peter Hayward & Home Keyboard Review; Copyright Music Notables (UK) 1989) Ed.]

WEATHER WAG

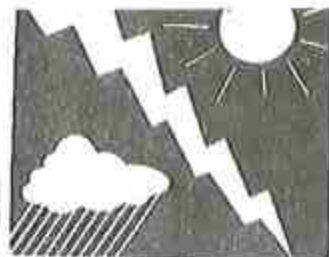
My answer-phone contained a plaintive little message earlier this week *"It's the Christmas issue next so make it Christmassy!"*. I ask you, what do I write about? Santa using the Jet Stream perhaps, harnessing lightning for his sleigh lamps, collecting large hail stones to cool the G&Ts, whipping the wind into a frenzy to fell trees for those humans down below to burn as Yule logs in their fires?

Wouldn't it be nice, though, to have a really *seasonable* Christmas this year? What makes us decide what 'seasonable' is? To me Christmas is a time of clear days and night-time frosts, and perhaps a few flakes of snow. In farming terms, dry for the early lambs and early caulis. Then there are the Christmas shoppers, carol singers, Christmas-tree harvesters, etc. who all want different weather conditions. The fact is that we down here in the south rarely get snow as early as December, but if there is any about in the vicinity I guess we might get a sprinkle. Carol singing in the snow is magical, in the rain miserable, but mulled wine with mince pies are very welcome whatever the weather!

What about this last week-end then? Today it is 2nd November, three days to the first frosts. No chance here this year. There is more rain and wind forecast. Hope they won't ruin too many Bonfire Night parties. Going back to Sunday (29th October) it was exciting wasn't it? The faulty window in our bedroom blew in during the afternoon - not completely devastating but bad enough...we can't sleep in our own bed and towels are ready to catch the rain. Thank goodness for shutters. Just don't ask me why they were not closed before the gale really got going. 78 mph at the time.

Later, between 5.00 am and 6.00 am, the barometer dropped to 984 mb and a gust of 88 mph hit us. With the shutters now closed, the window held by dint of bits of wood and pieces of string, we slept peacefully through

By Jan Turner



it all downstairs! I found it quite exciting to read the wind speed in the morning. Craig Rich said watch out for this coming Sunday (12th November) so I may adjust my anemometer to be able to record speeds of over 90 mph. In keeping with many other weather observers, my rainfall figure for October is almost double the highest over the last five years at 188.95 mm, or seven and one-fifth inches. The previous highest was 99 mm in 1997.

One week on and there is peace, perfect peace, outside even if it has rained most of the day. I really thought we were in for it this morning. In just one hour the barometer fell 10 mb and by tonight 14 mb and still falling, there should be a fair old wind blowing, but there isn't. Long may it last, we do not want a repeat of 1989-90. I have a book by David Lean called "Storm Force". I've just had a read through and really, although the conditions for many are dire in some parts of the country, for us all is well, very well by comparison with a decade ago.

The barograph charts for 29th October and the 5th November were fascinating and are reproduced on the next page. We really should have had more wind than we did. The reason I suspect is that the depression was so slow moving it and very extensive, covering parts of France and extending way north of Scotland; it had become trapped in a southerly bulge in the Jet Stream. This has the effect of slowing up the rate of progress across the country. Under a normal fast moving west to east Jet Stream, the depressions are hustled along, passing over the country in a day or less. This one also approached from the south, which meant that the east and north of the country got most of the rain.

Today I have had lots of chat about the concept of global warming and whether it is for real or just alarmist gossip. My feeling is

that there are lots of facts that we can look at and from those draw some conclusions of our own. Mine are that there is definitely something afoot. Nature has always played around with temperatures and the globe has always had a wobble, the sun suffers from spots on a regular basis with a knock-on effect on the solar system, volcanoes explode and produce dust to form artificial winters - I could go on and on. The one component that previous warm long-term changes in climate did not have is MAN. We, I think, are not helping the changes and are aiding the warming by our disregard for the atmosphere, i.e., the greenhouse gases etc.

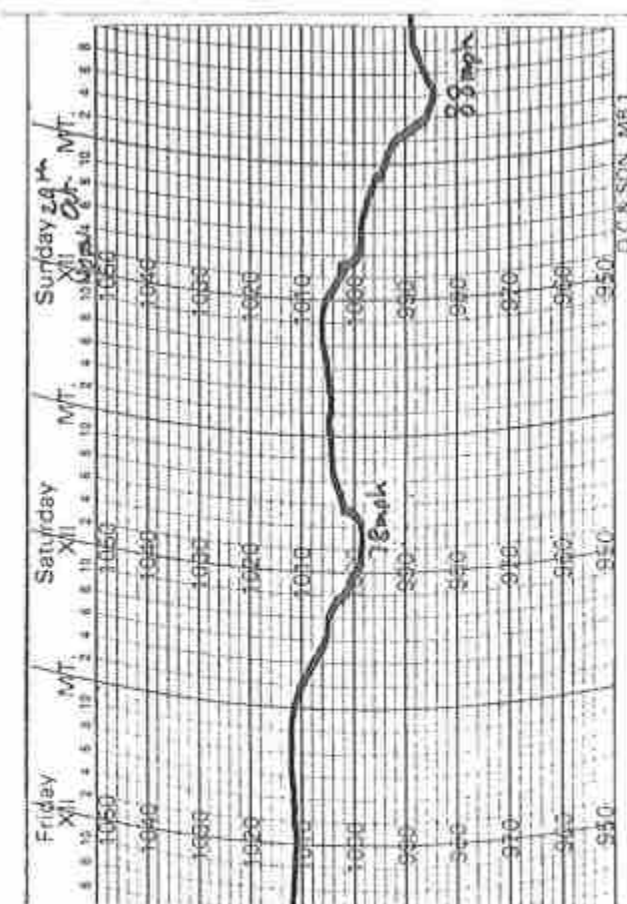
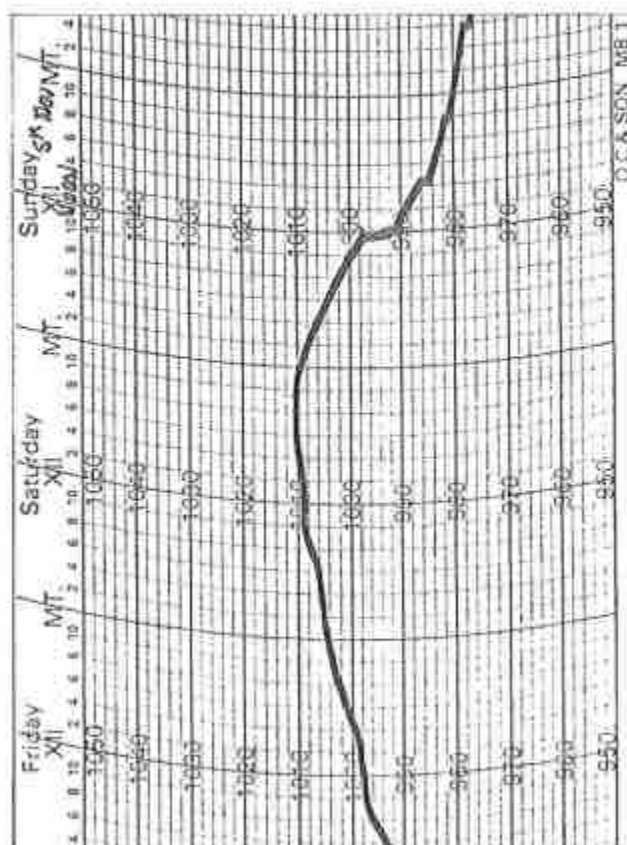
Global education is needed to slow down the effects, and with the conditions that the less-developed nations find themselves in, this is an extremely sensitive area. We should perhaps be looking at our treatment of their environments as well as looking at our own.

We have tried at various conferences of world leaders to help format solutions. But theory in practise is very difficult for those on the ground, especially if they are going to suffer in the short term, e.g., a dirty factory in Brazil closes down - good for the environment but the workers and their families will go hungry. There is a definite dilemma and the answer is not easy, if there is one at all.

Oh dear, I'm afraid this isn't sounding very "Christmassy"! Perhaps over the festival we could look to our own life styles and remember the exploitation of our neighbours in the Third World (I don't like that expression). Here's hoping for peace, weather-wise, over the festival. If so, there will be sunshine and frosts, lots of walking time with families and friends, so we can turn heating down in sunny rooms and save a little of the ozone layer for next year!

And now, if you turn the page sideways, you can follow the line of barometric pressure as recorded for the weekends Fri - Sun, 27-29 October and Fri - Sun, 3-5 November 2000.

That Windy Weekend!



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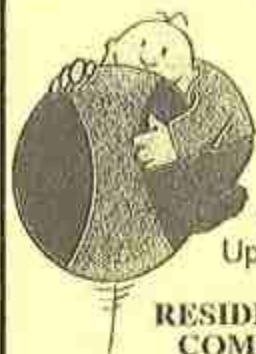
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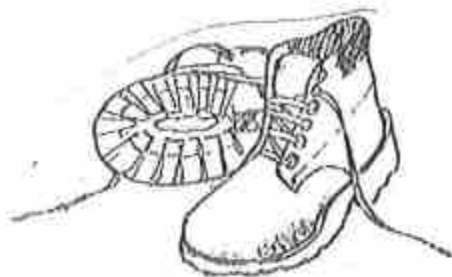
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TRAMP



1 Tuesday was a lovely day. So was Thursday, but in between... Wednesday. Seven of us and the faithful Achates (Ambrose really) set off from the Swallerton car-park as we had in August, but for quite a different walk. This (September) time we struck straightway out on to the moor, up and over the shoulder of Hound Tor and past Greater Rocks where the wind was quite vigorous. It was then, on the other side, now sheltered from the wind, that the first drops of rain fell - not much at first (just enough to make us put on waterproofs). And then, teasingly, it stopped.

By the time we reached Becky Woods it was showing signs of becoming more serious. A few optimistic holiday-makers were setting out cheerfully for a jolly stroll. We were going in the opposite direction, up and along until we reached the road near Water. When we arrived at the fork for Manaton our thoughtful leader gave us the option of going that shorter way as it was now raining determinedly. But no, spirits undampened, we chose the more circuitous route through the woods to Manaton.

By that time it was *pouring*, and somehow the prospect of sitting eating our sandwiches on a bench in the middle of the village green was not too alluring. Fortunately there was the church porch - into which we crowded wetly, joining a solitary lady walker whose final destination seemed improbably and unwisely distant on such a day. She set off alone while we were still eating our variously frugal or copious lunches and gazing rather apprehensively out at the rain which was showing no signs of abating but, driven by the wind, was even now trying to reach us in the church porch.

As we walked down the road from the

church we passed another group of walkers sitting relatively cosily in the bus shelter. They suggested we might like to catch the bus - we should only have to wait for two days. Our afternoon route was far shorter than the morning's. The final stretch past Bowerman's Nose could perhaps be described as invigorating: wind and lashing rain. Not surprisingly, back at the car-park, there was not a long queue for ice-cream, or even for mugs of tea.

However, in spite of the weather I think we all enjoyed the walk. At least it wasn't cold!

Pam Brewster

2 Once again the forecast was not good: heavy showers were likely. When the nine of us, in our waterproofs (with two dogs), set off from Cadover Bridge for our October walk it was grey and very breezy. To begin with, our way was along by the river, which was rushing and foaming down. It was dry overhead but distinctly soggy underfoot. Still, it was easy enough walking, and we were sheltered from the wind.

After a while, however, our leader, scorning a wide and straightforward-looking path (it must have been the one that leads to destruction) decided on a bit of mud-skiing down through the trees. There came a point when a modicum of dissatisfaction with the terrain became apparent among certain of the group. Eventually one foolish member who had no intention of going on a winter sports holiday scrambled up, mapless and compassless, to reach the sinful track. The others slid determinedly on.

The lone walker reached Shaugh Bridge five minutes before the adventurous ones and

then we all carried on together over the footbridge and up the other side of the river. This section of the woods seemed even wetter than the other. There was a minor difference of opinion as to which of several squelchy paths was the best; things look different when they are very wet. It was then that a few (a very few) drops of rain fell, but that was that as far as rain went. We were lucky again.

The chosen path led us up through the Dewerstone Woods, and past the Scout hut. From there, by way of Goodameavy, the path led to Clearbrook and the Skylark, our lunch-

time destination. Our arrival to take possession of our already-ordered soup and sandwich (good, but dear) was brilliantly timed just before the rest of the world got there. Granted it was half-term, but we felt that not everyone could be a schoolteacher. Later, when we were once again on our way, the little 15th century tin miner's cottage at Hoo Meavy gave rise to more speculation. A stretch of road, and then we managed to find a nicely muddy track to Lovaton. Finally, a mixture of road and path brought us back most satisfactorily to Cadover.

Pam Brewster

DAT MACHN'S CHRISTMAS PUZZLE

ANSWERS

REFERENCE GRID

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
P	A	T	G	N	W	B	X	Z	I	Q	L	D

14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
E	O	K	R	V	H	S	C	M	Y	U	J	F

When you have matched the numbers and letters as above, the grid will read as follows:

CAROL : Hark, the herald angels sing,
Glory to the new-born King,
Peace on Earth.

ACROSS : Tuft, Wagon, Joke, Quadrille, Era, Was, Medley, Lava,
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DOWN : Rift, How, Hug, Run, Dhow, Addle, Otic, Quadruped, Cloakroom,
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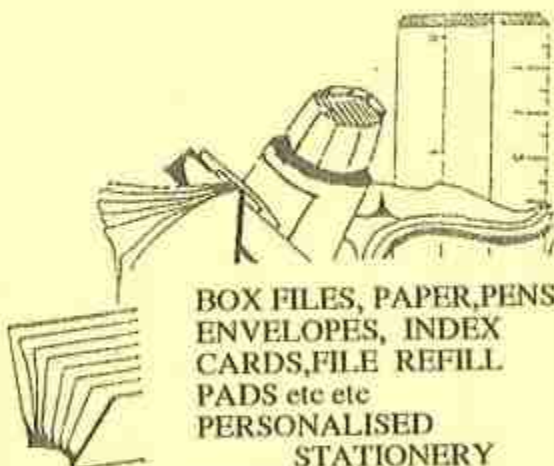
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DIARY DATES

DECEMBER

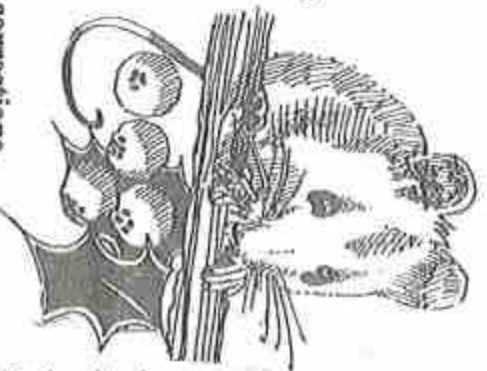
Sat 2nd Conservative Christmas Bazaar, Parish Hall, 10.30 am
Mon 11th Parish Council Meeting, 7.30 pm Parish Hall
Wed 13th TRAMP - Christmas Walk
Thur 14th WI Christmas Lunch, 12.30 for 1.00 pm

JANUARY

Mon 8th Parish Council Meeting, Parish Hall, 7.30 pm
Wed 10th TRAMP - Hembury Woods / Holme
Thur 11th WI, Parish Hall, 2.30 pm (Harry Huggins)

FEBRUARY

Thur 8th WI, Parish Hall, 2.30 pm (Elena Ball)
Wed 14th TRAMP - Lee Mill / Lutton



Please notify Village Voice of any forthcoming events, corrections, changes, or additions, by the deadline for the next issue.

Advertising Rates for Village Voice - 12 months (six issues)

Whole Page - £70.00

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Shelia Parker, 8 Mead Lane, Thurstone (01548-560330)

The magazine is entirely self-supporting and is not a charge on the parish rate. It was founded on behalf of Thurstone Parish Council and is delighted to remain under the Council's sponsorship. This does not mean that the views and opinions expressed in these pages are the views and opinions of any member of the Parish Council, and they should only be ascribed to the authors concerned.

Village Voice is delivered in Thurstone by Bill and Jane van der Welle and Vicki Dent and a team of volunteer helpers. It is delivered by Mrs Jean Hurrell in Barham and Buckland

DEADLINE FOR NEXT ISSUE: 5th JANUARY 2001

Please drop any contributions marked "Village Voice" through the letterbox at 25 Mead Lane before that date (or e-mail to RobinMacdonald@compuserve.com)

PARISH

BANTHAM SURF LIFE SAVING CLUB	Clubhouse	560447
BOWLS CLUB (indoor) Tuesdays and Thursdays, Parish Hall, 7.30 pm	Contact Eileen Daymont	560295
BRIDGE CLUBS 7 p.m. Parish Hall Wednesdays Fridays	Contact Mary Fulford-Smith Contact Dorothy Stone	842467 560708
CHURCHWARDENS	Graham Worrall Liz Webb	562016 560090
COFFEE TIME (Parish Hall) Mondays, 10.30 - 11.30	Contact Liz Webb	560090
FRIENDS OF THURLESTONE CHURCH	Contact Kit Marshall	560214
THURLESTONE GOLF CLUB TENNIS SECTION	Secretary/Manager, John Scott Contact Lindsey Fletcher	560405 560157
KEEP FIT Tuesdays, 10 - 11.30 Parish Hall	Contact Brenda Murch	560487
HORTICULTURAL SHOW (annual)	Contact John Lonsdale	560742
PROBUS	Contact Ron Parkin	561215
TRAMP (Thurlestone Ramblers)	Contact Tony Ward	560544
W. I. Second Thursday monthly (ex. August) 2.30 pm Parish Hall	Contact Jo Parkin	561215
RECTOR	Canon Andrew Gierling	562219
PARISH COUNCIL Chairman Vice - Chairman Parish Clerk District Councillor County Councillor Members	Peter Hurrell Veronica White John Lonsdale Carolyn Stoen Simon Day David Grose Charles Mitchellmore Geoffrey Siddons Derrick Yeoman Kit Marshall	560496 560236 560742 0370 - 965 683 01752 - 691212 560375 560602 560695 560607 560214

The Parish Council meetings take place on Mondays. See dates on Diary page overleaf.

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VILLAGE SHOP Thurlestone Village Shop	M. T. W. T. P., 8.00 am - 5.30 pm Sat. 8.00 am - 4.00 pm Sun. 8.30 am - 4.00 pm	561917
PARISH HALL Chairman Bookings	Rowland Cole Joan Lane	561006 560158
POST OFFICE	Thurlestone P.O.	561917
Open Mon, Tues, Thurs, Fri 9.00 am - 5.30pm Postal collections 10.30 am and 4.25 pm Monday - Friday 10.30 am Saturday, 11 am Sunday	Wed, Sat. 9.00 am - 1.00 pm	
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RUBBISH COLLECTION		
Thursday (But Friday in Bank - Holiday - Monday weeks) Green (recyclable) bins alternate Thursdays from 30 th November 2000		
BUSES		
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GARAGE (Blight Engineering)	Maurice Blight	560220
LIBRARY (Mobile Library calls alternate Wednesdays) Kingsbridge		852315
	11.10 - 11.30 am Bantam 11.50 - 12.15 pm Thurlestone Parish Hall 12.20 - 12.35 pm Thurlestone Church 12.40 - 12.50 pm Thurlestone Sunds	
MOBILE FISH & CHIP VAN		
Calls alternate Wednesdays, from 11 th October 2000, outside All Saints Primary school.		

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BUCKFAST ABBEY

Friday December 8th at 7.30pm



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16th Annual Christmas Concert with Kingsbridge Silver Band

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Friday Dec 15th & Wednesday Dec 20th at 7.30pm

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