SHALFORD

Village Magazine November 2026

showcasing our community

Produced by the People for the People

This magazine has been fully funded in memory of Tom Easton





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Shalford Village Magazine can be downloaded or viewed from www.bendlowe.co.uk

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St Andrew's Church



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WHAT'S ON

TABLE TENNIS IN FINCHINGFIELD



The group comes to the village hall on Monday evenings to play table tennis 7.30 pm for 2 hours. If you would like to have a chat beforehand, please call me on 07775 531781 – Brian Patient

SHALFORD ROADSIDE & CHURCH FISHING LAKES



are affiliated to Billericay & District Angling Club
The river Pant in Shalford is also covered by the Club
For further details contact:- Fishery Officer: Derrick Marriott, or www.bdac.co.uk

COFFEE MORNING – ST ANDREW'S CHURCH

EVERY 2nd & 4th THURSDAY OF THE MONTH
10.00 a.m. to 12.00 p.m.



SINGING 4 ALL – LORRAINE PATIENT

This singing group, which is held every Tuesday at Cornish Hall End Village Hall at 7.30 p.m. has become very popular. If you would like to try out this special group or join, please call 07775 531 781

SHALFORD CRAFT GROUP

Meetings are held on the 3rd Wednesday of the month.
At 2pm onwards.
Please bring along any craft projects you are working on.
Share ideas and learn new crafts.
Chat and craft over tea/ coffee and cake.
For dates of when and where please contact.

Caroline Ottley
07734140478
Marianna Marriott
07450251525

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Sarah8750@hotmail.co.uk
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FROM THE EAST END TO ESSEX



A fascinating and Interesting talk By Sharon Gould

St Andrew's Church, Shalford CM7 5HH
Saturday 7th November—3.00pm

Tickets £10
Available from Shalford Village Stores or on the door

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SHALFORD LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY
PRESENTS..



Roman road network leading to Boudica's Revolt

A talk by Robert Cameron

Amateur archaeologist, Robert Cameron, describes the discovery of a Roman kiln in North Essex and how this relates to known Roman activity in the area, such as the building of Roman roads and events like Boudica's revolt. A chance to see some of the artefacts from the dig and to get a picture of life under the Romans in our part of the world.

Thursday 19 November 7.30pm
Shalford Village Hall

Tickets £5 on the door
Refreshments afterwards










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Horticulture Raffle
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Sweet Carolines Bakery
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and more!
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5 December
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(Time to be confirmed nearer the time)
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WILLIAM BENDLOWE CHARITY

ITS CHRISTMAS TIME

FRIDAY, 18TH DECEMBER 2026

8.00 pm to 10.00 pm (doors open 7.30 p.m.)

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Our Regular
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Thursday 19th November
from 7.30 pm
Come and play, sing or listen to those that do!


Wethersfield
Christmas Switch On
Saturday 28th November
4 - 7pm
Wethersfield Village Hall
Parade from the Church
Visit from Santa
BBQ
Bar
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and much more besides...
Live Music at Wethersfield Club with TAKE COVER from 7.00pm
Arranged by the Village for the Village
Let's get Christmas off to a sparkling start!


Christmas
BINGO
WITH THE LEGEND THAT IS
JOHN BARKER
SATURDAY 5TH DECEMBER
EYES DOWN AT
8.00PM
CASH PRIZES
RAFFLE
WETHERSFIELD CLUB


Christmas
KARAOKE
Night
with Bob and Austin
All your favourite Christmas tunes to sing along too!
Great atmosphere, come along and give us a song!!
SATURDAY 12 DECEMBER
AT
WETHERSFIELD CLUB
FROM 7.30 PM

WETHERSFIELD LOCAL HISTORY GROUP

https://wethersfield-history.org.uk/

By: Sue MacKenzie

Our next meeting takes place on

Thursday November 12th at the Pavilion

There will be a talk by **Colin West** entitled

'Hard As Nails – The Sportsman's Battalion'

The Sportsman's Battalion was formed in 1914 during the 1st World War. It was made up of volunteers and included in their ranks was village resident Thomas Newman of St George's in Wethersfield.

Please join us as usual at 8pm

£3 on the door and all are welcome

We look forward to seeing you



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Further information can be found at libraries.essex.gov.uk



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Dates: 2/11, 23/11, 14/12

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1 West Drive, Wethersfield - Anytime

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ROYAL BRITISH LEGION

FINCHINGFIELD AND DISTRICT BRANCH

Upcoming Events

18 November 7.30pm. **Annual General Meeting** at Finchingfield Guildhall. All welcome.

Saturday 5 December 3pm. We are again hosting our "C" Group Carol Service. Everyone is welcome to Finchingfield church.

Looking ahead.

November 9 2028 will be our Branch's Centenary. We'd love you to help us celebrate this momentous occasion. Let us know if you have any ideas about events you would like to see.

Memories Are Made of This

We are hoping to compile a record of people's memories, from the Second World War onwards. Have a think and let us know if there is anything you would like to tell us.

Our Branch would always welcome new members. Membership is £24 per year and anyone can join. RBL Membership Line is 0800-307-7773.

A huge thanks to everyone who has knitted poppies to decorate the War Memorial at Finchingfield and the church wall at Cornish Hall End. We hope you will enjoy seeing these unique tributes to all those who have lost their lives in service to our country.

Contacts: Ivan Fleming (Chairman): 07525 751179 isskhs@googlemail.com
Janet Ridgewell (Secretary): 01371 810051 janet.ridgewell510@btinternet.com

SHALFORD HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY – SAVE THE DATE

Tuesday 19th January 2027 - 7pm - AGM

Saturday 30th January 2027 - Annual Quiz

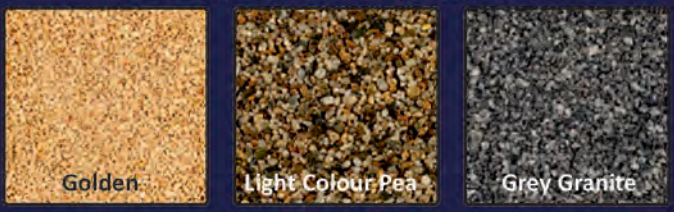


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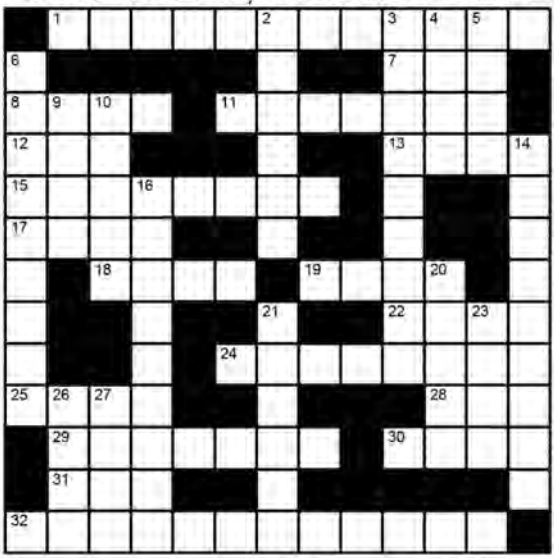
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Crossword SA1-UK by Robert from South Africa



Across

1 South Africa capital city (12)

7 Consumed (3)

8 Car Auto control (1-3)

11 Skilled craftsman (7)

12 Help (3)

13 Biblical pronoun (4)

15 Conveyance one to another (8)

17 Encourage (4)

18 Sound rebound (4)

19 Roof beam (4)

22 Deceased (4)

24 SA Admin capital (8)

25 Poems meant to be sung (4)

28 Education type (3)

29 View (7)

30 Hymenopterous insects (4)

31 Humour (3)

32 Book of knowledge (12)

Down

2 Cared for (6)

3 Beat the feet (9)

4 The Beehive State (4)

5 Gambling centre (4)

6 As thing are (6-3)

9 Strong wind (4)

10 Words of wisdom (5)

14 Childs help (4-5)

16 Compulsion as in law (9)

20 Repeated occurrence (5)

21 Watercourse (6)

23 Amount to (4)

26 Soft fluffy feathers (4)

27 Imaginative work (4)

Please Note:

There are no cryptic clues for this puzzle. My Australian friend who creates them is currently unwell and unable to create them at the present moment.

I am missing Shalford and Wethersfield but, having just married a beautiful South African lady in the wonderful St Andrews, the time has come to move on.

Regards, Robert

OPEN MEETING, 18TH SEPTEMBER 2026

I am pleased to report that our first Open Meeting of William Bendlowe Charity was received very well indeed. So many people reported that they found the evening very enjoyable and informative.

I am so grateful to our speakers for giving their time and expertise on behalf of William Bendlowe Charity and also another huge thank you is flying its way to Vic for his help. Yep, still more thank yous to my helpers who set up/cleared up chairs, tables, prepared food, washed up and more – so thank you Mandy, Marianna, Laura, Russell and Del Holland.

Our speakers were:-

Grainne Sheehy - Home Instead Braintree
Todorina Hammond - Braintree District Council - Social Isolation and Loneliness
Michelle Vagg - Colne Valley Primary Care - Network Social Prescriber - Dementia Lead







WILLIAM BENDLOWE CHARITY – Alice Cox

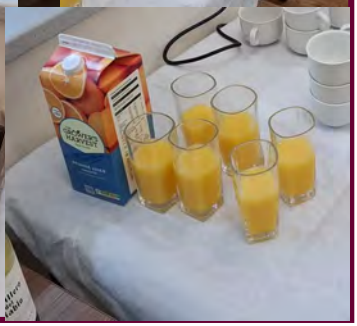














WILLIAM BENDLOWE CHARITY
ITS FUTURE AND OUR COMMUNITY
By: Vic Goodey

For those who couldn't make the Bendlowe's meeting in the Village Hall on 18th September 2026: we were well supported and pleased to welcome three guest speakers working with local people under three separate local organisations.

- Braintree District Council
- Home Instead
- Freshwell Clinic

The purpose of the meeting was outlined in the brochure distributed at the previous "Meet and Greet". Each speaker identified that we, as a rural community, have medical, mental and social, issues that result in some of us living alone, not getting out, not mixing with our neighbours and struggling with ever-changing technology. A good many technical "buzz" words and professional phrases were used, which, to be fair, are difficult to avoid when giving a talk however, we know the problems. We are living with them in a variety of ways!

For instance we know:

- That the national average age is increasing and for many becoming forgetful is part of the aging process.
- How difficult it is to get the weekly shopping done.
- What it feels like to be told that your driving license will be withdrawn for medical reasons.
- The realisation of being pleased to see the Ocado or Amazon delivery driver which gives us someone to talk to.
- The frustration of not being able to use technology to make an Ocado or Amazon order or even book a Digigo trip.
- The resentment that society is waiting for us to drop off the perch so that the next generation can make full use of new technology. Sadly for them technology doesn't stop developing and who knows what they will have to deal with.

I appreciate the advice we were given on how to spot developing mental health issues in others and how calm, effective language supports people with memory issues and it is good to see that professionally trained people exist and hear about their services. However, they cover large geographic areas with a great many people to serve.

We know volunteers from our own community charities working with "Bendlowe's" and "Engage" have served us so well and do so much. I'm afraid that I take for granted that they will always be there for us and I am sorry for that. No one should be taken for granted!

We need to move forward and support our local community, be it Bendlowe's Charity, Engage, Shalford Village Hall Committee and Fete Committee, the Parish Council, Friends

of St Andrew's Church (FoSTAC), The Horticultural Society, The Carpet Bowls Club and the Local History Association all run and are supported by unpaid volunteers We are fortunate to have The George Inn, Shalford Stores and Shalford School.

You may not be aware that this Village Magazine came out of a combination of the old parish magazine and the Bendlowe's Bugle which started as a single sheet distributed during COVID to keep local people in touch. Due to the enthusiastic contributions of articles, poems and stories etc it ended up being 64 pages by the end of the Pandemic. I think that is impressive and I stand to be corrected but I believe that Bendlowe's now publishes the Village Magazine. This includes seeking for advertising and editing the content. If you enjoy the magazine then support Bendlowe's Charity.

The main thrust of the meeting was to encourage people to stand as Trustees and Volunteers. A Trustee of a charity takes on the welfare of the Charity similar to the responsibilities that a Company Director has for the fiduciary care of their business. Records must be kept and policies and procedures must be drawn up, followed, reviewed and amended on a regular basis. There are people who thrive on these requirements and those of you who enjoy the work are encouraged to step forward.

Volunteers who arrange trips out, turn out to set up the Village Hall for "Meet and Greet" and entertainment, prepare and serve the food at events, clear and clean the Village Hall are golden.

I have lived in Shalford for over thirty years and I have met many characters during these years. Ladies that ran and took part in the WI, men who formed the Bowler Hatter club in the George, Shalford Cricket Club and the Football Team. Get them to tell their stories of Village life: Fetes; Fashion Shows; Harvest Festivals; Car Boot sales; Charity Auctions; The Shalford Mile foot race etc and you will wonder why we cannot match the energy of previous generations.

Where is the younger generation, the Thirty, Forty and Fifty year olds with a social conscience, willing to step forward and take a share in the future of the Village. We shall be facing some challenging times and we shall be losing some of the fabric of our community. Evidence of this may be seen in the fact that we do not have a Village Cricket Team to play on what has been considered one of the best Cricket squares at Village Cricket level. Shalford hires out its ground to teams out of the local area. Which is due to the lack of younger people wishing to play our national game.

It is refreshing to see our Parish Council and Village Hall Committee made up of younger people (well younger than me). I am grateful for those who serve our community but would urge others to heed the work already being done in developing the Neighbourhood Plan, standing up against the development of the Wethersfield Prison and Asylum Centre. Ensuring our voice is heard for improvements to our services e.g. buses and broadband infrastructure. However, the charities need the younger generation to volunteer for the role of Trustees and provide the guidance for a successful future in areas of financial management, event organisation, asset management, communication, and operational management. If you have something to offer in these areas of expertise please come and talk to current Trustees Alice Cox and The Reverend Alex Shannon, you are wanted and needed!

360 AND NOT OUT!!



Photograph taken by Angela Canham
on Thursday 24th September at the church coffee morning.
Left to right: John Burrows 92, Mike Chumbley 88,
Mac Beanland 88, Dr Peter Jones 92.

A total of 360 years
All looking young, fit & healthy.
What's their secret?
Perhaps its living in Shalford!

We send our good wishes to all four
And of course to Angela

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MACMILLAN COFFEE MORNING

It was all hands on deck for a very busy couple of hours on the morning of 25th September...

Together, we managed to raise a whopping £761.52 for Macmillan...

Thank you to all who donated delicious cakes, bakes, raffle prizes and their time, to make this year's Macmillan Coffee Morning such a success!!!!!

What a wonderful village and community spirit we have here in Shalford ❤

Caroline Ottley









Thank you for making our Coffee Morning special

Together, we raised a fabulous

£_761-52___

to support people living with cancer.

It's not too late to donate.

Simply scan this QR code with your phone to donate to your host's Coffee Morning.

It's easy, quick and secure. Thank you.

Scan me to donate











SHALFORD HORTICULTURAL SHOW
SATURDAY, 12TH SEPTEMBER, 2026

Last month's Horticultural Show was a great success. It was lovely to see people relaxed and enjoying the Show plus the marquee outside. Of course the weather helped as well.









We did wonder about the amount of fruit, vegetables and flowers which might be displayed due to the very hot summer we have had but everyone brought in what they could. So thank you for that.

It was a pleasure to see all the produce brought in - we have some very talented people in the vicinity!

Thanks to all who entered this year.

Perhaps others might like to enter next year.

Carol Praill





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Gillian, Ellie, Jan, Diana, Heather, Pamela, Sue Martin, Angela, Sue Morton, Hazel and Heather

HARVEST FESTIVAL FLOWERS ST ANDREW'S CHURCH








Gillian, Ellie, Jan, Diana, Heather, Pamela, Sue Martin, Angela, Sue Morton, Hazel and Heather

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FOSTAC

Friends of St Andrew's Church

President
Sir Roger Singleton, CBE.

October 2026

AUTUMN/WINTER NEWSLETTER

Hello FOSTAC Members

It seems summer has now left us and we are now well into colourful Autumn with leaves turning gold and fresh winds but with glorious sunsets with the prospect of cooler days and nights.

But that does not stop FOSTAC! Again we have a couple of more events planned before the end of the year. The first on **Saturday 7th November** at **3.00pm** in St Andrew's Church when we will be entertained by Sharon Gould where she describes a walk down memory lane of how life was in the **East End** and her transition **to Essex**. This may be familiar with some of you! Please note that this will be at **3.00pm in the afternoon!**

The last event of the year will be a welcome return of **Nancy May** presenting her **Christmas Concert** – on **Sunday 6th December** at **3.00pm.** This will again be an enjoyable afternoon of music

Both these events are at earlier times as the clocks change, so afternoons seem a better time to hold them – also one is on a Saturday afternoon the other a Sunday afternoon – please check when you get your ticket!

So far into 2027, we have only one thing planned but we welcome any ideas for future events – just let one of FOSTAC committee know and we will see whether we can arrange more events for you

We do hope you will be able to come along to all of these events and support us and there will be the usual FOSTAC Drinks and Nibbles

We look forward to seeing you there

FOSTAC
Committee

CFC Shalford 40th Anniversary Season

By: Ian Butcher



The club's 40th anniversary season is well underway, after just one pre-season game at the end of August due to various issues, we began our league campaign in the first week of September at home against Great Bardfield who have come up from Division One, they gave us a game but we ran out 3-1 winners with goals from Arran Dyson, Rory Bone and Ross Kochan.

Our second game saw us travel to Felsted Wanderers another promoted team, we were 3-0 down with 20 minutes to go and made a dramatic comeback to win 4-3, our goals were score by Jack Neale 2, Karl Swanborough and Ezra Drann.

Last season's Division One champions Sporting 77 were the visitors to Shalford for our third league match, Sporting who had signed some very good players went in to a 3-0 lead, we fought back again but weren't able to get anything from the game, losing eventually 6-4. Goals score by Jack Neale 2, James Watson and Karl Swanborough.

Essex FA County Cup action was next as we welcomed Madrid Wanderers from the Colchester Sunday League to Shalford and we went through to the second round with a 4-2 victory, goals coming from Karl Swanborough 2, Ollie Jones and Ezra Drann.

The following week we welcomed Kavern to Shalford as we returned to league action, we picked up a 3-0 win. We lead 1-0 at half-time thanks to Rory Bone's goal, second half strikes from Jack Neale and Karl Swanborough secured the points.

We faced bottom of the table Rayne next and didn't perform well as we drew 2-2, we lead 2-0 ahead at half-time after goals from Jack Neale and Karl Swanborough, we didn't start the second half well letting Rayne pull a goal back within a few minutes of the re-start and then we gave away a late penalty to allow Rayne to equalise and take a deserved point.

We face Clacton Athletic in the Essex County Cup 2nd round on 18th October and then Notley in the league on 25th October.

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We're delighted that local businesses **Deersbrook Farm, Shalford Village Store and Coney's Fish & Chips** are already supporting CFC Shalford FC by sponsoring players for the season.

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To find out more about player sponsorship, contact Ian Butcher - CFC Shalford FC.

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REMEMBERING OUR SON TOM



Our son, Tom Easton died during his third open heart surgery in November 2006. He was 32 and had his initial surgery at 5 weeks old. It was necessary for him to attend clinics at London hospitals for the rest of his life but he did not let this stand in the way of a normal life.

The family moved to Shalford in 1980 and he attended Shalford School and the Newport Free Grammar School, taking a degree at Wye College (now Imperial College). In his vacations he very much enjoyed working on the land principally with the late Tim Goodchild.

He made a career in Environmental Science, managing a lab which gave him the opportunity to deploy his wit, innovative talent and interpersonal skills, which abilities were reflected in the hundreds of tributes received by the family at the time of his death.

Tom, his girlfriend and a number of their colleagues, at that time, were exploring the possibility of opening their own lab but it was not to be. Despite living away, he saw Shalford as his home and he said that his spirits always rose as he returned to the village for the weekend, and took in the view across the Pant valley.

His absence is still and always will be much lamented by us - his parents Sandra and Frank, siblings William and Abigail and those whose lives he touched.



Grief is tidal. In time, it can recede and leave us with feelings of peace and advancement, only for it to wash back in with all its crushing hopelessness and sorrow. Back and forth it goes, but with each retreating drift of despair, we are left a little stronger, more resilient, more essential and better at our new life.

Nick Cave

Here, at Shalford Village Magazine, we are feeling privileged and honoured that Frank and Sandra Easton have fully sponsored November's magazine being a tribute to their beloved son, Tom. I am sure that many of us will be taking a moment to reminisce and remember a loved one such as Tom.
Our thoughts are with the Easton family this November and of course our heart-felt thank you for thinking of and supporting Shalford at this sad time.

WE REMEMBER



WILLIAM BENDLOWE'S

PEOPLE WORKING FOR PEOPLE

For many, November reminds us of Remembrance especially 11th November Remembrance Day and also 2nd November All Souls Day. Here at Bendlowe's this has prompted the Team to reflect and remember our supporters who, sadly, are no longer with us. However they supported us; be it by attending, Meet and Greet, an outing, a fund-raising event or by donating, we were extremely grateful for their support and company. We remember each one of them with fondness, affection and appreciation.

Reggie Nelson, Peter Canham, David French, Eric Baker,
Diane Suett, Dave Isbell, John Taylor, Don Mavis,
Alan Oates, Peter Ottley, Diana Hulkes, John Bahr,
Alex Tanner, Margaret Smith, Smudger (Mick Smith);
Patrick Alexander, Lawrence Rawlinson, John Bright,
Janet Bright, Carole Smith, Vic Ridgewell, Mike Meddle

We also wish to thank those who took part in our 450th Anniversary Chair Challenge by purchasing a chair in memory of a loved one. We wish to remember those who have a chair in their memory.



Diana Hulkes, Lawrence Rawlinson, Smudger (Mick Smith), Reggie Nelson, Peter Canham, Thomas Owers, Carmelina Earp, Patricia Norman, Peter Ottley, Vera Smith, Nan Stevenson, Alex Tanner.

SHALFORD VILLAGE MAGAZINE

We wish to extend our gratitude and thanks to everyone who has made a donation towards the printing costs of Shalford Village Magazine. You have made a difference. The magazine would not have continued without you.

At this special time of the year, we feel it would be remiss of us not to remember the lost loved ones whose family funded a month's magazine in their memory.

July/August 2023 was funded by Brenda Alexander
In Loving Memory Of
PATRICK ALEXANDER

March 2024 was funded by Mandy French
In Loving Memory Of
DAVID FRENCH

April 2024 & Dec 2025 was funded by John Earp
In Loving Memory of
CARMELINA EARP

July/August 2024 was funded by David Kay
In Loving Memory Of
JUNE KAY

March 2025 was funded by Angela Ridgewell
In Loving Memory Of
VIC RIDGEWELL

November 2026 magazine was funded by Frank and Sandra Easton
In Loving Memory of their son
TOM EASTON

We also remember with great fondness

JOHN BRIGHT
who passed away on 20th April 2024
John and Janet funded November 2023's magazine

MARGARET SPARKS
who passed away in November 2024
Margaret funded October 2024's magazine



JANET BRIGHT
1941 – 2026
John and Janet funded November 2023's magazine





Downloaded from Imperial War Museum's website:-
https://www.iwm.org.uk/history/iwm/hms-belfast

HMS Belfast History

Built by Messrs Harland & Wolff in 1936, HMS Belfast was **launched on St Patrick's Day** in 1938 by Anne Chamberlain, wife of the then Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain.

After fitting out and builder's trials, HMS Belfast was commissioned into the Royal Navy on 5 August 1939 under the command of Captain G A Scott DSO RN.

Designed for the protection of trade and offensive action, it was immediately called into service patrolling the northern waters in efforts to impose a maritime blockade on Germany. However, disaster struck after only two months at sea when HMS Belfast hit a magnetic mine. There were few casualties but the damage to her hull was so severe the ship was out of action for three years.

On rejoining the home fleet in 1942, the ship was still the largest and most powerful cruiser in the Royal Navy and most importantly she was equipped with the most advanced radar systems.

HMS Belfast was immediately called into action and played a crucial role in protecting the arctic convoys, Russia's supply route throughout the war.

For 18 months, HMS Belfast and her crew endured punishing conditions delivering supplies to the Soviet Union. HMS Belfast 's notable role during the Battle of North Cape saw the sinking of the Scharnhorst and the loss of all but 36 of her 1,963 crew.

In 1944 she spent five weeks supporting the D-Day landings and reportedly fired one of the first shots on D-Day itself.

After the Second World War, HMS Belfast played an active role in the Korean War from 1950-1952 working with other Allied Forces to support the retreating American and South Korean troops.

Its final years were spent performing peace-keeping duties until it was retired from service in 1963. As early as 1967 the Imperial War Museum had been investigating the possibility of preserving a Second World War cruiser. This led to the formation of a trust, headed up by one of HMS Belfast's former captains Rear-Admiral Sir Morgan Morgan-Giles. After some years the trust was successful and HMS Belfast was brought to London opening to the public on Trafalgar Day, 21 October 1971.

Today, it is the last remaining vessel of its type – one of the largest and most powerful light cruisers ever built.

Famous animals of the Second World War

Photograph: Gustav the pigeon



Image: IWM (CH 13321)

Gustav was one of the RAF's messenger pigeons during the **Second World War** and one of six birds given to Reuters news correspondent Montagu Taylor ahead of **D-Day**. On 6 June 1944 Gustav carried back the first news from the D-Day landings in Normandy. He flew more than 150 miles (241 km) – from the northern coast of France to his loft near Portsmouth – in just over 5 hours to deliver this message: 'We are just 20 miles or so off the beaches. First assault troops landed 0750. Signal says no interference from enemy gunfire on beach...Steaming steadily in formation. Lightnings, typhoons, fortresses crossing since 0545. No enemy aircraft seen'. Gustav was awarded the **Dickin Medal** in September 1944.



Albert Edward "Ted" Brine

and the 'forgotten war' in the Far East

By: Chris Brine
(Albert's youngest son)

Albert was born in Dorset, where both his maternal and paternal families had lived and worked for many generations. He joined the T/A (Territorial Army) in 1940, and after training he was posted to 239 Battery of the 77th HAA (Heavy Anti-Aircraft) Regiment of the Royal Artillery.

He was stationed primarily in Wales covering the docks and the Bristol Channel during the 'Blitz'.

In late 1941, the regiment was moved to Scotland, and in early December 1941 sailed from the Clyde bound for Durban, South Africa, to fight in the desert campaign.

By the time the regiment reached Durban, the Japanese had attacked Pearl Harbor and invaded the Philippines, and the 77th's destination had been changed to Singapore to aid the defense of the British and Dutch Territories in the Far East.

The 77th was initially ordered to land in Singapore but was again diverted to Batavia (now Jakarta, then the capital of the Dutch East Indies). The 77th landed in Batavia in early February 1942, after which 239 Battery was immediately engaged in the defense of Batavia and the surrounding oil and airfields against Japanese air attacks.

By early March 1942 the Japanese Army had complete control of Singapore and had advanced through much of the Dutch East Indies, and on the 8th of March 1942 the Dutch commanders ordered the surrender of their fighting forces; the British commander, believing the defense of the region to then be impossible, ordered the capitulation of the British forces shortly after.

Albert was taken prisoner by the Imperial Japanese Army around the 9th or 10th of March 1942.

Over the following months, most of the Allied POWs (prisoners of war) in the region were concentrated into camps in and around Java, Singapore and Burma (including Albert, who was held in Changi in Singapore), from where they were sent to camps all over the Japanese-occupied territories including Thailand, Burma and Borneo or to the Japanese home islands aboard 'Hell Ships', all as forced labour.

Japan never ratified the 1929 Geneva Convention concerning the treatment of prisoners of war, and as Japanese military philosophy especially viewed surrender as dishonorable and contrary to their 'warrior' values, they treated the POWs with contempt and indifference, viewing them purely as an expendable resource and subjecting the POWs to starvation, beatings, torture, medical experiments and murder.

Over the next three and a half years, Albert, along with tens of thousands of other British, American, Dutch and Australian POWs, was moved at various times to camps in the Thai Jungle to work on the Burma-Thai railway, the notorious 'Railway of Death' (made famous by the film The Bridge Over the River Kwai, which though is pure fiction) that was being built by the Japanese Army to sustain the provision of men and materials across Asia by land.

As the tide of the war in the Far East turned, by late summer of 1945 the majority of the surviving Allied POWs, including Albert, were finally liberated.

Albert returned to England in late 1945, four years after leaving Scotland, to be reunited with his wife and his eldest daughter, who was nearly five years old before she saw her father for the first time. The returning POWs for the London County Council. Albert and his wife Anne went on to have one other daughter and two sons.

Like many, he rarely spoke of the events of the war years, but the deprivations he suffered sadly affected his mental and physical health and contributed to his death in 1968.

The mortality rate of British POWs in Europe during the Second World War was around 3.5%, for British, American, Dutch and Australian POWs in the Far East, the mortality rate was between 27% and 34% and by some estimates even higher (for Chinese POWs of the Imperial Japanese Army it was believed to be over 99%).

After the camps were liberated, many documents were found, including, in some, 'Flee' or 'Kill' orders - instructions from the Japanese War Ministry to camp commanders to avoid the camp commanders and guards being held for the mistreatment of POWs, to 'erase' evidence or to prevent any POWs from rejoining the war.

One such documented plan to the commander of Kuching camp (Sarawak in Borneo) read:

1. **POWs and Male Internees:** To be marched to a sub-camp (near Dahan/Milestone 21, 18 to 21 miles away) and systematically bayoneted to death
2. **The Sick and Unable to Walk:** Any prisoners physically incapable of completing the march were to be mass-executed in the main square inside the Kuching camp
3. **Women and Children:** All female prisoners and children (including a large group of Catholic nuns) were to be trapped inside their wooden barracks and burned alive

These standing Imperial instructions are believed to have been intended to be enacted in many POW camps, especially those on the Japanese home islands.

'Little Boy' and 'Fat Man' were detonated over the Japanese Home Islands on the 6th and 9th of August 1945; Emperor Hirohito announced the Japanese surrender (against the express wishes of the Japanese Army and despite an attempted military coup) on the 15th of August, and Japan formally surrendered to the Allies on the 2nd of September 1945. The 'Kuching orders' were originally scheduled for August the 17th, 1945, but postponed until the 15th of September.

The Thai-Burma railway (the railway of death) was completed in October 1943; it is said that every sleeper laid on the railway cost a human life, and that some 90,000 Asian civilians and in the region of 12,000 Allied POWs, many with no known graves or markers, died building

it. In total, between 37,000 and 40,000 Allied POWs died under Japanese captivity during World War 2.

Successive Japanese governments have offered their 'sincere condolences and remorse' for the actions of the Imperial Japanese Army during the Second World War……

The FEPOW (Far East Prisoner Of War) Prayer

And we that are left grow old with the years
Remembering the heartache, the pain and the tears
Hoping and praying that never again
Man will sink to such sorrow and shame
The price that was paid we will always remember
Every day, every month, not just in November
We shall remember them

Whilst August 15th is VJ Day, on this coming remembrance day, please also take a moment to remember those who have fought, suffered and died in the cause of freedom far from home, especially the soldiers, sailors and airmen of the 'forgotten war'.

P.S. Following my mother's death, both my brother and I have been lucky enough to visit Japan and have found the Japanese people to be warm, friendly and gracious hosts.

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GARLIC – THE MARMITE PLANT

Garlic truly is a marmite plant - you either love it or hate it!

Garlic (Allium sativum) belongs to the Liliaceae family alongside onions, leeks and chives. It is believed to have originated in south-western Siberia before spreading into southern Europe. The value of garlic lies not in its foliage but in its bulb, which forms underground. Each bulb consists of small segments called cloves; all wrapped in a thin, papery skin.

Garlic has been recognised for centuries for its antiseptic qualities. It is said to help lower high blood pressure, ward off colds and even assist in curing them. A clove or two, pounded and mixed with honey, has traditionally been taken for rheumatism over two or three nights. During the First World War, raw garlic juice was reportedly applied to sterilised swabs and used on wounds to prevent infection.

In the kitchen, garlic offers not only its distinctive savoury flavour but also aids digestion. If you dislike the taste, you can gently introduce it by rubbing a cut clove around a saucepan or salad bowl. And really, who can resist a slice of warm garlic bread?

PLANTING

Garlic is an easy crop to grow in vegetable patches, flower beds or pots. Before a clove can form a new bulb, it must experience a period of cold, so the best planting times are late autumn (November) or very early spring (March). Choose free-draining soil in a sunny position.

Split the bulbs into individual cloves and select the larger outer cloves for planting; the smaller ones are ideal for cooking. Plant cloves 15 cm (6") apart, easing them into the soil with a trowel, pointed end uppermost. Avoid pushing them in by hand, as this may damage the basal plate - the hard, compressed stem at the base of the bulb from which roots grow. Cover the tops to prevent birds from pulling them out, and leave 30 cm (12") between rows.

Garlic makes an excellent companion plant thanks to its strong sulphur scent, which naturally deters pests such as aphids and spider mites. It grows well alongside brassicas, tomatoes, carrots, fruit trees, roses and strawberries.

However, garlic can stunt the growth of peas and beans, and may affect the flavour and vigour of asparagus and some herbs.

WATERING

Garlic grows early in the season when soil moisture is usually sufficient. In an exceptionally dry spring, water each plant with around 70 ml (2 fl oz) daily - not a lot, but sufficient to keep the surrounding soil moist.

HARVEST



By July, the foliage will die back and the bulbs can be lifted with a fork. Avoid pulling them up by hand, as this may damage the bulbs and reduce their storage life.

Allow the bulbs to dry thoroughly in the sun, a greenhouse or an airy shed. Set aside a few of the best bulbs for planting next season.

Once dry, the bulbs may be tied together into a grappe - a tight cluster resembling a bunch of grapes - or plaited using the long dried stems to create an attractive kitchen display.

Instructions for plaiting garlic are widely available online.

Happy Planting

The Theoretical Gardener

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Nature Notes

Dragon Fly

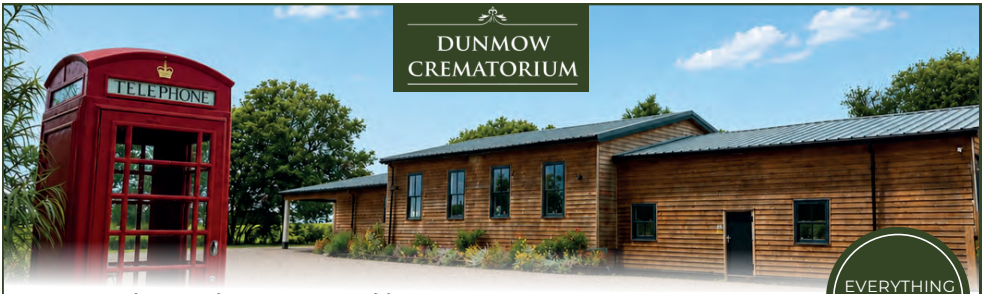
By: Mac Beanland

Going through my diary, I came across a note July 20, the large blue dragon fly in my garden. I do remember it well, first I was quite surprised to see it in my garden which is a long way from any water, and you usually see dragon flies near water but also it was by far the biggest dragon fly I have ever seen. I was able to get a really good look at it as it was not in any hurry to leave my garden. It must have made quite an impression on me as I am not in the habit of writing things like that in my diary. I must admit I don't know a lot about Dragonflies but I have enjoyed looking things up.

They can be found in every part of the world apart from the arctic regions, and worldwide there are some 5000 species. In the UK we have 30 and the one I spotted in my garden was by far the biggest I have ever seen so that tells me it was a large blue and was a male as they are larger than the female. It really was vivid blue quite a Pretty Boy. Dragon flies are harmless to us, they don't bite or sting and they eat small flies and insects especially mosquitoes midges and most of the insect pests in our gardens so that makes them very welcome visitors as far as I am concerned. They have large protruding eyes giving them 360 degree vision, very useful for spotting small flies. One unique feature is their flight pattern; they can fly in any direction: forwards, backwards, sideways, vertically up and down.

The more I study these unique creatures the more I see the resemblance to a helicopter. Was the design of a helicopter based on a dragon fly? Wide-scope vision from the front of the cockpit, a long abdomen to the rear and an ability to fly in any direction, I could be talking about the same thing. But the dragon fly is much quieter and does not need aviation fuel to fly. Most dragon flies don't move very far from their own habitat but a few are migratory and arrive here from the continent. They can fly at speeds up to 30 miles per hour and more with a tail wind. They have a three-stage life cycle, adult dragon flies mate, then the female lays hundreds or thousands of eggs on leaves, mud or even direct into water. They hatch in a few weeks or even wait until the weather warms up as nymph. Nymphs breath under water through special internal gills, they live from one to five years at this stage as formidable hunters, feeding on small fish, tadpoles and all forms of pond life. Once they feel ready, the fully grown nymph crawls out of the water onto a plant or rock, its skin splits open and a fully grown adult dragon fly emerges.





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Buzzing News from the Hives of Jillie Woolcock



Where has this year gone? It only seems a few weeks ago that I was stuffing all our winter decs back in their attic cupboard and by the time you read this I shall be thinking about summoning the energy to drag them all out again. But before I contemplate the Christian Festival at the end of the year (the name of which I refuse to mention because as I write it's still early October) I can still enjoy one or two more visits to feed the bees.



This is a bee feeder. The bees come up through the centre of the feeder to take the syrup

The honey has been taken off, and most of the hardware that is removed from the hives for the winter has been cleaned, painted and stored. I have three colonies going in to winter.

During the winter months Braintree Beekeepers Assoc. run a Beginners Beekeeping day where they give people a basic rundown on beekeeping, equipment, bee health and diseases. It's a really great day for anyone interested in starting their beekeeping journey. ** Each attendee is allocated a mentor and this year I was Sharon's. She hasn't got any bees yet but enjoyed coming over to Bardfield and helping me with mine.

Her beekeeping journey very nearly failed to start with me as the first time we were to meet, my bees had turned from angels to absolute beasts overnight - stinging anything and anyone in sight. It would have put her off for life if she'd been there when they were at their worst. (See June's issue for how calm was returned).

Anyway, we have done all we can to provide for the bees over winter. They have been fed sugar syrup which helps them bulk up their supply of winter stores. But, on 1st October, I took the photos below where you can clearly see the bees are still bringing in pollen.





The pollen is in the 'pollen baskets' on the back legs of the bees as they enter the hive

We last opened the hives about three or four weeks ago. Checking that "Their Majesties" were safe and well, that there was enough space for further storage of food to keep them going over winter, and also enough space for "Their Majesties" to lay their eggs. All was well, so we shut them up and tied them down as Badger Bill is still about and could easily knock the hives flying, although 'Muscles's' pee seems to have deterred any further digging activity around the hives (see September issue if this last reference is a little baffling).



I have kept the three colonies going into winter because, if the worst happens and a colony dies out, I still have some bees to be going on with in the spring. I have promised Sharon that in the event of all three making it through the winter she can have one as thanks for her help this last season.

So that's about it for this year's beekeeping season. The ups and downs will no doubt be readily available next year and I look forward to regaling you with them once again.

** Braintree Beekeepers: https://braintreebka.wordpress.com

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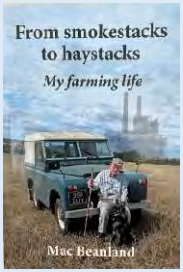
AFTERALL

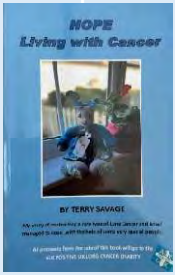
The nights are drawing in

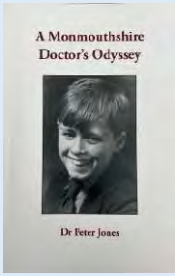
The temperature is dropping

You will need a good book

Here are three







For more information, contact the authors:

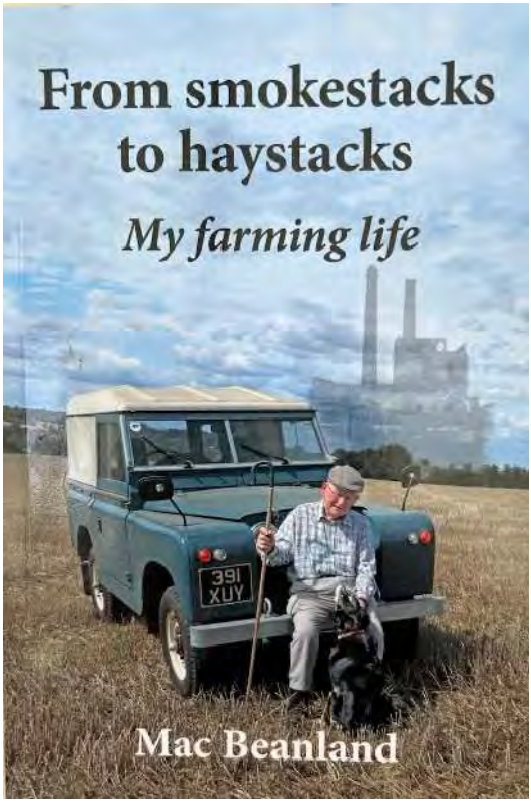
Mac Beanland

Terry Savage

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Or

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FROM SMOKESTACKS TO HAYSTACKS

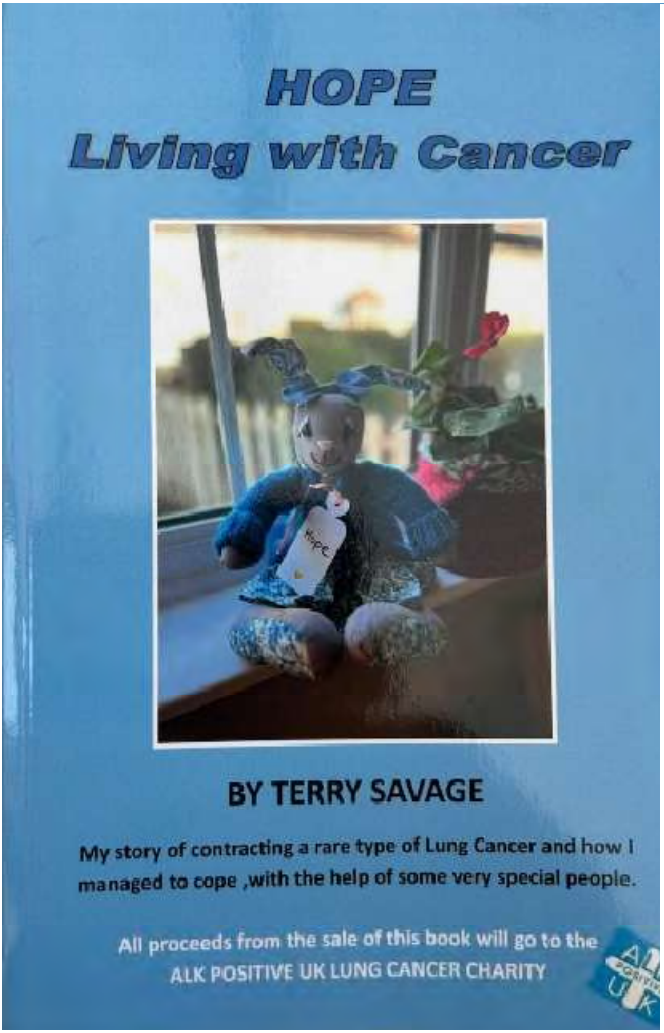
By: Mac Beanland

Introduction

This is my life: the story of a boy born in the City of Nottingham with no ancestral connections to agriculture or rural life who decided from a very early age he was going to be a farmer. Where this idea came from, I will never know, but all through life with its twists and turns, trials and tribulations, I never once deviated from this one aim and I have no regrets. Regrets never did anyone any good. What has passed can't be changed – learn by mistakes and try not to repeat them.

The two things that have made it possible for me to achieve my ambition are one: a wicked sense of humour which has allowed me to see a not-always funny side to a disaster, or rather a good side to a bad situation, and two: my biggest asset in life, my choice of partner in my late wife Joan. Without her, I don't think I would have made it. Not only did Joan understand my sense of humour but she could tell when it was failing. Her stock exclamation when things got too much was, "You will sort it out". She had more faith in my abilities than I did.

I have always enjoyed a laugh especially a laugh shared with other people so I hope we can share a few throughout this book.



HOPE

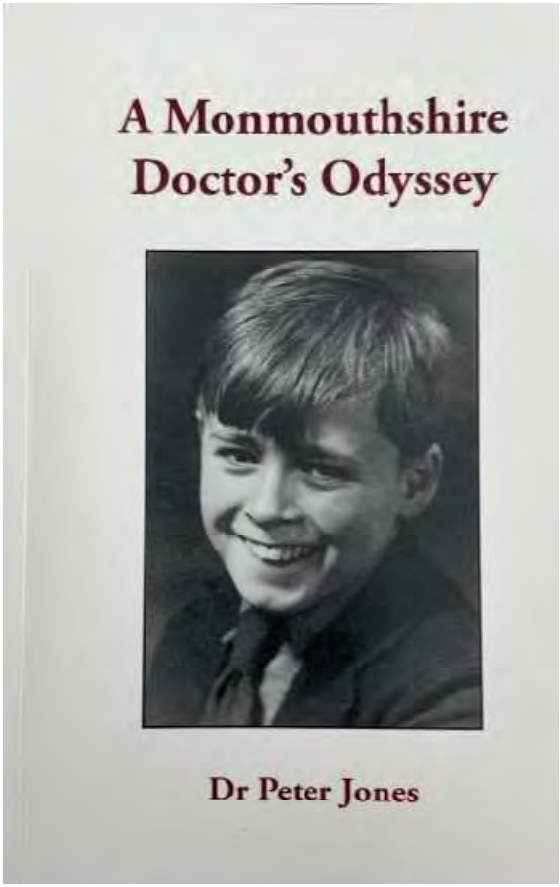
LIVING WITH CANCER

By: Terry Savage

Terry's story of contracting a rare type of Lung Cancer and how he managed to cope, with the help of some very special people

In 2017 I managed to get Lung Cancer, it came as a shock as most sufferers of this disease smoke, and I never have. It transpired that I had a rare form of cancer that not much was known about at the time. As the years have gone by new treatments are being found to contain this, as yet there is still no cure, so most people live their lives in 3-monthly cycles, the period between scans, to see if they have progression This is my story, my ups and downs, my coping mechanisms and how I got to still be here.

All proceeds to go to the ALK Positive UK Charity



A MONMOUTHSHIRE DOCTOR'S ODYSSEY

By: Dr Peter Jones

To Pamela

What is this life if full of care

We have no time to stand and stare

From "Leisure"

by W H Davies of Newport

Dr Peter Jones worked in general practice throughout his career. His early training years in hospitals provide many humorous anecdotes and his later work in the docklands area of Newport, Gwent, offers interesting insight into social deprivation and its effect on health. We see the early days of the National Health Service and chart the increasing pressures on the system and the role of the family doctor.

Peter is justifiably proud of the Bellevue Surgery practice which he built up and the part he played as an army doctor in the Territorial Army. His passion for the welfare of his patients shines throughout despite the occasional foray into black humour!

This collection of short reflections conveys a man committed to his patients, his family and his beloved Wales (not just the rugby). We also see his devotion to the arts and culture which he still enjoys to this day with regular visits to galleries from his home in Essex.

IN THE UNITED BENEFICE
of Finchingfield, Cornish Hall End, Shalford, Wethersfield, Little And Great Bardfield
THE PANT VALLEY CHURCHES



Shalford St Andrew's



Wethersfield St Mary Magdalene



Finchingfield St John the Baptist



Gt Bardfield St Mary The Virgin



Little Bardfield St Katharine



Cornish Hall End St John the Evangelist

From the Vicarage…

'Is there still a point in learning facts if we can just look them up at the touch of a button?' This is a question which has been on people's minds ever since Internet search engines became good enough to find quick and reliable answer to most questions we might pose (which has now been the case for quite a number of years). On the face of it, the answer might appear to be 'no', but if we think a little more deeply, we realise that we have a different kind of relationship with information which we have remembered as opposed to what we simply look up. The former is part of us, and so helps shape the way we think about the world and interact with it, and, indeed, helps form something of who we are.

This is very important for us to consider when it comes to November's identity as a month of Remembrance. As well as the annual marking of Remembrance Sunday and Armistice Day, the month opens in the Church's calendar with the commemoration of All Souls – a day of prayer for all who have died – and in some traditions this is a theme which characterises the whole month in its prayers and forms of service. But for the way we observe Remembrance in Church to make any sense, we need the 'remembering' at the heart of it to be very different from the kind of remembering which comes from looking up facts in some external reference; we need the remembering to become part of us.

One thing I nearly always mention at funeral services is that our departed loved ones have helped make us who we are. We carry, to a greater or lesser degree according to the closeness of our relationship, an imprint of them within ourselves. The 'memory' that we have of them is something living and active, which goes deeper than a biography or photo album, though these might awaken the deeper memories within. And similarly, when we come to the more specific 'Remembrance' of those whose lives have been lost in armed conflict, we are challenged to make that remembrance something more than what we might learn in a history book: at its best, it should be a deepening within our souls of the natural rejection of the cruelty and greed which lies behind the causes of conflict past and present.

I hope that you will have the opportunity this month to deepen your own sense of remembrance, as something which has its roots firmly in the fertile soil of the past, but which is also lived meaningfully in our lives each day.

Rev'd/Fr Alex

SERVICES FOR NOVEMBER IN THE PANT VALLEY CHURCHES

Sunday 1 November – All Saints' Day
9am Holy Communion (traditional language) – Cornish Hall End
9.30am Morning Prayer – Shalford
10.30am Family Eucharist–Gt Bardfield
11am Prayer & Pilgrimage (Celtic Morning Prayer) – Wethersfield
4pm Shoebox Service–Cornish Hall End
Monday 2 November – All Souls' Day
5pm All Souls' Remembrance Service – Shalford
7.30pm Sung Requiem Eucharist – Great Bardfield
Sunday 8 Nov – Remembrance Sunday
9am Sung Requiem Eucharist – Great Bardfield
10.50am Service of Remembrance – Finchingfield
10.50am Service of Remembrance – Wethersfield
10.50am Service of Remembrance – Cornish Hall End
3pm Service of Remembrance – Great Bardfield War Memorial
Wednesday 11 November – Armistice Day
10.55am Act of Remembrance – Finchingfield War Memorial
10.55am Act of Remembrance – Wethersfield Village Green
Sunday 15 November – Second Sunday before Advent
9am Holy Communion (traditional language) – Finchingfield
9.30am Morning Prayer – Shalford
10.30am Sung Eucharist – Great Bardfield
11am Morning Worship – Wethersfield
Sunday 22 November – Sunday Next before Advent
9.30am Parish Communion – Shalford
10.30am Morning Prayer – Great Bardfield
11am Holy Communion (traditional language) – Wethersfield
4pm Sung Eucharist *(for the Patronal Festival of St Katharine)* – Little Bardfield
Sunday 29 November – Advent Sunday
10.30am Benefice Eucharist – Shalford
(also celebrating the Patronal Festival of St Andrew)
4pm Advent Carol Service & Benediction – Little Bardfield

Regular Services & Events during the week

Monday
8.45am Morning Prayer – Finchingfield
1.30pm 'Faithful Fiction' book club – Between the Lines, Great Bardfield (1st weeks)
Tuesday
8.45am Morning Prayer – Great Bardfield
10am Baby & Toddler Group – Great Bardfield 'St Mary's Munchkins' story & song time with refreshments
Thursday
8.45am Morning Prayer – Wethersfield
10am Coffee Morning (2nd & 4th weeks) – Shalford
Coffee Morning (3rd weeks) – Cornish Hall End
10.30am Eucharist – Little Bardfield
Friday
8.45am Morning Prayer – Shalford
Saturday
10.30am (3rd weeks) Coffee Morning – Wethersfield

Keep In Touch!

To receive weekly email news about what's going on across our churches, please sign up to our mailing list by following this link: http://eepurl.com/ifMMHz or using the QR Code



Shalford
St Andrew's



Wethersfield
St Mary
Magdalene



Finchingfield
St John the
Baptist



Gt Bardfield
St Mary The
Virgin



Little
Bardfield
St Katharine



Cornish Hall
End
St John the
Evangelist

SHALFORD CHURCH OF ST ANDREW'S
PANT VALLEY CHURCHES
CHURCH WARDEN'S REPORT

I make no apologies for devoting most of this report to the church bells of St Andrew's that were re-dedicated on 11th October by the Archdeacon of Stansted, in the company of ringers and members of the congregation and the wider community.

I was a ringer for many years in the Cotswolds and it was a delight to be able to ring at lots of the tiny village churches in Gloucestershire and Oxfordshire. However, it was also a concern that, although a church might have a ring of bells in reasonable condition, ringers were in short supply or simply non-existent, having died or moved away. So often these lovely little settlements are now full of second homes whose owners are not really a part of the fabric of the community and only in residence for a few weeks of the year. So Christmas, Easter and Harvest, not to mention regular Sunday services, funerals and weddings (very fashionable to be married in the Cotswolds!) pass by without benefit of bells unless a visiting team can be induced to attend. You might even say that such a village has lost its "soul".



It makes me so glad that Shalford still has a "soul"! I haven't lived in a village with bells before, although in Stroud it was possible to hear the ring of 10 in the town church if the wind was in the right direction. And so it is with the Shalford bells that have been sounding out for at least 400 years, to call us to church, to mark the passing of the seasons and the passing of lives, to celebrate happy life events, to warn in times of danger, and, if the wind is in the right direction, the sound carries well beyond the village boundaries to all the nearby hamlets. We are truly blessed in all our ringers and in the generosity of this community in helping to fund the refurbishment of our bells and associated elements (see the photo of some of the spruced-up wheels). AND it's a fascinating and sociable hobby so if you are inclined to give it a go why not go down to the tower on practice night, usually a Friday, and make yourself known? You will be welcomed.

I'm hoping to commission a special record of names to be commemorated, at the request of those who donated to the Bell Fund, so if you haven't already let me know, but would like to take part, please do get in touch.

Also, please do take note in this magazine of all the opportunities for Remembrance that fall in November, including our All-Souls service on 2nd November at 5pm in St Andrew's. There is a list at the back of the church where you can write the names of your departed loved ones to be commemorated.

Hilary Penney

PS I don't ring any more at Shalford or anywhere else. An arthritic right hand meant I was a source of concern to the Ringing Master and the Tower Captain every time I missed the sally!

SHALFORD CHURCH OF ST ANDREW'S CONTACTS

Vicar, Revd Dr Alex Shannon, The Vicarage, Finchingfield, Tel: 01371 810309 Email: rev.alex.shannon@gmail.com

Associate Minister, Revd Canon Janet Nicholls, Park House, Braintree Road, Shalford, CM7 5HQ, Tel: 01371 851317, Email: jnicholls@chelmsford.anglican.org

Treasurer, Peter Havelock, Tel: 07721 371017, Email: peter_havelock@hotmail.com

Churchwarden, Hilary Penney, Orchard View, The Chase, Shalford, CM7 5HH Tel: O1371 851762, Email: spsware@copper12.co.uk

Safeguarding Representative, Sarah Pilgrim, Fieldside, Lombard Street Finchingfield, Tel: 01371 850781 Email: pilgrim511@btinternet.com

Ringing Master, Roy Threadgold, Plumley, Braintree Road, Wethersfield Tel: O1371 850481 Email: roy@boydellsdairy.co.uk

Captain of the Bell Tower, Michael Mason, 6 Cliffield, Shalford, CM7 5HP Tel: O1371 850125

Friends of St Andrew's Church (FOSTAC), Chairman Sue Morton 42 Hereward Way, Wethersfield CM7 4EG Tel: 01371 850626 Email: suebeazleyend@gmail.com



Lettuce Out!

The Garden Detectives stood silently beyond the fence, staring into the darkness. The strange quacking had stopped, but somewhere among the trees, a muffled cry suddenly broke the silence.

"Quack!"

Nedley Carrot swallowed nervously while Martin Mushroom examined the muddy ground. All around them were tiny duck footprints, mixed with the much larger tracks of several geese. Although Iceberg Lettuce was immediately suspicious, she remembered what had happened with Sly and reminded everyone that good detectives examined the evidence before reaching a conclusion.

Following the trail cautiously, they soon discovered a small duck hiding beneath a thick hedge. She introduced herself as Daisy and explained that twelve ducks had been taken prisoner near the old pond. Apparently, a group of geese had surrounded the pond, built a makeshift fence and refused to let the ducks leave.

The Garden Detectives followed Daisy towards the pond, keeping carefully beneath the cover of the bushes. From their hiding place, they watched several large geese patrolling the area. Others were gathered around a tree stump, where their leader was addressing the group.



The goose spoke angrily about unfairness, explaining that the pond had once been a peaceful home for many different creatures. Recently, however, the water had become increasingly polluted, while the available food and nesting areas had become scarce. The geese

believed that the ducks and other animals had been given priority for too long.

Martin listened carefully, recording everything in his notebook. Although the geese had clearly chosen the wrong way to express their concerns, their behaviour now appeared less mysterious. They were not simply greedy or cruel; they were angry because they believed nobody had listened to them.

Unfortunately, understanding the geese's motives did not solve the immediate problem. The ducks and several other animals were still trapped.

The Garden Detectives therefore devised a carefully planned distraction. While the geese were occupied, Nedley and Gareth rolled a collection of pumpkins down the slope beside the pond. As the pumpkins gathered speed, they bounced noisily across the ground, scattering in every direction.



The startled geese immediately abandoned their positions and rushed after them.

Taking advantage of the confusion, Anne led the others towards the old shed. Sly, being considerably smaller than the rest of the detectives, slipped beneath the door and pushed the wooden bolt aside. Almost immediately, the frightened animals began escaping into the surrounding woodland.

Ducks waddled rapidly between the trees; rabbits disappeared into the undergrowth and several hedgehogs hurried towards the safety of the bushes. Even the grumpy tortoise eventually emerged, although he appeared far more annoyed than frightened.

Unfortunately, before everyone could escape, one of the geese returned.

For a moment, the Garden Detectives expected another confrontation. Instead, the goose stood silently beside the pond, looking sadly across the dirty water.

Iceberg approached him cautiously and listened as he explained the truth. The geese had repeatedly tried to raise concerns about the condition of the pond, but nobody had taken them seriously. They

had become increasingly frustrated until they had decided that taking the ducks hostage would finally force everyone to listen.

It was a terrible decision, but beneath their anger was a genuine problem. The pond was becoming polluted. The food supply was diminishing. The animals were competing for the same small areas of clean water and shelter.

Iceberg realised that the mystery had not been about villains and victims after all. It had been caused by a problem that nobody had properly addressed.

The following morning, the animals gathered beside the pond. The ducks and geese agreed to stop fighting over the water, while the rabbits suggested planting reeds around the pond to provide shelter. The hedgehogs volunteered to keep rubbish away from the water, and the vegetables offered fresh food while the pond was being cleaned. Even the grumpy tortoise made an important contribution by reminding everyone that throwing rubbish into the water was a particularly foolish idea.

Gradually, a new agreement was reached. The geese would stop guarding the pond. The ducks would help restore it. The other animals would share responsibility for keeping it clean. Most importantly, nobody would be held prisoner again.

As the Garden Detectives returned towards Sunny Patch Garden, they felt pleased with their latest success. The ducks had been rescued, the geese had been stopped and the mystery of the pond had finally been solved. Iceberg was particularly pleased because, this time, she had examined the evidence before reaching a conclusion.

Near the garden gate, however, Martin suddenly stopped. Half-hidden beneath the leaves was a strange, silvery object. Carefully, he picked it up and spread it across his notebook.

“It looks like a snakeskin,” Anne observed.

Martin nodded. “And it's enormous.”

The detectives stared at one another. None of them had ever seen a snake that large anywhere near Sunny Patch Garden.

From somewhere beyond the fence came a faint rustling sound. Everyone froze. The sound came again, followed by the unmistakable swish of something moving through the long grass.

Iceberg carefully placed the snakeskin inside Martin's notebook and looked towards the darkening hills.

"We've solved one mystery," she said, "but I think we've just found another."

With the strange rustling continuing in the distance, the Garden Detectives stepped beyond the fence, unaware that their next adventure would lead them into a mystery involving a creature they had never expected to find.

TO BE CONTINUED IN *LETTUCE BELIEVE IT!*

By Graham Silvester, from an original idea by Martin Hinsley



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www.hundredparishes.org.uk

By: Ken McDonald, Secretary









Whilst walking, cycling or driving in our beautiful and mainly rural area you will come across a variety of crops at various stages of their life cycle. One of these is sugar beet, a plant that is harvested during the colder months, from September to March.

When my wife and I were checking out one of The Hundred Parishes quiet lane walks last winter, we came across great mounds of root vegetables. The farmer explained that they were recently-harvested sugar beets that were about to be transported to the local sugar beet factory in Bury St Edmunds, around 35 miles away.

Bury St Edmunds is one of just four UK processing plants, all in the East of England and run by British Sugar. In total, they produce over a million tonnes of sugar each year, around half of the UK's consumption (the rest is imported).

Sugar beet is sown in spring and harvested in autumn and winter. Sugar in the form of sucrose is produced by photosynthesis in the leaves and is stored in the root. An average mature root weighs about a kilogram or 2 pounds. About 20% of this is turned into sugar.

The sugar content of the beet deteriorates if it freezes so the farmer must judge when best to harvest and then get the beet to the factory as quickly as possible. The harvesting process first removes the leaves and then lifts the beets from the ground into a truck driving beside the harvester. The truck deposits the beets into giant heaps.

On the day we watched the operation, the already-harvested beet was being loaded onto a fleet of large lorries for transport to Bury. Once in the factory, the beet is washed and processed to extract the sugar. The residue pulp is turned into animal feed.

Photos:
A - Sugar beet growing
B - Sugar beet being harvested
C - Sugar beet ready to load
D - Sugar beet loader

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4 Surprising Wealth Lessons To Learn From Agatha Christie

Agatha Christie is the undisputed Queen of Crime and would have celebrated her 136th birthday on 15 September. As well as being globally famous for writing almost 100 books, short stories, and plays, she is also well known for her personal life.

A troubled first marriage resulted in her only child, and its end led to her famous "disappearance". Her second marriage later in life gave her lasting happiness. She was as astute with her finances as she was with her intricate plots, and dealt admirably with her changing life circumstances, vast earning power, and increasingly wealthy estate.

In fact, one of the most fascinating stories from Christie is how cleverly she managed her wealth, through structuring, planning, and passing on to the next generation.

Read on to discover what wealth lessons we can learn from the Queen of Crime.

1. Your estate might be worth more than you realise
Christie's novels, characters, plays, and adaptation rights were all valuable assets that continued producing income long after she wrote the original works.
It's important to remember that your estate can contain a multitude of less-obvious assets beyond property, cash, and investments.

These could include:

- **Old pensions.** If you've changed employers over the years or had periods of self-employment, then there's a good chance you've accumulated a number of pension pots along the way. If you think this could be the case, then we can help you to track these down.
- **Other property beyond your main residence.** These could include buy-to-lets, holiday homes, or property overseas.
- **Physical possessions.** Your jewellery, artwork, cars, and other possessions may be valuable, so it's important to consider these in your estate planning.

Having a clear idea of your estate's value is a key part of your later life planning. Following Christie's lead and keeping its value as low as possible could reduce Inheritance Tax (IHT) for your beneficiaries.

2. Consider how to structure your wealth
Christie established Agatha Christie Limited in 1955 in order to manage the rights to her work.

For tax planning purposes, she also became an employee of the company. This gave her a corporate structure for her finances and addressed her concerns about paying more tax as her earnings increased. She later sold a majority stake, but her family retained a large interest and significant involvement.

The way you structure your wealth is important. For example, if you have a life insurance policy, you could consider putting it into trust.

This means that, on payout, the funds will be placed into the trust and not be included in your estate. This could provide your beneficiaries with funds to clear any IHT bill, without increasing the taxable value of your estate.

Structuring assets and wealth in the appropriate way for your circumstances can help you remain tax-efficient. We're always happy to talk to you about how we can help.

3. You can pass on wealth and assets during your lifetime
Christie transferred her holiday home, Greenway, to her daughter Rosalind in 1959.

The property was kept in the family, and Christie and her husband Max continued to visit. These days, it may be necessary to pay commercial rent for the time Christie and Max spent there.
Lifetime gifting can be a good way to lower the value of your estate, as well as give you the opportunity to see your loved ones benefit during your lifetime. This could be helping your children or grandchildren with regular cash gifts, paying for school or university fees, or contributing to their ISAs or pensions.

There are certain thresholds and tax rules associated with lifetime gifting; we can talk through your options based around your own circumstances.

4. Think about the right people to inherit and manage your wealth
Christie's daughter Rosalind inherited her mother's interest in Agatha Christie Limited and subsequently became heavily involved in managing her mother's legacy.
Your estate plan could consider who is the right person to inherit a certain asset. For example, if you own a family business, it could be more prudent to leave this to a child or family member who already works there and understands the business. In turn, you could consider leaving other assets to your other children.

It's also a good idea to think carefully about who your executor will be. This person will be in charge of administering your estate according to your will, and it can be a complex and time-consuming task. Therefore, it's important to find the right person who is capable of taking on this responsibility.

Agatha Christie left a small estate with a large legacy and heritage
Agatha Christie enjoyed huge global commercial success. According to Saga Magazine, she was making approximately £100,000 a year in the late 1950s, the equivalent of about £3 million today. But at the time of her death in 1976, her estate was worth a modest £106,683 thanks to prudent tax and estate planning. The Bank of England's (BoE) inflation calculator estimates this as being worth approximately £746,352 today; clearly not a large estate for someone with such high earning power.

Get in touch
Agatha Christie has given us some enduring stories. The story of how she was ahead of her time in her financial shrewdness is one of them. If you'd like to talk to us about your financial planning, wealth structure, or estate planning, we're always happy to help. Please email us at info@harperlees.co.uk or call 01277 350560 to find out more.

Please note
This article is for general information only and does not constitute advice. The information is aimed at individuals only. All information is correct at the time of writing and is subject to change in the future. The Financial Conduct Authority does not regulate estate planning or tax planning.

Crossword 1 SA Solution – Robert Burrows

	1 J	O	H	A	N	2 N	E	S	3 B	4 U	5 R	G
6 S						U			7 A	T	E	
8 T	9 B	10 A	R		11 A	R	T	I	S	A	N	
12 A	I	D				S			13 T	H	O	14 U
15 T	R	A	16 N	S	F	E	R		I			P
17 U	R	G	E			D			N			S
S		18 E	C	H	O		19 S	P	A	20 R		Y
Q			E			21 A			22 D	E	23 A	D
U			S		24 P	R	E	T	O	R	I	A
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32 E	N	C	Y	C	L	O	P	E	D	I	A	

Braintree District Council

MEDIA RELEASE

Braintree District Council Leader on Operation Vanguard:
'Braintree is dealing with the issues and coming back together'

Responding to Essex County Council launching private security patrols yesterday (September 14) in Braintree town centre as part of Operation Vanguard, Cllr Tom Cunningham, Leader of Braintree District Council, said:

"Braintree is a safe place to live, work and visit, and it is important that any action affecting our town centre is based on evidence, properly planned and developed with the partners already working together locally.

"We remain firmly opposed to the use of Wethersfield as an asylum accommodation centre. The site is unsuitable, it should not have been imposed on our district, and it should close as soon as possible.

"We are also lobbying the Home Office to stop the trips to Braintree, Colchester and Chelmsford.

"But while the site remains open, the response must be careful, proportionate and evidence-led. The available information does not support any suggestion that Braintree town centre is unsafe or that a separate private security presence has been requested or justified by local partners.

"Town centre crime is lower than it was three years ago, police have their own dedicated Wethersfield funding, and crime linked to the site has been described as 'very low'. There is also already significant day-to-day partnership work taking place between the council, Essex Police, the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner and other agencies to keep Braintree safe.

"This proposal has been developed too quickly, without any consultation with the organisations already responsible for community safety locally.

"In a sensitive situation, what is needed is cooperation, clear evidence and calm leadership — not action that risks increasing concern or reinforcing inaccurate perceptions about Braintree.

"We have asked Essex County Council for urgent clarification on the evidence base for this decision, the role of the security provider, how the scheme will work alongside Essex Police, and how risks around community cohesion will be managed.

"It has been a difficult time for Braintree town centre, and other town centres too. Perception matters and we want to do all we can to support the town, our fellow residents and our retailers to ensure the town bounces back better and we all come together as a wider Braintree community.

"Braintree's residents, businesses and visitors deserve practical action that helps people feel safe and is rooted in facts. We will continue to work constructively with all partners, but Braintree's voice must be central to decisions affecting our town and district."



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