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FEBRUARY 2023
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A very happy belated New Year to you all from everyone at Honiton & Village News.

It always seems that the new year starts very slowly - but looking at the pages of What's On this month, it would appear that people across our area are very, very busy - please have a good look at what is on and try to support our local venues and community groups.

We are coming to the end of our year of having Lottery funding and have been reviewing how we have put it to best use.

The funding was given to us to help the community recover post-Covid by supporting our advertisers and also our local groups. This has enabled us to keep our advertising costs stable for everyone and also to subsidise thirty-three local charity and community group events as well as helping the local hospitality sector get back on its feet by helping with advertising costs.

We at H&VN have always been proud to be at the centre of our community and are glad to have been able to put this funding to such good use for Honiton and the surrounding villages.

We aim to continue as much as we can to be at the heart of this part of East Devon and celebrate its many achievements - thank you for your support.



Please note that copy date is 16th of the month preceding publication

honitonsvillagenews@gmail.com
www.honitonsvillagenews.co.uk



Honiton & Village News is a monthly magazine produced free of charge for the people of Honiton and surrounding villages by a team of volunteers:

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Where Can I Pick Up My Copy Of H&VN?

Awliscombe-The Honiton Inn

Broadhembury- Post Office and Store - Drewe Arms

Buckerell- via Splatthayes -Telephone Box

Churchinford-The York Inn -The Community Shop

Combe Raleigh- Village Hall Telephone Box

Dalwood- Community Shop

Dunkeswell- Highfield Stores - Highfield Garage - Connetts Farm

Feniton- Spar Shop - Envious Creative Hair - Feniton Hair Stylists

Gittisham- Bus Stop - Combe Farm Shop - Combe Garden Centre

Honiton New Street - House of Hair - The Dental Surgery - Honiton Library - TRIP

Honiton Heathpark Industrial Estate- Army Surplus Depot

Honiton Lace Walk- Co-op - Joe Gilson Mobility Stall

Honiton High Street - Stitched-up! - Coffee #1 - Little Shop of Seasons - Alan Rowe - St Paul's Church - Allhallows Museum - Wine World - RKL - Pearl Nails - 4 You from Me - Shades - Park Life - Bits & Bobs - Hybrid Gallery

Honiton- Tesco Stores - The Beehive - Thelma Hulbert Gallery - Hillside Garage (King Street)

Offwell- Windmill Garage - The White Hart

Payhembury- Community Shop - Sawmill

Plymtree- Community Shop

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Stockland- King's Arms - Telephone Box

Talaton- Community Shop

Upton- Sidmouth Arms

Upton- delivered ex Payhembury

Weston- Heron Farm Shop

Yarcombe- Village Hall

Looking for a new challenge for 2023?

We have volunteering opportunities at Honiton & Village News

Over the past four years we have developed a local-based, popular monthly magazine that is distributed to approximately 5,000 people in Honiton and the surrounding villages with an estimated readership in excess of 7,500.

We are now at the point where, in order to continue to progress, we need to widen our volunteer base. Could this be of interest to you?

What are we looking for?

Help with putting the magazine together

Ever fancied working in the media? Would you like to help put together the stories and other content of the magazine, working with the Editor? You would need to have access to your own computer, be happy to learn new software and have a good standard of written English. You would be involved in finding new stories, writing them up and also helping with some editing of copy.

Help maintain our high quality of photo content

Do you enjoy taking photographs? Would you like to help attending events to take photos for H&VN, working with the Photo Editor? You would only be asked to attend local events and always subject to your availability.

Help develop new advertising opportunities and support our current advertisers

Do you enjoy working with people and helping them develop their marketing? Many of our advertisers are very loyal to us and we like to build a relationship with them. We are also always looking for new advertisers who would benefit from being able to access local people.

Help support the team by taking on the day to day financial records and invoicing

We are fortunate in being a viable community interest company. Do you have the skills to take this task off one of our current volunteers who is overburdened. You would be working with the Editor and the Finance Officer, both of whom are involved in financial reporting, annual accounts and legal reporting to Companies House. Do you have good skills in finance that could be of help to us?

All positions are voluntary (as are all positions at H&VN) but we are able to offer repayment of expenses.

We really need you - please get in touch.

Contact honitovillagenews@gmail.com outlining your interest and skills and we will get back to you.



**HONITON
& VILLAGE NEWS**



Nature Notes

by Vernon Whitlock

It's Only February!



After a dull and soggy January when nothing much happens in the garden, I look forward to February when life seems to start all over again. Actually it's not been that dull as the birds have been tucking in at our feeders which we keep well stocked with sunflower hearts.

We have a party of about 30 Goldfinches who seem to have made our garden their home, whilst regularly popping into neighbour's gardens for a bit of variety. They are joined by Chaffinches, Greenfinches and a Grey Wagtail, which over the winter months has become less skittish. A pair of Blackbirds feed on meal worms and make the most of the pond for a daily bath. Our Robin is continuing to sing and there are occasional visits from Wrens, Dunnocks and Siskins. Despite all this avian activity, for me the real excitement comes with the arrival of amphibians and insects.



Early February marks the start of the season for the frogs in our pond, numbers varying yearly from around 20 to over 30. They gather for the annual fight over mates and the producing of spawn that in some years seems to almost fill the pond. The amount of spawn varies from year to year and, depending on the number of tadpoles that survive the predations of other occupants, the emerging young frogs will return after two years to start the process all over again.

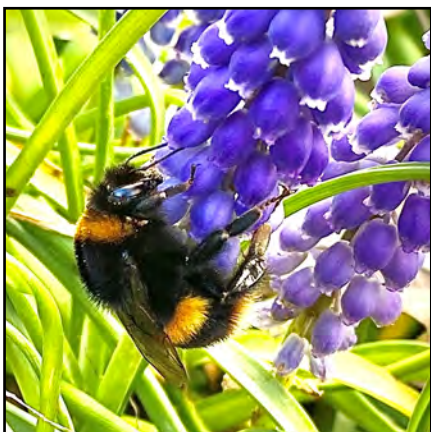
February also marks the return of the smooth newts. On damp mild nights, silent and unseen, the invasion begins. Waking up from their winter hibernation in the compost heap or the pile of logs in the quiet corner of the garden, they begin the journey back to the pond to breed and to tuck into the almost endless supply of frogspawn. If the temperature is right they may also start breeding. Before they get down to business male smooth newts undergo a dramatic change of appearance. During the autumn and winter their appearance is dull and unremarkable but when they return to the pond to breed, male newts have the look of tiny dragons. Jagged crests appear along the length of their body and tail and their underbelly develops a blushing orange colour.



Smart in their new appearance and ready for their courtship display, the males vibrate their tails from side to side slapping them against their body in a display that would put many birds to shame. If the female is ready she allows him to deposit a packet of sperm which she absorbs into her body before laying 200 to 300 eggs which hatch out two weeks later.

While it is all action in the pond, in the rest of the garden other life is beginning to emerge.

Queen Buff Tailed Bumblebees, having hibernated over winter in grass banks or behind the bark on trees, are amongst the first of the year's insects to appear. Having mated at the end of last summer, you can watch them flying close to the ground in the garden and wider countryside looking for suitable nest sites. Old mouse nests are favourite and, after building up a stock of pollen from early flowering plants or trees, the queen will build a nest and remain there for the rest of her days, laying eggs and producing the next generation.



My garden contains masses of early flowering Grape Hyacinths, which I cannot remember planting but which seem to expand every year. It's these early flowers which provide the early pollen source for the bees and the other early emerging February insects, the hoverflies. In particular the drone fly '*Eristalis pertinax*'. Although resembling (and often confused with) the honeybee, they have no sting and are solitary insects laying eggs in compost heaps, corners of ponds and other damp places where they hatch into 'rat tailed maggots' before emerging in February.

My notes would not be complete without mentioning my favourites, the many spiders which having survived winter can be seen at night erecting and strengthening their webs to make the most of emerging bumblebees, hoverflies and any other insects that might fly by and provide a tasty meal.

All this excitement and it's only February!



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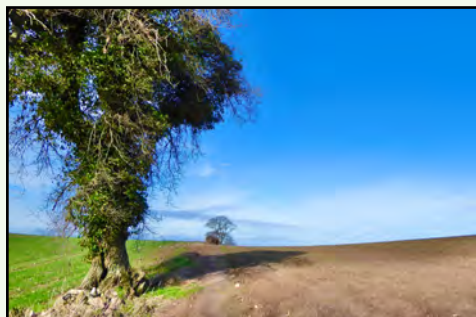
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The Harpford and Fire Beacon Hill Circuit.

by Chris Harwood

Map OS Explorer 115 – Exmouth & Sidmouth. 1:25000.

7 miles Great wooded track walking. Some quite steep but short sections on good tracks. A couple of long, long wonderful sunken green lanes, riverside, open heath and excellent panoramic views. A wonderful start to 2023.



Start at the now dis-used re-cycling depot, (GR 104908) on the right just before the Bowd Inn on the Ottery St Mary to Sidmouth Road, parking in the small area either

at what was the entrance or exit of the depot. Take the wooden steps down into the woods and follow, bearing right, the well-defined track through the woods. In the season these woods are full of bluebells and anemones with a wealth of wildlife but autumn has its own attraction. After about 300 yds take the footpath off to the right by a small marker post. Pass through the wooden gate and bear left along the field edge. Listen for donkeys! You are close to Donkey Sanctuary land. Follow the headland between two open fields and look at the most incredible panoramic views. Move down to the corner where you pass through a small wooden gate into the most wonderful grassy lane. The marker post is recumbent, but the lane is clear.

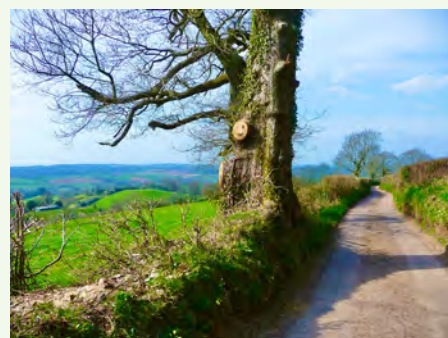
On and on and on it goes with, in the season, a never-ending wealth of flowers, ferns, hedgerows and.....very soon pass over the brick bridge that crosses the old railway line. Looking down, the old line now provides a wonderful walking track. Carry on down your track, merging into a surfaced lane. Ignore the path off left to the Bowd and carry on, meeting the road into Harpford. Left and then right around the church. Onwards, and follow the footpath to the right and then, via an old wooden kissing gate and bridge, cross over the River Otter. Sand Martins often visible. Right and follow the riverbank all the way to meet the road into Tipton St John. Wonderful river, pussy willow, alder, Magic.

At the road, right into Tipton - maybe stopping at the Golden Lion - and pass through the village, climbing slowly to meet the main road at Coombe Cross. Right here and cross carefully to take the footpath in about 100 paces down to the left. Carefully down the wooden steps and follow the somewhat sluggish (not in winter!) stream up through the woods to a wooden stile. Straight on following the trees on your left to another stile. Left at the two-way marker post and follow the markers past the farm buildings on your left to take the wide track up beside the still sluggish brook. Eventually you cross a minor rivulet coming in from the right whilst the main sluggish stream

ambles off to the left. Proceed up the wide steep but very beautiful rocky lane. This finally meets a wider access track at a signpost where you move straight ahead uphill to meet the road. Take a moment to look back at the views. Magic - and it doesn't cost a penny.

Right along the road - beware of traffic. Going some distance, ignore first and second footpath signs off to the left but soon, after the sign to the right, there is soon another sign off to the left - take this. It starts on a well-defined track uphill, past old beech trees and with a good flinty surface. The track swings right on to a good path to soon meet a number of other tracks at a sort of junction - see sign naming Fire Beacon Hill and the Nature Reserve Information board. Follow the pink arrowed track diagonally back left uphill and near the top beside a magnificent old beech follow the arrow right. Keep moving straight ahead to emerge suddenly on open heath. Wow! Just look at the view out to sea and of Sidmouth. Move along the flat top and, where indicated by a Public Footpath sign, move right along a wide grassy trail with the sea at about 2 o'clock. Note the trig point off to your right (there is now a worn path to it) - worth a look but return to your track - and proceed to where open heath gives way to woods. Follow the signs, passing a couple of small Woodland Trust posts and very soon you hit a wide stony track. Move right on this, dropping fairly steeply to meet the metalled road.

Go down the road and take the second - NOT the first - footpath off to the right. This drops diagonally left down to the left hand corner of the field and a marker post beside a mucky dribble! Over a very rough wooden plank bridge and straight ahead over a stile. Left down a narrow leafy track then almost immediately right over a wooden stile to your right, Follow the fence toward the house/ farm, through a metal gate and passing the farm buildings out on to the private road. Follow this down to meet the public road on a bend and continue downhill to the main road. Turn right and wander back to your vehicle at the start. Take extreme care on this bit up the road - it is narrow and bendy with traffic giving little quarter. Shame that such a great walk ends on a main road!



Chris, who lives in Talaton, has been a keen walker and mountaineer all his life, enjoying hikes throughout the UK and abroad. He has written 3 books describing the scenic wonders of East Devon, the Tale Valley and beyond. His informal and approachable style encourages all to get out and explore. "Great Walks in East Devon", "More Great Walks in East Devon" and "Great Walks around Ottery St Mary" are on sale at Talaton's Community Shop, Whimble Stores and the Curious Otter Bookshop in Ottery St Mary.

Naughty Bertie Shows His Face



Hello! My name is Bertie and as a young Working Cocker Spaniel I am one very lucky pooch. I live in a beautiful valley near Honiton, and Hembury Fort is my castle.

Oh my waggy tail what a time of ups and downs it has been at Bertie HQ. The whole human family came to stay along with Maisie my first girlfriend and Jazzy, who is very sweet but a rather nervous hound. Poor thing did not have a very good start in life. She was adopted from a rescue centre aged 5 without having learned any of the basic doggie training tricks. Apparently I am very good for Jazzy as, although she is wary of other dogs, my fun loving non-aggressive approach to life gives her confidence and I have been teaching her how to play.

We have enjoyed some lovely games of chase around the garden and when we are out I show her how to enjoy splashing around in muddy puddles and skittering through piles of crunchy leaves. Sometimes I am accused (unfairly in my opinion) of introducing her to bad habits like running as fast as we can around the house leaping off and on furniture and skidding along on the rugs - what is wrong with that I ask?

Then all of a sudden everyone returns to their own lives leaving me and my two fur-less friends to try and get back into our usual routines. This would normally be okay but both humans went down with some nasty virus and did not have the energy to blow the skin off of a rice pudding. For once I was not being put front and centre in our daily world and had to amuse myself a lot of the time. Don't get me wrong - my basic needs were catered for, meals still arrived (even if not always at quite the right time) and I could hear the negotiating about who was feeling worst that particular day, meaning it was the other unlucky soul who had to drag themselves out for quite frankly a rather miserable and shortened and usually cold, wet walk.

Spirits were definitely at a very low ebb and for a young active dog a certain element of boredom crept in. I found myself giving in to the "naughty dog" side of me to make my own fun.

Every day I would empty out all the toys from my basket (over 20 at last count) and spread them through the house. This left evidence of my unattended prowlings, with toys being found under beds, on the stairs and even worse on window ledges.

Boxes of tissues became fair game as it is super fun to pull them out one by one and shred them to bits and then scatter them all around the room.

Then there was the mystery of the missing biscuits; each human claimed not to have eaten them from the plate on the coffee table; my lips are sealed on that one, there may be crumbs in my whiskers but I know nothing.

My worst act of mischievousness was only discovered several days later when the female human could be heard screeching "naughty Bertie" for all the valley to hear. On popping into the spare bedroom she had found large muddy paw prints all over both freshly laundered and neatly made up beds. meaning a total stripping and re-washing was required. I could not get out of that one so it was definitely the naughty doggy step for me that day.

I am pleased to report life is poochalicious again now, the humans are back to normal, "good Bertie" is in charge and all is well with the world.

Did You Know?

At Beer Quarry Caves in the medieval period (following successful quarrying by the Romans, Saxons and Normans) quarrymen were expected to produce a four ton block of stone daily, working by candlelight. Each man was allowed just 5 candles per day, and they had to purchase the candles themselves.

At the end of each day's work the stone block would be struck with a tap-stone hammer. If it made a satisfying clear sound, the stone was passed as good and the quarryman would get paid.

If the stone gave a dull thud when tapped, it indicated there was a crack and the quarryman would not be paid.

So a man could work all day in almost total darkness, not only not getting paid but also out of pocket due to the price of his candles.

This gave rise to the saying that something is "not worth a candle".

A View From The Hills

by Miranda Gudenian

As I reached the top of the lane the full force of the gale hit me, a howling banshee. Rain spat in my eyes and stung my face. I took cover under the beech tree beside the gate to the adjacent field where sheep huddled in the shelter of the hedge, fleeces dripping. A crow, feathers askew, battled to land in the topmost branches of one of the trees in the fir plantation only to be lifted into the sky again by the force of the wind, like a light aircraft in a storm.

Below me the Yarty valley dropped away in the fading gloom of the winter afternoon; a landscape not much altered since the time when Thomas Hardy's ill-starred hero, Jude Fawley - the stonemason who dreams of becoming a scholar - contemplated the 'sad wet seasons' of his own upland world.

Feeble in the face of the storm, I retreated homeward. Indoors, with the curtains closed over rain-smeared windows and soup simmering on the Aga, I rifled through the box on the kitchen counter, repository of dozens of bits and pieces - archaeological artifacts sounds embarrassingly pompous but I suppose that is what they are - that I've dug up from the garden over the years. I've been meaning to sort through them but have never got round to it until now. From fragments of pre-Roman pottery to a plastic toy rifle made in Hong Kong, they open a secret door to the life of this piece of land that is my garden, to the life of this house.

I picked out a white-glazed sherd, once part of a remedy bottle. A 'cure for gout and rheumatism' proclaim the words painted in black capitals around the side, the potion proudly 'manufactured by the profriotor'. I hope it eased the aching joints of my Georgian predecessor when he or she, chamberstick in hand, climbed the winding stair to a damp bedroom under the thatch and winter fog wetly wrapped the hillside.

It was then that I became aware of a tap-tapping on the window. For a fleeting moment it seemed as if the fragment of bottle might have conjured up the ghost of that rheumatically soul, perhaps returning to the old homestead on this wild Blackdowns night in the hope of a seat by the Aga! Such neatly timed melodrama emanated from no more than a loose rose stem but, with the storm in full 'Blow, blow thou winter wind' mode, it was just the sort of night for hauntings.

Now, do not be too quick to laugh. A down-to-earth friend of mine told me that, in a field near Luppitt recently, while shutting up hens for the night, he heard the tramping of a regiment of feet and thin voices coming out of the darkness. He did not jest. He expressed no surprise. After all, he told me, we live in Monmouth country.



These remote hills made perfect hiding places for the doomed men of the Duke of Monmouth's army fleeing the King's wrath after the battle of Sedgemoor. Farmers and labourers, devoutly Protestant, they had foregathered at places like Lyme and Colyton and Luppitt, with hearts afire and banners and hope flying high. Most carried a so-called 'desperat wepon' fashioned from a ubiquitous agricultural implement, an adapted scythe lashed to a sapling haft.

Following defeat at Sedgemoor, the rebels scattered across the West Country. Hundreds were captured, tried by Judge Jeffreys in a series of Bloody Assizes and handed the treason sentence: to be hanged until nearly dead, then drawn, quartered and tarred. One of these unfortunates was Edmond Warren, baptized in my village of Yarcombe. Others were delivered a lesser fate, transportation as indentured convicts - slaves, in common parlance - chained in the hold of West Indies-bound ships such as the *Indeavour* and, irony of ironies, the *Happy Return*.

Of the several hundred who scrambled to bolt holes deep in our tangled lanes, many were hunted out by King James' soldiers and either shot on sight or strung up on rudimentary gallows. Their lost souls are said to wander these hills, endlessly seeking their way home.

Which brings me to those who did survive the carnage and to the so-named 'sword' discovered in the thatched roof of my house during alterations in the mid-1970s. From the description given to me by local people who had seen it I suspect it was a 'desperat wepon'. Yarcombe men Clement Bovett, Henry Brain, Richard Somerhays and John Newberry, four of Monmouth's rebels, managed to hide out until King James was deposed and they could return to the village and live out their lives. They rest in the churchyard, these men, one of them possibly having dwelt in my house.

And then my reverie is broken by the pinging of the kitchen timer. Supper ready, the past fades away and it's time for hot soup and the 6 o'clock news.

Shockwave Therapy

by Jonathan Boxall (Registered Osteopath & Shockwave Technician)



Shockwave therapy is a safe, effective treatment that speeds healing of tendon and ligament injury. Osteo and Physio is pleased to now offer shockwave therapy from our clinic in Honiton, but what is shockwave and how can it help?

Shockwave therapy is an innovative, non-invasive treatment that uses acoustic waves to help the body heal quickly from tendon and ligament injuries. The main benefits are pain relief and restoration of function to an injured area. The use of shockwave therapy for tendon issues is well supported by the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE). Randomised, double-blinded clinical trials support the use of shockwave therapy for injuries including;

- **Tennis and golfer's elbow:** These stubborn elbow conditions which usually arises from repetitive movements can lead to significant implications for work and quality of life. A course of shockwave therapy has been shown to be up to 75% effective at completely treating these conditions.

- **Plantar fasciitis:** Recent studies have shown that a course of 3 or 4 shockwave treatments completely treats this debilitating and painful condition up to 88% of the time.

- **Patellar tendinopathy:** 60-90% of patients with a painful patella tendinopathy reported a full recovery after a short course of shockwave therapy.

Other conditions that shockwave can treat include: • Achilles tendinopathy • Myofascial pain • Golfer's elbow • Biceps tendinopathy • Shoulder rotator cuff injury • Shin splints • Hip bursitis • Muscle tears and strains

How does shockwave therapy work? Shockwave machines deliver acoustic waves into the target area down to a pre-specified depth. The interaction these waves have with the tissues stimulates tissue repair, reduced pain and increased mobility. These benefits are down to three key changes caused by the therapy **(1) Formation of new blood vessels:** One reason tendon issues can take so long to recover is the poor blood supply to the area. Shockwave therapy creates microruptures in the capillaries leading to the creation of new vessels. This allows the body to better introduce the nutrients required for repair; **(2) Stimulation of Collagen Production:** Collagen forms the building blocks of connective tissues such as ligaments and tendons. In order for these tissues to effectively repair, new collagen needs to be created. Shockwave therapy accelerates the production of Collagen. **(3) Reduction of Chronic Inflammation:** Chronic, long-term inflammation is one of the key factors behind the long recovery times and high levels of pain associated with tendon issues. Shockwave therapy works to increase mast cell activity in and around the affected area, essentially speeding up the inflammatory process, so that you get better quicker.

What can I expect at a shockwave therapy appointment? Our therapists use the highest standard of shockwave machines available. Treatments are administered by fully trained and insured musculoskeletal experts. Shockwave appointments last around 20 minutes although the actual therapy can be over in just 5 minutes in some cases. During your appointment, your

therapist will likely provide additional treatment such as gentle soft tissue massage and joint mobilization. You'll also be given specific and tailored rehabilitation exercises and advice. Visit Osteoandphysio.co.uk to book your free 20 minute shockwave assessment at our Honiton clinic to see if shockwave therapy might be suitable for you.



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Plants Vs A Week-Long Freeze

by Andrea Rye, Combe Garden Centre



Skimmia



Nandina

After a summer of exceptional heat, we have had a December of exceptional frost at Combe Garden Centre. While overall the winter has been very mild, the frost that we had in December was unusual in that we have not seen such a deep, prolonged frost since the garden centre opened. As the plants were frozen solid for over a week, the freeze revealed which species are most likely to shrug off extreme temperatures, which may become a recurring problem in future due to climate change, and which species you can plant knowing that even a horrid winter won't ruin them. Here are some of the losers and winners of this winter.

The Losers

The bedding primroses and polyanthus hated being frozen for a week and, despite surviving after thawing out, suffered enough damage to look awful, with many developing rot at the base of the plant. The ones in your garden will grow back given enough time and free draining soil but will not return to their former beauty for some time.

Our daphnes have made it through the cold but are looking decidedly depressed and floppy. Daphnes are native to China and quite hardy but prefer a sheltered position away from harsh winds. Those plants that we kept in the under-cover area fared much better than those left outside on benches. To enjoy this scented beauty, plant your daphnes in protected areas with good drainage. Daphnes do not like their roots being disturbed so moving them is problematic; either attempt this retaining as much of the root system intact as possible (and using plenty of mycorrhizal fungus) or mulch generously in autumn and spring to protect the roots.

Cordylines are tenacious plants, which is just as well as almost all our cordylines have suffered from the cold. Their tops have flopped and the smallest plants may not recover. If you have poorly looking cordylines that look like they have succumbed don't give up all hope just yet. These plants have a tendency to rejuvenate from lower down on their stems and will start showing new growth there in a month or so.

Camellias are another evergreen that enjoy a sheltered spot and those at the garden centre shed not only their emerging flower buds, but also many of their leaves in protest this December. They may look unsightly but will probably recover just fine over the spring. Help them out by planting new ones where they will escape winter wind and give them a nice mulch in autumn and again in spring after the soil warms up a little.

The Winners

While the vast majority of the herbaceous perennials at the garden centre died back completely, the harsh temperatures have not hindered their new growth, which is already apparent in many of the pots. The herbaceous peonies have healthy red buds peeking out of the soil, veronicas have shy green growth at their bases, the hollyhock leaves still look completely perfect and even the agastache is still in leaf as normal. The perennials that prefer drier soils and can survive longer periods being frozen solid are worth noting as future contenders for your beds if the trend of extreme heat in summer and cold flashes in winter continue.

Of the climbers at the garden centre, we have been surprised by some of the species that have come through December with only some leaf drop. The passion flowers, especially the white forms, are bouncing back fast. There is new leaf growth showing on our sollyas and honeysuckles, especially the japonica and periclymenum types. While the leaf drop on the dregeas is worrying, as they are supposed to be evergreen, some signs of regrowth is already visible; this is a Chinese climber with white and pink waxy, scented flowers. Also, our Jasminum Starry Starry Summer Scent, which is supposed to be extremely fragrant and pink flowering, looks unhappy but far from dead.

Of the evergreen shrubs, the nandina, leucothoe, sarcococca and skimmias appear to have zero ill effects of being frozen for a week. If anything, the leaf colour of the nandinas and leucothoe are even prettier than they were before. Another winter garden favourite, the Winter Jasmine, is looking just as bright and glorious in full flower as it was in autumn. Any of these evergreens should be considered if you live in a frost pocket and had losses this winter.

Lastly, the clear winners of the cold snap are our favourite winter bedding plants, the violas and pansies. For such soft leaved plants, they always amaze us by how hardy they are and how they can effortlessly bounce back from the harshest lack of water or low temperatures when their sturdier looking neighbours wither and shed their leaves. Viva la bedding



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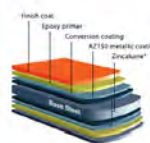
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The Ramblings Of Gertie From Gittisham



My dear readers – Well, I'll tell you, I've never in all my born days seen such a dreary and dismal stretch of weather. It's been nothing but rain, rain and more rain for weeks on end now. If I had a penny for every drop of rain that has fallen, I'd be a very rich woman. Instead of which, I am 'mithering' around aware of greater problems as the rain seems to find a way to seep into every crevice and corner of my little cottage. I've got leaks in the roof that I never knew existed, and the

damp is creeping into my bones like nobody's business. I feel like I am living in a swamp.

And don't even get me started on the mud. Trudging through that thick clay soil, hearing and feeling the squelch and suck, I've never experienced anything like it, although when the pheasant shoot is happening and gunshots are all around me, I sometimes think this must be, in some way, a pale imitation of life in the trenches. In 1916 Edward Thomas penned the lines in his poem aptly titled 'Rain':

Rain, midnight rain, nothing but the wild rain

On this bleak hut, and solitude, and me

Remembering again that I shall die

And neither hear the rain nor give it thanks

For washing me cleaner than I have been

Since I was born into this solitude.

Yes, indeed, solitude/isolation/loneliness . . . call this abject feeling whatever you wish, batters my heart while the elements rage howling and sputtering against the midnight blackness of my window pane. And this rain certainly does not bring cleanliness - the way the mud clings and clogs my boots - no wonder I slipped and fell head first into my neighbour, Doris', cabbage patch and lay there amongst the stumps, wounded and winded and witnessing at eye-level how the poor flowers and vegetables have been drowned and the weeds are taking over. I've spent hours in the driving rain trying to clear gutters, gullies, ditches and drains, but it's like fighting a losing battle. I simply cannot understand this wanton destruction and grey misery.

And there they all are; the Gittisham villagers out and about and all looking like drowned rats, huddled inside unflattering garments with ridiculous hats pulled over ears and foreheads with rivulets of freezing rain blinding their eyes, making out that nothing extraordinary is happening. This is NOT normal weather and Gertie's goat is braying with indignation. If one more well-meaning person says to me, "Oh, it's just a bit of rain, Gertie, you'll get used to it." Well, I won't get used to it and I won't stand for it a moment longer. My bucket of tolerance is full and overflowing and a red-hot self-righteous anger is flooding my being and I am taking matters into my own hands. I'm going to start a petition and demand that something be done about these wretched storms and the never-ending pelting precipitation. Early days, as yet and I am not sure who to address my petition to: God . . . the government . . . Gittisham Parish Council . . . fossil fuel CEOs . . . Zeus - the Greek God of Rain? I really don't know, but what I do know, is that I can't just sit here and let the rain keep falling, not when it's causing me so much personal damage and wretchedness. I implore you dear readers, if you are fed up with this wet weather like I am, come and sign my petition. Let's make our voices heard far and wide and demand that something be done. Together, we can make a difference and put an end to this endless rain.

In the meantime, in my despair recognising I will never feel dry again until this weather abates I have taken up swimming. Yes - conceding defeat against the elements, I now throw myself into the waters with gay abandon, recklessly recognising that if you can't beat the downpour go forth boldly with courage and embrace this most vital of elemental forces . I toyed briefly with the idea of 'wild' swimming at Sidmouth. However, after ruefully acknowledging the towering waves on a particular stormy day, I decided that my varicose veins were very likely to break out with the sheer shock of being exposed to a freezingly cold shingled beach, and that is before I had even managed to throw myself into the enraged ocean. No - I turned my car inland, with my windscreen wipers struggling to cope with the sheer force of the driving wind and rain, the perpetual misty grey skies casting their never-ending gloom and headed for Honiton Swimming Pool. Those beautiful young people - the lifeguards clad in yellow and red, smiled their warm welcome as I nervously ventured forward and cast my totally unprepared body into the turquoise blue depths for a spot of 'tame' swimming. The bright lights shed their tropical sunshine glow and my ample bosom offered up the necessary buoyancy to keep me afloat. Swimming doggedly several widths of the pool, ignoring all others, my worries quickly dispersed and very soon I believed myself to be bobbing around on a beach in Benidorm.





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DINOSAURS ANYONE?

by Kate Baxter



The weather did not look promising for a trip to the beach (our usual weekend staple) but it offered a good opportunity to do something new...

For a year now (ever since our fossil hunting weekend in Charmouth), Emily and Nancy have been fascinated by dinosaurs and archaeology. They've also really enjoyed learning about Mary Anning, an inspiring palaeontologist from Lyme Regis (born 1799).

I'm always extremely pleased when the children talk about something other than princesses and Frozen so, in order to encourage this, we took them on an 'In Search of Mary Anning' weekend in Lyme Regis.

We started in Dinosaur Land, a small but excellent museum tucked away in the backstreets of the town. More than 16,000 items are on display, many of which were found here in the South West. The building is an old chapel and it is where Mary was baptised as a baby and where she attended church each week.

Emily and Nancy loved the museum and marvelled at all the discoveries. To see them all properly you would ideally have a couple of hours, as the collection is extensive. Of particular interest are the platyodon Ichthyosaurs, one of which was discovered in Lyme Regis in 1972. As well as the fossils there are ancient rocks and animal skeletons - including a huge Russian cave bear, which was extremely impressive!

The receptionist (who had very kindly put the children's soaking wet coats on the radiator to dry!) described where to go for the second part of our Mary Anning hunt - her grave!

Off we set...

St Michael the Archangel is located close to the museum with large and well-maintained gardens overlooking the sea. Mary Anning's grave was easy to locate - rather touchingly it had a collection of plastic dinosaurs next to the headstone. Mary was buried with her brother Joseph and his three children. It was lovely to see it so well looked after, and people clearly coming to pay their respects.

Next, the Mary Anning Statue. Despite the ground breaking achievements of Mary Anning, there was not much recognition of her significance in the town. This changed in 2018 when schoolgirl Evie Swire - a keen fossil hunter herself - started a campaign to commemorate Mary's life with a statue.

In May 2022, the result of her efforts was unveiled. Situated above the beach where Mary discovered her famous Ichthyosaur is a large bronze statue of Mary holding a fossil and her trusty chisel. It's a remarkable creation and very much captures the appearance of Mary: one can easily imagine her strolling down to the beach with her bonnet on and small dog at her feet.

Emily and Nancy were thrilled to see the statue, especially learning about how it was an 11-year-old who put it there. It's well worth a visit!

We had planned to visit the Mary Anning fossil shop, but unfortunately it was closed, which gives us a good reason to go back to Lyme.

So, we finished our tour with a lovely meal in a cafe - mainly to escape the driving rain!



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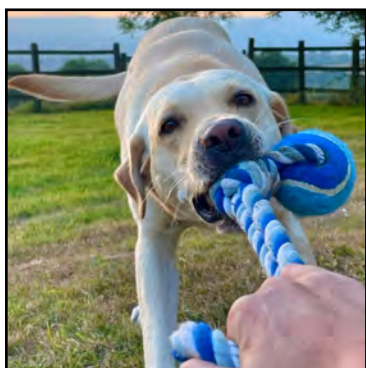
Thinking About Getting A Dog?

Here are 4 myth busters to help you guide your dog

by Jude Davidson

'Dogs are dogs, let them get on with it.' said no quality dog trainer ever! Usually spoken by not very good dogs owners who don't have the skill set or care to see that their dog is causing fear or distress towards other people's dogs. It's an owner's responsibility to teach their dog brilliant recall and teach them to ignore some dogs. After all, good recall is the law. It is not fair that someone else's dog is "having to teach them lesson" - this only encourages someone else's dog to become reactive. So take responsibility for your dogs' actions and teach them some manners. It's all about being respectful at the end of the day.

The dominance theory. Based on old fashioned science that studied a group of unrelated wolves in a captive environment. There are three things wrong already when we're talking about canine behaviour. Firstly, this study was on wolves and not dogs and they are separated by 25,000 years of domestic selective breeding. Secondly

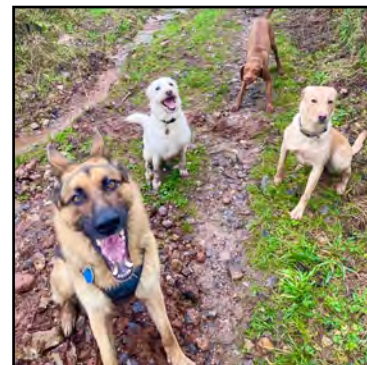


wolves live in family packs. Thirdly wolves behave differently in a captive environment. Even the scientists who conducted the experiments spent years trying to retract the findings after an outcry. By then the general public grabbed it with both hands and people like "the dog whisperer" Caesar Milan pushed it even further into

the minds of ordinary people. Maybe we believe dog training should be like this but we are pushing our social norms on to a totally different species. Ask yourself this one question - do you want a dog that wants to do things for you its whole life because it gets pleasure from it or do you want a dog that will do things for you its whole life driven by fear? On top of that, add in the fact that 98% of reactive behaviour is fear-based then you have a recipe for disaster if you chose the latter. Hire a qualified professional POSITIVE dog trainer, they are worth their weight in gold.

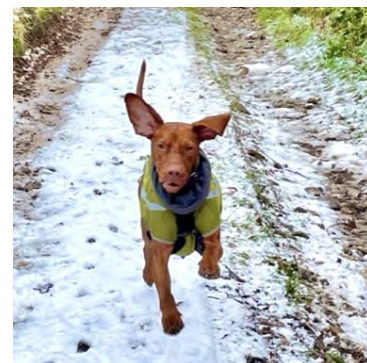
Socialisation. We've all been told it's really important that your dog interacts with other dogs but nobody is being told the best way to do it. Lots of people think letting your puppy run around in the park with lots of other dogs will be great for your dog's socialising. Wrong! It's a sure way to end up with a dog who won't listen to you, gets dog-obsessed and eventually may end up aggressive or fearful of other dogs. The best way to socialise your dog is to pick some well trained easy going dog friends for your dog to walk with and whom your pup can learn from. The whole time you should be playing, interacting and recalling

around other dogs. Your dog should have their focus on you and not every dog that comes into sight. That's how you get a well trained dog when there are other dogs around. Dog play can really hinder your training unless you get in on the action too and train your dog that you, the handler, are a lot more fun. Whilst out on my dog walks, the play and interaction comes from me and not each other; that's how I get ultimate control.



Highly processed. Ok, so it's pretty difficult getting a balanced nutrition diet right for your dog and it's definitely best getting some good guidance if you want to go down the fresh dog food path. Seriously, you can really mess up your dog if you don't feed them the right nutrients. For most people just buying a generic bag of kibble and feeding them that their whole entire lives is quite normal but is it a good thing to do? Well, studies show that dogs are actually dying a lot younger these day and that is mainly due to the fact that 56% of the western world's dogs are overweight plus they are being fed highly processed rubbish food. The easiest and best way to feed your dog decently is by buying a good quality

fresh/raw/kibble complete diet and then adding fresh veggies and meat in with it. Taking a quarter kibble/dog food and replacing with fresh vegetables every other day can dramatically improve your dog's microbiome gut function, reducing the risks of ill health like cancer, sensitivities and even bad behaviours. Also (and this is vital!!) dogs are suppose to be skinny, they shouldn't hold very much weight on them at all and it has been proven. You should be able to feel your dog's ribs all the way down without pressing. It's not funny, cute, or cuddly if your dog is overweight and you are solely responsible for any ill health that happens as a result. One of the fundamental principles of animal care is to be able to manage an animal's weight and nutrition needs skilfully and sadly I don't see that happening enough these days. I have various blogs on my website if you want to know more plus a comprehensive list of foods your dog can and cannot eat.



Jude Davidson is an award winning dog walker and cat sitter who also loves writing dog blogs. She lives in Honiton with her cat Lunar and her dog Elsa and is the owner of Park Life Honiton which she started 7 years ago.

Jude has honed her walks into activities-based wilderness trails, designed for gun dogs to improve their focus, socialisation, general health and happiness in the beautiful Blackdown Hills. She provides top tip videos, lovely photography, stories and information to her customers so they can be part of the fun too.

To join the Park Life Wilderness Club or for more information 07427500766 or parklifehoniton@gmail.com



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friendly february

Just now, we are all struggling to make ends meet, but we're not alone. During February let's chat more to our neighbours & friends & give someone a bit more time to listen.

friendly february at the **Library** on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday & Saturday mornings; free tea, coffee and cup-a-soup. **3rd March ECOE - free energy advice clinic 10-12**

friendly february at **The Beehive Café**: free teas, coffees and more plus games and puzzles. Tuesday Afternoons 1pm - 5pm

friendly february at **Honiton Family Church** offering a warm welcome on Friday mornings 10-12 with free teas, coffee. **3rd February ECOE - free energy advice clinic.** Lloyds Bank are offering financial help to any group [e.g. mother & toddlers or pensioner groups]

friendly february at **The CUB** [at the bottom of School Lane] every Thursday from 1-5pm, free tea, coffee and warm company. **16th February ECOE - free energy advice clinic 1-3pm.**

friendly february at **Dunning Court Community Centre** 10-4pm.

friendly february at **St Paul's Church** Tuesday & Saturday mornings.

friendly february **Yellow Deli** is open every night [Monday - Thursday] sit in the warmth and have a coffee and chat.



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IF YOU KNOW SOMEONE WHO NEEDS HELP WITH FOOD PLEASE DIRECT THEM TO FOODSAVE HONITON <https://honitonfoodsave.org.uk>.

PROJECT FOOD <https://www.project-food.org.uk>.

HONITON FOODBANK at Community Church

CLOTHES SWAP SHOP: next Swap Shop is 4th February at Honiton College

What's On - February At The Beehive



We begin February with a fabulous **'Get-Together with Mama Tokus'** on Friday, 3 Feb 7.30pm. This show is a joyful collective experience, where YOU get to join in with the band. Enjoy uplifting gospel, soul, blues and funk numbers with the lyrics beamed up in front. A previous participant proclaimed, "We need this in our lives!" It went down a storm in Ashburton, and we can't wait to experience it here in Honiton.

India Sweets and Spices (12A) is our film on Saturday 4th February at 7.30pm. From the producers of Crazy Rich Asians, this is a charming coming-of-age family

comedy-drama which is sure to entertain.

On Friday 10th, Paul Mescal, from TV drama Normal People, stars in **Aftersun (12A)**. The film explores the dynamic between a father and his 13-year-old daughter on a summer holiday spent together in the early 2000s. "Told via a framing device that sees adult Sophie look back at camcorder footage shot during the holiday, it's a beautifully made film that mixes nostalgia with melancholia."

Everybody is looking forward to our February half-term musical by our resident Honiton Community Theatre Company. **The Addams Family** is a fabulous, whacky musical comedy with toe-tapping numbers, plenty of laughs and glorious, larger-than-life characters. Performances are 14th-18th February at 7pm and a 2pm Saturday matinee. Good luck to all involved.

The Royal Opera Cinema season continues with **The Barber of Seville (12A)** on Sunday 19th February at 2pm. Sung in Italian with English subtitles, Rossini's comic opera is packed with fun and mischief. Expect heart-melting serenades, ridiculous disguises and a fairytale ending waiting just out of reach.

It's the **Beehive Acoustic Night** hosted by Terry Stacey on Wednesday 22nd and on Thursday 23rd at 2pm, it's our dementia-friendly (and subtitled) Nostalgic Cinema, **'Now, Voyager'** which stars Bette Davis.

Did you study Othello at school? National Theatre Live brings us an extraordinary new production of Shakespeare's most enduring tragedy, **Othello (12A)** on Thursday 23rd February at 7pm. Filmed live on stage, the cast includes Giles Terera, Rosy McEwan and Paul Hilton.

Finally, on Friday 24th February we are having a **Beehive Open Day** to showcase the activities and opportunities available here. It takes place between 2pm and 8pm so please come at a time which suits you and see what's on offer.

Check out the website www.beehivehoniton.co.uk, pick up a flyer, sign up for the monthly email newsletter, and most of all, enjoy your community venue!

Jemma and the Beehive team.

Honiton's Community & Arts Venue	
the beehive	FEBRUARY 2023 EVENTS
THE GET-TOGETHER WITH MAMA TOKUS Fri 3 Feb 7.30pm £14 A joyful, collective experience where YOU get to join in with the band. Uplifting gospel, soul & funk with lyrics beamed up in front.	
INDIA SWEETS AND SPICES (12A) Sat 4 Feb 7.30pm Adult £7.50, U16 £6.50 A colourful romantic comedy-drama from the producers of Crazy Rich Asians with a strong sense of both fun and feminism.	
AFTERSUN (12A) Fri 10 Feb 7.30pm Adult £7.50, U16 £6.50 Paul Mescal stars as idealistic father Calum, whose holiday with his daughter triggers bittersweet memories 20 years later.	
THE ADDAMS FAMILY 14-18 Feb 7pm + 2pm Sat matinee. Adult £15, U16 £12 Hilarious family musical presented by Honiton Community Theatre Company.	
THE ROYAL OPERA: THE BARBER OF SEVILLE Sun 19 Feb 2pm Adult £17, Student £11 (cinema) With vocal fireworks, scheming lovers and one very busy barber, Rossini's comic opera is packed with fun & mischief.	
BEEHIVE ACOUSTIC NIGHT Wed 22 Feb 7.30pm NOSTALGIC CINEMA: NOW, VOYAGER (PG) Thu 23 Feb 2pm £4.50 includes hot drink & biscuits 1942 drama/romance. A subtitled, dementia-friendly screening.	
THE BEEHIVE • Dowell Street • Honiton • EX14 1LZ Box Office: 01404 384050 www.beehivehoniton.co.uk Charity 1162412	

Honiton's Community & Arts Venue	
the beehive	FEB & MARCH 2023 EVENTS
NATIONAL THEATRE LIVE: OTHELLO (12A) Thu 23 Feb 7pm £16, Student £13 An extraordinary new production of William Shakespeare's most enduring tragedy, directed by Clint Dyer.	
THE BEEHIVE OPEN DAY Fri 24 Feb 2pm - 8pm. Free entry. Showcasing the activities and opportunities at the Beehive. Drop in and see what's on offer.	
A MAN CALLED OTTO (15) Fri 3 March 7.30pm Adult £7.50, U16 £6.50 The story of Otto Anderson (Tom Hanks), a grumpy widower who is very set in his ways. A funny, heartwarming story.	
PETER KNIGHT'S GIGSPANNER BIG BAND Sat 4 March 7.30pm £26 A unique force in British folk music. Steeleye Span fiddle player Peter Knight with Sacha Trochet, Roger Flack, Bellowhead's John Spiers and Edgelarks Phillip Henry & Hannah Martin.	
Sat 11 Mar EMPIRE OF LIGHT (15) Wed 15 Mar THE BEEHIVE FOLK CAFE Fri 17 Mar THE ELTON JOHN SHOW Sat 18 Mar THE BANSHEES OF INISHERIN (15) Thu 23 Mar ROYAL OPERA HOUSE: TURANDOT (12A) Sat 25 Mar TILL (12A) Thu 30 Mar NOSTALGIC: JESUS CHRIST SUPERSTAR (PG)(ST) Thu 30 Mar NATIONAL THEATRE LIVE: LIFE OF PI (PG) Fri 31 Mar WOMEN TALKING (15)	
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THE BEEHIVE CAFE NOW OPEN!
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 Saturday 9.30-1pm
 Bar open 1 hour before events

What's On



Fiddlesticks Knit and Natter

If you enjoy knitting or sewing, and fancy meeting up with others of like minds for tea, coffee, cake and a good natter there is a local group just for you.

'Fiddlesticks Knit and Natter' is Honiton based and meets up weekly to share interests in knitting, crochet, embroidery and patchwork. Established 15 years ago, this popular group meets on Thursdays from 4 to 6pm in the Garden Room upstairs at Honiton's popular 'Yellow Deli'.

You will get a warm welcome.

For more information contact Carla on; 07411977975

Honiton Garden Club



16th February 6.30-8pm

The Narthex, St Paul's Church

New Tricks for Old Gardeners

Katherine Crouch

This is a return visit to the Garden Club by Katherine, a previous BBC Gardener of the Year with over 30 years of gardening and design experience and we look forward to seeing her again

Visitors are welcome to our meetings at a cost of £3 per session.

For more details please contact Julia on

01404 548709



Applications Open For Honiton Gate To Plate 2023

We are really pleased to be beginning to plan the 2023 edition of Honiton Gate to Plate. This is the 5th time the festival will have been held in Honiton and we are thrilled to see it become an established part of the local calendar.

Honiton Gate to Plate returns on Saturday 19 August

The support of Honiton Town Council is invaluable and it is great to work alongside them to deliver this festival for Honiton.

We are now open for applications for all our events in 2023 and are keen that producers, makers, fermenters and brewers from the local area apply. They should head over to www.eatfestivals.org/apply and complete the application form there. There is also a link there for the Bursary, sponsored by Thatchers Cider - this offers a free place to brand new producers.

We have begun consultation on the proposed closure for 2023 - which will be a repeat of 2022 (New Street to the Kings Road roundabout).



Honiton, Ottery & District

Local National Trust Association

Our winter programme of talks is now complete and everyone is welcome. They all start at 2.30 at a cost of £3

23rd February

"Devon Surnames"

by Robert Hesketh

at The Institute, Ottery St Mary

More to follow - watch this space

**For more information, please contact Richard Coley
on 01404 813163**

If you are a small community group, don't forget to let us know about your events so that we can publicise them for you.

We are always happy to put in your details (or a quarter page ad) free of charge for small community groups.

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Classes at the Beehive are on a Wednesday evening and Marina and Chris also hold beginner and intermediate/improver classes in Colyford and Exeter.



Contact
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or visit
www.westernspirit.co.uk

SNOWDROP TEA



Sunday Feb 19th
2 - 4pm

St Nicholas Church, Combe
Raleigh

Come and wander round the
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and admire the snowdrops.

Snowdrop plants for sale

Tea and cake

The churchyard snowdrops should be in
full bloom and carpeting the grass.

Snowdrop bulbs will be for sale and
there will be tea and cake available in the
church.



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Saturday 25th February
7.30pm – 11.00pm

Tickets: £10 per person (on door or in advance)
(Numbers strictly limited - please book in advance to avoid disappointment)

To book contact: angeladunbar1@googlemail.com



St Nicholas Church Combe
Raleigh which will be holding its
Snowdrop Tea in February

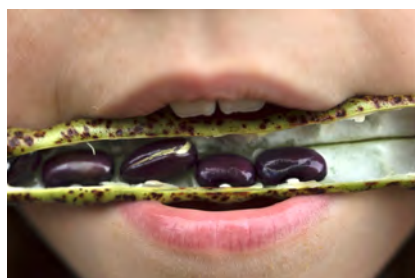
Paradise Found

Our new exhibition 'Paradise Found: New Visions of the Blackdown Hills' explores the picturesque Blackdown Hills through the lens of 36 leading contemporary artists alongside works by members of the Camden Town Group including Robert Bevan.

Between 1911 and 1925 the Blackdown Hills were a source of inspiration for the avant-garde painters of the Camden Town Group including Spencer Gore, Charles Ginner and Robert Bevan. They captured the ancient landscape influenced by the French artistic approach of Cezanne, Gauguin and Van Gogh.

36 contemporary artists have recaptured the same sites and these works will be exhibited alongside loans of drawings, photographs and paintings made by Gore, Ginner and Bevan.

The environment has changed little over the last 100 years, partly due to its inaccessibility for modern development. The exhibition will provide a fascinating insight into the ecological, social, industrial and historic issues particular to the Blackdown Hills over the same 100-year period, examining the values and characteristics which so attracted the Camden Town artists.



Paradise Found: New Visions of the Blackdown Hills

Curated by Fiona McIntyre, Sandra Higgins and Tim Craven.

18 March – 3 June

Open Tuesday to Saturday, 10am – 5pm

Thelma Hulbert Gallery, Dowell Street, Honiton EX14 1LX

thelmahulbert.com



Angels from the Realms of Glory

Having had a fascinating lecture on the History and Art of the Nativity Crib in December the members of The Arts Society, Honiton enjoyed an excellent talk in January by lecturer Mark Cottle entitled Angels from the Realms of Glory which featured two glorious pieces of art from the 14th century. Angels are not just for Christmas.



Mark talked about the Wilton Diptych, a religious work of two panels which fold like a book. It was made for Richard II in 1397/8 at a time of great political turbulence. The two inside panels are religious. On one Richard, looking youthful and handsome, can be seen kneeling; he is wearing rich red and gold robes. Standing behind him are 3 saints, St Edmund the Martyr, St. Edward the Confessor and St John the Baptist. Richard is looking towards the other panel which depicts 11 angels with the Virgin and Child, all of them are painted in blue pigment made from the extremely expensive semi-precious stone, lapis lazuli. In both panels the 'sky' is made from gold leaf. The exterior panels are secular. One shows Richard's coat of arms; the other is of a white stag symbolising Richard and it wears a gold crown around its neck. Again the sky is of gold leaf. All the paintings contain many pictorial references to Richard.

The theme of angels was carried through to the hammer-beam roof of Westminster Hall. It was commissioned by Richard in 1393 and is the largest medieval roof in Europe. 13 pairs of angels carry Richard's arms and his white stag is repeated 83 times. Mark concluded his talk by exploring medieval churches in East Anglia that feature carved angels in their roofs.

The February lecture is Caravaggio – Rebel with a Cause on Tuesday 7th February, 2pm at The Beehive (earlier date to avoid clashing with the pantomime). Visitors are always welcome and can pay on the door. Their full programme can be seen on their website www.theartsocietyhoniton.org.uk

Men's Walk 18 March

Veronica Pert and her sons hope to take part in Men's Walk on Saturday 18 March to raise vital funds for local charity, Hospiscare in memory of husband and father George.



A firm supporter of the charity, George and his dog, Ruaraidh (Gaelic for Rory), took part in the annual fundraising event, Men's Walk, every year until 2021 when illness prevented him from doing so.

George was diagnosed with prostate cancer

later that year. Despite his diagnosis, George was determined to take part in Men's Walk 2022 to support the local charity during its emergency Save our Services Appeal.

George refused to let his illness get in his way and completed Men's Walk with the support of his faithful four-legged friend, as well as wife Veronica and son Matthew. Through his unwavering support of Hospiscare, George was named Men's Walk top fundraiser for 2022, with his sponsorship exceeding £3,600!

"George was so courageous. He faced the prospect of dying in such a head-on way. The hospice were really brilliant when he was ill – they gave us so much support. He had a bed here at home and when he was transferred to the ward, the biggest thing he was worried about was whether Ruaraidh could visit! Ruaraidh is quite a bouncy dog and I was worried about him jumping all over the place on the ward, but I couldn't believe it – he was like a different dog. When the hospice called to tell us it was time, we took Ruaraidh because that's what George wanted. It was like he knew. He went straight up to George and put his head on him and laid down."

Men's Walk is a vital form of income for the hospice, which receives just 18% of its funding from the NHS.

Everyone is welcome to take part in Men's Walk 2023, whether by choosing 'Your Way' and walking a route of your choice in your locality or by joining the Hospiscare team at Double Locks.

Join Men's Walk on 18 March 2023 to raise vital funds to support patients like George. Sign up today to be in with a chance to win some great prizes at

www.hospiscare.co.uk/menswalk



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Quarantine Quilt Exhibition/Patchwork Devon Quilting Workshops at the Beehive

Patchwork takes different fabrics and connects them, creating something beautiful and useful.

#PatchworkDevon is a new project about carrying our priorities forward - together.

Award-winning Arts & Mental Health social enterprise Significant Seams is now offering bookable workshops to make patchwork bags together, representative of the literal landscapes of Devon as well as our figurative aspirations for our shared future post-pandemic. A number of the workshops will be at locations where you can see the Quarantine Quilts in person, including The Beehive, Honiton from Monday evening 13th February until Friday am 3rd March.

In a moment where our sense of our world seemed to be falling to pieces, the Quarantine Quilt Project Significant Seams helped people pick up the fragments, and see their priorities. In tandem people individually recorded what they cared about. Individuals then entrusted these thoughts back to Significant Seams artists. With threads, empathy, and artistry, they connected these insights into the artwork that is 'The Quarantine Quilts.'

Significant Seams now have funding in place to enable a programme of forward-looking workshops too. Participation is booked via eventbrite. There is a date FREE for social prescribers, community connectors, front-line workers, especially those who might make

referrals, and representatives of craft, sewing, and making social groups. Additionally, referring organisations can register to receive a code to make spaces available free for their referrals. Significant Seams also have funding to help qualifying individuals to access transport support to attend.

We very much welcome any social prescribers, community connectors, or representatives of 'making' groups (FREE) on the dedicated session: Monday 20th February, The Beehive, Honiton 10:30 -3:30 (light lunches & snacks available to buy from the cafe)

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/498608891617>.

Attendees will be provided a code to refer their clients to a free space.

Additionally anyone can book a space on these sessions: Monday 27th February and 6th March, The Beehive Honiton 10:30-12:30(2 session workshop) OR Thursday 2nd March, The Beehive, Honiton 10:30 - 3:00 (Light lunches and snacks available to buy at the café). <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/481790477287>

Contact catherine@significantseams.org.uk with further queries, including to receive a code that makes free tickets appear with the booking, or for conversations about sponsoring workshops in a particular geographic area or for a particular group of people. We hope and expect further occurrences to be scheduled.

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NEW YEAR

by Martin Long



Happy New Year... Somehow, it feels odd to be writing that, since Honiton and Village News is not published in January. We are so used to celebrating the start of the year on January 1st, that it feels wrong to be thinking about it now that February has come around. But it is not as strange as it sounds. After all, January 1st is just one of the many dates on which people have marked the transition from one year to another.

January 22nd saw the Chinese New Year, heralding the start of the year of the Rabbit. Historically, the Roman Empire marked its new year on anything from March 15th to May 1st. In parts of medieval Europe, New Year was celebrated on Easter Saturday. However, this was far from ideal, as Easter is calculated using the lunar calendar, which means that Easter can occur any time between late March and mid-April.

There was a time in some parts of Europe (including, for a short time, in England) when the new year started on Christmas Day, which would I suppose, if nothing else, save on an extra Bank Holiday. And Revolutionary France even decided for reasons of its own to celebrate new year in September.

However, the most common alternative to January 1st was undoubtedly March 25th. This date was the official start of the new year across much of Catholic medieval Europe. And it remained the new year in Scotland until 1600. So much for the importance of Hogmanay.

It is hard to believe now, however, that it also remained the date of the new year in England until as late as 1752. The reason for the eventual change has to do with the two competing versions of the calendar – the Julian and the Gregorian – which led to surely the strangest year in our history, when 11 days of people's lives simply seemed to disappear.

Until 1582, much of the world followed the Julian calendar, which made no allowance for the Earth's orbit not being exactly 365 days. Therefore, the seasons had long since begun to drift. The introduction of the Gregorian calendar was required get things back on track. One result was that October 4th that year was immediately followed by October 15th. After that, leap years every four years kept the seasonal drift from happening again. Except that, at the start of most centuries, the leap year does not take place.

Britain did not fall into line with this change until 1752, by which time the seasons had drifted by a further day. Therefore, Wednesday 2nd September was followed by Thursday 14th. When I was at school I was taught that there were riots in the streets, with people demanding: "Give us back our 11 days."

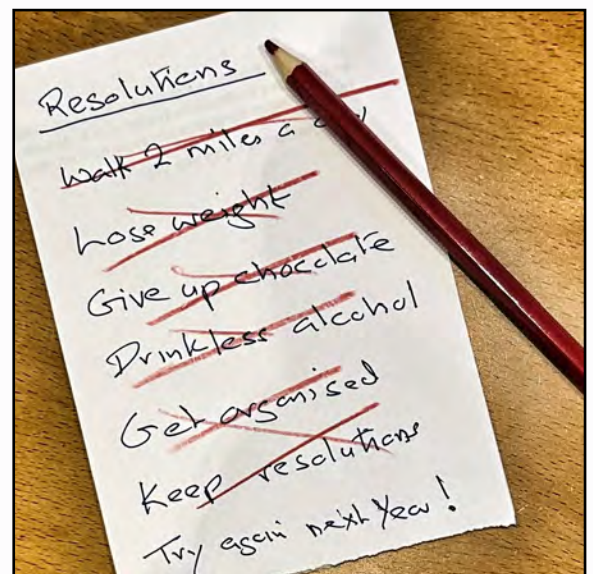
As taxpayers will be aware, our financial year starts on the apparently random date of April 6th. Previously, the tax year began on March 25th, the old New Year's Day. In order to ensure they did not lose any revenue, the Treasury decided that the tax year beginning on March 25th 1752 would be the usual 365 days long, despite the 11 missing days. Therefore, it would end on April 4th, with the 1753 tax year beginning on April 5th.

Once begun on this pattern, it simply carried on, until 1800 which was not a leap year in the new Gregorian calendar, but would have been in the old Julian system. The Treasury simply moved the start of the tax year forward another day to the 6th, and it has remained there ever since.

So, let me say again: Happy New Year. For surely it does not matter whether it is January, March, May or September. You can be quite certain that someone somewhere, in some religion or culture, is celebrating their new year. And, more importantly, do we really need a Bank Holiday or a date marked in the calendar to make a new beginning, to decide to make a change in how we live or how we want to treat each other?

I have never been a great believer in making those awful New Year's Resolutions. As most of us will probably already have found this year, they are very easy to make, but put a ridiculous amount of pressure on, because we think that it is a just a once in every twelve months thing. Whereas in fact every day is a fresh canvas, ready for us to do with as we will. Every day is the first day of a new year. And every day gives us an opportunity to start over, if only we make up our minds to do so.

I hope you have a happy new year.



The Gleam Of Early Silver

by Liz Chilcott



By English law, silver has to be hallmarked. Early hallmarking was introduced by Henry III in 1238, with Edward I passing a statute in 1300 to regulate the quality of English silver. These hallmarks, as well as showing the purity of the silver, identify the date and maker of the piece.

Early silver is sought after by specialist collectors. Chilcotts sold a collection of 16th and 17th century West Country spoons that had been amassed by one Devon man.

The 'star' of the spoons was a seal top example, made by John Jones of Exeter in the 1570's. Recognised as a hugely important maker in the Elizabethan era, Jones was described by Timothy Kentin 'West Country

Silver Spoons and their Makers' as 'One of the most important and successful provincial goldsmiths of his epoch'. Consequently, this single spoon sold for £3,600.

Meanwhile, another, identified as the so-called missing 'Plymouth spoon', achieved £2,100. Made circa 1694, the spoon - with its distinctive Trefid design - had been misplaced from Plymouth silversmiths Messrs. Page, Keen and Page in the 1950s. Although we hoped the spoon might return to the city of its making, instead it moved further east away from the West Country, having been bought by a Norfolk collector.

Chilcotts Silver Specialist, Jennifer Bell who undertook detailed research into the spoons prior to the auction, said: "This was a truly fascinating collection to get to know, especially as it provided a good opportunity to find out more about the history of spoon making in the West Country."

We are currently accepting entries into our standalone auction of silver, jewellery, watches and gold; please make an appointment to meet with Jenny at Chilcotts' saleroom in the centre of Honiton High Street.



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**A pair of William III silver Britannia standard Candlesticks,
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Book Review - The Psychological Thriller

by Roger Sleeman

A friend of mine recently asked me what types of fiction I like to read. The best I could do was to name a few authors, most of which he didn't know. It was only when I thought about it later that I realised that their novels had common features in terms of themes, structures and story-telling techniques. Following some online research, I realised that a good proportion of the fiction I currently enjoy belongs to the genre of the psychological thriller.

I've seen the term 'psychological thriller' described as 'a sub-genre of the thriller'. Regular thrillers, such as those written by Robert Goddard, rely on fast moving action, a complex story line and many unexpected twists and turns. A psychological thriller centres more on the characters than on the action. What is going on inside the characters' heads is often more important than what they are doing. This is what makes a good psychological thriller thought-provoking and often quite frightening. It's often the case that one of the characters is flawed in some way, perhaps mentally unstable, but it's never immediately obvious who it is. These novels are not horror stories, although there may be some horror involved! Nor are they police detective stories. Any police involvement tends to be on the periphery of the action.

As with all genres of fiction, it's possible to identify common features in the way psychological thrillers are written.

Accounts of events are often given in turn by several different characters, giving a sense of uncertainty and foreboding about where the story is going. Gradually it may become increasingly obvious that one or two of the characters are not what they seem!

Another common technique is to alternate between accounts of current and past events. This enables the true emotional and mental state of the characters to be revealed as the story continues. The two sets of events, present and past, may be related by different characters, adding to the suspense and sense of uncertainty about the motives of those involved.

As with any good thriller, red herrings abound. It helps if, like me, you are gullible and easily led!

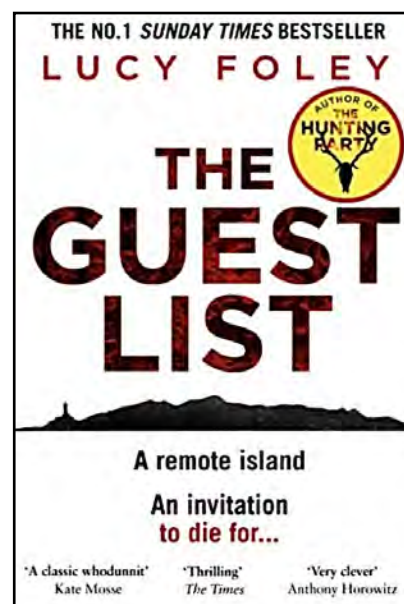
Many writers of psychological thrillers make effective use of a prologue. The book begins with a brief account of an event which is often traumatic and sometimes violent. Care is usually taken not to identify any characters involved (even by gender) and to avoid giving away whether the event is occurring in the present or in the past. It may only be towards the end of the story that we discover how the events of the prologue relate to the storyline which follows.

So how does it all end? Perhaps, surprisingly, some psychological thrillers have happy endings but this is certainly not guaranteed. Part of the appeal of these books is that nothing can be taken for granted.

If you've not tried this type of book before, you might be interested in the names of some of the authors I have read and enjoyed. I've listed them in no particular order.



KL Slater
TM Logan
Lucey Foley ('The Guest List')
Rachel Abbott (perhaps best known fDCI Tom Douglas Series)
Shari Lapena
BA Paris
JP Delaney (perhaps best known for 'The Girl Before', recently adapted for TV)
Paula Hawkins (perhaps best known for 'The Girl on the Train')



Houseplants To Help With Condensation And Mould

By Laura Searle, Combe Garden Centre



We all know that houseplants are good for our homes and for our mental and physical health. There are many plants that help to purify the air, giving us more oxygen to breathe (we know this thanks to NASA's helpful experiments). They can also help to take the spare moisture out of the air, which is the very same moisture that contributes towards the mould and condensation that plagues our houses in the winter, especially when it's warmer inside the fire or heating on and cooler outside. Below I'll talk about the best performers!

Sansevieria, or Mother in laws Tongue – a wonderfully architectural plant, bringing a bit of colour inside as well as beautiful form. Sansevieria are super easy to care for, making them perfect for houseplant enthusiasts and beginners alike. Great for a bedroom as their large leaves filter airborne toxins like benzene and formaldehyde, plus they help to eradicate dust mites from the air too. It is a must have plant or your home! A fun fact that I love is that they are part of the asparagus family!

Palms and Ferns particularly the Parlour Palm or the Boston Fern are

all great for zapping the excess moisture from the air. The Parlour Palm is native to Central America, where tropical rainy seasons and humid dry seasons is their natural climate, so it makes them perfect to help with condensation. Both palms and ferns are shade tolerant, but they do love a bit of indirect light to grow and a temperature of above 10°C. The Parlour Palm is also pet friendly and helps to filter the air of spores and chemicals too.



Spathiphyllum otherwise known as the Peace Lily – they have gorgeously deep green glossy leaves, and they present tall ovate white flowers when cared for correctly. They love humidity and can be perfect for your bathroom or kitchen, but equally anywhere with bright indirect light. It is another top air filtering plant, making it perfect for help with condensation and mould. The peace lily absorbs pollutants through their leaves and then sends it all down to its roots where microbes 'digest' them into the soil. All the rubbish we don't want in our air is essentially 'feeding' our plants!



The last great air filterer I'll write about is the Chlorophytum or Spider Plant. Another pet friendly plant that during its photosynthesis process, gives us plenty of fresh oxygen to breathe while taking in those nasty chemicals and spores from air.

Spider Plants are a great beginner's plant, they're easy to care for and they grow 'pups' which can be easily propagated meaning more plants to help clean the air! Just like Sansevieria, the Spider Plant is part of the asparagus family.

In all houseplants the absorption rate for carbon dioxide fluctuates depending on the temperature. Scientists believe that one leaf can produce five millilitres of oxygen per hour. Just means we'll all have to buy more houseplants, and that means I get to take more home too!

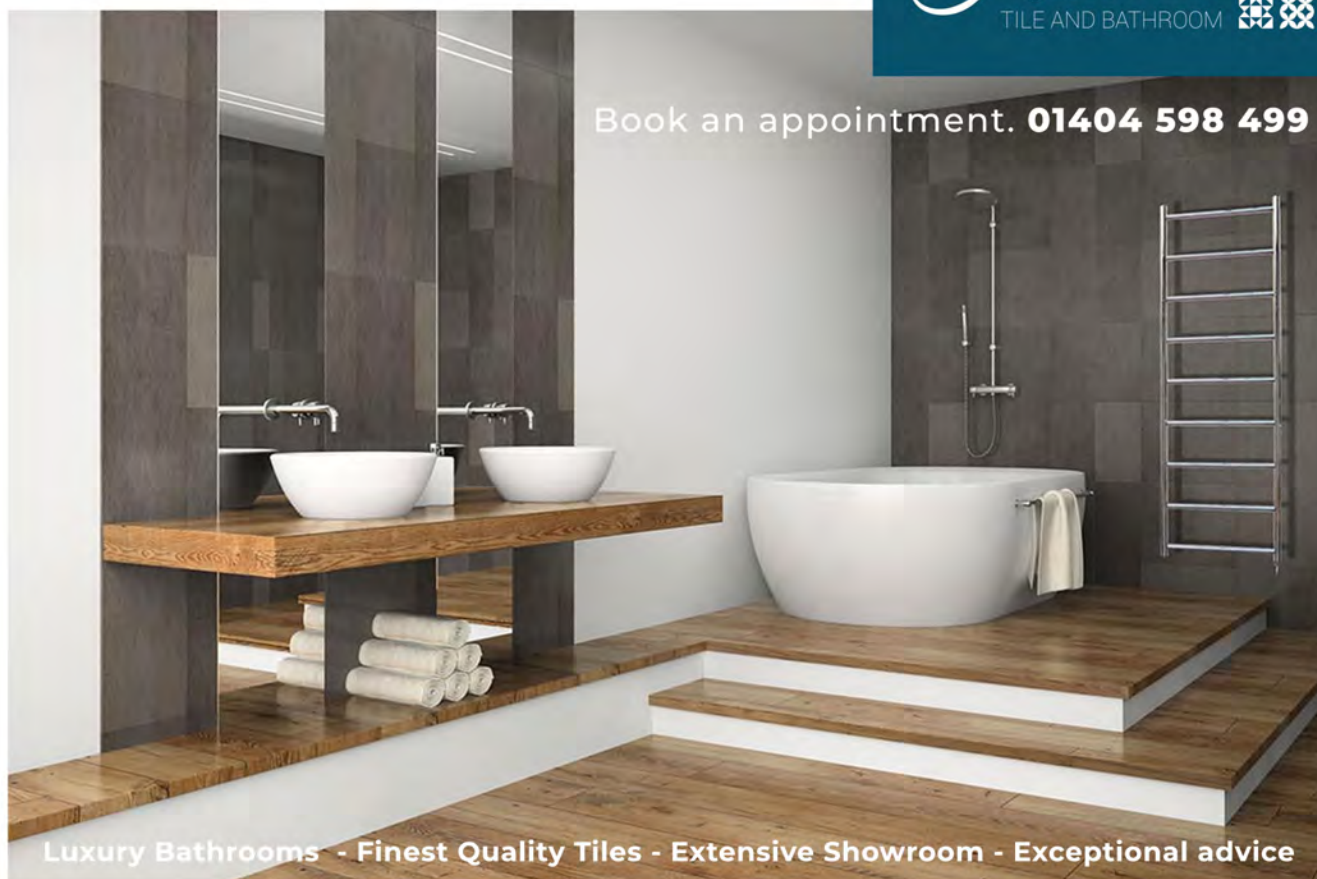


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Protest & Inspirational Role Models

Hi, my name is May and I'm a fifteen-year-old climate activist from Gittisham.

Recently, with the new police and crime bill banning forms of peaceful protesting, non-violent protesters like myself have been increasingly labelled in the media as 'criminals' and 'eco-terrorists'. However, the reality of the climate movement is much more nuanced than the media makes out. Protest and collective action can not only create drive for a particular cause but can simultaneously make other things such as friendship flourish, which it has done in my case.



I went on my first climate protest when I was eleven, where I met the inspiring Sam Sleeman (who was one of the organisers of the protest) whom I'm still in contact with now. Four years later, and I now co-organise the protests that Sam co-founded in Devon, which are all part of the wider *Fridays For Future* movement.

Fridays For Future is an international movement run by the youth of today, who are inspired by the Swedish activist Greta Thunberg's method of protesting, which is to hold peaceful marches and school walk-outs to demand systematic action on climate change.

By having a direct involvement with these protests on a local level, I have met many incredible young people, some of whom I'm now very good friends with. For example, Mabel, who I run the *Fridays For Future* Exeter social media with, has become a very good friend of mine, as have Summer and Honey, both whom I met at a protest last year.

These people have taught me first-hand that although the aim of protesting is to encourage action on a specific cause, it can be successful in other ways too, such as by learning from people who otherwise you wouldn't have had the opportunity to get to know. It's people like Mabel, Summer and Honey that keep society and various movements thriving.

Also, social media has helped me reach out to many different people involved in the climate movement. For example, through Instagram I have got to know Traore Fousseny, a pioneering climate activist from Mali, West Africa. Traore is one of the organisers of the *Fridays For Future* branch in Mali, and is particularly vocal about how the climate crisis is impacting West Africa and how unfair this is given that they are one of the global areas who have contributed least to the crisis. Traore has had to move to the UK because of extreme weather events in his local area, and our online correspondence has helped me understand the impact that climate change can have on individuals.

Finally, I'm lucky to live in an area full of supportive individuals who take an interest in the environmental issues I raise awareness about. For instance, I got to know Miriam, who contacted me after reading one of my articles. She was kind enough to take me to a climate conference in Dawlish with lots of other people from around Devon who are passionate about climate change.

My friend group, particularly my best friends Rose and Amber, are always there for me and energise me to keep persevering with environmental activism through their kindness, wisdom and humour.

I wanted to write this article to help raise awareness about the byproducts of climate activism, but also to thank the inspiring people that help educate and support me. Community and the climate crisis are strongly interlinked, and I strongly encourage those who want to get involved with the climate movement to look into joining an environmental group in their area.

Together we can create change!



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News From Devon & Cornwall Police

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You can choose what information you receive, e.g. crime, anti-social behaviour, witness appeals, missing person appeals, community events, local good news. You can also choose when, how and who from:

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- By email, text or telephone
- Police, Action Fraud, Crimestoppers, Neighbourhood Watch
- It is free: there is no cost, contract or obligation
- Covers Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly

D&C Alert plays a significant role in our rural crime prevention activity. We utilise the platform to circulate key prevention messages and crime appeals. Messages will be tailored to your specific business location and interests, so you can ensure the information you receive is always relevant.

The Farm Community Network:

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- RESPECT EVERYONE
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- ENJOY THE OUTDOORS
- FOLLOW ADVICE AND LOCAL SIGNS

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YouTube : DC Police



Cafe At The Beehive Is Now Open

New for 2023 – the café at the Beehive Community & Arts venue on Dowell St, Honiton opened on Monday 9th January, and is now open on Mondays to Fridays, from 10.30am to 3.30pm, and on Saturday 9.30am to 1pm.

It provides a range of coffees and other hot beverages, pizzas, sandwiches, homemade cake, soup and daily specials. The range of products will be extended as the business grows.

A spokesperson for the charity that runs the Beehive said, "Since its inception, the Beehive has had a café /bar, which is used before and during events at the venue but it has been underutilised during the day. We're looking forward to changing that this year. The café bar at the Beehive is a lovely, airy space with good facilities, including parking."

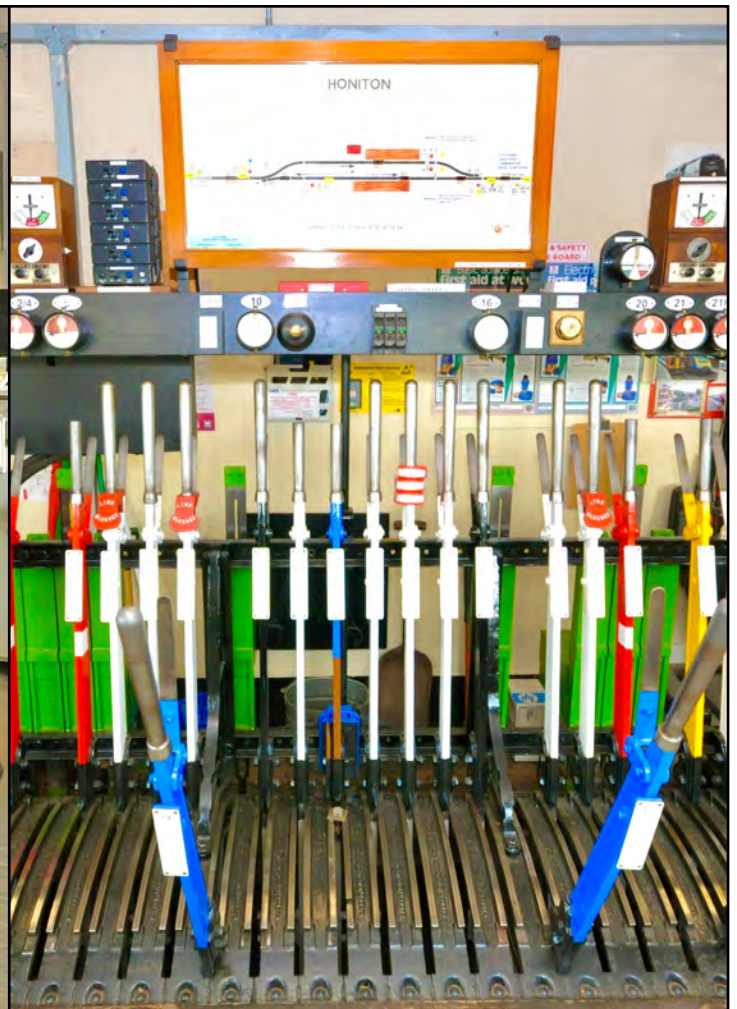
The café will initially be staffed by volunteers, including two of the Trustees, one of whom has extensive experience of running catering outlets and, if the project proves successful, experienced paid staff will be recruited further down the line.

Due to issues following the Covid pandemic, the charity that runs the Beehive has been supported financially by Honiton Town Council since March 2022, but that arrangement is due to end after 12 months. The charity has therefore produced a new business plan which they hope will enable them to cut their reliance on the Council's support and to break even.

As part of their plan to return to financial independence, the Board of Trustees realised that opening the café for general use was a good opportunity to provide an enhanced service to the public and to all those people who use the Beehive during the day.

You are invited to give the new service a try and to tell your friends.





In February 2012, a month before closure and subsequent demolition, our photographer recorded life in Honiton Signal Box. The signaller is Sue Groves.

Around & About In Our Community

Chatty Train Trip for Honiton Memory Cafe



Over 20 members of Honiton Memory Cafe enjoyed a trip on a train with a wander around Axminster topped off by a delicious cream tea at The Railway Kitchen.

This Devon County Council “Connecting You” project aims to tackle loneliness through innovative transport schemes like our “chatty train”.

We would like to pass on our sincere thanks to Stacey the Community Ambassador at Honiton and Feniton train stations, along with all the station and train

staff from Honiton and Axminster, for giving us a VIP and stress-free train experience.

Being together with friends on a bit of an adventure was great fun, there was much laughter and reminiscing about train travel over the years and we look forward to doing it all again in the spring.



Local Little Helps

For many years now a small shelf of pre-loved books have become a point of interest, conversation and community investment.



The Tesco Honiton Community Book Sale has been a small but mighty initiative that has generated thousands for local causes, interest groups and charities on our door step for years now.

The simplicity of the scheme works so well because our customers and users know that the money raised will stay within the EX14 area.

We see the same books come back month in and month out, we see people spending a pound or 50p on a novel, autobiography or thriller only to come back with the same book plus a carrier bag or two with more donations!

Through the donations of books and money Tesco Honiton has been incredibly blessed to have been able to support so many in our area with large cash donations. We have donated hundreds of pounds to local sports groups, special medical groups, educational services, youth groups and so much more.

With the monthly cash donations reaching up to and including £400 a month we have the special opportunity to make significant impacts to our

customers directly.

Donations are currently allocated on a first come, first served 4 weekly rota with all of December's donations kept back for smaller, more seasonal based work.

This December we supported Reverend Sue from St Pauls church with oranges for the children's Christingles, sweets for small school fetes and cash donations to local care groups organising Christmas lunches for those in need.

We only ask that all donations been in good quality.

Anyone seeking to benefit from the book sale need only apply in writing to Duncan Sheridan-Shaw at Tesco Honiton.



Around & About In Our Community

Presentation to Mary Bolshaw after 45 Years of Service to Hospiscare



Mary was caught by surprise in December when Carol Gilson presented her with a beautiful bouquet of flowers to mark her retirement after 45 years of volunteering for Hospiscare.

Mary has been involved with Hospiscare since its creation, as a member of the Exeter Soroptomists who became involved with raising money to build

the hospice. Since then she has worked tirelessly, mostly with her cooking skills. She is also very well known for her afternoon teas with music (her husband Trevor on organ or piano) at their home.

Weddings, special birthdays, funerals, the regular coffee mornings, stalls, Easter celebrations, Christmas lunches, bingo evenings and many meals taken to people's homes (especially in lockdown). The list goes on

Thank you Mary for all your time and commitment over the past 45 years and enjoy your retirement.



Upottery Playing Fields Flower & Produce Show Founder Retires After 60 Years

On Saturday 19th November we celebrated Richard Weaver's contribution to the Upottery Flower Show, as after 60 years he has stepped down, having been a Founder Member of the Show.

Richard was invited by Chair Linda Palmer to hand out the cups at the 60th event in August and, as a lasting thank you, Richard helped plant an oak tree in the Upottery playing fields.

We would like to thank Richard for his dedication and commitment to this local event and its continued success.

Anyone interested in joining the committee or helping next year would be welcomed; please contact Linda on 07815 848772 for information.

Date for the 2023 show is August 19th and details of the classes are posted on the local Facebook page, website and brochure sent out in July.



First of all, a belated Happy New Year from us all at Honiton Lions.

Following on from the December/January magazine I am pleased to say we were able to help eight Ukrainian families living in our area; we supplied coupons to enable families to purchase clothes and food. Sainsburys in Ottery St Mary kindly supplied enough fruit and vegetables to make up hampers for the eight families. Each

hamper was sized to suit each family by us.

Thank you Duncan, at Tesco in Honiton, for allowing us to make a bucket collection on December 17th and 18th when we collected over £600 thanks to the generosity of you the public.

Also, Father Christmas attended The Busy Bee Play group and the Makaton Choir Christmas party at the CUB to the delight of the children present.

We are now in February and planning our Easter Egg Draw. Please take part, you could win one of our rich, one-kilogram eggs. Each egg is made from Belgian milk chocolate and could be yours for the cost of £1 per square. Look out for venues taking part.

If you have any unwanted good clothes or unwanted Christmas gifts that you would like to donate to the Lions Club, please give David Rickard a call on 01404 47752 to discuss suitability and collection.

If you would like any more information of what we, The Lions, do or would like to become a member please give me Brian the Lion a call on 01404 43738 or 07966 173828. Alternatively, you could email me with the following email address: brian.richards@honitonlions.org.uk



Around & About In Our Community

Attestation Evening For Police Cadets



Honiton Police Cadets attended their attestation evening in mid November at Honiton Community College. The evening was attended by Assistant Chief Constable Jim Nye and Chief Superintendent Dan Evans. They were joined by some cadets from Tiverton Cadet Unit also attending for their attestation. With families in attendance and, after speeches from the Assistant Chief Constable and Chief Superintendent, cadets took their oath followed by a drill demonstration in the school playground. At the end of the evening everyone stayed for tea and cake.

The Honiton Cadet Unit started in June 2021 originally based in Honiton Youth Centre but moved to Honiton Community College in September 2021. We meet on Thursday evenings between 18.30 and 20.30.

We take part in many Community events, support neighbourhood policing teams; we have checked and washed police vehicles ready for duty and also tidied and weeded Honiton Police Station. We are making plans to visit the police control room and are to be visited soon by police dogs and other specialist units. We have also taken part in first aid.

Cadets are aged 13 to 18 years and we are always pleased to welcome new members, just pop along to Cadets one evening or email 16502@dc.police.uk

Photo shows the four Cadet Leaders Staff Lindsay Dell, Staff Lucie Caspar, Staff Lauren Pattmore, Staff Sue Kelly



District Commissioner's Commendation Award for Zoe

Zoe Braunton-Turner (Eeyore is her Scouting name) received this award on Thursday at Jose Beavers section meeting.

She has been an adult leader in 1st Honiton Scout Group for 10 years.

The award is thoroughly deserved for all the hard work she puts into the group.



Honiton Carers

On the day designated "Blue Monday" and the so called saddest day of the year, Honiton Carers went to Greendale Farm. It was the last of our "Walk & Chats" funded by the Tesco Community Grant.

Our future "Walk & Chats" will be funded by the "Connecting You" Grant from DCC. We will be using the train rather than coaches for these walks, or perhaps a mixture of trains and buses depending on our destination.

We were so lucky with the weather having had torrential rain for several days but on this day we were blessed with a clear blue sky, initially cold with a strong wind, but it settled as the day went on and became really warm and pleasant in the sunshine.

We enjoyed seeing all the different animals, two trips around the circular walk, Cuppa & Cake, some retail therapy and a lot of chats. Perfect day to cheer up everybody who needed cheering up. There truly is nothing better than peer support.

If you are an unpaid carer and would like to join our group, please do get in touch, you are guaranteed a warm welcome, whether it is at our Socials at The Kitchen at Combe Garden Centre, our meetings with speakers at The Methodist Church or our Art & Craft session at Creative Beings at Awliscombe.

For further information please contact

winniekjaer@btinternet.com

or phone 07974636926



New Arrivals At Wildwood

A pair of red-billed choughs (pron: chuffs) – a species once extinct in Devon - has returned to a custom-built aviary at Wildwood Devon to contribute to an exciting conservation project between key conservation organisations including

Wildwood Trust, Kent Wildlife Trust and Paradise Park.

The charismatic couple moved from their former home at Jersey Zoo to the park in Ottery St Mary in December, with aims to help restore the species to suitable habitat across the UK. Chicks reared at Wildwood Devon will hopefully join the chough restoration project in Kent, which is intended to return the birds to the area after a 200 year absence.

Laura Gardner is Director of Conservation at Wildwood: "The choughs received such a warm welcome at Wildwood Devon and we hope people will take joy in seeing this iconic and emblematic species back in the county."

Red-billed choughs are a bird species belonging to the crow family. As the name suggests, the birds have a distinctive red beak and legs. Their downward curved beak is used to find insects in the soil and in the dung of grazing animals. Their Latin name *Pyrrhocorax pyrrhocorax* translates as flame raven and gave rise to the nickname 'fire crow'.

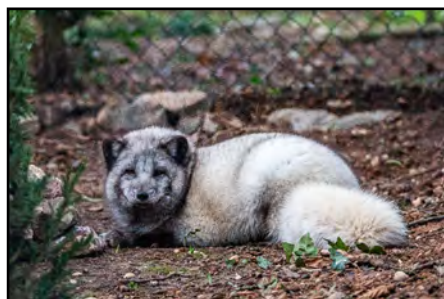
The rarest member of the crow family, the red-billed chough is in decline in the UK, with an estimated population of fewer than 450 pairs, found only in West Wales, the Scottish isles, Ireland, Isle of Man and in Cornwall. Changes to farming practices, grazing regimes and historic persecution have caused this decline. The return of the twosome to Wildwood will allow visitors to learn more about the cultural and ecological significance of these beautiful red-billed birds

photo courtesy of Michael Colquhoun

Wildwood has also welcomed a new arctic fox.

The fox arrived in December. She joins the same enclosure as Miska, a fellow arctic fox known for charming visitors with his cute allure. Wildwood Devon social media followers and visitors to the park have been voting from a shortlist to decide a name for the fox.

Next time you're at Wildwood, don't forget to go and see this new addition - and find out which name was chosen.



Don't forget to send us your community news

**Just contact
honitonvillagenews@gmail.com**



Rotary is made up of men and women from all walks of life. We have members from Ottery St Mary, Honiton, West Hill, Exmouth, and Cranbrook. We welcome individual and corporate members to our club.

The group meets weekly on a Tuesday evening at The Tumbling Weir in Ottery St Mary at 7.30pm. The meeting starts with a 2 course meal. We have a speaker, fellowship or a business meeting which starts around 8.30pm; you do not have to dine if you prefer not to.

Rotary raises money and donates it to local and International charities/organisations/schools/groups and individuals. To continue doing this we need to grow our membership, if you care about the community, come along to one of our meetings and see what we do, you will be very welcome. Contact the Secretary Caroline1959@hotmail.co.uk.

December 2022 - Well what a busy time we had in December, hard to believe that's over a month away already. Our wonderful Santas were in action many times in the run up to Christmas, starting with Cranbrook Christmas festival, Millwater SEND School, Operation Rudolph in Honiton, Ottery St Mary Library, Poppy appeal fund raiser at West Hill and 3 days at Tesco in Honiton.

Christmas Store collections - we raised an incredible £2,400 which will be available to local charities,

Thanks to donations we were able to Help Honiton Food Bank, Otter Silver Band and provide chocolates for the Christmas meal provided on Christmas Day by the wonderful volunteers in Ottery to those who may have been alone on Christmas day. If your organisation would benefit from financial support please send an application to Secretary CarolineThornton1959@hotmail.co.uk. We consider all applications.

Community Raffle - This was drawn in November, all winners have been notified, if you would like to see a list of winners please go to our website, ottervalleyrotary. Over £15000 was raised collectively for the organisations that took part.

Upcoming events - Hospiscare quiz, West Hill Village hall - 3rd February 2023 arriving at 7pm for 7.30 start, If you wish to book a table call Steve on 01404 811335; **Ottery Silver band** - Centenary Concert – 25th March 2023 at 7.30pm

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