

TemeTalk

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March 2021

In this month's issue

Eastham's new Memorial Hall

20 years in the Teme Valley

Opera in the rain

Walking church • The power of silence

and all your parish news



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TemeTalk

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A community going forward with God

March 2021

Published by the churches of the
Teme Valley South Group
and delivered free to every household

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Sandra Griffiths, St Michaels

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Editor:

Sandra Griffiths
Grey Gables, St Michaels
Tenbury Wells WR15 8TW
Telephone 01568 750665
ronsmum@btconnect.com

Distribution:

Alison and Keith Tompsett
(Stoke Bliss & Kyre)
Averil Opperman (The Hanleys,
Eastham and Rochford)
Sue Softly (Stanford)

Priest-in-charge

Rev Julia Curtis
Telephone 01886 853286
revjuliacurtis@gmail.com

Parish website

www.temevalleysouth.org.uk

Items for inclusion should be
sent to Sandra Griffiths
by the 18th of the preceding month
and will be included subject to space

Dear Villagers

It is hard to comprehend that this month marks a year since we went into lockdown for the first time. Our last service before lockdown was from St Mary's, Stanford, where a few of us celebrated Mothering Sunday and the service was streamed. This was still very much a novelty at the time! I remember gratefully the wonderful surprise when we arrived to find a beautiful bunch of flowers left outside the church door by a very kind person. A full year on, who would have believed that once more Mothering Sunday, the fourth Sunday in Lent, will not be celebrated in the usual way. We will mark it nonetheless with a pre-recorded service and acts of kindness around the parish.

The tradition of marking this day goes back five centuries, and 'mothering' started not by focusing on your Mum, but by visiting your 'mother church' or 'mother cathedral' for a special service. This would have been the main church in the place where you grew up and the pilgrimage journey of going back was known as 'going-a-mothering'. For those who were in domestic service, this meant a precious day off and a chance to see their own family as well as their mother church. As time went by Simnel cake, full of delicious dried fruit, became a treat associated with the day. Just to ensure a nod to the Bible the cake was decorated with eleven balls of marzipan representing twelve disciples minus Judas, the disciple who betrayed Jesus on Good Friday.

I wonder what act of kindness each of us might be able to offer to mark Mothering Sunday this year? I pray you might be inspired to do a little something special for someone near you on 14th March. Something to gladden the heart, not just of mothers, but of anyone in our community.

Rev'd Julia

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TemeTalk

Deadline 18th March

Please note this is the *last* day for contributions – the sooner you send your items to the editor, the more chance there is that they will be included

Teme Valley South Contacts

Priest-in-charge: Julia Curtis 01886 853286
Associate Priest: Sally Jones 01584 781526
Reader: Pete Thorp 07917 783159

Churchwardens

Eastham: Celia Adams 01584 781258
Rochford: Ann Prosser 01584 781317
Stoke Bliss & Kyre: Jen Jones 07749 977821
Hanleys: Ed Yarnold 07930 882728
Stanford: Robin Dean 01886 853295

Pastoral Team

Stanford: Lesley Dean 01886 853295
Hanleys: Peter Thorneycroft 01885 410484
Stoke Bliss:

Rochford: Ann Prosser 01584 781317
Jenny Barbé 01584 781298

Eastham: Helen Matravers 01584 781510

Parish Safeguarding Officer: Sue Softly
01584 881342

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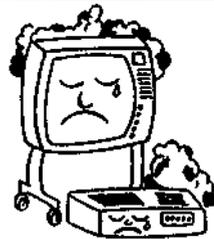
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Parish news

From the registers

Our prayers and sympathy are with the family and friends of Alec 'John' McCaull after his funeral and burial at St Mary's, Stanford on 14th January.

We also pray for the family and those who knew Ann Wiltshire, who lived in Rochford for many years. Her funeral and burial took place in Eastham churchyard on 2nd March.

Also with the family and friends of Pat Painter, Charlie Lloyd and Patricia 'Tish' Mills who have all sadly died since Christmas. Patricia's funeral was at Wyre Forest Crematorium on 12th February.

Take Breath

Would you describe yourself as spiritual, but not religious? Then silent prayer may be for you. Silence goes beyond words; beyond absolutes. It draws us towards something that is hard to define, yet the practice of holding silence in a small group can be a very powerful one.

With the start of a new year, I invite you to join with us at Kyre church to try a time of silent prayer and Take Breath. As we explore this together the time of silence will be gradually lengthened, but we will start by gathering for 30 minutes from 4pm on Fridays. All welcome and we will observe Covid secure guidelines. Please bring a mask.

Lent reflections

We invite you to join us during Lent as we reflect on the images in the following publication, which is available online as a paperback or in kindle format.

The Art of Lent by Sister Wendy Beckett

We will meet weekly by Zoom at 7.45pm on Mondays to share our thoughts on the paintings and artwork from the previous week. We do not have to commit to all six weeks of Lent to join us.

For more information or to book a place, please call Jen on 07749 977821.

**This month's front cover photograph
is by Nicki Beavan**

Sunflower competition 2021

Having saved seed from our winning plant, we hope to run the competition once more over this summer. Look out for more details in the next edition of TemeTalk!

Service times and openings

Our church buildings remain open as below, but if you would like to visit outside of these times, please contact the churchwardens, who will do their best to accommodate this. You are very welcome to come and spend some time in these spaces to reflect, to pray and just to 'be' for a quiet moment.

St Peter & St Paul, Eastham

Tuesday 9am to dusk

St Mary, Stanford on Teme

Thursday 9am to dusk

St Mary, Kyre Wyard

Friday 2.30pm to 5pm

Church to be attended

Silent Prayer "Take Breath" 4 to 4.30pm

St Michael, Rochford

Wednesday and Sunday 9am to dusk

St Peter, Stoke Bliss

Friday 10am to 4pm

All Saints, Hanley William

Saturday 9am to 4pm

Thanks to all of you who are willing to air the churches and have offered to lock and unlock. Without you we could not re-open.

Rev'd Julia Curtis

TemeTalk

Deadline 18th March

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Rochford 49 Club Congratulations

to this month's £25 winners:

Wednesday winners

Jan 6th	No 10	Caroline Nicholes
Jan 13th	No 4	Alison Champion
Jan 20th	No 37	not sold
Jan 27th	No 51	not sold
Feb 3rd	No 12	Sheila Palmer
Feb 10th	No 54	not sold
Feb 17th	No 1	Brian Woodhouse

Saturday winners

Jan 2nd	No 37	Ann Prosser
Jan 9th	No 53	not sold
Jan 16th	No 27	Simon Ayres
Jan 23rd	No 56	not sold
Jan 30th	No 42	Colin Lord
Feb 6th	No 6	Treena Jones
Feb 13th	No 48	not sold

There are still plenty of numbers available – why not join in? It's just £1 per draw plus you get two chances each week to win £25! Remember, you must be in it to win it!

Ring Gill Smith on

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Teme Valley Tote

February's prize draw of the Tote (the eleventh in this series) was decided when Rev'd Julia Curtis rolled the dice on 2nd February to select the set of random numbers. Prizewinners are:

£50 – **Burgoyne family** of Stanford (No 577)

£30 – **Callum Hillhouse** of Lindridge
(No 120)

£20 – **Flocat Spilsbury** of Eastham (No 267)

If you have any queries please contact the organiser, Robin Dean, on 01886 853295 or by email at robin.c.dean@gmail.com. A new series will start on 1st April – details on page 12.

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Rochford Rochford Rochford

Open gardens

Well, it's springtime with new beginnings, the rapid rollout of Covid vaccination and hopefully a return to a more normal life as we look forward to getting together with community activities as soon as we are allowed. We are still hoping to have an open gardens event in May or June, so please let us know if you would be willing to open your garden for a day. It would be great to have a variety of gardens to visit in the village, ending up with afternoon tea.

Welcome

We would like to welcome the Engleheart family to Rochford. We hope they will be happy living here and enjoy the friendship and activities that this community has to offer.

Neighbourhood lunches

Because of Covid, take-away neighbourhood lunches are still on hold but we look forward to them returning later in 2021.



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Farewell

In February we said goodbye to four people who had strong connections with Rochford.

Pat Painter was 93 and lived at Cold Green, her father's family home, for 50 years. Her passions for her garden and cake were well known by everyone – but her love for her family was even greater and she was always happy to give her time to them. The family was always amused by her not understanding why she was tired after spending eight hours in the garden weeding. Pat had a love for good conversation and a party and on many occasions she was among the last to go to bed. The cards, tributes and letters have been much appreciated by her family and are a real testament to how much she was loved.

Anne Wiltshire was born in her granny's house in Battersea but the family moved to Ewell in Surrey where her working life began at 15. Here she met Len and they married in 1948. By the late 1950s she was a section leader at the London Electricity Board where future prime minister John Major was assigned to her team as her assistant.

When her brother David and his wife Shirley moved to Rochford in 1997, Anne and Len decided they also wanted to make Rochford their home and were very happy here. Len died in 2002 and is buried at Eastham. Anne had made many friends in the area who supported her and she enjoyed her surprise party when she celebrated her 80th birthday in Rochford village hall.

For the last few months of her life she was cared for in Juniper House in Worcester where she died on 9th February 2021, aged 94. She will be buried with Len at Eastham.

Andrew Barbé

*Rochford News continues with memories of
Tish Mills and Charlie Lloyd on page 19*



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Stoke Bliss and Kyre

The history of your house

Maggie Kingston has researched the history of Stoke Bliss and Kyre over the years that she has lived here, so if you would like a house history or the history of your surname in the parish she will be happy to put one together for you. Contact Maggie on mdk46@phonecoop.coop (yes, that ending is correct!) or phone 01885 410431.

Generous donation accepted in aid of Stoke Bliss and Kyre churches to help with the fundraising needed for Stoke Bliss ceiling repair and the Lady chapel east window stonework repairs at Kyre.

Lent and Good Friday

On Good Friday a cross will be carried from each of the seven churches in Teme Valley South to the Rectory for a service in the garden there at 3pm.

The St Mary's, Kyre, cross will be a larger version of the Bridget cross (right). Small versions will be available as a kit at Kyre on the Friday afternoons of Lent if you would like to make your own. Kyre church is open Fridays 2.30 to 5pm and Maggie will be there.

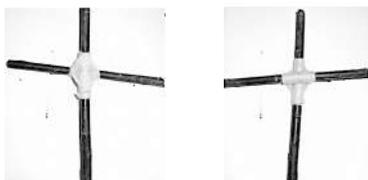
Making a Bridget Cross

- Take two pieces of wood, hazel or willow. The cross piece is 2/3 the length of the upright.
- Take a length of wool and firmly wrap it around the cross, having first secured it with a neat knot at back of cross.
- Take it under the next arm then over the same arm continuing this way around the four arms of the cross. You can change colour and create a rainbow if you wish.
- Finally, finish off with a neat knot at back of cross.

The secret is to keep it firm and not overlap the row before.

You will find your rhythm as you wrap and turn; then you can, if you wish, hold in mind someone that you are particularly aware of and wish them well as you wrap.

The finished cross, front (left) and back.



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Eastham Jottings

Coffee morning

The next coffee morning will be on Wednesday 3rd March at 10.30am by Zoom. This month's facilitator is Josie Ward and the theme is "someone famous I have met or would like to meet". If you have a good story you would like to share and cannot make the meeting, please ring Josie on 01584 881435 or email msandjward@btconnect.com.

If you would like to join and/or need help with Zoom, please call Celia Adams on 01584 781258 or email easthamcourt@icloud.com. Regulars will get an invite on the morning of the coffee morning.

April's meeting will be on 7th April with Paula Brown as facilitator.

Eastham Riverside Fête

The fête is scheduled for Sunday 15th August at the new Memorial Hall. The schedules for the flower and produce show and the dog show have been prepared. We are just waiting for official confirmation from the government. Keep your fingers crossed for August!

Potatoes for the fête

Can you grow the heaviest crop from one seed potato? Open to all for judging at the fête. Collect pots, potatoes etc from the wooden stand by the old phone box between 12 noon and 2pm on Saturday 27th or Sunday 28th March. Entry is free for under 16s, just 30p for ages 17 and over – pay when you collect your growing kit.

Eastham Memorial Hall AGM

Sixteen people attended the Zoom meeting on 18th January. The accounts for 2020 were approved and can be viewed with the Annual Report on the Charity Commission website, Charity No 1177355. Thanks to Barbara Selkirk for her independent examination of the 2020 accounts.

Flowers, cleaning and sidesman

March – Celia Adams

April – Sally Jones

Eastham community garden

£6,450 has been raised as part of Crowdfund Worcester. This will allow us to enhance the outside area around the hall. If you would like to get involved, please contact Mike Palfrey on 07976 854267 or email mike.palfrey@eastham-memorialhall.org.uk.

Wish list for donations

See the full list on the hall website eastham-memorialhall.org.uk. If you would like to donate please contact Mike Palfrey as above.

Zoom call with Sara Philips Ritchie

Sara, who is in San Francisco, has made a gift to Eastham Memorial Hall in memory of her parents. If you would like to join a Zoom call to Sara on Monday 1st March at 7pm please contact Celia for details. Sara has followed the progress of the hall on Facebook and is looking forward to reminiscing about times in Eastham when she lived at Nurses Cottages.

Spring cleaning

Depending on Covid restrictions we have pencilled in Saturday 24th April for the spring clean of the churchyard from 10am to 12 noon and the interior in the afternoon.

Congratulations

Welcome to baby Ryder Nieve, born to Laura and Sam Wordingham one snowy and icy Sunday when the midwife had to be towed up to Garden Cottage, Hillwood, by tractor.

Teme Valley Tote

Full details are on page 12. Thanks to Robin Dean for arranging it and helping Eastham to pay £750 into funds in the last two years.

Celia Adams

John Field

Some of you will remember John Field who lived with his mum and dad, Muriel and Bill Field and his brother Ken at Church Cottage. John passed away in late December and we send out condolences to his family and friends.

Kate Palmer

Hanley Happenings

Doris Simpson



Our dear Doris, stalwart of the Friday market for many years, died on 22nd January. She was at home and her end was peaceful.

Her cheerful outlook on life and her cooking skills were always to be enjoyed and there was always a queue for her marmalade!

Pictured on her 80th birthday, her joy of life is clear to see.

Donations in memory of Doris will be split between Macmillan and the West Midlands Air Ambulance, two charities which she always supported. Please send your donation to Carole Gardner, Tally Ho Cottage, Bell Lane, Hanley Broadheath WR15 8QX. Please make cheques payable to Mrs Carole Gardner.

Laptops2kids/BBC Make a Difference

If you have any redundant computers why not donate them to this very worthwhile project to provide recommissioned computers, or make a donation for children who do not have access to one. All you have to do is to find Laptops2kids/Herefordshire and follow the links. There are drop off points in Worcester and Hereford and they will do the rest. For further details please get in touch Jane Delahay on 07854 441634.

The old telephone box

Last year the parish council splashed out £1 to buy the redundant phone box on the layby near the Fox. These iconic installations, always in my view smelling of stale cigarettes, were once the only way for some people to maintain contact with the outside world and are worth keeping if only to remember what it was like before the age of mobile phones.

The council is keen to get your ideas of what it could now be used for – the madder the better, or perhaps a noticeboard in the box telling a story of someone who had to use it in an emergency. Please get in touch with Tracy on 07972 183164.

Plant sale

Anna Fletcher's plants have been growing despite the pandemic and bitter weather of the past few days, carefully nurtured by her. So her much anticipated sale is still on schedule for Saturday 8th May and with a more general air of optimism around this is surely something we can all look forward to with anticipation. Full details of the Covid compliant event in next month's issue.

With this more positive note I think we can look forward to some kind of normality later this summer. Whilst adults have been generally able to cope with the restrictions, particularly over the last three months or so, there are worrying signs in our young people who are finding life extremely difficult. I think we must hope that they can all get back to school with their friends as soon as it is deemed to be safe to do so. The worst outcome would be to allow them back and then have to reimpose restrictions, so we all still need to respect the current advice.

Peter Thorneycroft

Hanley Parish Council
will be holding a
Parish Council Meeting and AGM
on Tuesday 11th May
at 7.15pm at Hanley Village Hall
Members of the public are welcome!

See page 16 for Hanley Happenings Part 2

Stanford • Stanford • Stanford

Where to begin again?

At the time of writing (17th February) we are still in Lockdown 3 with a promise of a roadmap out next week (I saw a 'joke' about a malfunctioning sat nav – you can guess the rest!). The vaccination programme is going well – some of us have had the first vaccination but eagerly awaiting the second so that we can return to the 'new normal'.

Last month we didn't deliver paper copies of TemeTalk in Stanford (electronic copies are available on TVS parish website). In that issue I wrote about lies, damned lies and statistics and – surprise, surprise – Sue read what I said and sent me a long and interesting email. She recommended Tim Harford's book *How to make the world add up* – with the wonders of Amazon I bought it. It's very interesting with tens of references in each chapter. I'm still reading it – a number of cautionary tales. I hope that Sue gets commission!

The new normal

Holy Communion is at St Mary's at 10am on 7th March.

You are all welcome (as long as there are not too many of you). Social distancing measures will be in place during the services. Masks should be worn at all times, except if you are doing a reading or prayers. We also need to collect your names and details for contact tracing – these lists will be destroyed after 21 days. We will continue to try to stream services or record them and we will continue to record special services and publish them on Facebook and the TVS parish website.

Easter

Last year we lost Easter except remotely – we hope that with further relaxation of lockdown rules, we might be able to have public services in each of our churches on Easter Day, starting with the lighting of the Pascal Candle in Stanford at the dawn service, before sunrise at 6.20am.

Teme Valley Tote

Full details on page 12. Please speak to Alexandra if you would like to take part.

St Mary's

In Stanford we will open St Mary's for private prayer from 9am to dusk every Thursday during March. There will be a continued need for social distancing when in the church and you will be asked to use the provided hand sanitiser both on entering the church and on leaving. Thanks to Anthony for opening up each Thursday.

Parish Giving Scheme (PGS)

This allows you to give regular amounts to a church of your choice. Phone 0333 002 1271 and quote PGS Code (for Stanford) 420642278 and give your bank details. From 1st March you will be able to give regular amounts to a church of your choice by visiting their website – details in April's TemeTalk.

Communications

I put this section in October, November, December and January/February's TemeTalk but I received no response so I assume that no one is interested. However, I repeat it below.

In these uncertain times it is not always possible to communicate immediately through TemeTalk which is published once a month. Therefore if you wish to be kept in the 'village loop', please let me have an email address if you have one? If you do not, please let me know and we will try to phone you. Alexandra and Cecilia are maintaining a Stanford page on Facebook which will have the latest information and there is a Teme Valley South website and a Teme Valley South Facebook page.

Volunteers please – again

People have recently joined both the church committee and the village hall committee but we would welcome some more, especially when the crisis is over. What should we do to celebrate the end of the crisis? Robin (01886 853295) is happy to explain what is involved and you are welcome to one of our meetings when they restart so that you can see what it is like. We need people to organise events and assist.

Robin Dean

Worcestershire charity helps in Uganda

If, like me, you were shocked that the overseas aid budget was cut by this government and saved 0.25% (and it didn't even pay 1% of national budget before!) then please consider supporting FOAG, a relatively small local Worcestershire charity that makes a big difference in Uganda. The charity works directly with and is responsive to the people and organisations it supports. The committee and others pay their own way to go to Uganda each year (2020 was the first time they have not been able to visit in nearly 40 years) and talk to as many of the projects they support as is possible.

Some of the projects supported include: (numbers are for the past 12 months)

- Enabled life changing operations for 26 children, enabling increased independence.
 - Helped 1,100 farmers to waste less food and provide food security for their community through the use of storage silos and grain drying methods.
 - Sponsored 34 children and young adults through school and university. (There is no free schooling and so only 1 in 4 children who start in primary school make it to secondary schooling and only a 1 in 3 go on to higher education.)
- Sponsoring a student for £200-£300 a year will

help.

- Helped four children's rehabilitation centres to grow their own food sustainably thus providing food security for hundreds of children.
- Launched a new sustainable agriculture project using agroforestry – management of land with 'little or no dig' – maintenance of crop ground cover and protection with leguminous trees.

For more information look on the website www.foag.org or make a cheque donation to FOAG to their treasurer, Robin Dean at Rectory Cottage, Stanford Bridge, Worcester, WR6 6ST.

Maggie Kingston



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Pandemic feet

Anne Hull, the Foot Nurse, has been allowed to work since the end of the first lockdown last year. She believes that treating people's feet provides a vital service to our community, to save people with painful feet and foot problems taking up their GPs' valuable time.

Anne is available for toenail trimming, removal of corns and callus (hard skin), fungal nail treatment, diabetic foot care and ingrown toenail management.

At the first appointment Anne will make a full assessment, including medical history and current medication list. Contact details are taken with the client's signature to allow Anne to keep these records. Client cards are stored safely to ensure confidentiality. Anne wears full PPE, which includes a mask, apron and gloves. The patient's temperature is taken with a con-

tactless thermometer.

Working through the pandemic has been a challenge because of all the extra precautions required. Anne has treated people outside as far as possible during the warmer months and she has encouraged the opening of windows for ventilation during the winter. She has reduced the number of clients she sees every day, allowing a bigger gap between appointments to promote greater safety. Anne has also been able to collect prescriptions and essentials for some of her regular clients when they are feeling too unsafe to venture out themselves.

Anne has followed all the government advice and the guidance of her professional body, the Alliance of Foot Health Practitioners. As a member of the Alliance she has gained entry to the register accredited by the Professional Standards Authority. This means that she is required to constantly update her knowledge and skills. She is also fully insured.

Anne is very relieved to have received her first Covid vaccination. If your feet need attention please call to make an appointment on 07929 115084 or email anne@foot-nurse.co.uk.



Anne with her Covid vaccination certificate

Anne's handy footcare tips

- Wash your feet every day with soap and warm water. Towel dry your feet remembering the spaces between your toes.
- Moisturise your feet daily with foot cream or moisturiser, giving the cream time to dry before putting on your socks or tights.
- Wear comfortable well-fitting shoes, making sure your toes are not cramped.
- Change socks or tights daily.
- Keep your feet dry as fungal nail infection and athlete's foot thrive in warm moist conditions.
- Toenails should be kept trim.
- If you suffer from diabetes try to examine your feet daily on all the surfaces, not forgetting to check in between your toes for cracks, corns and blisters. (If you find this difficult ask someone to help you or use a mirror placed on the floor).
- If you are diabetic, never let an untrained person cut your toenails.

Teme Valley Tote – a new series starts in April

The last series of the Teme Valley Tote paid out £1,200 to lucky winners and just under £2,600 was distributed to the parishes of Teme Valley North and Teme Valley South.

This year the price of each subscription is again £10. For this you will be entered in each of 12 monthly draws with the possibility of winning £50 or £30 or £20 each month.

I appreciate that with current restrictions, it will not be easy to collect your subscriptions.

Your local Teme Valley South co-ordinators are:

Eastham – Celia Adams

Stanford – Alexandra Winnington

Stoke Bliss and Kyre – Margaret Yarnold

They will try to contact you during March.

If you have internet banking you can subscribe online – the account name is North Teme Group of Churches Tote Account, sort code 20-39-64, account number 30947539. Please give your name and district as a reference and also email me on robin.c.dean@gmail.com.

If you currently pay by standing order you will be entered automatically. If there is any problem, I will contact you when these come in on 1st April. If you wish to pay by standing order, I can send you the form.

Or you can send a cheque made payable to Teme Valley Tote to meat Rectory Cottage, Stanford Bridge, Worcester, WR6 6ST.

If you have any queries about the Tote please contact me on 01886 853295 or email robin.c.dean@gmail.com

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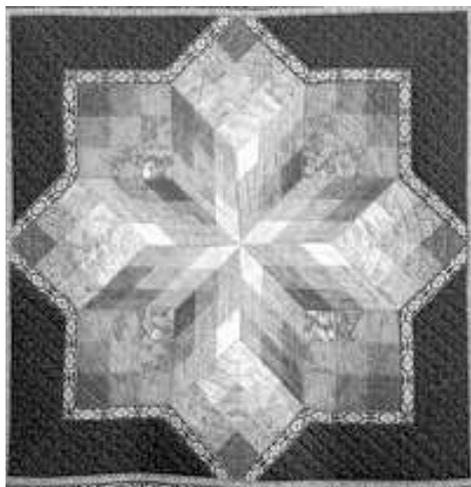
Hanley Happenings Part 2

Local talent – Christine the quilter

In our local talent spot this month we feature Christine Dalton who moved to Bell Lane with her husband Graham in 2016 and who has pursued her hobby of patchwork and quilting for over 20 years. She says it is more of an addiction and her husband is a very understanding man as their house is full of her work!

Chris took up quilting when they lived in Brussels and she joined a group of mainly American ladies who inspired her to have a go. Since then she has always had a project on the go. Quilting is especially popular in the USA and also in Japan, where they have beautiful fabrics and designs. Chris has been to many shows all over Europe and to the biggest show held annually in Houston, Texas. The largest show in the UK is usually held at the NEC in August but there are very good ones at the Three Counties Showground in May and October.

Her quilts can take months to complete and although a large bed quilt may cost between £500 and £1,000, the cost of the materials and time it takes to make are significant. A quilt top



can be “pieced” by hand or on a machine and can also be quilted by hand or on a machine. Of course quilts can be placed on beds, tables or sofas and hung on walls so they are very versatile.

The results of Chris’ work over the last twenty years are stunning and she would be very keen to hear from anyone who would like to know more or even be interested in starting a sewing group. Contact her at christenem.dalton@btinternet.com.

The village hall and the church

A planning application is being submitted for the extension and refurbishment of the hall.

The village hall has agreed to fund the cost of up to £300 for a new battery for the defibrillator currently located by the existing front door to the hall. If you would like to contribute to this cost, which is an asset for the whole village, please get in touch with Tracy. In addition two new table tennis tables have been purchased one being funded by our local councillor Ken Pollock.

Finally it is hoped that the hall will be open again for the local elections in early May.

Sadly as we go to press it looks as though both our churches will be closed until Easter – more news hopefully next month.

Peter Thorneycroft



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Eastham's new Memorial Hall

The bar and patio doors



The kitchen



Eastham's new Memorial Hall was formally handed over by the builders at 12 noon on 12th February. There are external works to be completed to finish off the outside fascia of the hall, when weather permits, and to lay tarmac. Then the garden can be started.

With Covid regulations and the ground-works around the hall it is not possible for the hall and its surrounds to be open just yet.

Special thanks were expressed to all involved at the AGM held by Zoom on 18th January.

The premises license has been applied for with Malvern Hills District Council as a new li-

The hall



cence is required for the new building.

Plans for the future will be firmed up as changes to Covid regulations are clarified.



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Twenty years in the Teme Valley

The valley of the Teme, the valley that has played such a very special part in my life, is best described as the view on a clear summer's day if you stand in the meadow next to Hanley Childe church and look south, starting with the Netherwood



estate on the far side of the valley, around past Kyre and then down to the river with the Clee Hill on the horizon. Whenever I have been away, the view ahead as I start to descend to Stoke Bliss from the Hanley water tower always gives me so much happiness and a feeling that I am home. When my husband was ill in hospital in Birmingham, I just wanted to bring him home to see the valley again. Sadly that was not to be, but he had seven magical years here.

My first memories as a small child were quite different. My father farmed at Clee Downton and I dreaded my mother saying that we were going to take the pretty road through Tenbury to Bromyard to visit my uncle and aunt in Suckley. I knew all the bends in the road were going to make me car sick. Little did I know that my lovely husband and I would come back to this beautiful part of the world when we retired. We found Bank Farm, fell in love with it immediately and moved up from Kent to the peace and beauty here. Shortly afterwards we were

concerned to see an article in a glossy country magazine saying that this valley was the best undiscovered hidden valley in England. We didn't want it to be invaded: is that so selfish?

Soon after moving here our neighbours the Northwoods stopped to talk to me. Mrs Northwood looked at me with sparkling eyes and said "there only be one Jessica and that be the commander's daughter!" "Yes, that's me" I said; I was here 32 years ago. People here don't forget. They are so very special and caring.

For twenty wonderful years I have enjoyed the changing seasons. When I see the snow-

drops I am filled with hope for a new start; my garden filling with daffodils, carpets of anemone, scillas, cherry, apple and other blossoms, while the lanes are white with hawthorn, cow parsley and wild areas of primroses, bluebells

and many more wild flowers. The garden bursts forth with beautiful roses and summer flowers of all colours before the autumn yellows and oranges, the trees' superb autumn colour followed by falling leaves. Finally, winter sees the Clee Hill capped with snow.

The farming seasons are just as important, from the fields of brown to bright green spring grass and cereal crops, lambs, calves, and hay making, the lush green a darker colour and suddenly the barley ripens followed by the other cereals, then potatoes and maize. So much to harvest in such a short time, helped or frustrated by the weather.

Now that farm equipment has replaced the plough horses, farmers are working just as hard but they are alone, not surrounded by many farm hands. It has never been so important to care for our farmers, our lonely neighbours with so many incredible memories. Make time for them and support them as they grow older and are so often confused by the pace of life

today.

I am leaving this beautiful valley and the people who have cared for it for so many generations. I leave with wonderful memories of love, fun and memories of the farming seasons. I also leave with the sadness that my husband and our wonderful younger daughter, Judith, are buried in Stoke Bliss churchyard. I'm not going far, but living in this valley and among its people will always be one of the happiest time of my life. Thank you all.

Jessica Middleton

*For twenty wonderful
years I have enjoyed
the changing seasons*

Walking church – the first twelve months



joined on those walks on different occasions by ten different people who would not usually be part of our congregations on a “normal” (whatever that means!) Sunday. We know that there have been well over 500 views of the online Walking Churches, with very many more looking at

Amazingly, March sees the anniversary of our first Walking Church. 15th March last year saw a dozen people and four dogs braving the mud of Hanley Childe. We knew that a lockdown was a strong possibility but I don’t think any of us anticipated what sort of year it would be and how that would impact on Walking Church.

With lockdown, Walking Church went online. The online services attracted a lot of views with May’s rogation walk being used by a Congregational church and an Anglican church in Northampton in their discussions about how they could work together. That wasn’t something I had anticipated.

July’s easing of restrictions meant we could have physical Walking Church again, but initially the rule of six limited numbers. So in July and August we doubled the number of walks. A further easing of restrictions meant that September and October were as near to “normal” as anything has been this year. November was virtual. December was limited to six and at the end of the month we had a nearly nine mile walk thinking about the journey of the Magi which provided recordings for an online Epiphany Walking Church.

As I write (early February) we are back in lockdown and can’t even have our “rule of six” walks. But rather than go back to the virtual walks we are offering one to one walks (that complies with Covid regulations) where I walk with individuals. The first of those is happening later this week.

So what has Walking Church achieved in this strange year? During the eight physical (not virtual) walks we’ve had an average of eight participants. Not bad, bearing in mind the restrictions the rule of six imposed. We’ve been

posts about the walks.

We’ve explored the beauty of the Teme Valley. We’ve heard about its past and its present. We’ve thought about the faith of Mary, Elijah, the Magi ... We’ve looked for signs of the Kingdom and thought about healing. We’ve enjoyed each other’s friendship and benefited from the exercise.

It’s not been a first year that any of us would have chosen, but richly rewarding nevertheless and we look forward to see what the next twelve months brings.

Robert Barlow

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The power of silence



Friends War Victims Relief Committee assisting refugees leaving Marne. Photo credit: Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) in Britain

I was interested by the invitation in TemeTalk to try silent prayer at Kyre Church. Silence is the basis of prayer for members of the Religious Society of Friends, Quakers, who are both spiritual and religious.

It was founded nearly 370 years ago in Cumbria by George Fox, a 25 year old shoemaker who had spent years travelling to try and find the meaning of religion. He was dissatisfied with organised religion and what he saw as its abuse of power at that time. He discovered he had an inner light which allowed him to communicate directly with God. And the best way to do this was through silent prayer. So he started the first Meetings for Worship where followers could meet in silence.

The format remains the same today; Quakers meet on Sundays, and other days, for an hour's silent prayer occasionally broken by someone's thoughts or a prayer. Fox believed that it was in the deepest places of the human spirit where people would find their faith. There was no need for priests or sacraments, religion should be plain and sincere. So Quakerism became a way of life rather than a confirmed set of beliefs. He refused to doff his hat because only God could claim his reverence. He refused to use titles because everyone was equal in the sight of God. He sought uncompromising honesty, sincerity, simplicity of lifestyle, non-violence and justice for all, high born or low. He refused to take oaths because he spoke the truth at all times. He would not even swear an oath to the sovereign as head of the church. Because of this, Quakers were disbarred from entering parliament and from join-

ing the armed forces. Hence many Quakers became bankers or manufacturers.

His view of alcohol was quench thirst but do not become drunk! In those days drinking beer or cider was safer than tap water.

Pacifism is a cornerstone of Quakerism; Quakers will not take up arms against fellow human beings. But during the two great wars, many were doctors, nurses and stretcher bearers, drove ambulances or did whatever else they could to help. They joined the Friends' Ambulance Unit or the Friends' War Victims Relief Committee.

The Quaker United Nations Office defines the principles of Quakerism as integrity, equality, simplicity, community, stewardship of the earth and peace.

So if you decide to join others in silence at Kyre church, maybe you could contemplate these principles. And if you struggle with sitting in silence for long, think about this. In the days of Quaker prison reformer Elizabeth Fry, Meeting lasted for two hours ...and she had 11 young children to keep quiet!

Averil Opperman, author, While It Is Yet Day, a biography of Elizabeth Fry



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Census day is 21st March

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Go to census.gov.uk for more information

Word of the month

ERINACEOUS

Erinaceous sounds like a homoeopathic remedy but actually means 'like or pertaining to a hedgehog'



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Rochford News

Continued from page 5

Tish Mills

We also said farewell to **Tish Mills** (née Patricia Rosemary Ann Lanman), the seventh of nine children born to George and Lily Lanman.

She trained as a nurse in Kidderminster, where she lived after her marriage. In Kidderminster her friends and colleagues knew her as Pat, but in Tenbury she was known as Tish or Auntie Tisha to her many nieces and nephews. In 1971 she moved to the RAF base at Hartlebury as an industrial nurse and in 1973 she re-trained as a midwife. After nearly 20 years as a midwife she retired, but she continued working as a locum at the family planning clinic and helping to run a back clinic. Her need to care and look after people never left her, despite having health issues of her own. She cared for many of her family when they were unwell. She also worked at St Michaels College, looking after the foreign students. She travelled widely, to Gambia, Sierra Leone, Kenya, America, Spain, Holland, Greece, Ireland and Scotland.

After 35 years of marriage she bought a run-down house on Greenhill Close and decided to try life on her own. She loved her garden, flower arranging and sewing and made beautiful bridesmaid's dresses for the family. She

had a very full life in Tenbury. She helped in the hospital shop and was always keen to get involved with what was going on. She went dancing with Dan most Saturdays. She worked hard for Rochford church and helped Dan with the magnificent tombola at Rochford fête.

Tish will be remembered as that feisty little lady with amazing energy and motivation. In the last couple of years she has been suffering from dementia and she knew that there was something seriously wrong. But she didn't lose her need to help and the staff at Haresbrook became her new family, treating her with love and respect right to the end.

Charlie Lloyd. A few of the older residents of Rochford will remember Charlie Lloyd, who lived at Bank Cottage, Rochford and who died recently aged 75. He was disabled after being knocked down by a car when he was 21. His funeral was at Wyre Forest crematorium on 26th February.

Andrew Barbé

TemeTalk

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Drive-in opera in the rain

We stumbled across English National Opera's "Drive & Live" *La Bohème* on Sky Arts when we were scrolling through the television menu for something to watch instead of the ten o'clock news. Intrigued, we switched it on and found a live drive-in opera recorded last September in a car park at Alexandra Palace, the audience all shut up in their cars and honking their horns or flashing their lights instead of applauding.

In this modern day production of Puccini's classic opera the artists' garret is replaced by a group of camper vans in a car park. Rodolfo arrives through the audience on his Deliveroo bike before opening his laptop. Marcello, the artist, is a real hippy, his clothes splattered with paint. Mimi is sewing artificial flowers in another camper van.

And so Rodolfo and Mimi fall in socially distanced love. The opera is sung in English and the words reflect the times – he is unable to hold her tiny frozen hand or to kiss her, and they stand at opposite ends of the stage to declare their love for each other.

This is a much truncated version of the story, so barely have they been out celebrating with their friends, apparently in the middle of a Pride march with a Mr Whippy's ice cream van

standing in for Café Momus (Musetta arriving in an open top Mercedes) than Mimi is back in her camper van, dying beautifully, leaving Rodolfo to run through the lines of cars calling her name in despair.

The singing was sublime although the orchestra, perched high up on scaffolding behind the stage, sometimes seemed a little out of tune. There was also some hip hop dancing which didn't add anything to Puccini's score but obviously replaced the need for large numbers of singers all trying to stay two metres apart from each other.

Watching it from your car with the radio tuned to the right frequency to pick up the sound must have been a very different experience from ours. There were large screens on either side of the stage but the rain was lashing down so windscreen wipers would have been essential to see any action at all. But at least you could unwrap your sweets without annoying the people in the row behind!

We enjoyed it – having put it on "just to have a look" we stayed to the end. If this is the new normal, bring it on!

SG



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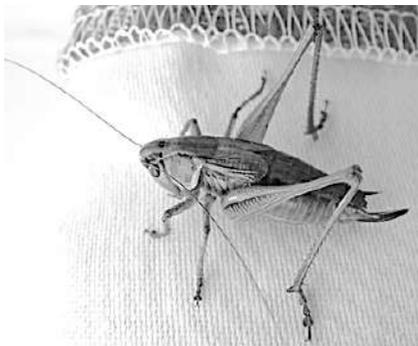
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Teme Valley Wildlife

This month's photograph is of a Roesel's bush cricket which hopped, or maybe flew, in through my open window last year, apparently to inspect my curtains. A hand-some bright green creature, it has only fairly recently arrived in Worcestershire. It is not the subject of this article though, which is about locusts, but I have never had the opportunity to photograph a locust so I hope you won't mind me using it instead.



Organisation's programme for locust control.

The locust in question is the desert locust and is found in 65 countries, most of which lie between West Africa and India. Normally it lives a solitary life, but after heavy rain it has the potential to breed extremely rapidly. In the right conditions huge numbers can develop simultaneously, these then rise up and form a

swarm. It is difficult to imagine the size of a swarm, because it may contain 40-80 million insects, cover an area of 460 square miles and fly a distance of 80 miles in a day.

Last year Kenya experienced the worst locust swarms for 70 years. A swarm the size of one square kilometre can eat enough crops to feed 35,000 people for a year, so the threat to food supplies was great. The present outbreak began during cyclones in 2018 followed by

Continued on page 24

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Continued from page 23

heavy rain and warm weather in 2019 which helped it to spread quickly. War in Yemen and Somalia prevented early control measures from being used, then coronavirus hampered later interventions. Although there are biological controls, using a type of fungus to kill developing insects, these are ineffective in the later stages of an outbreak so the main action at the moment is to spray with insecticide.

Usually, control is effected by prompt action at an early stage of the insects' development and by monitoring weather patterns against historical outbreaks to try and predict swarms. A plague of locusts is just as devastating today as the Biblical plagues in the time of the pharaohs. A tenth of the world's population lives by subsistence farming in the countries under threat and often there is insufficient money for bio- or conventional pesticides or for the aircraft that are used to apply them or for the control centres that monitor them. Last year the added pressures of political and natural disaster caused a crisis within a crisis.

Britain contributes funding to the UN's Food and Agriculture Organisation and a local firm contributes equipment and know-how, but how lucky we are that we don't face locust swarms here.

The next meeting of the Teme Valley Wildlife Group is on 11th March and will be conducted via Zoom, after our successful trial in January. The talk is "Bees, what's all the fuss about?" by Roger Umpleby. Please consult our website or Facebook page for details of how to join. We invite everyone, members and non-members alike, to take part. If you haven't joined us before, welcome.

Stephanie Mocroft

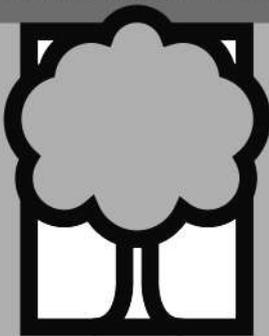
For up-to-date information on what wildlife is being seen in the area, or to give us your sightings or comments, visit our Facebook page. Our programme of events, bird survey and archive photographs are available on our website www.temevalleywildlife.co.uk We normally holds meetings on the second Thursday of the month. All are welcome. Contact us by telephone on 01568 750413 or by email at twwg@outlook.com

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The deadline for the next issue
is 18th March

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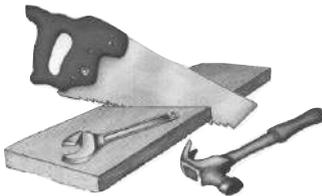
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What's on in Teme Valley South

March

3rd Wednesday Eastham Coffee Morning by Zoom, 10.30am

April

7th Wednesday Eastham Coffee Morning by Zoom, 10.30am

24th Saturday Spring clean of Eastham church and churchyard, 10am

May

8th Saturday Plant Sale, Hanley Court Gardens, Hanley William, 10am

11th Tuesday Hanley Parish Council meeting and AGM, Village Hall, 7.15pm

August

15th Sunday Eastham Riverside Fête, Eastham Memorial Hall, 12 noon

Send items for inclusion to Sandra Griffiths by 18th of the month
telephone 01568 750665 or email ronsmum@btconnect.com

TemeTalk Deadline for the April issue is 18th March
Don't forget – the sooner you send in your copy,
the more likely it is to be included



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