

Tidmarsh with Sulham Parish Magazine

SUMMER 2020



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A message from your editor – Jenny Cope

What a difference a couple of months makes . . . in the last issue I wrote that February has been the wettest on record and in this issue, we have just experienced the hottest and driest May since records began in 1927! Talk about from one extreme to the other!

As I write, we are emerging from lock down, self-isolation and making only necessary journeys whilst still maintaining social distancing. It will be interesting to see how things change over the next three months. Here in the villages we have seen real pulling together – the WhatsApp group proved to be a huge asset for sharing information, assisting with shopping and no doubt some new friendships formed too. This made me think that it would be a good idea to have a General Village WhatsApp group which could be used to publicise events that missed inclusion in the Parish Magazine or to just trade goods/plants or request assistance with collecting prescriptions or shopping if we experience bad weather or, heaven forbid, another 'lock down'.

At one point I felt we would not be able to put together a Summer issue as there would be very little content but you good folk rallied round and sent me some great articles and photographs so we didn't have to miss an issue and for that, I am extremely grateful.

On Saturday 30th May, Tidmarsh had a close-call with a group of travellers who attempted to move onto the Village Green. Fortunately, the vehicles towing caravans were unable to negotiate the tight turn from Tidmarsh Lane into the entrance and moved on to Goring Recreation Ground where they were eventually evicted the following Tuesday. I think it goes without saying that we all need to be vigilant and keep everything locked up. Speaking of which, I don't exactly practice what I preach and on the afternoon of Sunday 7th June whilst we were cutting our hedges along Mill Lane, a black Citroen Picasso with two men took the opportunity whilst they were stopped due to the hedge cutting clear up reducing the road to one lane, to rush in to our drive and grab the hedge cutter and two leaf blowers and make off in the opposite direction! The brazenness of this was incredible so please do be watchful at all times.

As things start to ease over the coming weeks it will be interesting to see how things develop. I do hope some of the pubs and restaurants will be able to open up in some form and also hairdressers, barbers, beauticians as many of them are self-employed and not receiving any government assistance and finding it very tough. The main thing is that everyone stays well!

Please send your stories, photographs, memories, notifications and anything you think will be of interest to our readers to the email addresses below or call us and we would be happy to take details over the phone.

Jenny Cope – 07747 775 900, jenny@candcsystems.co.uk

Karen Fountaine – 07867 854 420, karencoltmoor@talktalk.net

VILLAGE HALL NEWS

Like many community venues, due to Covid 19 the Hall has not been in use. We unfortunately could not hold the Annual General Meeting or the Spring Quiz but we hope that we may be able hold an autumn quiz and sell 100 club tickets later in the year.

All bookings have been cancelled until further notice, meaning that we have no income but still many bills to pay. If anybody has any questions please contact chairman Alan Maskell on 0118 984 5326.

We will post updates on our facebook page.



Twins born during lockdown (photo courtesy of John Haggarty).

THE PARISH OF PANGBOURNE WITH TIDMARSH AND SULHAM



THE CHURCH
OF ENGLAND

A Message from the Rector . . .

I know many of you are wondering when we will be able to gather once more in our village churches. The answer is that although we cannot put a date on reopening buildings once more, plans are being put in place for this to happen as soon as it can be safe to do so. There are strict guidelines for buildings opening to the public during the Covid-19 pandemic and we do know at the time of writing that we may not allow folks in until after July 4th at the earliest. We will then have to put in place adequate Covid-19 risk assessments and deep cleaning arrangements. This means the opening of church buildings throughout the country is likely to be a phased progression with some churches being able to open before others. We very much hope that in our parish we will have a facility for drop-in prayer as soon as we can, while gathered worship may take some weeks, or even months, more to resume.

You can join us for Christian worship in the parish weekly by Zoom, or with the wider church through streaming on the Oxford Diocese and Church of England websites: <https://www.churchofengland.org/more/media-centre/church-online>.

Please contact Vanessa on office.ptschurches@gmail.com for an invitation to Zoom worship with your local congregation.

News updates and our weekly lockdown letter are available on the parish church website – www.pangbournechurches.org.

Meanwhile please be assured that the church community is active on your behalf through the Covid-19 crisis. The Good Neighbour Scheme of volunteers is serving folks in all three villages and prayers are offered regularly by the ministry team and other members of church. Please ask if you would like particular prayer to be said for you and your loved ones. Phone 0118 984 2928 for both of these services.

The funeral was held on June 1st for Mrs Jane Griffith Williams with family attending. Jane is remembered with great affection by many throughout the parish, particularly for her long years of service to the community and faithful membership and support of local church and charities. We hope to have a memorial service in St James the Less church when possible.

I wish you all a safe and happy summer, and thank you for your prayers and for being good neighbours in these trying times,

with love, Rev Heather

GROWING UP IN WWII

The following article was written in the 1960s by Joyce Ayserst to help her son understand what it was like for a child growing up in the second world war. Joyce still lives in Sulham.



Just try to imagine you are a child of between 4 and 10 years old during the second world war, not fully realising that life was in any way 'different' as since you can remember, talk had been about 'war' or 'when the war is over'. When I was that age, I lived in Kingshill Avenue, Northolt, Middlesex. We considered ourselves lucky not to live in London where most of the bombing was taking place. Where we lived was rural. It was on a new housing estate which ran between two large areas of cornfields, safe enough you may think but when I tell you that behind my house was, what was then, Northolt Aerodrome one of the main Forces aerodrome of that time. London Heathrow Airport being but a few small Nissan huts and sheds! Behind the houses opposite was a munitions factory and at the end, a gun site with huge guns – what a noise they made in the night when enemy aircraft came over – Big Bertha we used to call the loudest one. At the end of our road was an army camp, so of course we were in quite a dangerous situation. Of course, at the time, we children didn't realise it and just felt sorry for the children in London being bombed out of their homes. We did have two bombs in Kingshill Avenue which demolished two semi-detached houses.

Have you ever thought when you go off to bed after a cosy evening watching the television, what it was like for children during the war? We would be packed off to bed early to get a good sleep in before it got dark and 'Jerry' (that is how we referred to the Germans) came over after dark. I remember even my older sisters and mother used to be in bed soon after listening to the 9 o'clock news – before some of you go to bed these days I imagine. Once it was dark, we had plenty to keep us on the run if there was an air-raid. We might be tucked up all nice and warm on a cold night, and through our dreams came, "come on, here they come again, we have to go to the shelter". Mother would wrap us each in a blanket, my elder sister would carry my younger sister and Mother would take me to the shelter which was half way down a fairly long garden. It was awful I remember, especially if it was

raining, or very cold and I was woken up properly and there was no change of me getting back to sleep again.

In the shelter we kept a tin of biscuits, (not to be used up too quickly) as they were rationed, so no getting through a packet at one sitting as children today like to) a flask of cocoa and I used to like the chewing gum we had, it was like cheating really as we didn't get many sweets, but it was considered a necessity down there to help us relax.

We were a family of six, my father was not away during the war, but worked all night at the Gramophone (now EMI factory in Hayes) some of his shift was spend 'spotting' – looking out from the roof of the factory for enemy aircraft. One night he thought our house had been hit and ran home off the way from the factory. As he ran through Hayes the windows in what was Payne's fell out. It was in the Winter and very slippery, when he got home, we were all still in bed, he was very relieved but thought of the awful journey he had home and didn't really see the funny side of it when we all laughed.

I don't remember making up the lost sleep, it must have made some of us very bad tempered during the day, when we had been disturbed night after night. Sometimes the Galloway family from next door but one used to join u in our shelter – that was a tight squeeze.

One night, as I was carried down the garden in a blanket, the whole field beyond our garden was like fairyland, small lights all over it, caused by incendiary bombs which had set small fires all over the cornfield.

One thing we children were pleased about was the time a bomb dropped in the field behind our garden, not harming anyone fortunately though we were upset that some baby chicks we had been given that day by the rag and bone man, died from the shock and our neighbour who kept chickens lost all of them. Over the years the hole made by the bomb filled with water and made a lovely pond, we used to catch newts and tadpoles there and really enjoyed ourselves. Sometimes on a hot summer day we would take a picnic over to the pond, a jam sandwich and a bottle of water and, if we were lucky, some lemonade power added to the water – no squash in those days (or all the crisps and goodies which are so essential to a picnic today! I am sure we enjoyed ours just as much though and feel free for the day playing among the haystacks and corn stooks. We weren't far from home and could make a quick dash if we heard the air-raid warning go.

I don't think we missed much with sweets being rationed, we had a quarter of sweets for the week. We would walk to a kiosk at the White Hart on the Ruislip Rod

GROWING UP IN WWII

on Sunday mornings, a really pleasant walk past the riding stables and a little cafeteria, and try to choose those sweets which could last a long time. Mostly my mother would buy them but when I got a little older I used to stay with my Grandmother for a couple of weeks and I was given my ration tokens to take with me and felt really pleased with myself to be able to choose what I liked for my younger sister and I t have a whole bar of chocolate each was very rare and such a pleasure when it was possible. We used to have to share all our sweets very carefully. To have a whole packet of anything to oneself was really luxurious and more appreciated than children today who I am sure don't get the same pleasure from such a treat.

I remember also the day we were to get our gas masks, which fortunately, we didn't every have to wear, but what a nuisance to have to carry that bulky box with one all the time. I was most upset as my younger sister has a 'Mickey Mouse face' gas mask! Mine was just like the grown up one. I thought this was favouritism on my Mother's part and sulked for ages until I realised that these were distributed according to age. We even had to have a large strong brown paper bag put away in a handy cupboard to put the cat into just in case of gas although thank goodness we didn't need to as he didn't enjoy the practice runs at all leaving us scratched from head to foot.

At one time toward the end of the war we had German prisoners of war based at the army camp at the end of our road. These men weren't at all as we had imagined 'Jerry' to be – a horrible monster out to get us all – but men much the same as our Dad's, Uncles and Brothers. They worked in the fields during the day helping with the hay making or potato picking and were a happy bunch, probably pleased not to be in danger any more.

They made us children little presents to while away the time I suppose, but we were so thrilled with these gifts. Carved brooches out of Perspex with our name or flowers painted on the, and well-made wooden toys. I expect some of you have seen the kind of toy, something like a table tennis bat with hens on attached to a string that is threaded through the middle, by gently swaying the 'bat' the hens are made to 'peck' the food in the centre. These were beautifully made from wood and designs burnt on them with a poker or piece of strong wire. I am very sorry now that none of these little gifts ever came through childhood – very often children are given items that they don't really appreciate the value of until it's too late.

At school we often had to leave our lessons which didn't seem too much of a hardship of course, out we would all march to the shelter, awful smelly places!



They were always cold and damp even on the brightest of days, eerie places lit by a paraffin lamp usually which gave off an unpleasant smell and we always imagined had burglars hiding in the corner. All seemed well at first, but after the sixth rendering of Old MacDonald and the same old stories the teachers used to relate, boredom soon set in. Should a bomb fall nearby it was more frightening not having Mum there and wondering if it was anywhere near our homes this time.

Then came the end of the war. What rejoicing and the parties we had in the street (Gurney Road) – “bring your own cup, plate and spoon” the invitations read and there were bonfires actually in the side-roads which must have caused a lot of headaches for someone but we didn’t care – it was over – and we could go where we pleased. Most of us hadn’t been to the seaside in our lives or holidayed away from home. We had stayed with our families, just thankful that our parents hadn’t decided to have us evacuated and hoping they wouldn’t decide to do so.

Bonfires of course were all new to us as there were no bonfires or fireworks on November the fifth for children then. We really enjoyed ourselves and so did the Mums and Dads, all dancing into the early hours of the morning but we didn’t care, at least when we did get to bed, we were there for the night – no more awful trips up the garden path to the shelter!

A.B.
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The April Book club could not take place due to lockdown. Members are looking forward to meeting again as soon as restrictions are lifted. Group members have made some recommendations for future reads:

Olive Kitteridge by Elizabeth Strout · *Three Hours* by Rosamund Lupton

The Rosie Project by Graeme Simsion · *The Other Half of Augusta Hope* by Joanna Glen

Reviews of previous book club reads:

COLD COMFORT FARM by Stella Gibbons

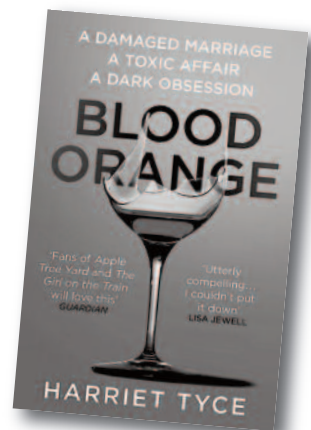
It's hard to believe this book was written in 1932, the dry humour and the character observations are very current. The story tells of Flora Poste, a privately educated, clever and witty girl left orphaned at nineteen by distant parents. With limited income and no intention of earning her own living Flora decides to write to all her living relatives to ask them to take her in. For various hilarious reasons she chooses to go to a family of cousins who live and work on Cold Comfort Farm. Flora decides it is her mission to take each of her relatives in hand and to rescue them from ruin.



This book took a couple of chapters to get into, the language is of its period and takes you into that time. A very enjoyable, clever and funny read.

BLOOD ORANGE by Harriet Tyce

The protagonist, Alison, is an attorney based in London. Her personal life is close to total collapse. Verging on being an alcoholic she is also cheating on her husband Carl and appears to be neglecting her 6-year old daughter. Alison is working on a murder case. Her client is a woman who has stabbed her husband to death as he slept. As the story progresses, Alison sees parallels between herself and her client.



This book has a plot that moves forward with perfect timing and clever twists. An enjoyable psychological thriller.

For more information on book club please contact Gillian on 9842 729.

1930s CHILDHOOD IN RURAL SULHAM

I was born in the pretty thatched cottage, then known as the Village Post Office where Grandmother was the Postmistress and where eventually she remained for 25 years. My mother had been schoolteacher at Sulham School for 10 years and after her marriage at Sulham Church she and her husband George found accommodation in Pangbourne, renting two small rooms in a cottage next to the railway line just under the bridge on the road to Whitchurch. But as was the norm in those days when a baby was due it was back home to Mum for the event. So on October 29th 1929 at 10.30 in the morning I made my entry into the world, apparently so I have been told making myself known with lusty overtures. After the usual convalescent period for the new mother, it was back to Pangbourne. The elderly lady who rented out her spare rooms must have been totally unprepared in having a small yelling infant within her four walls. Firstly at three months I had whooping cough, then at eighteen months another mysterious illness occurred which kept my parents awake for nights on end. So to stop my yelling they had to walk me up and down in turns during most of the night time, as I wouldn't sleep and they were worried it would keep the old lady awake (probably no doubt today it would have been diagnosed as a virus, but no such antibiotics in those days). But apart from all this I also was not adverse to find other ways to attract attention and I managed to try and devour the top off my mother's rouge pot (something the ladies in those days used to highlight their cheekbones) and got it stuck in my throat, and another new invention was an outside tap. I found this really interesting as when it was turned on out came a stream of water, however the owner of the property was not too amused when she found it had flooded her kitchen

When by the time I was two years old my parents had decided it was time to seek larger accommodation (nothing to do with me I hasten to add??) A cottage in Sulham had just become available and as Grandfather's health was failing and, as was obvious in those days if you were no longer able to work you had to make way for a younger fitter employee. So my father applied to rent this cottage, Grandmother gave up her post at the Post-office. And Grandfather retired as Chauffeur and we all moved into Silver Cottage in 1932.

My early years of growing up in a small village on an Estate were idyllic, the lanes were narrow and there were horse drawn carts still in the mid- thirties. Very few people had cars then, as most would not have been able to afford one, bicycles being the usual form of transport and real old boneshakers some of them were. However if a car did appear driven at a leisurely speed there would be a rush to the garden gate to see who this could be, no doubt it was the highlight of the week and many were the comments among neighbours.

We still had in the thirties many trades people call on a regular basis, bakers, grocers, milkman, butchers, (though most of us still kept chickens, ducks and the occasional pig if you were lucky enough to have a pig sty in the garden). The tally man would also make a regular weekly visit as most people could not afford to pay for items in full and to eke it out over a number of weeks was a great help, but woe betide you if you missed the regular payments (and some did). Also too the Insurance man would be a regular caller, folk in those days were concerned that when they left their earthly life they wanted to make sure there was enough money to, as they said “put them away to rest “decent. “

Of course we all had gardens surrounding the cottages and by today's standards would be considered quite large. So in spring and summer in the light evenings the men folk could be found digging, planting and tending their plot which kept most of us in vegetables for the coming year. In addition most rented an allotment on the Estate as well, so we were pretty well self-sufficient. It was also a time to stop and chat with your neighbours and take a break and enjoy a pipe of baccy as nearly all men in those days smoked and pretty strong stuff it was too, no one had been told it was bad for your health

In addition to the vegetable growing, fruit trees and soft fruits were all part of the garden and it was here that the women folk came into their own with bottling, jam making, pickles and chutneys, even storing eggs from their own hens in a solution of isinglass (it seem to work but they were a bit rubbery). So it was a busy life with little time for entertainment, but it was what most were used to and what was expected of them.

Of course we youngsters were oblivious to the daily grind and apart from spending days in summer collecting firewood to store for the winter or blackberrying, gathering mushrooms, sweet chestnuts and other country bounty as it came into season we had an idyllic childhood. Schooldays were very much the three “Rs” but one lesson we all enjoyed were the nature walks in fine weather and bringing back various items in season to put on the Nature Table. Homework was not heard of in our neck of the woods so after school, time was our own and we were free to roam the lanes and woods at our leisure. In wintertime there was snowballing or sledging often well into late evening when it was frosty and the moon was our only light. How different it is today.

We always had a dog to take on my rambles round the village so one always felt safe and there was also a cat or two to keep the mice and other vermin down as my father always kept chickens.

1930s CHILDHOOD IN RURAL SULHAM

There were of course other attractions within the village and which we youngsters enjoyed, one being the end of the summer term when we broke up for the summer holiday. School finished at mid-day and after a dash home for our dinner (not called lunch then) and a change into our Sunday best clothes we were back to the Rectory where we were able to play in the gardens. There was fun to be had on the swing boats, see-saw (shaped like a boat and held quite a lot of children) and the Razzle Dazzle, something I never had the nerve to tackle. This piece of equipment consisted of a tall wooden platform, which you climbed up to via a ladder. A stout cable was attached above the platform and it ran down to a lower post further down. On the cable was a strong leather oval shaped strap and you sat on this and held on to two wooden handles above your head. Someone would then give you an almighty push and you whizzed down at speed to the other end. Woe betide you if you didn't put your feet down as you neared the lower post to slow you down because if you were unfortunate to hit it you were sure to suffer a nose bleed. The village boys thought this great fun to push some unsuspecting female amid great yells from her, and laughter from them. Recently whilst visiting Lands End where there was a small play area for children there was a similar form of our Razzle Dazzle using old car tyres to sit on but it wasn't the same, as they say the old ones are the best., As well as the fun and games there was always tea in the Parish Room, presided over by the Rector and his wife, accompanied with several of the village women dressed in large floral aprons and wielding large brown teapots whilst distributing sandwiches and big sticky buns (MacDonald's had not been invented then). This building was in the Rectory Garden (known as the Parish Room) and mainly used for village events and other functions within the village such as the Mother's Union to which most women attended.

Schooldays for me began at the little village school where my mother, having been a teacher there herself was pleased I would be going there also, but I can't say I particularly enjoyed my school days much to her disappointment, but I always looked forward to the holidays when I could get out and about roaming the the woods and fields and other country pursuits and as previously mentioned the nature walks were the best bit.

Now all this sounds very idyllic and so it was, but in those far off days we didn't have all the technology that we all have at the touch of a button today. Television and Computers had not been thought of, and the best we could know about the big wide world was an ancient radio or the newspaper. Also too mobile phones were another thing unheard of back then, (what would we do without them today) and no one had a phone in the house except those that lived in the Manor

House, We did have a red Phone Box at the top of village but it was only used by villagers, usually for urgent matters such as phoning the Dr if you were really ill, and even then a decision had to be made, was it really nessesary?, as getting the Dr cost you money. I well remember a search for the coins which you put into the machine to get through. If you were seen entering into the phone box by a villager it was soon all round the rest of community, that it was probably something serious.

Holidays in strange lands were only for the better off, so a once a year coach trip to the sea-side was a real treat, but we were never envious of those that could afford it. because as they say what you never have you do not miss. However, we were very excited as the day drew near for our trip, and going to sleep the night before was very difficult. We had to be up early in the morning and walk to Panngbourne to climb on the coach. The journey seemed to take forever (three hours usually) but great excitement when we got our first glimpse of the sea. I always remember our first paddle, often jolly cold as we didn't always have a sunny day but we stayed in as long as we could. Then time for tea, usually as a great treat we went to a cafe on the front and then it was back in the coach by six o'clock and the three hour journey home. There was usually a stop on the way back at a pub as the men wanted a glass of beer but we youngsters were mostly asleep in the coach by then, but we had all had a great day and it seemed such a long time to next years outing,

Then along came World War Two when everything changed. I was nine years old when war was declared in September 1939 and life as I remember it would never be the same again but that as they say is another story.

Jean Harland

Jean celebrated her 90th birthday in October last year and lives in Tidmarsh with her husband John. Jean has contributed many articles to this magazine and also has a fantastic collection of photographs of the area that she has been collecting since she was very young, which have been exhibited locally.

An hour spent with Jean is always fun and interesting. I eagerly await the reopening of The Greyhound so that we can resume our regular chats over a glass of wine!

Jenny Cope



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The wet winter, such a problem for many, brought a spring with masses of blooms. They have been short-lived unfortunately as the lack of rain sees blooms fade quickly. Watering is going to continue to be important.

JULY

- Cutting back growth in hanging baskets can encourage new flowers and foliage and will revive the display. Cut back hardy Geraniums and Delphiniums to encourage further blooms. Prune lupins for further flowers. Pick sweet peas every ten days to keep them blooming. Dead-head your roses to keep them looking tidy unless your rose produces attractive hips
- Now is the best time to to prune deciduous Magnolia. Divide clumps of Bearded Iris. Take cuttings from tender plants for over-wintering indoors. Prune Weigela as soon as it stops flowering .
- Pinch out tomato side shoots each week and cut off any leaves growing below the lowest ripening fruit trusses. Feed with dilute tomato fertiliser weekly. If leaves look pale and yellow feed more regularly. Pick runner beans regularly to prevent them becoming stringy and to make room for developing pods. Water fruit and vegetable crops daily in warm weather.
- Clear weeds regularly, as they compete with your crops for nutrients and water. Plants fruiting in containers need high potash liquid feed.
- Check the leaves of gooseberry bushes for sawfly larvae and remove with water or by hand. Peg down runners on strawberry plants to create more plants for next year.

AUGUST

- Camellias and Rhododendrons need to be well watered at this time of year to ensure that next year's buds develop well. Watering is key for all plants, especially in pots even if it rains .
- Stake tall or top heavy Dahlias and Lilies to prevent wind and rain damage. Trim lavender plants after flowering to keep them compact. Don't cut into woody stems.
- Cut back the fruited canes of your summer raspberries, tying in the new green canes for next year's crop. Prune plum, apricot, peach and cherry trees now as it reduces the risk of these trees getting silver leaf disease.

Alan tends gardens in Tidmarsh and RG8 area.

During the Covid 19 crisis, financial support for the *Sue Ryder Duchess of Kent Hospice in Reading and the South Oxfordshire Healthcare Hub*, who care for and support patients and families dealing with life limiting illnesses, fell dramatically as charity shops closed and fundraising events were cancelled.

As a nurse working at the hospice, I wondered what I could do to help. Rather than just asking friends for donations or sponsorship, I remembered an online art auction I had been asked to donate art to previously. I talked the idea through with my family and we decided to try to set one up ourselves. We hoped it would give those stuck at home during this time an incentive to draw and paint and at the same time, an opportunity to contribute. Art is therapy.

I contacted all my artistic friends who then passed the message on to all their arty friends. Many very enthusiastic responses later we could see we had a chance of making our idea work. Daughter Hayley got busy setting up a website to display the artwork whilst I managed communications. Proof-reading, artwork and brainstorming support came from hubby John and son Christopher.



It has been a lovely way to inspire people stuck at home to get their paints out and will hopefully bring joy to the purchasers. It will certainly make a difference to patients being cared for by The Hospice.



The online auction went live on June 1st and ran for two weeks. I will give you an update on the funds raised in the next issue.

Illustrated here are just a few of the 100 beautiful works of art we received.

Gillian Alderton



DOROTHY PICKERING – LOCKDOWN 80TH BIRTHDAY

Many thanks for Dorothy for sending me this account of her birthday . . .

I had a very big one – I was 80 on 17th April and was meant to be away in Antigua with my daughter, son-in-law and my two grandchildren, 14 and 9, and of course that was all cancelled. I don't know if this will be too personalised for what you were looking for as insertions in the magazine but in fact I had the most memorable birthday – I think ever – thanks to family, friends and neighbours here in Sulham who absolutely came up trumps!

As I normally slob around in gardening clothes, certainly during the lockdown – I decided I needed to make an effort to make my day more special and out of the ordinary so put on some smarter clothes and lipstick, earrings and necklace. Thank goodness I did! First thing was FaceTime from Australia, followed by friends from South Africa then my daughter and her family on WhatsApp and then at 10am my neighbours came down my drive with their two young children carrying balloons all singing Happy Birthday and carrying a tray with glasses, an ice cooler, with a bottle of Cava, orange juice, a birthday cake with candles, matches to light them, knife to cut it, chocolates, another bottle of Laurent Perrier champagne and a beautiful, huge, pink hydrangea house plant. So we stood in the drive social



distancing drinking Buck's Fizz at 10 in the morning!!! What a wonderful start to an amazing day thanks to the neighbours on both sides of me. The phone never stopped all day – if I was on the house phone, the mobile would ring and vice versa! And I had flower deliveries, sometimes just dumped outside the gate so I didn't know they were there but luckily some friends called round with presents and retrieved them. I didn't quite run out of vases – in fact my birthday present from my daughter was two large vases – at my request – which she opened for me on FaceTime so I could see them with the children.

Other neighbours came round with cards, an egg freshly laid that morning and a beautiful hand painted birthday card of a goldfinch, and at tea time freshly made scones with butter, strawberry jam and clotted cream in little ramekin dishes, a bunch of tulips and a bottle of mini Prosecco!!!! What is so funny is that I am not normally a drinker as most people around here know. I don't like wine but DO like sparkling Prosecco, Cava, champagne etc and sweet things like rum punch. I had intended having a barbecue by myself with a rum punch at lunchtime but Friday 17th April was the first day we had rain for ages so I cooked sausages inside instead, cooked myself a decent supper for a change and had a Lamborghini cocktail beforehand which I discovered on holiday in Croatia a couple of years ago.

So, thank you to everyone. What I thought was going to be a non-event turned out to be quite fantastic. I think people took pity on me for reaching the horrendous milestone of 80 and also thought it was not nice alone.

It is not nice alone definitely but otherwise I have been gardening – not as much as I should e.g. every day as sometimes I just cannot get motivated – and doing quite a bit of biking and was given a little gizmo for my old granny type bike which gives me all the details, i.e. 20.7 miles on Saturday at average of 9.7 mph and top speed 28.5 (that's a bit scary!) and time 2 hrs 49 mins 45 secs. I grew up in Bucklebury in a house on the common which is next door to where Chris Tarrant now lives, so know the area very well as I used to bike to school and was horse mad and used to ride around everywhere with a girlfriend from Stanford Dingley who was lucky to have ponies when I didn't. So I have gone along the Pang valley up to Yattendon and home and also to Upper Bucklebury, down the Avenue and home through Tutts Clump. All very familiar territory and lovely memories.

I intended sorting our letters, starting writing my life history for my family but that has so far been put on the back burner as I have now discovered online bridge which I have been playing almost every day with friends and which has cheered me up a lot and has made lockdown that much more enjoyable. So too has the amazing weather.

LOCKDOWN IN TIDMARSH

Having been isolated now since mid-March, we can look upon the benefits and good times this has given us, rather than the negatives ones. Within a few days of our isolation a knock on the door brought us a neighbourly offer of help with shopping, prescription collection or other local errands. The offer came from Melvin and Michelle Mann, who live in the Barn development and this offer has been greatly appreciated.

New technology for us was ordering food online, which we have never done before. Meat from Scotland, fish from Grimsby and then our first order from Sainsburys. Everything was fine until the Sainsbury order turned up, Jane had ordered four oranges. Unfortunately she managed to tick the wrong box and to our amazement we had actually ordered four bags of mandarins, each bag contained 12, therefore, eating 48 mandarins, leaves us with no chance getting Scurvy in the next few weeks!! Food deliveries have been excellent and very well organised.

The garden has never been so well tended and vegetables and fruit are coming on well. An advert online was taken up and we obtained three fruit trees for under £20. They arrived looking more dead than alive, however, but having been left in a bucket of water for several days, they are now planted, recovered and are springing into life, or put it like this, now, they do at least have leaves and blossom.

Two Zoom Quizzes online were entered into in the first week of April, one with the family and the other for a charity, raising much needed funds. This was great fun, although coming last, we can rightly blame this on our lack of knowledge of films, so called celebrities and pop music of the last few years. Hopefully the next quiz this month, may have questions, which we can answer!

We are well, we have made some new friends, family not too far away and plenty to occupy ourselves. So – no complaints and we give thanks for our continuing good health and we wish the same to you all.

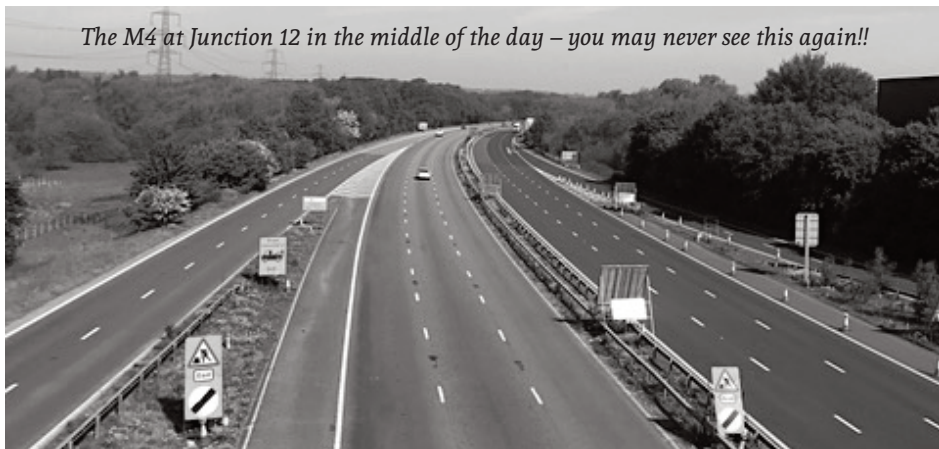
John and Jane Butler

NEXT ISSUE

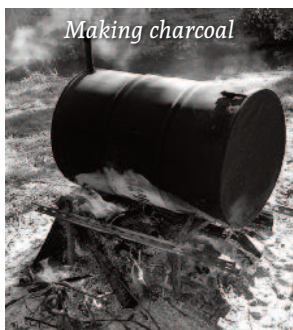
Do you have any news or an upcoming event you would like us to include in the next issue? We welcome any contributions.

Please email any items, including photographs, for the next edition of the magazine to jenny@candcsystems.co.uk by 1st September at the latest.

The M4 at Junction 12 in the middle of the day – you may never see this again!!



Making charcoal



Homemade charcoal in use



PHOTOS COURTESY OF PATRICK PUXLEY SHOWING HIS 'LOCKDOWN ACTIVITIES'.

Clearing the Sul





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VE Day Street Party, Sulham Lane (photograph courtesy of Patrick Puxley).



ST NICHOLAS CHURCH DECORATED FOR VE DAY

You may have noticed that roof repairs following the lead theft from St Nicholas have not been able to move forward as the roofing company contracted to undertake the work is not working during the lockdown. We are all hoping they can start soon.

Although services have been suspended during the Covid 19 pandemic the PTS church community is still in close contact with some 'Zoom' services taking place. We are all looking forward to being able to worship together in the future.

Here is a photo of our 1942 Dodge Truck WC52. Bedecked in Allied Flags, it sat at the end of our drive in Tidmarsh Lane. Neighbours and those walking or cycling past for some well needed exercise were invited to view it and read a little of it's history, use as a weapons and troop carrier in WW11 and maybe to make a voluntary donation to the Royal British Legion



We were due to be in Guernsey with this vehicle at this time, as part of the Channel Islands 75th anniversary of their Liberation Celebrations, but all the arrangements of travel, hotel and the celebrations too were cancelled some weeks ago. However, we hear from the Island organisers that they hope to have these sometime in 2021, so we might yet manage to take the Dodge there, as part of the postponed festivities and parades etc.

John and Jane Butler



Tractors parked out up Tidmarsh Lane on VE Day (spotted and photographed by Jenny Cope).

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Pangbourne and District Volunteer Centre

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Ecclesiastical

The Church of England Parish of Pangbourne with Tidmarsh and Sulham (PTS)

Rector of Pangbourne with Tidmarsh and Sulham

Reverend Heather Parbury
The Rectory, St James Close,
Pangbourne 0118 984 2928
rector@pangbournechurches.info

Church Administrator

Vanessa Saunders
Church office open
Tuesday and Friday
12.00-3.00pm 0118 984 5066
admin@pangbournechurches.info

Church Wardens for St James, Pangbourne; St Laurence, Tidmarsh; St Nicholas, Sulham

Jill Palfrey 0118 984 2698
Julia Sheppard 0118 956 1820

PCC Treasurer

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Councillors for the Purley on Thames Ward

Tim Metcalfe (Conservative) 0118 942 8001
Rick Jones (Conservative) 0118 962 3793

Tidmarsh with Sulham Parish Councillors

Jonathan Pearson (Chairman) 0118 984 4837
Steve Webb (Vice Chairman) 0118 984 4194
Jon Chishick 0118 984 3666
Colin Pawson 0118 984 2619
Andrew Madden
Sima Elliot 07720 469 316

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Gillian Alderton 0118 984 2729
John Butler (treasurer) 0118 984 2621
Jennifer Nutt 0118 984 2370
Karen Fountaine 07867 854420

Medical

The Boathouse Surgery

Whitchurch Rd, Pangbourne 0118 984 2234

NHS Direct

0845 46 47

Berkshire West Primary Care Trust

Reading office 0118 950 3094
West Berkshire office (Newbury) 01635 42400

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Jennie Currie

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Berkshire RG14 2RQ 01635 580 190
tidmarshwithsulham@gmail.com

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Steven Webb (vice chairman) 0118 984 4194
Colin Pawson (chairman of planning working group) 0118 984 2619
John Chishick 0118 984 3666
Sima Elliot simaelliot@hotmail.com
Andrew Madden
andrew.john.madden@gmail.com

District councillor

Gareth Hurley 07515 624899
or gareth.hurley1@westberks.gov.uk

Public Transport

Rail Travel

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National Rail Enquiries	08457 48 49 50
TrainTracker (train times/fares)	0871 200 49 50

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Cubs, Jane Barkshire	07811 446 488
Scouts, Simon Pickett	0118 933 1615
Rainbows, Helen Randall	01635 48765
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Email:	tidmarshvillagehall@hotmail.com

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