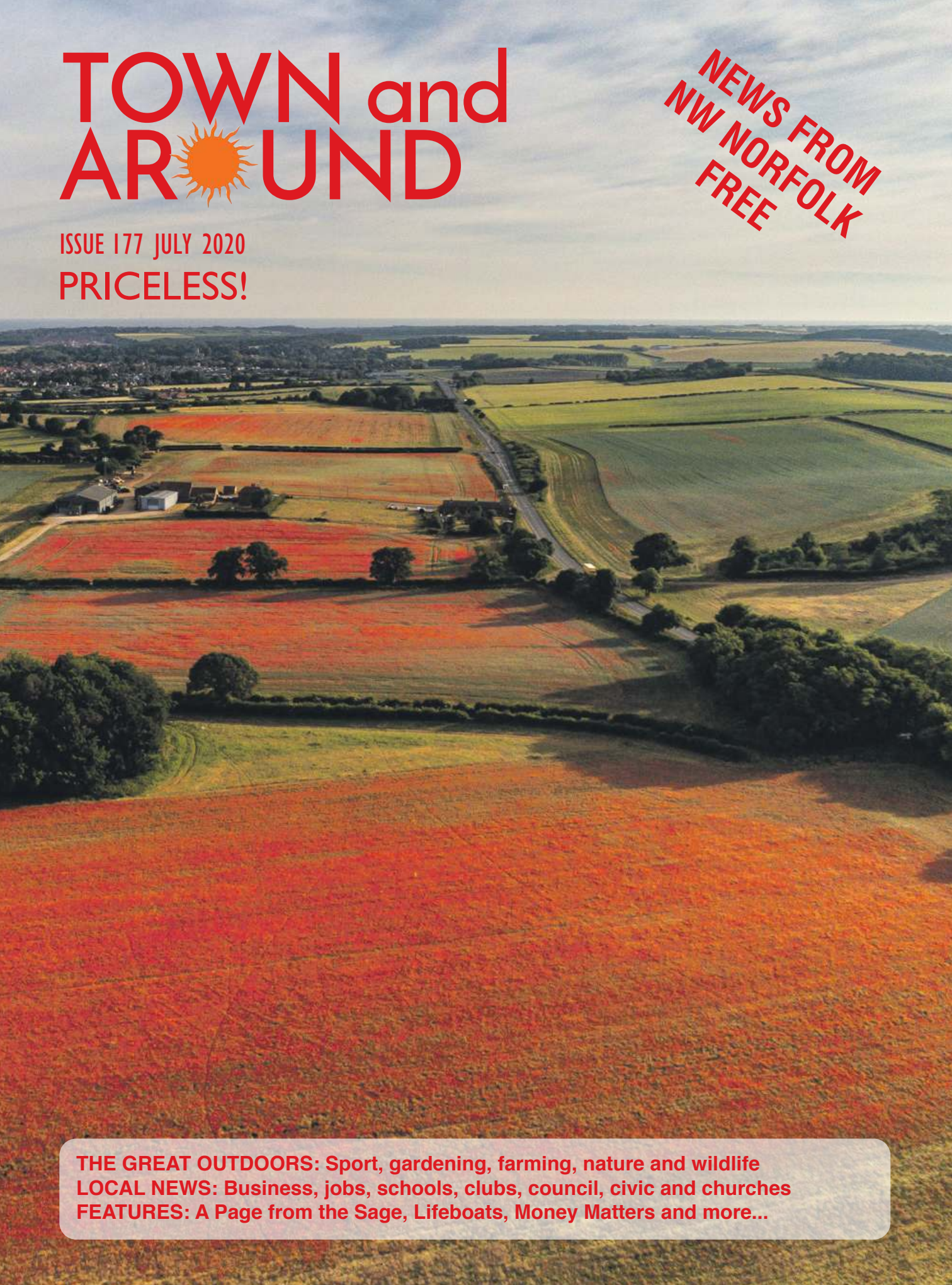


TOWN and AROUND

An aerial photograph of a rural landscape. In the foreground, there's a large field of red flowers, possibly poppies. A road runs diagonally through the middle of the image. To the left of the road, there's a small farm or house with a grey roof. The background shows rolling green hills under a blue sky with some clouds.

ISSUE 177 JULY 2020

PRICELESS!

NEWS FROM
NW NORFOLK
FREE

THE GREAT OUTDOORS: Sport, gardening, farming, nature and wildlife
LOCAL NEWS: Business, jobs, schools, clubs, council, civic and churches
FEATURES: A Page from the Sage, Lifeboats, Money Matters and more...

First word

I think poppies are a happy flower and judging by the number of people stopping to see and photograph the amazing spectacle adjacent to the A149 over recent weeks, I am not alone.

Pat Richardson tells me that the weather has suited the poppies this year, and with no chemicals used due to the conversion of marginal land to organic production under the Countryside Stewardship Scheme at Ken Hill, we can look forward to a repeat performance next year. Canny and David Jones told me that poppies take them back to their childhood days when all the fields had them. Robin Limb says: "Poppies are not an unwelcome sight and have very little impact on crop yields, and I suspect we will see more of them in the future as agro-chemical usage is reduced." At last - a subject upon which all agree!

Teachers have had to find new ways of communication over recent months and one local teacher has gone global with her maths and phonic lessons. Congratulations to Mrs Patnell whose story is on page 4.

Now that businesses are starting to open up we welcome regular and new advertisers to these pages, please consider them first when choosing suppliers and tell them you saw their advert here.

My thanks as always to all our contributors and our wonderful volunteer delivery team. You are all much appreciated.

It is a full magazine, I hope you all enjoy your read, stay healthy and safe and we'll see you next month.

With best wishes

Elaine

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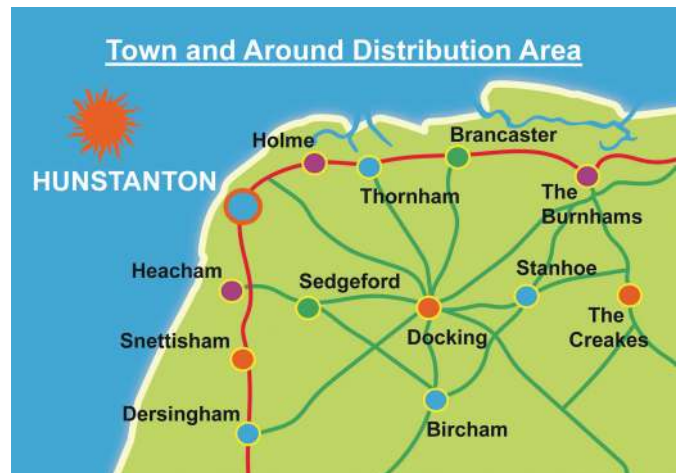
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2. Book your car in for a full safety check with a trusted garage.
3. Have your car serviced.
4. Book your car in for an MOT. Although this isn't mandatory, it's the best way to ensure you're not putting yourself or others at risk whilst driving.

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Mrs Patnell's Maths class watched around the world!

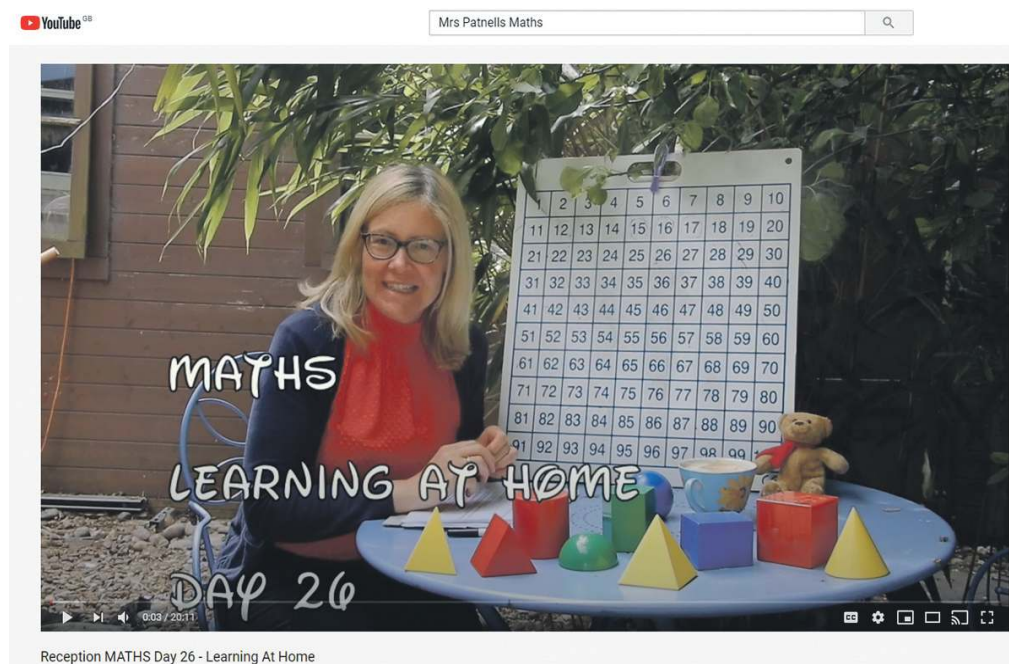
A Diocese of Norwich Primary Academy teacher's maths and phonics lessons have reached far and wide from right here in west Norfolk.

Jackie Patnell is a teacher at the tiny school of Sandringham and West Newton Church of England Primary Academy, which has under a hundred pupils on its roll. But that hasn't stopped her YouTube videos on maths and phonics from attracting almost a thousand subscribers.

Now a mother and son in Wiltshire have emailed the school express their appreciation:

"Just wanted to express my sincere thanks to Mrs Patnell on You Tube for her fantastic lessons. While we do not attend your school and live in Wiltshire, my son is of Reception age and we stumbled across a Maths lesson last week and since then have been watching daily. "The lessons are absolutely fantastic in terms of interest and timing, and we have now recommended this onto friends too! "One day we would love to say thank you, and once this pandemic is over, we will get a card sent to the school for her. Thank you again." Gemma & Albie.

"I knew my Reception class wouldn't reach their full potential if I simply gave them worksheets for maths and phonics," responded Jackie Patnell. "Four and five-year-olds would benefit more from seeing their usual



Mrs Patnell's channel can be viewed here:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCbA7JYIUeTKRwqxmqiLNjQ/videos>

teacher teaching in a similar way to what they were used to in the classroom. I had to adapt the lessons quite a bit in order to make them entertaining but still educational. This proved trickier in some more than others, especially during a lesson on time, when I had to time my chicken racing round my back garden (this took several takes - never work with chickens)!

"I received thank you messages from people in several different continents and this was when I felt really proud and

extremely happy to be helping out so many people that were suffering from the same struggles all around the world. I am about to hit 1000 subscribers to my channel and considering that I was hoping to just attract my nine pupils, this now feels like a real success and a great way to have worked during lock down."

Executive headteacher Jane Gardener said, "I have been so impressed with how all the staff have adjusted to managing learning remotely. Our wonderful team has supported our children

and families and we have received such positive feedback at this challenging time. Jackie's creativity producing line lessons for her Reception class in phonics and maths has been a tremendous success, with wonderful feedback from not only our own families but from those far and wide."

Sandringham & West Newton Primary Academy is a member of the Diocese of Norwich Education and Academies Trust www.dneat.org

£6,000 to help Snettisham Beach Sailing Club during the COVID-19 pandemic

Snettisham Beach Sailing Club has been awarded £6,000 of National Lottery funding from Sport England's Community Emergency Fund towards payment of essential fixed expenses during the on-going COVID-19 pandemic.

The outbreak of the virus and the consequent shutdown of businesses as of March 23 has left the sport and physical activity sector facing a period of uncertainty.

In response, on March 31 Sport England announced a £195m package to help the sport and physical activity sector through covid-19. Within the package is a £20m Community Emergency Fund, of National Lottery money to deliver immediate funding to those who have a role in supporting the nation to be active but are experiencing short-term financial hardship or the ceasing of operations due to the impact of coronavirus.

The grant will allow the club to meet essential permanent costs such as wages, insurance, licensing to see the club through this season so that it can re-start activity as soon as possible and continue providing the excellent opportunities for training and development of sailors of all ages and abilities as it has done for many years.

Club Commodore Adrian Tebbutt said: "I'm reminded of something that Seb Coe said about the time of the London Olympics; "Sport is

like an extra social service ; it binds people together and provides essential physical and mental benefits to the whole of society - and that's something we certainly need now! This grant money will help us continue doing that."



Pictured: A Tebbutt and J Ellison, Snettisham Beach Sailing Club

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Vicarage to become the home of King's Lynn Winter Night Shelter

The King's Lynn Winter Night Shelter will move to a new home this summer ready to welcome the homeless again in the autumn.

Planning permission has been granted to convert the old Vicarage next to St John's Church on Blackfriars Road into a shelter for the homeless. The new Night Shelter, St John's House, will open at the end of October.

The new building is much larger than the Night Shelter's former premises at St Ann's Fort and will eventually be able to accommodate more guests than has been possible in previous winters. Discussions are in progress with the Borough Council on how to open safely if Covid-19 restrictions are still with us in the autumn, to ensure that guests can have their own space and are able to isolate if needed.

Lucy McKitterick, Co-ordinator of the Night Shelter, said:

"St John's House is a really exciting project and will be a wonderful new temporary 'home' this winter for people who have none. It's the first vicarage in Norfolk to be used for this purpose and a great witness to faith in action in our community: we're here for people who have lost everything, and what better way to show them how much they are valued than a beautiful big house to welcome them. There's also a large garden with a lot of potential to develop as a community project, perhaps involving some of our guests: we look forward to seeing what we can all do!"

The key to helping the homeless is partnership working and we're looking forward to working with the Borough Council and partner agencies again this winter to make sure the new Night Shelter is here for those who need it most: and that everyone who stays here will have access to the best possible support to help them find a home of their own.

We had 104 people come to stay last winter: many will have been helped by the emergency plans under Covid-19 in the last few months which have seen many people housed who



might otherwise have waited months or years. The Council and others have done an incredible job to make that possible. At the same time we know that homelessness isn't solved yet: we want to make sure everyone has somewhere to stay this winter, and we look forward to being part of the solution for them in King's Lynn in 2020 and beyond."

The Rev'd Becca Rogers, Vicar of St John's Church, said:

"We moved from St John's Vicarage in April 2019, to a new vicarage in North Lynn. St John's is a wonderful house, but was always very big as a family home! We could not be more delighted that it is becoming 'St John's House': a place of welcome, provision and 'home', for those who find themselves homeless."

The congregation of St John's church, next door, where I am vicar, is also excited to see

the vicarage developing in this way. Some members of our congregation are homeless and previously homeless, and a number volunteer at the night shelter. As a church, we have a desire to be more involved, so this move feels very positive and right."

The Night Shelter will be looking for volunteers again in the autumn and will post updates from September in the local press, on the website www.klwns.org.uk and on Facebook @klwns.

To make a donation to support the work of converting St John's House into a night shelter this summer, please see the link on our website or send a cheque to King's Lynn Winter Night Shelter, St John's House, Blackfriars Road, King's Lynn PE30 1NT.

The picture shows volunteers preparing St John's House for use as a Night Shelter ... all observing "social distancing" of course!

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FRIENDLY BANKER BECOMES MORTGAGE BROKER

Joining Kings Lynn based Mortgage Brokers, Barrett Batchelor Mortgage Services LLP, is Dersingham resident Paul Malcolm.

Paul, who is married and has a daughter, previously lived in Hunstanton for a number of years, and is well known to local residents having previously worked for Barclays Bank for 17 years.

"I'm delighted to have been given this opportunity to join Nigel and James at Barrett Batchelor Mortgage Services LLP. I've known both of them in a business capacity for a number of years and have always admired the personal approach they adopt in their business.

"To me, the corporate world has lost its soul, and I'm looking forward to now being able to offer the same personal and friendly service that Nigel and James provide.

"The current pandemic is of course causing problems for many at the moment, but having been in the office for the last two weeks, I have seen how Nigel and James are assisting existing clients who have concerns during this difficult and worrying time, and how they are also advising people with new enquiries".

Paul can be contacted at the company's office in the Tuesday Market Place, Kings Lynn. Telephone number 01553 692800. Email: paul@barrettbatchelor.co.uk

Barrett Batchelor Mortgage Services LLP are directly authorised by the FCA and offer advice from the whole of the market that is made available to them.

Pictured right: James Batchelor, Partner at Barrett Batchelor Mortgage Services LLP with Paul Malcolm (seated).



Bishop of Lynn announces retirement

The Rt Revd Jonathan Meyrick has announced that he will retire from his post as Suffragan Bishop of Lynn on 25 January 2021.

Bishop Jonathan will have served in full-time ministry for 45 years with nine of those spent as Bishop of Lynn. He will be three months short of his 69th birthday.

Making the announcement to Diocesan Synod on 3 June 2020 – held virtually through Zoom for the first time – Bishop Jonathan said:

"It has been a huge privilege to serve in the Diocese of Norwich. I have been blessed in being able to work with stimulating, supportive colleagues, and in living amongst such welcoming communities.

"There have been so many individual highlights, starting with the 9 days cycling around the groups of parishes I have responsibility for in my first Lent here, but what I have valued most have been the regular acts of sacramental care that are a bishop's lot: confirmations; blessing new ventures in churches, schools and churchyards; the deanery pilgrimages of prayer; and the annual opening of the Mart in King's Lynn.

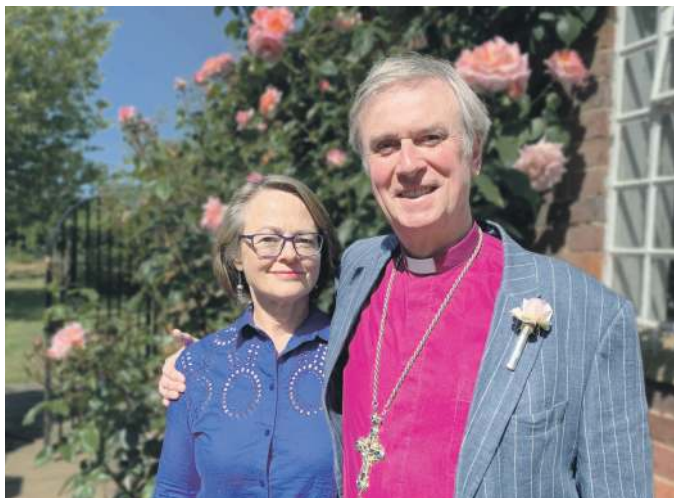
"Offering, in whatever ways I can, something of the love of God for everyone has always seemed to me the heart of Christian ministry. As always, I have received so much more than I have been able to give, and when the time comes, I will leave Norfolk and the Diocese of Norwich with a huge amount of gratitude and love for all its people – but of course, there are nearly seven months to go which will give plenty of opportunity for more of the same!"

Bishop Jonathan and his wife Rebecca, who is a specialist palliative care nurse at the Norfolk Hospice Tapping House, will be moving to a small village in north Oxfordshire, close to where he served his curacy in the mid-1970s.

Speaking following the announcement, the Rt Revd Graham Usher, Bishop of Norwich said:

"Bishop Jonathan has served the Diocese of Norwich with much energy, wisdom and dedication, together with his own unique and joyous style.

"We still have some time before his retirement in January next year and I know that we will want to find ways to thank Bishop Jonathan and Rebecca for all that they have given in the service of Christ amongst us and pray that they will have a happy retirement in Oxfordshire."



*Rt Rev'd Jonathan Meyrick with his wife Rebecca.
Image credit Diocese of Norwich*



Equity Release made simple

James Batchelor, Principal of Evergreen Equity Release Solutions, based in the historic Tuesday Market Place of King's Lynn, on making Equity Release simple

When my business partner Nigel Barrett and I first formed Barrett Batchelor Mortgage Services LLP in King's Lynn, our aim was to not only be professional and efficient, but also ensure the service offered was personal and friendly. We firmly believed this was essential to make our company successful – and was also what the people of West Norfolk required.

We were (and remain) determined to treat our clients with the respect they deserve and ensure they don't feel as if they're just a number, as can be the case when dealing directly with the big banks.

When we made the decision to extend our range of services a number of years ago by forming Evergreen Equity Release Services, it soon became apparent to us that this personal approach was probably even more important when dealing with people who were considering Equity Release.

Important decisions have to be made when people are approaching retirement – and using your property to raise funds could be the most important one of all. It's fair to say that Equity Release isn't for everyone, and part of the process I guide people through is explaining the other options available to them.

In addition to this, future plans and state benefits could be affected – it's not a decision that should be rushed into,

and it all depends on your individual needs and personal circumstances.

Having said that, more and more people are recognising the benefits of raising money this way, and it can be a very efficient way of doing so.

Many of you will still be very active in retirement, and still have plenty of plans ahead of you. If you no longer have a wage coming in, and your private pension may not have performed as you'd hoped for, the question that could be asked is – how can you fund your future plans?

For many, it could be a case of having the majority of your wealth locked up in your home. Where some will look to downsize their property to release some money (not a cheap option in itself when you take into account the fees from Estate Agents, Solicitors and potential stamp duty on the new purchase), more and more people are looking at the option of staying in their current property, and raising funds via

Equity Release to enable them to do so. One thing I'm very keen to do is explain to people how the Equity Release market has evolved over the last 25 years. You no longer have to sell your property to the Bank, so you still retain ownership of the property. Another important point is the 'No Negative Equity Guarantee' – which ensures the amount you borrow will never exceed the debt on your property.

Examples of how I've assisted people with their Equity Release requirements are:

- Raising funds to boost their income in retirement
- Clearing an outstanding mortgage on a property
- Property improvements
- Assisting family members financially
- Funding new or existing hobbies, such as caravanning

There are of course numerous other reasons you may be looking to raise money, and the importance of discussing such matters in detail with a fully qualified Equity Release Adviser can't be stressed enough.

A big concern I have is that many people decide Equity Release isn't an option for them without being in possession of the full facts. They could be missing out on a great opportunity because of this, and that's why I offer a completely free consultation without obligation. I'd even suggest you bring a family member or a trusted friend with you to the meeting.

If you're fast approaching retirement (Equity Release is available to over 55's only) or have already reached this milestone in your life and would like to explore the options available to you, I'm here to offer an expert helping and guiding hand.

To understand all the features and risks, please ask for a personalised illustration. If our service is of any interest to you, I'll be only too pleased to visit you in the comfort of your own home if you'd prefer.

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'Coal Shed' to become new unmanned Tourist Information Centre

Since the closure of Hunstanton's Tourist Information Centre due to the coronavirus pandemic, finding a way of delivering leaflets, maps and tourist information to holidaymakers in a safe way over the coming months has been something of a challenge.

A novel solution has been found in the 'Coal Shed' - the last remaining building associated with Hunstanton's Railway situated on Le Strange Terrace - which is being turned into Hunstanton's first unmanned Tourist Information Centre. The Coal Shed was converted into an art gallery with help from the Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk Council in 2008 and with support from Hunstanton Civic Society. The once-derelict building was beautifully converted into a gallery space to promote access to art in the Hunstanton area. However, the building has been unused since then but is set to get a new lease of life thanks to



Hunstanton Town Council in association with the Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk.

It is hoped the new unmanned Tourist Information Centre will be up and running within the next few weeks. The borough council and town council will be working together on signage to ensure visitors can safely access the

information they need to enjoy all aspects of Hunstanton and local surroundings.

Hunstanton's Mayor Cllr Tony Bishopp said:

"We are delighted to be able to bring this lovely building back into use once more as our new unmanned Tourist Information Centre and look forward to welcoming visitors back to our

lovely town.

I would also like to thank the staff who manned our Tourist Information Centre at the Town Hall for their hard work and dedication over the years and wish them all the very best for the future."

Cllr Elizabeth Nockolds, Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk Cabinet Member for Culture, Heritage and Health, said:

"It is very positive news that a centralised provision of tourist information will remain at Hunstanton, now in this great building, to inform and direct our visitors. We will work with local distributors, Hunstanton Town Council and partners to make sure the tourist information available at the Coal Shed best serves our visitors as the tourism industry responds to the 'new normal'."

Editor's note:

Political comment on this issue is on page 16.

Passwords with DNS Computer Services

Online passwords - we all hate them, but they form the backbone of security for most of our online accounts. This month we will be looking at how to create strong passwords, and how to keep track of them safely.

Until fairly recently, a password was all that was needed to gain access to many email accounts, online shopping accounts, member sites etc, meaning that if somebody knew or guessed your password, they were in.

In recent years we have seen the widespread implementation of multi factor authentication, this means that in addition to the password, an extra piece of information is required upon login, usually in the form of a code to be sent to a registered phone number or email address. This has drastically reduced the level of security breaches associated with online accounts.

But although multi factor authentication is now offered by most companies, it is not necessarily put into effect unless you actively request it. You can usually find this option in the security settings once you have logged in, well worth a check.

Once you have enabled multi factor where possible it is a good idea to look at the strength of your passwords themselves. Here are a few basic points to consider when setting passwords.

- Use a long password, the longer the better

for security

- Don't use the same password for more than one account/company
- Use a mix of numbers/letters/characters
- You can substitute letters of words for numbers, for example 's3cur1ty'
- Don't use names of pets, or family members, they are far too easy to guess.

Organising and recording your passwords

Passwords can be difficult to keep track of, with so many accounts for many different companies, it can be hard to remember which is which.

Without doubt, the most secure way to store your passwords is in your own memory, but with so many to remember, this is not always practical, or possible.

To write them down decreases your security dramatically, but to not record them decreases your own chances of remembering them too. There are many online offerings which claim to be able to organise and remember your passwords so that you don't have to remember them every time, usually using a 'Master Password' to gain access to the list

These type of services need to be treated with extreme caution, there are such companies who offer a legitimate safe

solution, but there are also scams, some companies will potentially take the information you are storing and use it to gain unauthorised access. It is therefore very important to ensure that you choose a company which has a good reputation and that uses a good level of encryption for your passwords. Your IT support provider will be able to help you choose and implement this correctly if you so wish.

If you feel more comfortable keeping your own record, it should be secure. Here are a few pointers to consider when choosing how to record your passwords.

Try to keep any password information either locked away, in a safe for example. Or, if stored on your computer, it must be in an encrypted, password protected folder.

Do not keep your passwords in a simple word document or excel spreadsheet, if your system is compromised, it will be very easy to access.

Try to create your own code for the names, instead of writing 'Tesco' try to think of something that you will understand but that someone else would not.

If you would like more information about good password discipline, or would like some help in setting up more secure passwords, please call DNS Computer Services on 07554018307



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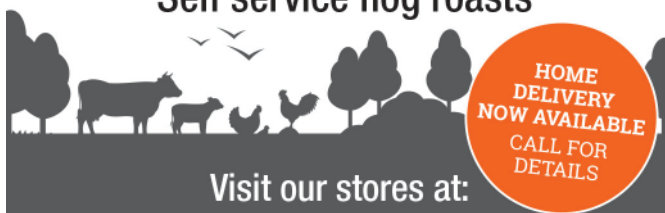
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UPDATE ON CORONAVIRUS BUSINESS SUPPORT . . . AND OTHER TAX MATTERS

By Kathryn Gigg Chartered Accountants, Hunstanton

1. 'Back to Work' Furlough replaces 'Stay at Home' Furlough

From 1 July 2020 the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (CJRS) rules are significantly amended to permit a "furloughed employee" to work part-time for their employer without compromising the employer's ability to claim under CJRS.

This is in stark contrast to the original scheme which did not permit a furloughed employee to undertake any work for their employer (other than training, subject to certain criteria). This change means that rigorous record keeping will be even more cumbersome and the CJRS2 claim process will, by definition, become more complicated.

From 1 July a claim can only be made in respect of an employee who was first placed on furlough by 11.59 p.m. on 9 June 2020 (i.e. the scheme will close for anyone who hasn't been furloughed for 3 weeks by 30 June); additionally, all claims under CJRS1 for the period ending 30 June 2020 must be made by 31 July 2020.

Hence, all those employers with numerous, but below 100, employees on furlough who have delayed processing their claim in the hope that the Revenue will waive the requirement to enter each individual's details in separately and allow an en bloc submission on one spreadsheet now need to ensure they do not miss the deadline at the end of next month.

The CJRS scheme has been extended to 31 October. Employees will not see any change to the level of support that they receive whilst on furlough but from 1 August 2020 employers will start to bear some of the cost of furloughing an employee, with the Government contribution to the furloughed wage starting to reduce firstly on 1 September to 70% and then to 60% on 1 October.

Dates to be aware of are:

10 June 2020: A CJRS claim cannot be made for any employee first furloughed on or after 10 June

1 July 2020: Flexible furlough

commences allowing employers to bring previously furloughed employees back to work part-time to suit the needs of their business. The employer will pay employees for the hours they work plus related employer's NIC & pension contributions. The Government will continue to pay 80% of wages to a cap of £2,500, plus employer NIC and pension contributions of 3% of qualifying earnings for the hours the employee doesn't work.

N.B. Note that the maximum number of employees that an employer can claim for in any period going forward cannot be higher than the maximum number claimed for pre-1 July.

31 July 2020: Deadline for employers to make a claim under CJRS1 for the period to 30 June 2020.

1 August 2020: Employer will pay employees for the hours they work. The Government will pay 80% of wages to a cap of £2,500 for the hours an employee doesn't work. Employer will pay employer NIC and pension contributions on ALL pay.

1 September 2020: Employer will pay employees for the hours they work. The Government will pay 70% of wages to a cap of £2,187.50 for the hours the employee doesn't work. Employer will pay employer NIC and pension contributions on ALL pay. Employer will pay 10% of wages for hours not worked to make up to 80% total up to a cap of £2,500.

1 October 2020: Employer will pay employees for the hours they work. The Government will pay 60% of wages to a cap of £1,875 for the hours the employee doesn't work. Employer will pay employer NIC and pension contributions on ALL pay. Employer will pay 20% of wages for hours not worked to make up to 80% total up to a cap of £2,500.

2. CJRS Claims correction facility

A lot of employers have found the CJRS calculations difficult. On 5 June HMRC added information to its guidance on how to correct errors previously made.

Where an over-claim has been

made this must now be adjusted in the current claim and tick a box to say a correction is being made. Beware: penalties may be applied if an employer does not notify HMRC of an over-claimed CJRS grant. Great care must therefore be taken with the calculations. However, the online error correction facility only applies to over-claims of CJRS grants. If an employer has under-claimed they must call HMRC on the Coronavirus technical line, whereby the Revenue Officer can put through a parallel claim for the extra grant and provide a claims reference number, a record of which must be retained for 6 years.

3. Self-Employed Income Support Scheme (SEISS): Round Two

SEISS has thankfully been extended for a further 3 months, to cover June, July and August. However, while the CJRS has been extended until 31 October, the Government have made it clear that this will be the final extension of the SEISS and no further payments should be expected.

The eligibility conditions for the second grant are identical to those for the first round and so if you have already made your SEISS claim, provided that the following also apply you should be eligible to claim your grant in the second round:

- Your trade continues to be adversely affected by Coronavirus (check the Gov.uk guidance on what is meant by 'adversely affected'; it is not necessary to quantify the impact of Coronavirus on the business and you do not need to rush to get your 2020 Tax Return filed [though it is always wise to file as early as you can] but evidence of the factors that caused the adverse impact should be retained); and,
- You still intend to continue to trade in 2020/2021 tax year.

Note that you do not need to have claimed in the first round for March, April & May to apply for the grant for June, July & August.

HMRC will continue to calculate the grant and apart from the lower percentage of profits at 70% (80% in Round 1) and the

lower cap at £6,570 (previously £7,500) the basis of the calculation will be exactly the same.

Your claim for an SEISS grant has to be made personally, as, as Tax Agents, we cannot do this for you which we are finding a lot of our clients would have preferred being unsure of the process. We can however guide you through the process if you wish.

If you are eligible and have not yet made your claim for March, April & May, you will need to do so by 13 July, and we would advise you to do so sooner rather than later to avoid the last-minute rush.

The claim for the second round of the Grant will again be made online but the HMRC portal for this application is not yet open. It is expected that this will be made available sometime in early August.

The SEISS payments are taxable in the 2020/21 tax year, i.e. they are subject to Income Tax and National Insurance; SEISS is a grant, not a loan, and is not repayable.

4. Did you want to defer your VAT but failed to cancel your Direct Debit?

Taxpayers that wanted to defer their VAT payments due between 20 March 2020 and 30 June 2020 but did not manage to cancel their Direct Debit in time can now claim a refund. The quickest way for them to claim, according to HMRC, is to submit a Direct Debit Indemnity Claim to their bank ensuring that they state they want to claim under the Direct Debit Indemnity Scheme (DDI). HMRC confirms that there is no time limit in making this request.

Otherwise, a claim can be made direct to HMRC but it must be remembered that due to Covid-19 restrictions Payable Orders are not being issued and it may therefore take up to 21 days for the refund to be received if the DDI claim process is not used.

5. Deferring your 31 July Self Assessment payment

The opportunity to defer settlement of your 31 July 2020 tax is an automatic offer and

optional. You do not need to be self-employed to be eligible for deferment, anyone in Self Assessment can use it. (However, do be aware that if you are still able to do so, you should make the payment, i.e. this deferment should not be used by those who are able to pay their tax as usual.) No interest or penalties will be charged on the deferred payment provided it is paid in full by 31 January 2021.

6. Local Authority Discretionary Grants Funds

If, as a small business you have found yourself in the position where you have not benefitted from any of the Covid-19 Government support so far, make sure that you contact your Local Authority to see if you could benefit from their Discretionary Fund. Each authority is tailoring this funding to local circumstances so visit their website to use the initial eligibility checker.

7. Have you moved but suffered a delay in selling your original home?

In light of the Coronavirus pandemic's impact on the housing market, HMRC has updated its guidance on exceptional circumstances for claiming SDLT refunds outside of the normal time limits. This will allow homeowners to apply for a refund of the higher rate of SDLT even if the previous home was not sold within the 3 year time limit, where that period came to an end on 1 January 2020. Once the pandemic is over the previous home must be sold as soon as practicable to be able to apply for the refund. The claim will need to include an explanation as to why the taxpayer was unable to sell the previous home within 3 years and decisions will be made by the Revenue on a case by case basis.

8. An Emergency Budget?

Reports in the mainstream press suggest that an Emergency Budget will be held in the week commencing 6 July but there has been no confirmation from the Treasury or whether it would be an update on the economy or would include tax measures.

In the Spring Budget on 11

March, the Chancellor had indicated that there would be a second Budget in the Autumn. However, during the Prime Minister's appearance in front of the Liaison Committee on 26 May, he mentioned that the Government would be bringing forward its economic recovery package in late June, early July.

As we are currently experiencing the worst health and economic crisis to hit us since WWII, and with the resilience of British business on the floor and Brexit trade negotiations not going well we shall have to wait and see!

9. CGT on Residential Property: Don't overlook deemed disposals

From 6 April for any chargeable disposal of residential property a tax return must be filed, and tax paid within 30 days of 'completion'. There are numerous situations in which a disposal occurs for CGT purposes even though there is no contract: everything from gifts of property, declarations of trust and partnership changes. It is therefore important to get into the mindset that the new rules do not bite on a physical 'completion' but potentially apply to any actual or deemed disposal, with or without such completion. There are exclusions from the new rules but they are very limited e.g. 'no-gain no-loss' transfers (such as between spouses or civil partners) and if you are a UK resident you are absolved for the requirement to file a 30-day Return if no tax is payable on the disposal. But, take care as the changes to the rules on exemption for 'principal private residence' gains may mean that tax will, in some cases, be payable where previously it wasn't: particular care needs to be taken with mixed use property.

10. Construction: a change to the diary

The domestic reverse VAT charge for building and construction services, postponed last year, was due to take effect on 1 October 2020. In stop press news, the charge has once again been postponed and will now come into effect on 1 March 2021.

11. Was it a gift or was it a loan?

The Coronavirus pandemic is

resulting in a lot of inter-generational gifts and loans, and care must be taken regarding the correct recording and appropriate tax treatment. Take advice and ensure there is supporting paperwork in every case. Confusion frequently arises as to whether a "gift was a loan" or vice-versa, and such misunderstandings can have different Inheritance Tax treatment and different understandings between family members as to their ultimate shares of the Estate.

12. Protect yourself from scams

Everyone needs to stay vigilant about scams, many of which are mimicking Gov.uk messages. In order to obtain information about how to recognise genuine HMRC contact search "Scams" on Gov.uk.

If, having read through the information provided above, you require advice, please contact either myself or my assistant Nicola Tarry FCA on 01485 534800 or email

kate@kathryngigg.co.uk if we can assist in any way.

Mrs K H Gigg FCA

Caution: The information listed above is for general guidance only. You should neither act, nor refrain from action, on the basis of any such information. You should take appropriate professional advice on your particular circumstances because the application of laws and regulations will vary depending on particular circumstances and because laws and regulations undergo frequent change. Whilst I endeavour to ensure that the information contained herein is correct, neither I nor my firm shall be liable in damages (including, without limitation, damages for loss of business or loss of profits) arising in contract, tort or otherwise from any information contained in it, or from any action or decision taken as a result of using any such information. © Kathryn Gigg 2020

Kathryn Gigg

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A Page from the Sage

Well here we are again, another Page from the Sage for July 2020 issue no 177, I hope you are all getting on alright together.

Bagot Goats

Let's make a start talking about the Bagot goats that I had suggested the council put up on Hunstanton Cliffs to eat the grass and weeds. I would like to thank Diane Westwood for all her information about these goats, I have found out since that West Norfolk and King's Lynn council have a policy of no animals on their land; that is why they do not have circuses on the playing fields at Hunstanton and the Walks at King's Lynn. North Norfolk Council do not have this policy, that is why Cromer are allowed their goats, they now have twelve more goats to add to their herd, they are certainly a big tourist attraction at Cromer. I reckon the weeds and grass will just have to stay on Hunstanton cliffs.

Whilst I am writing about the cliffs, there has been another fall of rocks, there are two big signs at each end of the cliffs telling people to stay away from them but people still walk close to them, sit on them and fish from them, take note - those notices are there for a purpose.

Wash Barrier

What an interesting write up by Robin Limb, agricultural consultant; a barrier across the Wash, as Mr Limb says this idea of a barrier has been thought of many times as a lot of other things, 200 years ago on the Boston side of the Wash there was some nice sandy beaches, and people were told sea water was good for you so at Freiston Shore near Boston two hotels were built near the shore, Plummers Hotel and the Marine Hotel. Everything went well whilst the sand was there, but then the mud started creeping in and that was the end of that venture.

Then an idea came up to drain the Wash and build a large city there and the city would be called Victoria after Queen Victoria who was on the throne at the time, but this never came about.

In 1933 Malcolm Campbell, the speed boat racing driver, wanted to race speed boats from Boston to Gibraltar Point near Skegness, there have been so many ideas on what to do in the Wash like a bridge from Hunstanton to Skegness, a harbour at Hunstanton and also a marina at Hunstanton.

In the late 1890s a boat took people across the Wash, also a hovercraft ferry and a boat ferry were thought of but nothing ever came of these ideas, the main reason being no one was brave enough to put the money up.

Wash facts and figures

Now for those who do not already know here

by
Dick Melton
01485 535658



are some facts about the wash, it is a winter feeding ground for over 300,000 visiting water birds, waders and wildfowl more than any other place in the UK. About 20km wide and 30km long, the Wash is a shallow bay on the east coast of England that opens up into the North Sea, it's the largest estuary system in the UK. In the summer the various habitats provide breeding grounds for many species of birds including avocet, redshank, oyster catcher and little tern.

Five rivers flow into the Wash: the Steeping, Witham, Welland, Nene and Great Ouse. Baby seals are born on the sandbanks and the Wash is home to more common seals than anywhere else in England. The rivers collect water from over 10% of England's land. There are a lot of different types of homes - called habitats - for wild plants and animals, salt marshes, saline lagoons, shingle banks and sand dunes. Beneath the surface, the waters of the Wash are teeming with life, including coral forming worms, starfish, crabs, cockles and sea anemones. When the tide is at its lowest it reveals sand and mud banks that cover nearly half the bay, it's an important nursery area for many fish including cod, skate and bass. It has the second largest area of intertidal (uncovered when the tide goes out) mud flats in Britain.

So I would just say to Robin, leave the Wash alone and let Mother Nature look after it as she has done for thousands of years.

The Golden Lion

Well now it looks like the Golden Lion will at some time have new owners; with the shutdown let's hope it does not stand there empty and derelict for many years as the Kit-Kat did.

The Golden Lion Hotel was first known as the New Inn, then for a short time as the Royal Hotel and the Commercial Inn; it was once nicknamed Le-Strange's Folly as it appeared to be built in the middle of nowhere, there being no other building between Heacham and St Edmund's Chapel ruins near

the lighthouse. The lighthouse was built in 1840 though there were lighthouses in that position before the present one.

The Golden Lion was built in 1846 and was opened for trade in 1847; when the Golden Lion was first built there were only two roads into Hunstanton apart from the main road (A149), they were Shingle Pit Road now Westgate leading down to the beach and a track leading from the Golden Lion north to the lighthouse and beyond to Old Hunstanton. The land behind and to the east of the Golden Lion was Glebe land, other land around the Golden Lion belonged to the Le-Strange estate.

The Golden Lion had about one and a half acres of walled in garden that was used to grow vegetables for the hotel, most of this garden land was sold off in the 1960s and one of the buildings that was erected on this land was the Northgate shopping precinct, United Counties supermarket that was opened by Katie Boyle the well-known television personality in 1969, and the flats took up the rest of the land.

Landlords and entertainment

The first landlord to keep the Golden Lion from 1864 to 1869 was Henry Whiting, during his tenure on 7th of April 1868 David Tatum and Thomas Rutland committed a breach of the peace by fighting on the premises, they were each fined six shillings with six shillings and six pence costs. The next landlord from 1871 was Thomas Mahon from 1875 to 1877, his wife Elizabeth Mahon took over from 1879 to 1896. Ben Rowell was the landlord from 1901 to 1912 and a Miss Kate Rennison took on the job of running the Golden Lion from 1916. Miss Dangerfield was the manageress of the hotel and then Captain Grey was the landlord; he also ran other hotels nearby like the Glebe and the Lodge at Old Hunstanton. In 1949 a Mr D Grey took over, he was followed in 1960 by Mr Peter Horsfall, then in 1961 Thomas Harman was landlord then on the 10th December 1962 Peter Horsfall was again the landlord. Horace Hinchcliffe and Norman Hinchcliffe were joint landlords from 1965 to 1967.

In 1967 there was an advert in the press from the Golden Lion saying that Piggie's Paradise is open every Saturday night in the Blue Room for dining and dancing till nearly midnight. If I remember right during the 1960s and 1970s the back room was turned into a music room called the Beachcomber. I have no more information till 1989 when a lady by the name of Denise Beedon was the manager, I know that in 1986 a gentleman called Phil was the landlord, if anyone can fill in the gaps with the names of missing landlords please let me know.

Coaches

When I worked at the Kit-Kat, Shearings, the company that own the Golden Lion, did not own a hotel in Hunstanton but they did own one in Cromer so the coaches would take their holiday makers out on daily excursions and of course on of their favourite places to visit was Sandringham, after their visit to Sandringham they came down to the Kit-Kat for lunch, this was twice a week. We also had another coach company do the same thing and they were Wallace Arnolds. Shearings were based in Wigan and I think Wallace Arnolds were

based there too.

In the nineteen sixties and seventies during the early days of summer in June and July before the children broke up, there was no food available at Sandringham so the coaches would bring their passengers to Hunstanton for a late lunch or tea; it would be nothing to see 30 to 40 coaches in town on Wednesdays and Thursdays, and on a Sandringham Flower Show day which is always on the last Wednesday in July you would get close on a hundred coaches parked up all over the town. The Kit-Kat had its own car park for ten

coaches in Seagate Road, there was a coach park in the Pit Caravan Site in Southend Road, then when the Sandringham Hotel was demolished in 1967 this site became a coach park. After 1984 when Harlequin House was built the coach park was moved to half way down Southend Road where it still is today but we get very few coach parties in Hunstanton these days.

Well that's all for now it will soon be time for some sanfar, let's hope you all keep well together and keep a troshin', all the best the Boy Dick, Sunny Hunny.

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Saving money and the Tourist Information Centre Hunstanton

By Political commentator Richard Bird, former Independent Councillor at Town, Borough and County

On 12th June Town and Around published an online article concerning the TIC produced by Hunstanton Town Council that also appears on page 10 of this magazine. The article generated a raft of comments and protests from the general public.

The responsibility to provide the TIC facility rests with the Borough Council of Kings Lynn, not Hunstanton Town Council. The Boro', used to have an office at the front of the Princess Theatre but closed it at about the same time as they decided that they didn't want to continue with the direct running of same at a yearly cost to the ratepayers of about £350,000.

Fortunately for us residents, the Princess Theatre is now run successfully by a local independent impresario at no cost to the local ratepayers. It should be said that KL&WNBC still own the freehold.

The Hunstanton Town Council (HTC) was approached to take on the role of running the TIC, and the staff were transferred (TUPE) to the Town Council. The agreement was made and what is called an (S.L.A.) service level agreement was initiated; the SLA was never enough to cover the staffing costs plus all other overheads, but the original idea was for the staff to make sales from stocks purchased by HTC in order to cover the shortfall. To the best of my knowledge this was never achieved for various reasons, and the domestic ratepayers of Hunstanton have been subsidising the TIC for years. Of course, many attempts have been made to balance the books by reducing the hours of operation, staffing levels and stock valuation levels but all to no avail. Whenever a proposal to initiate a business proposal was put some councillors would say "it's too risky to use ratepayers monies", while others would claim the enterprise to be in competition with the private sector. When applying for franchises, HTC was told that the town was too 'down-market' for

many of these products or services.

It was obvious to most that the KL&WNBC would be looking to make savings at this pandemic time, after all, the so called 'Jewel in the Crown' of Hunstanton would be losing huge revenues based on its freehold assets not giving a financial return. The estimated income to the KL&WNBC of about £2,000,000 p/a has taken a real beating over this period, bearing in mind that the Boro', cannot furlough staff and has been obliged to continue paying full pay to the entire staff not made redundant. The £43,000 SLA was already causing embarrassment to both HTC and KL&WNBC with both parties seeking to find a way out of the financial embarrassment. Hunstanton residents already pay the most in the whole Borough per household (sometimes Downham Market pays more) of all 101 Towns and parishes within it.

What will be happening in the short and medium term? Firstly, the staff, who have done a terrific job over the years, have resigned or been made redundant. That's already happened. The next steps, like so much in these troubled times, are still not completely clear, what is being hoped for is that the new library, yet to be built, on the bus station site, will hold the TIC office alongside many other new facilities.

With the Coal Shed Gallery, another Borough Council 'white elephant project', acting in the interim as an unmanned TIC fill in. I wish all involved with that project, good luck.

On closing, I would draw your attention to another badly troubled area, that of South Bedfordshire Unitary Council. Because of their investment of buying back Luton Airport which of course is virtually closed, they stand to lose £49,000,000 this year, that makes our problems look really tame.

Borough Council News - Heacham, Sedgeford and Fring

Terry Parish Leader of the Group of Independent Councillors

Take back the beaches!

The traffic order at South Beach Heacham is in force with all signs in place. The Ken Hill estate car park is in operation though planning permission has not yet been granted (this is allowed). So, no more free parking. I was opposed to the loss of free parking to residents, not particularly bothered about its impact on visitors. I would like to see concessions conditioned on the planning application. I would also like to see revenue from the new car park contributing to refurbishment and enlargement of the poor toilet provision at South Beach. If you have similar or other comments then the Application number is 20/00804/CU. Consultation 'deadline' is until 7th July although comments will be accepted later if I call the application in. Contact Borough, the Parish Council, me, post-haste if you have anything to say.

A lot goes on down the beaches, the communities of North and South Beach – all holiday homes most with restricted residency, nudge at planning restrictions which refuse increases in habitable size or question the splitting of plots and the sudden arrival of caravans. When counter arguments are made, the pig's ear of past development, particularly along North beach, is held up as a reason that anything should be allowed. Villagers – you need to take more notice of planning applications at the beaches and the activities of groups which organise to 'represent'

owners.

Planning in general: there are devious things going on across the Borough as developers and applicants wake up or delays in the application process are overcome. For example, Docking has got dumped with more houses it certainly didn't want and a developer in Gayton, not content with a doubling in allocation, wants a few more (both applications supported by officers by the way; the first scraped through planning committee, the second is due before committee, again, at the end of June after a fiasco at its first appearance. Anyway, what has this has to do with this Ward – beware and sharpen your protest pens.

Talking of devious things. I said last month that democracy was slowly happening at the Council. Many things can happen in a few weeks; democracy is now dead. Due to the Independent Group of 15 Councillors sending a letter to MPs and the press, asking for the high Covid related incidents in West Norfolk to be looked at and better testing to be provided (paraphrased, it was quite a long letter), the Leader of the Council doesn't talk to me or my group anymore. Consultation ended overnight. Since then communications with other cabinet members have been patchy. In addition, written minutes after planning committee have become even thinner – watch it on U tube is the cry – and when a decision went the 'wrong' way – it was refused, the



application was deferred until the next meeting (so we can try again – my interpretation).

Local Matters: Anyone got any comments (good or bad) about Highways current season of 'resurfacing' – tar and gravel? And weed spraying – the County does this twice / year with Glyphosate. Some local concern has been raised, particularly on its impact on wild flowers nearby, etc. Highways sent me the documentation to show it was safe. The European Union is reviewing its use, some countries, a few, have banned it. Whilst mentioning verges; they are important refuges for wildlife. Can people who live near them try and look after them rather than close mowing them AND verges in land deemed countryside should not be mowed regularly and left to seed, unless at road junctions.



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*According to figures from armedprevention.co.uk

Wild in Westminster



As I enjoyed a bacon bap outside the Old Town Beach Café in Old Hunstanton on a gorgeous sunny day, I reflected that Westminster has nothing on West Norfolk.

Nonetheless it has been good to return physically to Parliament.

As I write, I'm sitting in my small and imperfectly formed office in Westminster. People expect rightly MPs to be in Parliament, speaking in the Chamber, holding the government to account in committees, passing legislation, and representing our constituents.

Although social distancing limits numbers in the Chamber to 50 people at any one time, just by being here means I can nobble ministers, or work with colleagues, to pursue issues. Now there is even a voting system that does not involve conga queues snaking round Parliament. Those who cannot attend

for medical reasons are also accommodated through the system.

Our return is part of ending the lockdown and encouraging more people to return to work. With the re-opening of Creak Abbey and other farmers' markets, car showrooms, and then wider retail last month, the plan for recovery continues.

The next stage is one that I, along with many of you, have been longing for with hospitality, leisure, and tourism businesses opening from 4 July. Some people will understandably be concerned at lifting restrictions and this is subject to it being safe to do so.

In recent weeks, I've been speaking to business owners and their employees who are desperate to get back to work. It has been frustrating that my, and other MPs, efforts alongside the sector to allow holiday parks, leisure, and hospitality businesses to open sooner have not been implemented. The rationale is that every easing of the restrictions viewed in isolation may make sense but it is the cumulative impact that counts in terms of risk.

Everyone is craving some normality. Our fantastic pubs, restaurants, hotels and others have worked hard so they are ready to reopen. It is vital that they can welcome customers given the major contribution to jobs and the West Norfolk economy.

It is important that we do not drop our guard as we need to keep the R rate under control. Norfolk has been selected as one of the lead areas for the test and trace system with £3.7m of funding. The Public Health

Director has been working hard with the NHS and others on local outbreak control plans to identify high risk premises with localised measures for schools, factories, business premises, or other locations.

By following this model and controlling any outbreaks we continue the easing of restrictions.

In recent weeks I've been working with the Hunstanton Rail campaign, Councillor Andrew Jamieson, and Norfolk County Council on a bid to the Restoring Railways Fund. This fund has been set up by the government to support proposals to restore some of the Beeching cuts from the 1960s. We have submitted a proposal for a study to reopen the King's Lynn to Hunstanton line which would bring economic, environmental, and wider benefits to West Norfolk.

It's important to recognise this will be a long journey and to use a rail analogy, the train has not yet left the station let alone arrived. I hope we are successful in this first step and secure funding for transport and economic studies that lead to a business case.

By the time this article appears we will know if Norwich City are in the semi-final of the FA Cup and if King's Lynn FC have secured their deserved promotion. Fingers crossed for both!

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London SW1A 0AA
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www.jameswild.org.uk
[@jamesowild](https://twitter.com/jamesowild)

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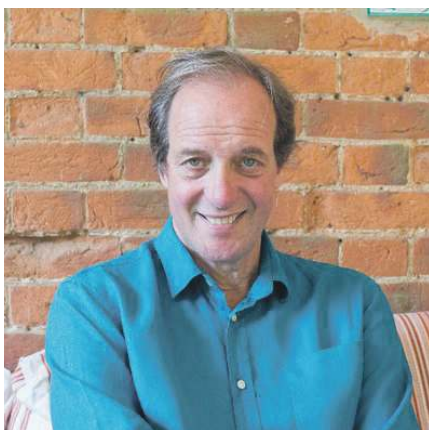
Andrew Jamieson County Councillor for the North Coast and Cabinet Member for Finance

Andrew.jamieson.cllr@norfolk.gov.uk

I have written before of the need to take the some of the lessons learned from Coronavirus and use them constructively. Transport is an obvious area. There are many ways that our daily activities impact our health and the environment along the Coast, so changing some of those activities will have a real impact. Globally, tourism represents about 10% of carbon emissions; however, 40% of emissions are caused by us moving around so this is an obvious place to start.

Therefore, I am promoting the idea of using the AONB as a test bed for some of these plans. If the project is funded, we will look at some or all of the following to help us work towards NCC's goal of carbon neutrality by 2030.

First, let's really make this an area where walking and cycling is truly welcome: as well as continued development of the Greenways project we are proposing to create a coastal cycle path to match the (uncompleted:- where



are you Natural England?) Coastal Path.

Second, a cycle path would make speed limits of 40 or 50mph even more of a necessity along the A149 east of Hunstanton. Additionally, there is rising support for a

20mph limit on many of the Coastal villages' back roads and lanes and a survey to see if there are other back roads that would be better suited to riders, walkers, and cyclists only.

Third, make cycle hire along the new routes ubiquitous, and promote the use of E-bikes for both leisure and work travel. Provide more park and ride, more electric charge points and promote electric buses to change perceptions about how buses are used.

Fourth, address a nationally important landscape as being part of, not in opposition to the local economy. Provide sustainable, low impact employment widely in the area to broaden the demographic away from a retirement/tourist hub. Increase off-season tourism but achieve it by linking increasing climate awareness to arts and culture.

Lots to do and think about here but there needs to be a buy-in and I would therefore like to hear from as many of you as possible, as your views will then feed into County Council

thinking.

Finally, I thought I would comment on the relatively high incidence of confirmed cases of Coronavirus in West Norfolk compared with the rest of the County. I am conscious that this is a moving picture and that there is still much to understand in relation to Covid19 and its spread in our communities both nationally and locally. By the time you read this we may have definitive conclusions from what is currently ongoing data reporting and analysis.

The following issues are currently thought to be likely contributing factors:

At the time the lockdown was put in place West Norfolk may have already had more cases in the community. The QEH had the first confirmed cases admitted – on 14th March. The first COVID related death in Norfolk was also registered at the QEH on 17th March. These cases were prior to the country going into lockdown, and therefore the infection rate is likely to have been higher within the community.

The QEH takes patients from outside west

Norfolk (including those from neighbouring counties such as Lincolnshire and Cambridgeshire) which will be included in the reported figures.

Daily commuting out of Kings Lynn to Cambridge and London is also thought to have contributed to flare-ups in and around the town, compared to more isolated areas in North or South Norfolk.

The information we have currently shows that in West Norfolk care homes, the percentage reporting outbreaks are at about the average for all Norfolk districts so it is unlikely that the increased cases and deaths are attributed to this sector.

Finally, the data on directly standardised death rates from COVID-19 are significantly lower for all Districts in Norfolk compared to England as a whole. West Norfolk is still the highest in Norfolk: but this may reflect some of the underlying age demographics and deprivation factors that we are contending with.

Keep well, keep safe and keep in good spirits.



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Hunstanton Town Council

Whilst Hunstanton residents have been avoiding each other in the nicest possible way - and for the right reason, Hunstanton Town Council have been working in the background and Cllr Maureen Howard wrote to Town and Around recently about what they have been doing during the lockdown.

Maureen is the Chairman of Community Engagement Working Panel and her report reads:

We needed to ensure that we maintain a beneficial service to the town and residents, despite the fact that several Councillors are themselves shielding.

The Clerk, Jan Roomes has continued to work throughout this unsettling period and has kept HTC working as effectively as possible within the restrictions imposed.

We applied for a grant of £1000, and made money available to small groups or volunteers within the town who might benefit from a part of it to assist them in the fight against Covid19. Each care home was contacted directly to see if they required any help. Only one, Somerset Villa, requested some assistance.

Via social media we appealed for unwanted laptops and tablets and were able to distribute five devices all in working order so that residents were able to keep in contact with their family and friends.

HTC donated £1000 to the Foodbank, and then subsequently £1000 to The Round Table, to help them with their initial outlay in supplying residents with a fantastic service, including shopping, collecting medical supplies, and generally assisting those who needed it most.

As the restrictions eased, face masks were purchased and a quantity were donated to The Round Table and the Foodbank for them to give to their most vulnerable contacts. We recognised that vulnerable adults

who are isolating during the Covid19 pandemic needed support and Activity at Home packs were delivered to help them keep active.

A new Facebook page was set up, dedicated to Covid19, and was updated with all relevant information from various sources, all designed to keep readers up to date with what was happening in the wider community as well as in Hunstanton; details were given advising which businesses remained open and those that were offering a delivery service.

Advice from the Government was posted as necessary, as well as updates on what Kings Lynn Borough Council were doing to help maintain the safety of the residents and visitors as more people choose to visit as the lockdown was eased. A popular post were the poems written by a key worker in one of the care homes, which reflected on feeling as the pandemic took hold.

Whilst no groups were using the Community Centre, our caretaker Steve has been busy decorating and refurbishing the interior so we can welcome our groups back with a fresh new look as soon as restrictions allow.

The Council held its first Virtual Council meeting during May, and it was good to get back to a variation of normality, and be able to be proactive again. A new councillor was co-opted on, and the Council is now almost back to full strength.

Finally, as the town reopens to more visitors HTC are working with NCC and BCKLWN to ensure that every safety aspect is applied to safeguard the visitors and residents, and on behalf of the town and HTC we would like to send a huge thank you to all key workers and a welcome back to all our social distancing visitors.

Do you have a story to tell? Call 01485 540620 or e mail editor@townandaround.net

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AN ITEM OF INTEREST FROM THE HERITAGE CENTRE

MTB 234 Brass plaque from the second world war

This months 'OBJECT' from the Heritage Centre is a Large Brass Plaque, which once adorned the Wheelhouse of Motor Torpedo Boat number 234 during WW2. MTB 234 was the Flagship of the 24th MTB Flotilla.



How MTB 234 came to be was that during WW2, the National Savings started a campaign of helping, in this case, the Royal Navy, to adopt or raise money to maintain or build new Warships. At the beginning of WW2 many ships had been sunk by enemy action, plus we needed escort ships to protect the Atlantic Convoys. We were not short of Sailors but ships had to be replaced.



The crew and Lt Peter Dickens receiving the brass plaque

These campaigns were not just for the Navy, there were 'Wings for Victory' for Bombers, 'Spitfire Week' for Fighter Planes, 'War Weapons Week' and 'Tanks for Attack Week'. Hunstanton was asked if they could raise monies for an M.T.B. costing £25,000, this they certainly did and raised £33,000 in 'Warship Week'.

A great achievement for Hunstanton, but in all 1,273 districts did the same between 1941 – 1942, Cities were asked for Battleships and Aircraft Carriers, while Towns and Villages would focus on Cruisers and Destroyers, and smaller Towns and Villages would be set a lower figure.

During the war a total of 1,178 warship weeks were organised, and £955,611,589 was raised. That money paid for: 8 Battleships, 4 Carriers, 49 Cruisers, 301 Destroyers, 25 Submarines, 164 Corvettes and Frigates, and 288 Minesweepers.

Back to M.T.B. 234, she was ordered on the 22nd February 1941 and Commissioned 12th April 1942. Built by Berthon Boats, Lymington, England. Her 1st Commander (for 1 month) was T/S Lt John Provost Perkins, RNVR, he did what is called today 'Sea Trials'.

He then handed over to Lt Peter Gerald Charles Dickens, R.N. Yes, you read it right, he was the Great Grandchild of 'the' Charles Dickens.

We all know of Charles Dickens the writer (who incidentally died exactly 150 years ago on 9th June 1870) but Peter's other relatives were very much drawn to the Royal Navy.

His Father was the Admiral Sir Gerald Louis Charles Dickens KCVO, CB, CMG, RN. His Brother was Commander Claud Edgar Charles Dickens RD.

Even his Wife, Mary Alice Blagrove, was the daughter of Rear Admiral Henry Blagrove.

When Peter Dickens was a Lieutenant in 1941 he was Mentioned in Despatches (MiD) for Naval Operations off the coast of Norway.

Again in 1942 he was MiD for never failing to set an example for devotion to duty. The same year he was made a Member of the Order of the British Empire for bravery and devotion to duty.

Also in 1942 he was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross for courage and skill in attacks on enemy shipping off the French coast.

In 1943 he again was MiD for good service in action on many attacks on enemy ships off the Dutch coast. That same year he was awarded a Companion of the Distinguished Service Order for successive attacks on enemy forces in enemy waters.

Before the War was over he was promoted to Lt Commander of numerous larger ships and ended up as Assistant Deputy Chief of Staff, Allied Forces Mediterranean (NATO). He died in 1987.

That MTB234 certainly served its purpose during WW2. The ship was sold off in 1945, and was converted into a House Boat called 'Freedom'. After a storm in 1991 it was irreparably damaged and was scrapped. This month's 'Object' was removed in the 1970's by a former Crew Member, O/SIG'S S.F. Haynes (D/JX 273398) and returned to the area (his name is etched on the back).

As there was no suitable place in Hunstanton for the Plaque, we had not set up a Heritage Centre, a safe home was provided by the Docking Heritage Trust at the Ripper Hall, Docking.

When in August 2013, the Hunstanton Civic Society formed a Heritage Centre it was



Lt Peter G C Dickens 1942 and 1960s



handed over and the Hunstanton Heritage Centre accepted responsibility for the Plaque's safe keeping and it is kept in one of the Harry Croad glass topped cabinets.

Further information is available in the files at the Heritage Centre.

My thanks for some data from Tim Snelling of Sedgeford, from research done in April 2010. Tim also researched other Village contributions to Warship Week, which can be viewed from our filing system on request.



MTB 234 under way from dock

Researched by Heritage Volunteer Tony Armstrong.

If you have other ideas for subjects to investigate and report on please let us know by contacting Tony Armstrong on armstrong@hunstantoncivicsociety.org.uk

Hunstanton & District Civic Society news

CORONAVIRUS

We continue to look towards the future and the eventual reopening of the Heritage Centre. We still worry about our older generation of volunteers and how dangerous it could be if we were to expose them to catching the virus. Some organisations not too far away from here have decided to play safe and are not opening until next year. It may well be that we should also be equally protective of all our volunteers but we have decided that we should leave these decisions until we know more and feel comfortable in the decisions we need to make.

COMMITTEE MEETINGS

The committee continues to meet every other Wednesday using the ZOOM program. Minutes are available for viewing on the website should you wish to know what we discuss!

RESTRUCTURING OF THE CIVIC SOCIETY

One area of discussion has been concerning the restructuring of the Society to become a Charitable Company limited by Guarantee not having Share Capital. This is because we have concerns about your Committees' individual liability being that H&DCS is an unincorporated organisation. We are now well on the way with the mechanics in place for actually carrying this out. As you might imagine, there is a lot involved in getting this done. Over the next couple of weeks, we shall be circulating some documents for our membership to read and try to understand.

It is rather convoluted for which we must apologise but it simply cannot be helped. Ultimately it will involve holding a virtual Special General Meeting of the Society which we hope at least some of you can attend whilst the rest we hope will signify approval in advance.

TALKS AND OUTINGS

Talks continue to be in abeyance for the time being. We have, however, made arrangements and tentatively booked the Town Hall for the 2020/2021 season of Talks. We just hope we are going to be able to utilise them. The same sadly applies to our Outings which we have, up our sleeves' ready to go whenever we can.

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Down: 1. Imitate, 2. Heist, 3. Rag trade, 4. Tibia, 5. Buttercup, 6. Rued, 7. Opinioned, 8. Sistine, 14. Persimmon, 15. Entourage, 17. Make good, 18. Killjoy, 20. Reputed, 23. Beard, 24. Regal, 25. East

Hunstanton and District Inner Wheel

Sue Trewin, Club Correspondent

Although normal service has yet to be resumed, we have made full use of Zoom to hold our business meeting and the AGM. It is a strange experience seeing friends on the screen and personally I was not over thrilled with seeing myself.

The most important event was the handover of the chain from the outgoing president to the new one, normally done during the last meeting before the summer break followed by a social hosted by the outgoing president.

We look forward to some normality returning in the autumn, we thank Annie for her leadership and welcome Hilary as our new president.



From left: outgoing President Annie Bagworth and incoming President Hilary Farrell

One of the positives, and there are several, of being in lockdown is the opportunity it provides to be creative without the restraints of an already full diary. The following pictures show what some of the Inner Wheel members have been up to.....



Hazel the artist



Jennie the dog trainer



June the hairdresser experimenting with colour



Rosemary's charity plant stall



Sue the bird watcher



Susan the gardener

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Does the Town Council offer value for money?

By John Maiden

Hunstanton has always welcomed visitors and some of these visitors have made Hunstanton their home, or in some cases their second home! Before the first world war my maternal grandparents went one better and bought four properties in the town. Shortly before the Second World War I had the good fortune to be born in one of them.

As a youth I often heard my elders saying how much better everything was before the war! There was plenty of evidence all around me to support this claim, not least because most of the fine Victorian and Edwardian architecture had survived, along with precious amenities from the twenties and thirties.

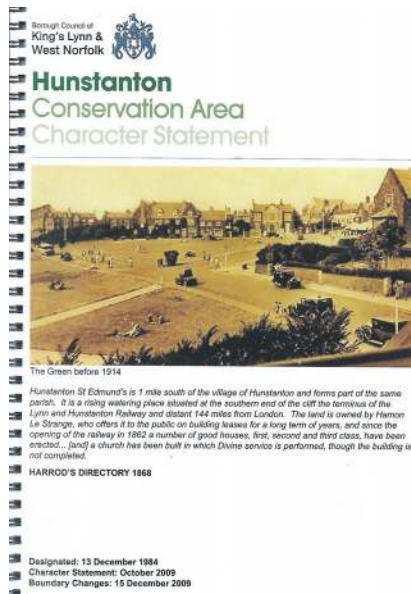
Unfortunately, in the second half of the last century my home town lost much of its character as fine buildings were demolished, while amenities, including the railway, were lost. When the town celebrated its 150th birthday in 1996, and the older generation displayed their old photographs of Hunstanton in its heyday, there was a growing awareness of the need to show more respect for the town's heritage.

The following year the Capital Challenge project gave a taste of what could be achieved with the Boston Square Sensory Park, but it failed dismally with a half-baked attempt to



improve the High Street.

It took a fire and another lost opportunity to get things moving in the right direction. In 2002 thousands of petitioners against the 'hangar' were ignored by a majority of town councillors and by borough planners, in spite of the fact that 'The Green' had been in integral part of a Conservation Area since 1984. It was in response to this assault on local democracy that a Civic Society was formed.



In 2009 the Conservation Area was extended after consultation with the Civic Society and the Town Council. At the same time the Borough Council published a well-researched 'Character Statement'. On page 26 of this document the importance of properties along Sandringham Road is emphasized. The last paragraph reads as follows: "The Convent of St Teresa and 29, on the east side, are a continuous group of turn of the century carstone houses in substantial gardens with important trees and front walls."

This should have been enough to ensure that the character and appearance of this area would be protected, but in 2014 an application was submitted to build a chalet bungalow in the substantial garden of 29 Sandringham Road. When planning permission was refused by the Borough Council, an appeal was made to the Secretary of State by 'Heista Real Estate'. The Planning Inspectorate upheld the decision to refuse planning permission, but this did not stop an application being submitted by another applicant in 2019, which was to build a 'bungalow', as opposed to a 'chalet' bungalow.

The Civic Society recommended refusal and this was supported by borough planning officers. Sadly, the Town Council's

recommendation for approval ignored the Character Statement and the reasons given by the Planning Inspectorate for upholding the decision taken in 2015 to refuse planning permission. This meant the application had to be decided by the borough's planning committee.

Most members of this committee are, at best, only day trippers to Hunstanton, so it is extremely doubtful if many of them had read page 26 of the Character Statement before they voted in favour of approval. It would appear that the only member to speak in favour of refusal was Terry Parish, a Heacham Ward councillor.

Once again, Hunstanton Town Council has scored a spectacular own goal, almost on a par with its support for the 'hangar'. It could have been avoided if members had understood the purpose of the Conservation Area Character Statement, or if they had simply endorsed the comments submitted by Hunstanton & District Civic Society.



Perhaps it is time for councillors to extend their consultation process, which is currently restricted to smokers, voting with their fag ends on a single issue. Important as more trees are, especially in a Climate Emergency, the wider electorate might want a say on whether or not the Town Council offers value for money...

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Round the bend with Dean Baker

I'll put you on my diary! Or Nat King Cole says it right!

I have always carried a diary for work. Just a good old fashioned page a day. I have progressed to a mobile phone and I have a laptop, but diary is still a vital piece of my kit.

This years is grey. It has 20 on top and another, 20 underneath. For the past 3 months I've passed my diary as it lies in my corner of the kitchen, by the door next to the recipe books. I'd catch sight of it as I went to the fridge or the larder, to the tin that we keep the dog chews in. Occasionally, I'd brush the banana bread crumbs off it. Eventually, I think Mrs B squeezed it in-between 'Deliciously Ella' and 'The Kew Gardens Children's Cookbook'.

Now it's back, I'm back.

In the past my July article has dealt with carbon monoxide poisoning and the annual boiler service. And I see no reason to change. The only difference this year is that my customers have taken to running into the garden or the bedroom and shutting the door tight behind them!



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Don't forget if you have a holiday let you then you must have the boiler serviced and put up a carbon monoxide detector before re-opening.

And now, I'm off to find 'Those Lazy-Hazy-Crazy Days of Summer'. The year is still only half way through.....

Until August, all the very best
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Finding your family's past

Derek Smith

Researching family history has undergone a massive transformation over the past 20 years with the digital revolution. Millions of records are now online. New skills are needed to undertake research, more computer-orientated combined with a knowledge of social history and a detective's instinct!

I began researching my family after the death of my parents in 2002 and soon friends asked me to look into theirs. Within a short time, I was undertaking this research professionally. The work has taken me to the WW1 battlefields of France and Belgium and to New Zealand and has led to a few radio and TV features.

I would invite anyone, with an unexplored interest in their family who is uncertain as to how to proceed, to get in touch with me. A phone conversation can impart whatever existing family knowledge is already known after which I would undertake 2 hours research work (for a fixed fee of £30) which is usually a sufficient time to produce a basic family tree and the start of a story. Then, if greater detail and depth is required, we can negotiate further.



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The Barking Bugle - Walks with Pupstar

During lockdown my pawrents have had more free time which means more exercise for them and more walkies for me! Pawsome! We've been out exploring and have discovered lots of new walks and one we really like and have enjoyed doing a few times is the 7 mile Ringstead circular walk. Let me tell you all about it.

You can start this walk at various points but we prefer to park in the small car park at Ringstead, opposite the old School House where there is also a children's play area. You then turn left and walk up the High Street, following the road round the bend to the right. You stay on this road for about 15-20 minutes until you pass a windmill on your left. Keep going and ignore the signpost on the left which takes you to Holme. A few yards further on there is a signpost to your right which takes you down a wide farm track. From here you can see the sea in the distance!

Keep walking until you get to a quiet road. Bear left and walk about 200 metres and then you will see a sign on your right. Take this path and keep going until you reach the road. The signpost for the circular walk wants you to turn right up the road and then take another right at the next junction. We suggest you don't do this. Although the road is generally quiet it is narrow and not particularly easy to negotiate if you have a doggy stroller in tow.

We suggest you do the following instead:- just before you reach the first junction there is a gate advertising Courtyard Farm to your right. Go through the gate and into a field where you turn left. You will find yourself walking alongside the road but there is a fence so you are pawfectly safe! Keep walking around the perimeter of the field where the path bends to the right. Ignore the stile in the corner. A couple of hundred metres along there is another stile and a gate on your left. At this point cross the road and you will see the signpost for the walk leading you up a slight incline. Keep walking – the track is quite wide



here so there are no problems with social distancing. You eventually reach a road where you then bear left and soon you have to cross another road.

Walk up the track and keep going until you pass a green sign on your left showing you how to reach Castle Acre via the Peddars Way which is seventeen and a half miles – phew, I'd have to be super fit to do that!!! A short distance further on you follow a signpost on your right which states that at this point Ringstead is just one and a half miles away. Here you walk between fields and you keep going until you come across a quiet road with a few houses on your right.

At the bottom of this road are two signs saying Peddars Way South. Turn left at the junction, walk round the bend to the left and then take the next right at the junction. This takes you up Ringstead High Street past the Gin Trap Inn and the village store, and you will soon find yourself back at the car park where you started your journey.

This is a very nice walk and if you go at a gentle pace it should take you about two and a half hours. It is very well sign-posted so you shouldn't get lost, just follow the signs for the Ringstead Circular Walk. You can also download a copy of a map from our website at

The paths are mainly wide enough for a doggy stroller so there is plenty of room for social distancing. It is also a wonderful alternative if you want to avoid the crowds along the coast.

Please remember to only do long walks like this on cool days as we don't want you getting heat stroke! There are many areas where you will be exposed to the sun and there is no shade.

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Nature Notes with Roger

Some like it hot!!

Well, what a scorcher the last three weeks of May have been. In fact here in the east May has been the driest since 1862 with rainfall just 6% of the normal monthly average. It has also been the sunniest spring for the whole of the country since 1929 with a total of almost 600 hours of sunshine recorded. We have all been waiting to get out, and now as restrictions ease a little, at times it is even too hot for that. But I am not going to complain. Although we have been in lockdown, wildlife has not and seems to have flourished in the changed conditions. Many nature reserves have reported that without so much human disturbance birds have been nesting near to footpaths and trails and other 'non-normal' places, so managing this means that they may not open until the birds have raised their families.

At home a pair of House Sparrows has nested under the tiles at the corner of our neighbour's roof. It is a very untidy nest, and feathers, straw and other nesting material keeps spilling out and catching on the cobwebs along the gutter. They are obviously not very house proud parents. The youngsters are ready to fledge and keep peering out into the bright wide world, which must look very daunting. The young Starlings, however, have spilled out of their untidy nests under nearby roofs and in holes and crevices in the line of oak trees bordering our road. They are now wheeling around in noisy gangs following their parents, and when they land in the garden worry and bully them into giving them some food, although they are quite capable of finding their own. The Magpies I wrote about two months ago have successfully raised three young which fledged on 25 May. Two of them followed one of the parents to the trees at the end of the road, and the third stuck with the other parent in the vicinity of the nest. They will remain with the adult birds until September and then be told to go and find their own places to live.

Thanks to the recent easing of restrictions I have been able to get out for more extended days in the



Male Yellowhammer

field, and have enjoyed some delightful walks along country lanes and round some farmland trails. Despite the dry weather there have been excellent displays of wildflowers; Red and White Campion and Ox-eye daisies in profusion, while along the hedgerows, the Hawthorn blossom, which only lasts for about three weeks, has made way for Elderflowers and Dog Roses, the latter with layers of branches cascading down the side of the hedge like a floral waterfall. I have also had excellent views of Cuckoos, Turtle Doves and Marsh Harriers, as well as the rather secretive Bullfinch, and have been particularly pleased to see several Yellowhammers.

The Yellowhammer is a bird of open farmland and lowland heaths with lines of hedges, and, for me, is best appreciated on warm sunny days when the bright yellow head of the male bird stands out like a sparkling jewel in the hedge. As a lad it was one of the first birds I learnt to identify outside our familiar garden birds, and has always remained one of my favourite birds of open downland along with its drowsy call so resonant of long hot summer days. I always think, however, that it does take quite a stretch of imagination to interpret it as "a little bit of bread and no cheese". In 1850 the Reverend Francis Morris, an ornithologist of some note, wrote about the Yellowhammer, "This is

one of the most common birds that we have in this country, and is more particularly observable in the summer time, when there is not a hedge alongside of which you can walk without seeing one after another flitting out before you." Unfortunately this is far from the case these days, as there have been so many changes to the countryside over the last 170 years. The loss of so many of our hedgerows, and the lack of grain in open yards in the winter has led to a quite drastic decline in their population. However, I have been encouraged by the numbers of fields with wide headlands left for wildflowers, many smaller fields bordered by hedgerows, and several small copses growing in the corners.

Exactly a year ago Joanna wrote about changes in the countryside and our seeming

obsession with making it neat and tidy, and she also wrote about roadside verges being cut more frequently or at the wrong time of the year. This year the verges have looked particularly wonderful with poppies and other wildflowers, but I have come across two council cutters recently, shaving verges to the ground, now devoid of wildflowers and resulting in a loss of habitat for insects and birds. Since 2018 the organisation Plantlife has been running a campaign to highlight the importance of our roadside verges, and trying to arrange for county councils to 'cut less and cut later', giving seeds time to set, and so manage them on a more wildlife-friendly basis. Let's hope Norfolk County Council will take up the challenge.

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With no open gardens this month, let's share our knowledge, gardens and produce with those around us. So many people are trying to grow edibles for the first time. You are now able to have friends in the garden. If you have an excess of vegetables or fruit plants that you have been successful with, pass some to friends. Often these are fine to be potted up and will thrive in a large enough pot on a doorstep, balcony or patio.

It has been a very changeable Spring and early Summer, lots of sun and dry weather. Your plants could do with some help at the moment, as could the wildlife. Watering, feeding and deadheading are key to keep everything looking good this month.

Watering:

June has been super hot at times, plants suffer if we let them dry out. Water the soil around the base of plants rather than their foliage. This directs water straight to the roots. Water your baskets and containers thoroughly during hot weather. It is much better to saturate them when you can, rather than a small amount daily. Use water butt water if at all possible.

Raise lawn mower blades to reduce stress on grass during dry periods. Water with a sprinkler if possible and no water ban is in place. Keep bird baths topped up too.

Feeding:

Feed baskets, tubs and roses with a liquid fertiliser. Remember, every time you water, nutrients are being leached from the soil. When plants are in their growth phase, they need as much help as possible.

Vegetables and fruit:

If you have a raised bed, allotment or vegetable area in your garden, there is still time to sow kales, Redbor and Nero di Toscana are lovely. You can also still sow radish and carrots, french beans or beetroot.

Don't forget to harvest herbs for drying.

Divide rhubarb plants or plant divisions that a neighbour has passed you.

Fruit trees:

During June, fruit trees naturally drop some of their fruit, it is good practice to thin a little more by hand, generally by mid-July. This will increase your yield and allow new trees to have sufficient energy to create a sturdy framework too.

Bugs & beasties:

Look out for lily beetles, aphids and powdery mildew. Ladybirds, hover flies and lacewings, as well as the birds will help to reduce some of the more voracious bugs. Beware slugs and snails too! Often a spray of weak washing up liquid solution will address a lot of these issues, without chemicals.

Lockdown project:

Grasses

Leave an area of longer grass to the edge of your lawn, allowing it to grow to 30cm. This will act as a shelter to grasshoppers, lacewings and many other creatures. As well as producing seed heads for birds. Alternatively, plant taller grasses in the border for the same effect.

Try Calamagrostis or pennisetum for their beautiful seed heads, these last well in to autumn and even early winter.

Lots of basic TLC needed for the garden this month. Ensure you also sit back and enjoy too. Don't forget to stop and smell the roses!



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My memories of working in Egypt

By Robin Limb, agricultural consultant

In 2014 I joined a group of Saudi Arabians and Egyptians on a tour of British Sugar's Wissington factory. After the formalities were over, I was invited by their senior executives to undertake consulting work in Egypt. My first reaction was to run a mile, but after both my wife and my mother said I should do it, I went ahead with the task. I had two days to get organised and on the plane.

The biggest challenge of all was actually getting there, via Istanbul, but Savola gave me business-class travel with Turkish Airlines (which is a great carrier), and put me up in five-star hotels – the Radisson Blu in Alexandria and the Intercontinental hotel in Cairo. The 'Ex-Com' meetings with senior executives were the most inspiring, and with me being allowed PowerPoint time to offer a contribution to the proceedings. There were no rules at these meetings, and while the ranting raged, you just had to stand back and wait for it all to end. Eventually they paid me on time and in full.

Once I was on the ground, and into my comfort zone, I could not have encountered more friendly people. Sugar beet is grown extensively in northern Egypt, with the help of irrigation. It took me a while to get used to the culture: the pace of life is much slower than in the West, and at some point you have to take a step back and be patient. Visiting the sugar factory was more like a family reunion than a business trip. I am still friends with many of these people on Facebook to this day. At Alexandria sugar factory they had built a massive beet elevator entirely from re-cycled steel parts.

Without ground-water abstraction crop production would be impossible, more than a mile from the river Nile. Away from the Nile Delta, in the eastern desert region, south of Cairo, is an artificially created sugar beet growing area. Centre-pivot irrigators cover over 100 acres each, and there are over 200 of them. The combined contribution amounts to over 100,000 tonnes of sugar a year. It takes 20 minutes to get from one end of the estate to

the other on rough track roads in a sturdy four-wheel-drive truck travelling at insane speed. And don't assume they have antiquated machinery – they have state-of-the-art modern equipment.

One thing you realise rapidly is that water is everything: without water crop production is impossible in countries such as Egypt – whether it be flood irrigation from the Nile, or extracted sources from the ground.

Away from the tourist traps, Egypt is not a pretty sight, and is still classed as a third-world country by the WHO. Having said all that, I have rarely received more generous hospitality anywhere else in the world. Nothing is too much trouble for the Egyptians, and they will go to great lengths to ensure your safety and comfort. You rapidly become accustomed to police and army road-blocks, with officers wielding machine guns. After shifting uncomfortably in my passenger seat, I was asked to step out of the car. I assumed that I was going to be interrogated, but I was simply just shown the way to the latrine.

Egyptian sugar beet yields are only average by comparison to UK ones (c. 60tonnes/hectare), but their costs of production is relatively low, and a lot of hand-work is still involved. The ground-water resources the industry relies on are somewhat uncertain: they could be finite in nature, or being continuously re-fuelled by aquifers – time will tell.

My biggest challenge while working in the country, on three separate occasions, was that you could give all the advice in the world, but the officials were either unwilling or unable to adopt it due to a lack of government finance and internal politics. Being a temperate zone crop, sugar beet is not ideally suited to the climate in Egypt. At growing temperatures much beyond 25C the crop goes into stasis, so at 40C it starts to go backwards.

There is no doubt that beet growing conditions in Egypt are in theory close to ideal. Rich soils, constant sunshine, and ample water supplies. But there is a reluctance by farmers to adopt mechanisation because it is not as

efficient in crop recovery as harvesting by hand. There is a social aspect to this as well. Most farmers grow only about two acres of sugar beet, and the sowing and harvesting is all done by the family. The first time a machine touches the stored crop is when the truck with a grab-loader turns up to collect it.

It remains a serious challenge to introduce mechanisation to the industry. Several farmers have engaged with the concept, but they are currently in the minority. Economies of scale are helping to support these efforts, as the desert project illustrates.

Egypt is a captivating country, and despite all of its draw-backs, it is still the land of the Pharaohs, and holds a fascinating history. It is a Muslim country, and one must respect the culture of its population, despite it once being under British colonial rule. The country sits at a cross-roads in the Middle-East, between warring factions on all sides. I never failed to be impressed by the professionalism and manners of the people I worked with at the time during my stay. It may sound a bit facile, but my experiences were life-changing.

The 'take-away' message I suppose is that Egyptians are doing the best to boot themselves up by their shoe strings. There was once famous story of the marketing manager of the Bata Shoe Company that went to Egypt to investigate the potential sales opportunities. He came back and reported: "There are no market opportunities – none of the people



wear shoes." What he had failed to recognise and realise was that there was a massive un-tapped market for the sale of shoes.

Mosquitoes do buzz around your bedroom at night, and no matter how hard you try to avoid them, you still end up with endless bites on your face in the morning, but thankfully North African mosquitoes are non-malarial. Until you have actually visited the desert region, you really cannot begin to understand just how desolate it really is. People say it's just miles and miles of sand: no it's not. The desert area consists also of huge rocks, some of which weigh as much as your car.

In reclaiming the desert before cropping can begin, the rocks have to be cleared, and the land levelled using huge Caterpillar loading shovels. Once these operations are completed, the land is quickly transformed into a crop growing environment, and maize, wheat, soya, and sugar beet can thrive.

Photo: sugar beet harvesting machinery in Menia, Desert Egypt



Brancaster School news

Brancaster school has been open for vulnerable children throughout this pandemic. The home learning has been very crazy but we have all respected the choice.

Throughout the weeks it has got more and more unentertaining at home but soon enough the school opened up to year 6 and year 1's and reception. The school has accepted the fact of having bubbles (little groups that work and play together but stay apart from other bubbles). We must stay 2m apart which is just fine for us because we have a fairly big classroom. It is a bit of a squeeze in Thrift class who have more children and less room.

We Year 6s are very excited to be coming back and seeing our friends again and starting a new and exciting topic. When we found out about the news we were bursting with joy it is so great to be back and learning especially when we can see our friends and teachers.

It is also exciting now because we have new mini laptops and there is enough for one for each student because there are only a few of us in Samphire class at the moment. We clean them and use them every day for easy access for our work. Brancaster school has been amazing throughout this hard time.

At school, in Samphire, we have been doing work on our computers. Mr Lacey Hastings sends us work every day. In English we are doing instructions and sentences then after break we come in and have maths. In maths we are doing decimals; after maths we will read a book. After the book we will have lunch and lunch break. Then we will come in and wash our hands (we wash our hands a lot now) and do some topics that our teacher gives us and then it is home time and we clean our tables then pack away.

Thrift are learning about dinosaurs at the moment and are also really enjoying being back. First thing, the whole school does PE with Joe. Now there are more of us, we are doing it outside. Mrs Bocking has the computer next to her and she copies Joe and we copy her. We thought Mr King was going to join in today but he didn't!

We don't know what will happen next. Maybe some more children will come but we haven't any more space. We will have to wait and see.
Written by Faith, Eve and Chloe (Year 6)

Message from Mrs Bocking – We are all so proud of our children who have been, and still are, working really well at home or at school. It shows a great attitude, good learning behaviours and a real strength of character. Also, thanks to the parents who have supported the children and us, all the way through.

Message from Mr King – It has been really welcome to hear the sound of so many children around the school this week. They are clearly enjoying being back and have been wonderful. We look forward to a time when all the children can be back safely. As someone relatively new to the Federation, the lockdown has been a wonderful opportunity for me to catch up with lots of jobs that needed to be done. We have also been busy using some of the generous donations from the Brancaster community to improve the school - and I will join in the PE with class, but I had to make sure I didn't have a wardrobe malfunction!

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Royal British Legion VE Day fundraising

Neighbours watched as Hunstanton resident Colin Hurst braved the shave in his front garden for the Royal British Legion on VE Day. They donated nearly £100 and with further gifts from Mr Bun the Baker and Fred from Cypress Close, Colin now has £128 for the Poppy Appeal Fund that will be given to the Royal British Legion Branch based at Hunstanton's United Services Club. Mr Hurst said: "Thank you to all our kind hearted neighbours for their generous donations."



Pictured above Mr Hurst is about to be shaved.

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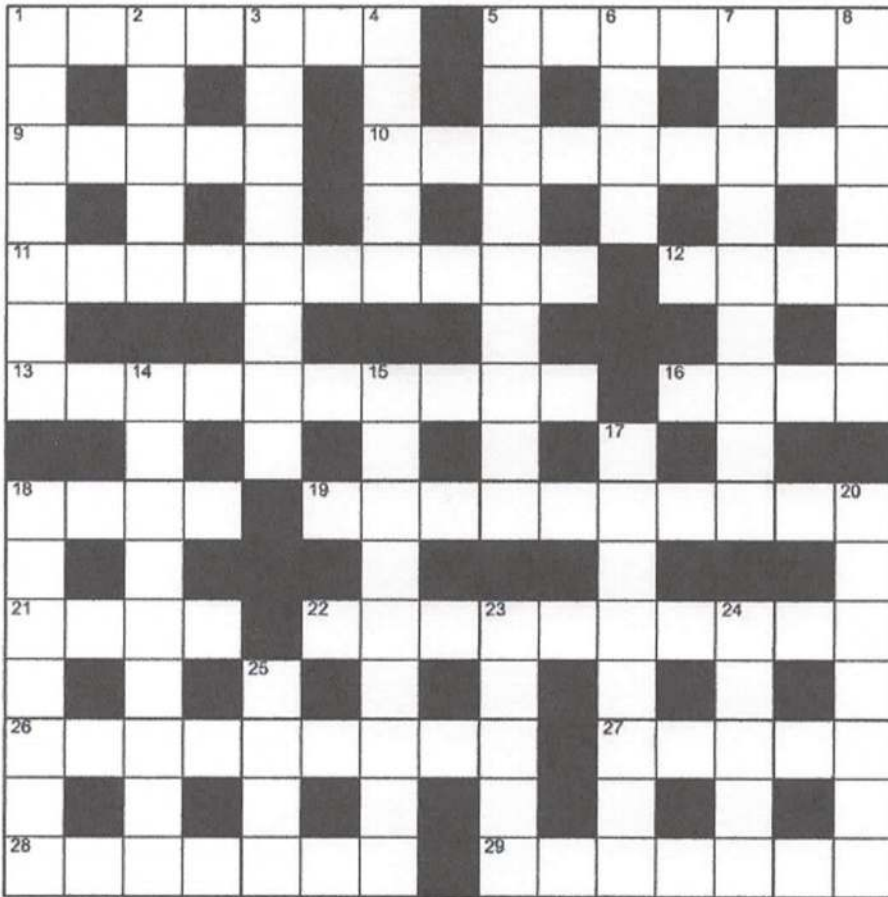
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David Elsey's Cryptic Crossword



Crossword solution on page 23

Crossword Clues Across

1. Succeed with fashionable female sex (7)
5. Ancient burial mounds are mainly to be found around temples (7)
9. Sweet cover of a piece of music in G-flat (5)
10. Pound is competing with euro at banks (9)
11. Argued to change CD with 'ostile content' (10)
12. I am wheeled around in a minor mode of transport (4)
13. Lacking money, fall in to get benefit ... (10)
16. ... as soon as I get to grips with initial complexities (4)
18. Stop broadcast at roadside (4)
19. March precedes long summer for climber (10)
21. Call back when settled (4)
22. Cover might be blown by war off Portugal (6,4)
26. Dish German agreement with Britain to invest in former Asian country (9)
27. Should nothing detract from new start? (5)
28. Get zany, crazy flower (7)
29. Finished before last bod started, having cheated (7)

Crossword Clues Down

1. Take off glove, hiding one that is worn (7)
2. Is the rent daylight robbery? (5)
3. Arranged time for new replacement to adapt to business (3,5)
4. I pushed in a raised piece of bone (5)
5. Name associated with lower prize is taken from nanny (9)
6. Was sorry for sounding rough (4)
7. Has compelling views on love, being immobilized (9)
8. Persist in engagement being confirmed in chapel ... (7)
14. ... for each simple soul taking in mass there's a piece of fruit (9)
15. Following outburst, anger takes hold (9)
17. Do well to produce sound (4,4)
18. Sourpuss will take the edge off success (7)
20. Put off going back and turning up requiring accommodation, as rumoured (7)
23. Face growth of listener participation in Belgium and Germany (5)
24. Serve up drink fit for a king (5)
25. In France, is article blocked to make a point? (4)

Ray Butchers Su Doku

Easy first...

...then the more challenging

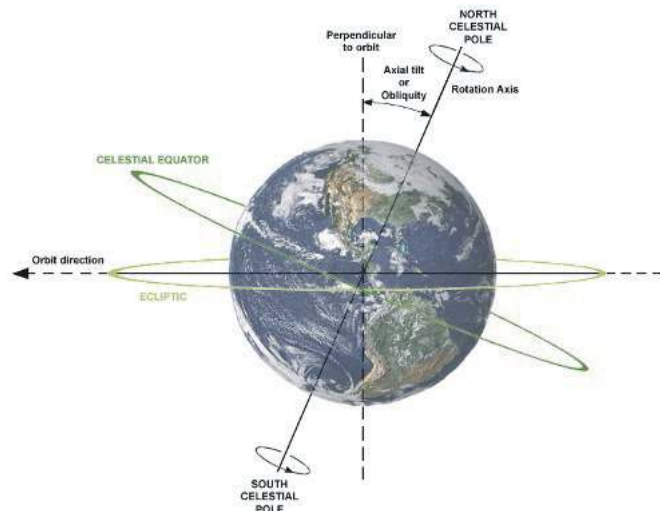
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Heacham and Hunstanton at Night

Terry Parish

On the 4th we, the Earth, are at aphelion, the furthest from the Sun we get in our, not quite, circular orbit. 152 million km or, in real units, 95 million miles. This has nothing to do with the fact that, at the time of writing, it feels like March.



There are four celestial objects in opposition this month, five if you count the Moon on the 5th. Opposition means the object is on the end of a line which starts at the Sun and passes through the Earth. The object lies in exactly the opposite direction to the Sun so, as the Sun sets in the SW, the object rises in the SE. As the Earth turns west to east, the object will pass overhead in an arc, called the ecliptic, from east to west where it will follow the Sun below the horizon.

The Moon is Full on the 5th so is in opposition or, as it is directly opposite, in opposition to, the Sun, all its face is illuminated and so it is Full. Work that out.

On the 14th the gas giant Jupiter is in opposition and will be at its brightest with a magnitude of -2.7. On the 20th it is Saturn's turn. However, it will be much less bright at magnitude + 0.1. Saturn is, at 840 million miles, around twice as far from the Sun as Jupiter and it is a tad smaller too, hence not so bright.

Regular readers will know that Saturn has a yellowish tinge which, to the naked eye gives it a bit of mystery – you are looking at a planet 750 million miles from your nose.

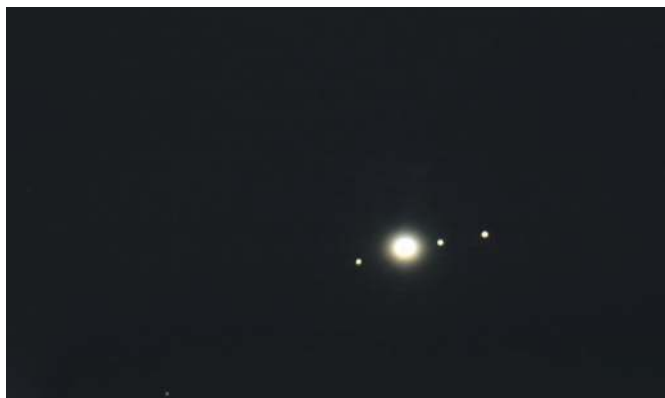
The two gas giants appear fairly close in the sky but not close enough to be in conjunction – very close – that occurs on the 21st December when it will be called the Great Conjunction. It happens once every 20 years.

As indicated earlier, these two planets will rise as the Sun sets, Saturn about a half hour later than Jupiter but they will be seen better when higher, later, and against a darker sky. This means after midnight early in the month and about 11 pm towards the end.

If you can stay up to 2am on a couple of nights then on the 6th, the Moon, Jupiter and Saturn make a nice triangle; Jupiter above and to the right of the Moon, Saturn above and to the left. On the 8th, Saturn is just above the globular cluster Messier 75 which should provide a fine view in binoculars.

Surface details of Jupiter are not easy to see on light nights and when, as now, it does not get very high in the sky. However, Io, Europa, Ganymede, and Callisto, the Galilean moons, are easy to see through large binoculars or, more likely a bird spotting or small astronomical telescope.

The moons will appear as small points of light strung out either side of the planet. You might not see all 4 as one might be behind Jupiter. With patience you might see it reappear or one vanish. They orbit quickly and you can see their movements over several hours. Io is fantastically active, spewing sulphur from its many volcanos into



Parish. As you will likely see Jupiter's moons.

space. Europa geysers water into space from its hidden oceans, it is on the hit list for a potential source of life.

A small telescope turned towards Saturn will pick up the rings which make it the most recognisable planet and the one everyone likes to see. They are very wide and bright though if they are edge on, just a line across the planet. If you see the rings you should see a spark of light well outside them, this will be Titan, Saturn's largest moon. Titan has a thick nitrogen and methane atmosphere with liquid methane lakes and rivers which intersect in a similar way to Earth's water cycle.



NASA Titan

An article in the New Scientist magazine suggests that the giant moon of Saturn will be the next human extra-terrestrial colony after Mars. An attraction is a range of possible energy sources including tidal power. Saturn's gravity causes tidal changes of about 1 metre/day in Kraken Mare, a methane sea, and a feature called the Throat of Kraken is akin to Earth's Straits of Gibraltar. So, your distant grand children might live there one day. Titan will be habitable once Earth has vanished within the expanding Sun in about 5 billion years.

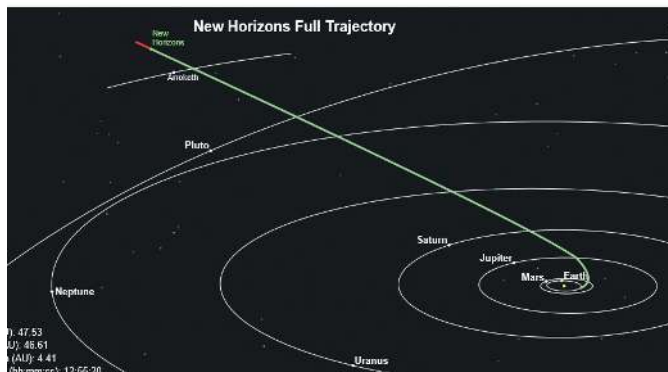
Jupiter, Uranus and Neptune all have rings around them but they are made of or coated with dark dust and have only been detected by space probes. Saturn's rings consist of billions of ice particles and are very reflective.

There are two more objects reaching opposition, the Minor Planet Pallas and Dwarf Planet Pluto. Pallas was discovered in 1802 and was then designated a planet as was the earlier discovered Ceres (now a Dwarf planet). They and many other small masses were later called asteroids. After the Astronomical Union's stirring of the naming pot in 2006, designations changed again.

Pluto was discovered as late as 1930 by Clive Tombaugh and was a

planet until my middle age. It was still a planet when NASA's New Horizons craft left Earth and flew past Pluto years later in 2015. Pluto's structure, atmosphere and colours were a complete surprise. It is also now known to have 5 moons, the largest Charon, orbits a point within Pluto making the pair a binary (dwarf) planet system.

New Horizons is still functioning, and is around 4.5 billion miles from the Sun. The image below is real time position on the 12th June. The alignment of the planets relative to Earth can be clearly seen too.



NASA New Horizons

Pluto is very close to Jupiter and they would be said to be in conjunction if Pluto, million miles away could be seen. A very large telescope and a clear, dark night are all needed.



NASA

Pallas is well above the ecliptic, between the bright stars Altair and Vega. Use Stellarium or software on your 'phone to locate it.

If you have got used to staying up, at 2am and 4am on the 11th Mars will be above and to the left of the Moon. On the 12th it will be above and to the right. Look SE

Venus is a morning object rising in the east at around 2.30am and shining brightly with a magnitude of -4.4. On the 17th, at 3.30am, Venus will share the sky with the Crescent Moon, the Hyades star cluster and, a little further away, the Pleiades star cluster.

Whilst you are up and about, look for the spark of Mercury low down in the NE, not an easy horizon to find. The best chance to see the messenger of the gods is right at the end of the month when it will be a little higher in the sky.

Pluto is pretty well isolated.

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Hunstanton Lifeboat Station

Geoff Needham

With the continuation of the restrictions placed upon us, all Lifeboat stations, including the shop, remain shut to all but essential personnel; the service still operates a search and rescue service, and as the government lifts the restriction on travel, we urge you all to take care when visiting the seaside, and not to put yourselves and emergency services at risk. We cannot social distance when attending a casualty situation, and if medical treatment is required it involves a large number of personnel from various organisations including paramedics, ambulance crew, coastguard, nurses, doctors and air ambulance - mostly avoidable if you think before you venture out, stay safe.

Monday 25th May at 5.07. p.m. U.K. Coastguard requested launch to a report of people cut off on Scolt Head Island. Hunstanton hovercraft launched and proceeded to Brancaster, on arrival it was found that a total of 14 adults five children and five dogs were cut off and on a small strip of shingle that was fast becoming smaller as the tide flowed in, two RNLI crewmen stayed with the marooned people while the hovercraft ferried small groups at a time to the safety of the beach and into the care of the local coastguard response team. As the Hovercraft was returning to station they were requested to assist in the evacuation of lady who had fallen and was unconscious near Hunstanton prom, on arrival the lady had recovered, but was complaining of back injury, she was placed in the coastguard basket stretcher and carried off the beach to the sailing club where she was checked over by the ambulance crew.

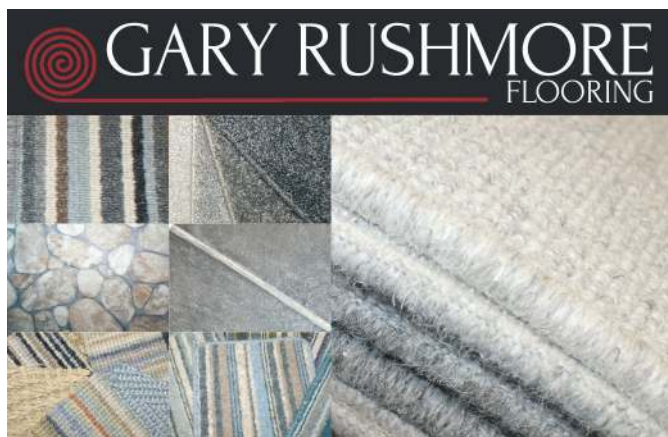
Friday 29th May at 12.45 p.m. UK Coastguard requested launch of Hunstanton RNLI Lifeboat to report of Kayak in trouble off Heacham Beach. Hunstanton RNLI volunteer crew launched on service and

proceeded to area, the kayak was located and escorted towards the beach, due the tide ebbing and no depth of water the lifeboat waited offshore until the kayak reached the beach and into the care of the local coastguard response team, the lifeboat was then released to return to station. High Water 11.36 am. Wind Easterly æ. Sea state slight. Vis. good.

Saturday 15th May at 3.15 p.m. UK Coastguard requested launch of Hunstanton RNLI Lifeboat to report of Kite surfer in difficulty off Hunstanton South beach. RNLI crew launched on service, and proceeded to Hunstanton South beach, on arrival they were stood down to return to station as casualty had made it ashore the local coastguard response team, gave him some safety advice no medical attention was required. Lifeboat returned to station. High Water. Saturday 5.57 pm. Wind. S.W.2 Sea state slight. Vis. good. Saturday 30th May Hunstanton lifeboat was requested to launch to go to the aid of a swimmer off Old Hunstanton beach, thought to be in trouble, crew were stood down before entering the water as swimmer had made it back to shore, this was classed as a false alarm with good intent, take care everyone.

Our Respect the water campaign and advice to visitors: Tidal waters have strong tidal currents, especially the approaches to the harbours. General coastal safety tips. 1. Check the Weather and tide times. 2. Read signs. Be aware of local hazards, ie; sandbanks. Channel Strong tidal currents. 3. Carry means of calling for help. 4. If you see someone in danger dial 999 or 112 and ask for the Coastguard who will page us.

Video footage of some recent rescues can be seen on the RNLI website: www.rnli.org.uk



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Old Hunstanton Church Flower Festival & Fête

Regretfully Old Hunstanton Flower Festival 2020 has been cancelled for safety reasons relating to COVID-19. The governments lockdown restrictions for large gatherings are still in place at this time, so the committee will look to hold smaller events later in the year, and very much looking forward to the 2021 Festival.

A huge "Thank You"

It has certainly been a strange and somewhat difficult time for us recently, and more so for some than others. We have been shielding and self-isolating, unable to see friends or family, and often relying on help from neighbours and caring people around us. Some of us, particularly our elderly residents, have relied on our local shops which have remained open throughout this pandemic. We thank you all for your hard work and kindness.

Our local convenience store in York Avenue has been fantastic! The owners, Mr & Mrs Kumar, have been wonderful, and we feel that they deserve a special "Thank You". They have been so caring and helpful. Walking to people's homes every day and taking shopping to them, delivering papers, helping those who couldn't leave their house, making sure that elderly residents had what they needed, remaining open 7 days a week, and ensuring essential items were available as much as possible. They have been a godsend!

Thank you from all your customers
Beverley Keit

4 July – Holiday Freedom Day.....maybe

Well, it has been an eventful few months for everyone. In our office, so many letters, emails and telephone calls to make. People to placate, bookings to cancel or transfer, procedures and protocols to follow.....and people to avoid as much as possible. But that still did not stop so many travelling to seaside resorts and other popular places to enjoy the sunshine in June. Plus rules on internal UK travel have been flouted by the best. We are all trying to do our very best to help and live in this unfortunate situation.

All our holiday homes have been empty till 4 July and at time of writing we are eagerly awaiting Boris Johnson to lift UK travel so people can be confident to book their summer holidays. At present we have a few optimistic bookings drizzling very tentatively in for later in the year, plus some very keen people to book in July once lockdown is lifted. The UK travel holiday and tourism sector is anxiously waiting for a huge flood of bookings from eager families wishing to escape their home captivity from the last few months or so. Let's hope it happens. Let's hope it happens safely, hygienically and with everyone following Government Direction, without any madness of being let out of prison lockdown. We all want to move on with some form of normal life back without anyone messing it all up by flouting rules again.

There are rules on Government websites for correct methods of cleaning holiday homes which I am sure those 'jobsworths' out there will be vetting intently. There is always one to find fault unnecessarily and start causing upset. Let hope not. As I said above, we are (and I don't just mean us at Norfolk Holiday Homes) all trying as hard as we can to work everything in our lives around the dreaded Covid 19.

More people will be staying in the UK - it will certainly be easier to plan, avoiding the international regulations and restrictions. You won't have to self-quarantine when you get home either.

Many of you have not seen family or friends for months, so why not plan on seeing them now. You can all follow the two meter rule (may be one soon....) and even though those long awaited hugs and cuddles may have to wait a while, they can still visit and you can physically see each other rather than phoning, face timing, using a portal, etc. Relief and tears a plenty.....

So if you are desperate for a family reunion, want to meet that new grandchild, or just need to get away just for a change of scenery (and we have plenty of that), get in touch.

We're local, we offer holiday homes to suit all and a human, in our Hunstanton office, will pick up the phone and offer honest, practical, informed advice on whether a holiday home you have chosen is right for you.

After three months of isolation and lockdown it's important you get it right, so let us help you to get your family and friends to Norfolk to make this holiday best thing that's happened this year so far.

As we still have vacancies, we suggest booking as soon as possible to beat the anticipated rush

Sandra Hohol (with excerpts from Carol's Blog from our web-site)

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The past few months have been unprecedented for all of us and I hope you and your family have stayed well. West Norfolk Glass took the very difficult decision to temporarily close as the country went into lockdown, in order to protect its customers and staff. As a second generation family firm, we have been serving the people of North West Norfolk continuously for 53 years, so we were delighted to reopen in early June and to work within the Government's COVID-19 Guidelines.

For many customers, the time spent during lockdown threw a sharp focus on home improvements and we have seen a surge of enquiries for new double glazing, replacement guttering, plus some updates with conservatories and bi-fold doors.

With many people set to work remotely for a continued period, reshaping domestic space to accommodate a work area has been an important home improvement. One solution which several customers have loved is the easy switch to a replacement roof for their old-style conservatory. Guardian Warm Roof is a lightweight system which reduces sun glare, rain noise and heat loss making your conservatory a great space to use year-round. A cost-effective way to reclaim unused space in your home.

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At the time of writing both of our churches are currently closed, you can find parish news, Fr Henry's Sunday homily and links to the many live streamed Masses and prayers showing in the diocese on our parish website. Although technically not able to video the Masses, Fr Henry is still saying daily Masses and praying for parishioners in the church at Dersingham. When the churches are allowed to start public Masses again, notices will be on the doors of both churches as well as on the parish website.

Website: www.hunstantoncatholicparish.org

Email: parish@hunstantoncatholicparish.org

The Parish telephone number is 01485 534675.

If you require a Priest urgently please telephone V. Rev Canon Peter Rollings on 01553 772220 or email; parishpriest763@gmail.com

Just a thought

Well this is it, my final Town and Around article and I cannot believe how time has flown. I look back and it only seems five minutes since we were unpacking and getting ready for a new and exciting adventure in the West Norfolk area. Now it is nearly over (beginning of August) and for each of us a new adventure must begin.

Saying goodbye for whatever reason is difficult; saying goodbye to you who have shared my six year journey is doubly difficult. I do not find it easy leaving but I go forward into retirement because of the way you have always encouraged me to be confident in myself even though there were times when not everything went to plan (well nothing ever did go to plan at any service did it!!).

There is a poem I read the other day which actually says all that I want to say. It was written by Emily (only name given) and it begins like this:-

You helped me laugh
you dried my tears
because of you I have no fears
Together we live
together we grow
teaching each other what we must know

And over the past six years I believe we did all these things; we have taught each other, grown together, laughed together and yes at times cried together. But most of all we have worshipped a God whom we are able to put all our trust in together. And it is because of that trust I am leaving Heacham. I trust that he has called me to undertake as yet things unknown in my retirement, but He has called me away for a reason and I must honour that call, just as the new Minister Rev Richman Ncube will honour his call.

So it just leaves me to say thank you; thank you for helping me through my time here with patience; thank you for watching over and praying for me and the family during times of trouble; and thank you for six years of friendship, kindness and a willingness to walk the road together. I will never forget it.

I wish you every blessing and pray that the coming years will be ones of joy, hope, peace and growth beyond your dreams.

Steve



Hunstanton and the Saxon Shore

Dear Friends,

How are you? How are you feeling about the recent changes to lockdown?

I wonder if, like me, part of you is excited at the prospect of slightly more relaxed 'rules' and the other part is more than a little concerned about the near future. Our responses will all be different because they are based on our own experiences during this last few months. Some people will have lost precious loved ones either to the virus or other illnesses and will have had to manage final goodbyes and funerals with incredibly difficult restrictions. I take many such services and it is not easy for the family or the minister/celebrant on these occasions either, our hearts go out to you.

For others the thought of more freedom is just what you might need to help get your life back on track with work or seeing very special people in your life.

However you are responding to the changes coming up I know that the little kindnesses that we have witnessed in our communities have made a massive difference to many people. My hope and prayer is that we can still hang on to the resourcefulness and resilience that means we are stronger and more caring as we look to the future. The Benefice of Hunstanton and the Saxon Shore have been working to plan out how we can re-open a number of our beautiful church buildings for private prayer and some services in the future. At the point of writing we are at the early stage of working out which days and times some of our buildings will be open. The information will be available on the Benefice website and it will be posted on the notice boards of each church. We hope that by planning carefully at this point we will be able to offer a number of places for private prayer at different times.

The thing that is most important to us all is keeping safe. Our church buildings rely on so many faithful volunteers to keep the places open, clean and with floral arrangements for visitors to enjoy. I am sure that I wouldn't be speaking out of turn to say that many of these volunteers are of a more mature age and therefore more at risk of falling victim to the virus. Jesus taught us that everyone is of incredible value to him and that we should value each other in the same way. The parable of the lost sheep is a good reminder that whilst the 99 sheep were safe the good shepherd goes in search of the one who is not safe and needs his help and protection. We are endeavouring to follow this example and care for our most vulnerable so that is why we may not be able to open all of our church buildings as we once did... yet!

These restrictions will not last forever but while we have people to protect such as visitors, volunteers and local residence we will act in a way that shows others that we care. I expect that small funerals will soon be happening in some churches and we are hopeful that small weddings will be able to start in the summer again. We are staying positive and looking for ways to bless each other by our words and actions. If you would like to join us for our Sunday 6pm Evening Prayer via zoom do just email me and I will direct you to the correct links. We would love you to join us if you are able to do that. If technology is not 'your thing' then we wait with expectant hearts to welcome you back through the doors at the right time. Do check out the various radio and tv services to help in your time of reduced activity.

With my continued prayers for you all,

Rachael



Christian Science Society, Hunstanton

Due to the current situation, Christian Science services are now only available online. Further information on the worldwide Christian Science church can be found at www.christianscience.com. Please go to www.spirituality4.me to find live-streamed services around the UK, along with other online events, talks and webinars on Christian Science. An online shop is also available where you will find books, CDs and many other resources. Follow us on Facebook to find out when our regular services at Christian Science Society, Hunstanton, will resume.

UNION CHURCH

The Outlook: While talking about The Lookout last month I found changing the word round gives me a topic for July. In a weather forecast, there will be a summary of what to expect for a few days further on – the outlook. With the way our weather changed from glorious sunshine in May to cold, windy & wet June, it is always hard to predict the outlook very far in advance.

Since Covid-19 arrived, we have had to rely on government & scientists to give an outlook of how serious the situation is and what they would like us to do to lessen its impact. Their outlook in the main tells us what we cannot do or only do cautiously. From that we have to work out for ourselves what our own personal outlook is on life – does it curtail all our freedom or are there things we can still do or do differently?

Although Christians are restricted in not being able to meet together in church buildings, thankfully, there are no restrictions on the expression of our faith. Christians down the centuries have often lived under restrictions and persecution, and still do so in some countries. They have always found ways to be followers of Jesus even in the most difficult times. At Union Church we believe God can use these times of difficulty to give us a new outlook as each week we offer services, prayer meetings, bible studies and support in the various means of post, phone, email and internet. With God nothing is impossible because there is always the possibility of a new beginning (or outlook) if we put our trust in him.

With Every Blessing, Janet Brown

Only Believe

By Gordon Tanner,
a member of The Way C F Leadership team

A few months ago my GP had said he thought that I had a cancer. It is a bit disconcerting to receive that news and it raises a few questions and fears in your mind. You wouldn't be human if it didn't, but I knew as a Christian I could have God's peace in it.

The Church I go to, 'The Way', is a new church and we tend to sing the more recently written Christian music – though sometimes we will sing something more ancient than modern. One song I'd heard a few times during the time of my diagnosis is called 'No Longer Slaves', and it has the chorus 'I'm no longer a slave to fear, I am a child of God'. As I was going through my cancer investigation this seemed a very appropriate song and I frequently sang that chorus in my head and it carried me through most of the initial tests in total peace.

One day I had to go for a total body bone scan to look for any secondary tumours. That involved getting changed into a hospital gown and as I was walking into the room for the scan I found that what I was singing in my head changed to another part of the same song. It was a part that referred to the original exodus of the Jews from Egypt, roughly 3500 years ago, as they crossed the Red Sea. The lines of the song were 'You split the sea so I could walk right through it, You drowned my fears in perfect love, You rescued me so I could stand and sing, I am a child of God'. And in this I felt God gave me all the assurance I will ever need about my cancer, my future, everything.

This morning (17th May 2020) I woke with that song in my mind. I always feel it is going to be a good day when I wake with such a song in my head. It sets the day up right. As I prayed with my wife this morning I was reminded of something that happened a few years ago. We used to own a small cottage/bungalow on the Isle of Skye and used it for our holidays and lent it to friends if they wanted to go up there. The rest of the time it was available on one of the cottage agencies for anyone to hire.

It is a long way to get there, and we used to make in a single journey by sharing the driving in roughly 2 hour stints. But it was 580 miles to get there so it was a full day's travel. The best time to go was straight after church. We'd walk out from church with the car already packed – including food for the journey – and set off. A149, A47, A17, A1, Scotch Corner, turn left, etc etc. One of us would eat before we switched drivers at Newark, the original driver would eat after Newark, toilet stop at Scotch Corner etc, we had it planned for the whole way, and on a Sunday with less commercial traffic around we could get there in about 15 minutes under 12 hours.

As we prayed today I was reminded of one Sunday when we went up the Doncaster by-pass (A1M). There were some very heavy thunder showers around: we could see the rain pouring out of the clouds. They were on either side of the road for about 20 miles, but it was as if we were being led to avoid them. The curves in direction of the motorway led us between the showers, and we never got wet. It was quite amazing. The rain was so heavy that had we been in a shower we would certainly have had to slow right down to somewhere nearer 30mph.

I felt this was God showing me that even in these uncertain times with my own situation plus Coronavirus filling the news 'He is in control'. He can lead us through any situation. Maybe you have a similar problem to face. Don't lose heart, don't expect the worst, sing with me 'You split the sea so I could walk right through it'. Remember God is in control.

One time Jesus was called to the home of a synagogue ruler whose daughter was very ill – facing death. When he got there people were saying 'don't bother, she's dead' and other such things. Jesus said to the father 'Don't be afraid; only believe!' The little girl was restored to health that day.

Is God saying to you in your situation 'Only believe'?

Dear Editor,

Why can't I legally use my personal holiday home in Hunstanton? I normally spend considerable time there when not working, and always use all local services, however, the property is legally designated a 'second home.'

Current laws allow anyone from any part of the country to travel to Hunstanton, and anyone can enter the property including friends and neighbours, painters and decorators, meter readers, plumbers, and so on, almost without restriction. However, I am not allowed to stay in my own house in total isolation, overnight! I can only assume that the virus can appreciate the difference between night and day! It's illogical, and damaging to our community particularly now that shops are opening and local tradespeople need as much work as they can get.

I do not have the virus, the property is self contained, and I self isolate wherever I am. I also pay the full council tax and other taxes.

All of this is unacceptable and illogical but in recognition of the greater good I, like so many, have complied!

It's about time that both the council and government recognised that 'second home' owners and those in self contained caravans make a considerable and positive contribution to the local area. I am sure that if we can open zoos, pub gardens and drive through restaurants, we can safely open many caravan parks and 'second homes,' both of which make a considerable beneficial contribution to the area.

Best wishes, be aware, keep safe

John Freestone

Lily is lonely

By Abigail Loveit

Along the coast there's a little theatre, not dissimilar to this one. It has rows and rows of red plush seats. They have been worn threadbare in places from all the bottoms that have sat on them over the years. There is a big silver proscenium arch; that's the bit that frames the stage. The stage is small and a touch creaky but it's surprising what you can squeeze on it and oh boy, have there been a lot of things crammed on it over the decades! It's a very special little theatre in lots of ways but there is one reason in particular.

So, just take my word on this, all theatres have ghosts, it's just a thing that theatres have and this little theatre is no different, except our ghost is not your typical ghost; for a start she's not a scary ghost, she's definitely mischievous, and sometimes she can make you jump. Her name is Lily, she's a young girl of indefinable age, dressed in black. She has been spotted all around the theatre, sometimes she's at the back of the auditorium, sometimes in the wings ready to go on, occasionally she appears on stage making her entrance through the tabs before disappearing in the blink of an eye; although she likes the light she's not that keen to be in it. You might not know this but you have probably already seen her. Lily is not the kind of ghost that likes quiet, dim, lonely places, you know what I mean, an eerie church yard or an abandoned house, no, Lily is happiest when this place is full of people.

She loves a good audience but at the moment Lily is lonely because the theatre is dark; we say a theatre is dark when there are no shows on, and at the moment the theatre is very dark. You see, auditoriums don't have windows, all the light is man-made. First it was gaslight, then limelight, now it's electric light divided up into many colours, but for now, the lights are off and the speakers are silent. This little theatre, like every theatre up and down the country, is closed; there are no shows, it is dark, well, almost dark, I did leave one light on before I left when the country locked down. A ghost light. A ghost light is not actually meant for ghosts, it is a theatrical superstition; when a theatre is dark you should always leave one light on, usually on stage pointing across the auditorium, the reason being is to make sure the theatre will open once more and that the shows will return. I left our ghost light on for this reason but also for Lily who doesn't like the dark. So, our ghost light really is for a ghost!

I wonder what she's up to at the moment? I would like to think she is maybe giving the stage a good sweep but I reckon she is most likely up to some mischief or other.

She likes to move things around you see. Once I was working alone on stage, I had briefly put a roll of electrician's tape down and the next minute it was gone, poof, vanished into thin air, completely disappeared! I had to go all the way down to the substage store to get another roll. By the time I made my way back onto stage, the roll of tape was back just where I left it. She does that a lot. Okay, I know I can be a little absent

minded but things really do go missing and then reappear all the time!

I do hope she is okay but I have a feeling that Lily is lonely. She misses you, the audience with the clapping and the laughter, the dancing in your seats, the rustling of sweetie wrappers, "Pass the Jelly Babies mum." She loves a good audience and our audiences are great, they are completely brilliant, always different, some are well trained, some are wild. You see, theatre is not for the rich and it's not for the poor, it's not for the well-educated and it's not for the more, well, basic of us. Theatre is for everyone. How much more moving is a play when listened to in a crowd or when you are swept up by the music and all those around you are feeling the same beat, and jokes that need laughter? It's then that Lily is at her happiest. She especially likes the shows that bring the children in, like Pantomime and the summer season. This is when you are most likely to see or hear her; a giggle from nowhere, footsteps on the back stage stairs. She misses you, the audiences. She misses us lot too, the bar staff and the box office, the cleaners in first thing, picking up the debris left behind from the night before, the management and volunteers. She misses the butterflies; the butterflies are the ones that like the limelight - singers, dancers, actors, comedians (even the difficult ones), she likes the lot. Ventriloquists, jugglers, magicians, sports personalities, politicians, and of course, the musicians, every one of them she likes, although she is not awfully keen on the mediums, I don't know why, perhaps because she never gets a mention.

She misses us cockroaches too, we are the ones that don't like being in the light, we are camouflaged in our theatre blacks and will scuttle off to find the dark at the nearest opportunity. We are the unseen. The ones that make the magic happen.

She misses the lot of us but most all she misses you, dear audience because there is no spectacle without its spectators. I hope soon, somehow, the lights will be back on, the shows will roll back onto our tiny stage and you will be back. Then, once again this room will be filled with music, applause and laughter, that you, the audience will return and Lily will be happy once more, but for now Lily is lonely.

There are many stories of what happened to Lily and how she came to haunt this theatre. Was she a resident of the former Simpsons hotel when tragedy struck? I do not know. There are few records, just the stories handed down from the generations but sometimes, I wonder if I might be Lily? You see many, many years ago, a strange little girl who thought she was a grown up, walked into this theatre and said, "Got any jobs going..?" She did not know how to do the job but was at that age when the young assume they can do anything - experience not a necessity. (Luckily for me she turned out to be quite good at it). Now here is the thing, for the first time in her very short life she found the place where she belonged. She was a fit, not because everyone else was like her but because everyone else was different too. A melting pot of the weird and the wonderful but all with one single thing in common; a love of the theatre and so, I can't help but wonder if the sheer excitement of being here did not bubble over and leave some residue or energy behind that transcended time, the ghost of a young girl dressed in black.

Update from Norfolk Libraries

In March all of Norfolk's libraries closed until further notice. This included mobile libraries, the Home Library Service and Open Library. While the buildings are shut, we still have lots to offer online including:

eBooks
eAudio books
Newspapers
Magazines
Historical newspapers
Find my past
Picture Norfolk website with over 20,000 images of local life

The Norfolk Heritage Centre
Podcast with talks about Norfolk's history
Find My Past
Plus weekly online events via Zoom and Facebook
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For more information and to keep up to date with the latest news visit the Norfolk County Council website
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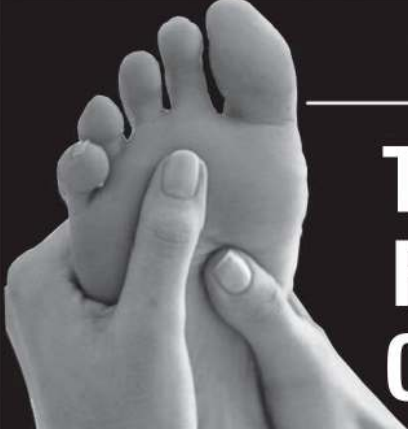


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Summer's begun!

With beautiful summer fashions for every occasion, Allez Chic is reopened and has new ways to shop.

I am so delighted to be writing this article during our first week of reopening after lockdown. For all of us the recent months have been challenging, so to open our door and welcome back customers to shop at Allez Chic has been so heartening over the past few days.

Of course 'the new normal' means there are a few changes to the way we shop to ensure we comply with the Government's COVID-19 guidelines, but Allez Chic has always been a light, airy boutique which offers an enjoyable, crowd-free shopping experience with a warm welcome and personal service.

While we may not be planning big events and overseas trips just now, our wide range of high quality clothing includes some fabulous everyday labels not found on the high street. Lily & Me, for example, offers soft organic cotton tops and dresses that are so comfortable to wear, and the Scottish Marble label never fails to deliver chic clothing in gorgeous fabrics which will become timeless classics for our wardrobe.

Comfort is key when it comes to summer footwear and, whatever your style, Lunar shoes is a brilliant brand to slip into – our collection is always popular so pop in and grab a pair of new shoes for the season before they disappear!

Recognising that some of our customers may have concerns about shopping at the current time, we are introducing a new Shop By Appointment service from 3pm on Tuesdays and Wednesdays. Pre-booked, this will enable people to browse and shop privately, with a member of the Allez Chic team and we hope this is useful. We will also be closed on Mondays for the time being.

Lockdown has also given us an opportunity to develop a small online store for Allez Chic too – this is a new venture for us and we will be regularly adding items, so please do take a look and we can deliver to your door.

However you choose to shop with Allez Chic, we are excited to share our beautiful ladies' fashions with you once again, so please do come see us and enjoy shopping again. Stay safe and stay well. Visit Allez Chic, The Old School Road, Castle Rising PE31 6AG. To book a Shop By Appointment date, call 01553 631915 www.allezchic.co.uk

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