

Corton Denham News



from John Godley

FEB - MAR 2019

ISSUE 232

The Editor's Desk

from Lisa Adam

Happy New Year to you all. Even though we are already into our second month of 2019. I hope you all had a joyous festive time and your new year has started well?

This year Mr A and I went to the Gambia for Christmas. More detail on the trip from Jim. Even though it was amazing it made me realise that Christmas is for spending time with family and friends. It is not about the presents or the food, it's all about quality time with those you love. Hence to say we are going back but not for Christmas!

As I am writing this piece for the magazine, I am looking out the window and the sun is shining, a shoot is going on around the farm, so I can hear the odd shot and there are the cutest lambs jumping around in the paddock. For a very small moment I forgot about all the worrying things that are going on around our planet.

I hope that the Government can sort out the dreaded Brexit and we can start to feel more assured. Something tells me probably not!

I have started to think about the products I buy and the packaging that holds them. Looking around the supermarkets I can see small changes but these are not happening quick enough. Bins around our streets are disappearing or over-flowing because the staff are not there to empty them so more rubbish is just being thrown on the roadside and fields. We live in a beautiful part of the world and not everyone sees that.

It makes me grateful to those of you who don your hi-viz jackets and spend your time keeping our village clean and helping protect our environment. Thank you!

Deadlines for the submission of articles for future issues are as follows:

April/May - 21 March 2019

June /July - 21 May 2019

August/September - 19 July 2019

These are the final submission dates. It would help the editorial team if you could provide your articles before the final submission dates.

Sudoku Corner

This month's teaser and the last edition's solution.

Fill in the grid with the numbers 1 to 9 so that each row and each 3x3 block contains all the numbers 1 to 9.

9	1	6	8	5	4	2	3	7
5	4	2	1	7	3	6	9	8
8	7	3	6	2	9	1	4	5
7	9	8	3	6	2	4	5	1
1	2	4	9	8	5	7	6	3
3	6	5	7	4	1	9	8	2
6	3	9	2	1	8	5	7	4
4	8	1	5	9	7	3	2	6
2	5	7	4	3	6	8	1	9

8		3			1			
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Parish Letter

from Stephen Rymer

The last time I wrote a letter for this magazine, I had just been told that I had an inoperable cancerous tumour in the base of my tongue. The only possible treatment was a programme of thirty daily doses of radiation, and I was waiting for that to begin. It was devastating news and I admitted to some concerns about whether my life-long belief and trust in God could withstand such a stress, or whether fear for the future, and the painful side effects that I had been warned of, would take me down into depression and reduce the possibility of healing.

Nine months later, I can report that there is no measurable sign of the cancer, the tumour has been greatly reduced in size, and I can talk, eat and swallow almost as before. Many Christian friends call it miraculous. Their prayers have been answered and God has delivered a miracle. But it did not happen in the way that miracles seem to happen in the Bible, where Jesus touches blind eyes and people see, cripples get up from their beds and dance, a child is raised from the dead, and a haemorrhaging woman is healed by touching his robe. So was it God handiwork or just modern medicine?

From the moment I made the diagnosis public, Rosemary and I were deluged with messages of love, offers of support, and prayers. Our house became decorated with cards as if it were Christmas, friends drove me to and from Taunton for treatment on thirty occasions. A grandson arranged a cake sale at his school and raised £60 for Cancer Research, other grandchildren sent me text messages of love and encouragement on their way to school. All the NHS staff at

Musgrove Park were wonderful and delivered their care with great care and sensitivity – with love. And for about three months Rosemary and I were carried day by day on a wave of love and prayers which kept my spirits up and the side effects down. That was God at work delivering healing love through people, and radiation machines.

In that last letter, I also mentioned that the Ministry Team were planning to start a group for people who were, like me at the time, questioning their faith and wrestling with doubts. I can now report that the group, “Why Believe?”, has been meeting every fortnight for many months and has become a safe place for its eight members to share questions knowing that each will be listened to carefully, that there will be a wide range of views, and all will be heard and accepted. It is a place for teasing out aspects of belief, where the biblical perspective is made real in the context of today. And there is always something to take away and think about during the next week. When I visited the group last week it was very obvious that God’s Spirit was present in all that was happening.

In recent weeks, it has become known that others are interested in joining such a group, which is leading the Ministry team to wonder whether a second group might be viable. If you would be interested in such a group, please make that known to a member of the team.

And remember that God moves in mysterious ways, not always just as the Bible records, or theologians tell us, and that your beliefs, questions and doubts are all part of God’s handiwork.

Carol singing at the Pub

from Caroline MacGregor

Accompanied by festively attired Mark Pennell on his guitar and mince pies provided by Gordon and Jeanette, a group of villagers gathered by the roaring fire in the Queens Arms on the evening of 11th December to sing Christmas carols and songs. Although the standard of singing would not win any choral awards, it was an hour of good fun and got everyone there well and truly into the Christmas spirit. Many thanks go to those who organised the evening. Can it be repeated next December?



from Simon de Trey - White



from Simon de Trey - White

Parish Council

from Richard Thatcher

There was another well-attended Parish Council meeting on Tuesday 15th January, when our ward members brought everybody up to date on what was happening in both Somerset County and South Somerset District Councils. Further details on this and other agenda items can be found in the minutes posted on the website.

Julie Bunker reported on a lot of activity in her defibrillator group, and there will be further details in a letter from this group which will be sent to everybody in the village in the next couple of weeks. The Council congratulated them on their activity, and confirmed their support for the installation of a defibrillator in the village telephone box by agreeing an immediate contribution of £350.

Following on a meeting with Highways, it was reported that there will be two separate road closures in the 2019-2020 financial year, one to complete laying of a new drain between Poor House Lane and Ridge Lane and the other to re-surface Wheatsheaf Hill. Dates are unknown, but will be published as they become available.

Local elections, including five Parish Councillors for the ensuing four years (2019-2023), will be held on Thursday 2nd May, after which (i) the annual Parish Meeting followed by (ii) the annual Parish Council Meeting have been fixed for Tuesday 14th May at 7.30 p.m.

Message from the PCC

from Chris Bunker on behalf of PCC

We are writing to you on behalf of the PCC of St Andrew's the Parish Church of Corton Denham.

We hope you agree that our church is an essential part of the village's character and, in addition to its regular work as a place of worship, it plays a vital role in supporting the people of the parish through major personal events and bringing our community together at important times and occasions during the year. The village cemetery is also the responsibility of the PCC and relies on voluntary support from village residents.

Together with the crucial support of the regular donors in the village, the PCC uses its best endeavours to manage the financial well-being of your Parish church and cemetery in a prudent manner. However, as we all know, costs have increased considerably in recent years and it now costs more than £1600 per month just to keep the church open and the cemetery maintained. This year, we anticipate that existing regular donations and collections, together with Gift Aid tax recovery, will cover some £600 per month of these costs.

Against this background, the PCC are planning to contact our regular donors and potential new donors to help place the financing of your church on a firmer footing. We very much hope that all village residents will feel able to make a contribution to maintaining the unique character of our village by supporting your Parish Church.

Thank you.

Marion Chapman

Peter Prager

(Churchwardens)

Fox Ancestors

from Helen Finlayson

I am researching my great grandad's family. They lived in Corton Denham. They were John Fox, wife Jemima Andrews. They had children, Harry, Jane, Edwin, James and Alfred. I wondered if anyone living in Corton Denham are linked to this family and may have a photo or informatipon of any of those mentioned.

Contact - helen.finlayson@talktalk.net.

Charity Christmas Concert

from David Morgan

In early December, the Village hall hosted a concert of Traditional Jazz and Swing performed by Jungle Harmony, comprising Corton Denham's own Alex Ferris and our popular former postman, Phil Lloyd. A good audience was treated to a wonderful mix of songs and duets once performed by such favourites as Frank Sinatra and Michael Bublue with music ably provided by Steve Ferris. Much enjoyed by all, the evening raised the princely sum of £332 for Dorset and Somerset Air Ambulance and a further £169 for Village Hall funds. A very successful and enjoyable evening for all.



from John Godley

Remembrance Oak Tree

from Robin Odgers

When it was suggested that we should plant a tree in the Churchyard to commemorate the 1918-2018 Centennial, the first question was what species of tree?

A common choice for a churchyard is an English Yew. They are found in very many churchyards, some being as old as 2000 years, and had their origins in pagan times, being associated with pre-Christian and Bronze age burial grounds. However, there are a good number of old yew trees in our churchyard, and it was therefore decided to plant an English Oak, *Quercus Robor*.

The English Oak has strong associations with cathedrals and churches. The Celts apparently had great respect for the Oak, and it became absorbed by the Christian church. Carvings of oak leaves and acorns are found in almost every cathedral and many parish churches, often displayed on fonts and pew ends. Ancient boundary oaks were called Gospel oaks, under which parishioners gathered to hear Gospel readings.

The English or Pedunculate Oak is one of two native oaks, the other being the Sessile Oak, *Quercus Petraea*. They are easily distinguished by their acorns, one having a stalk, the other sitting directly on its twig. The English Oak is the more highly prized tree: it produces better timber, and a far greater crop of acorns, which were valued as a food for pigs and cattle. In fact, the Domesday Book measured an area of woodland in terms of the number of swine it could support! The Oak also supports, feeds and shelters a greater range of other organisms than any other tree. By contrast the Horse Chestnut is ecological practically barren. They can grow to a great size,

sometimes with enormous girth, and are very long lived, some being known to be over 1000 years old.

It is commonly said that an oak tree takes 200 years to grow, 100 years to mature and then 200 years to decline. They established in post ice age Britain around 9000 BC, and for the next four millennia, Britain was all but covered in a mixed oak forest. Since then oaks have been widely harvested for their timber. A typical Elizabethan farmhouse used 300 oak trees in its construction, and the roof of the 14 century Westminster Hall was preconstructed and assembled on site from 600 oak trees. Elizabeth 1 sanctioned the first formal oak plantation to satisfy the national need for oak timber, and there have since been at least eight warships called HMS Royal Oak. In the mid nineteenth century, 90,000 tons of oak bark were used in the leather tanning industry. Today, concrete and steel have overtaken oak as the prime material for buildings and ships. Nonetheless, the oak tree still has a most prominent place in the hearts and minds of British people.

Our churchyard oak was planted in mid-December, as a bare rooted specimen, having waited for complete dormancy before transplanting it. It will need careful nurturing and watering for the next few years, during which time it will grow slowly while it establishes its roots. It will then quickly become a magnificent tree, worthy of and appropriate to its purpose as a Remembrance of the Great War.



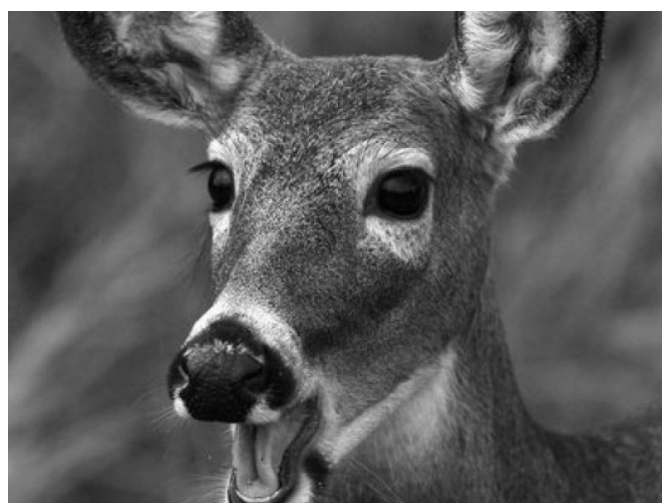
Farming News

from Brian Green

So far the winter weather has been on our side. The grass was slow to recover from the drought, but has now romped away owing to the mild November and December. This has enabled cattle farmers to keep stock out for longer helping to eke out the depleted winter forage stocks. The sheep have plenty of grass and are looking well. Sheep do well in cold dry weather. The ewes have had rather too many lambs and Sarah rears the surplus on a milk feeder. When they are two to three weeks old Sarah takes them to Sedgemoor Market where they are purchased by small holders and people who enjoy rearing pet lambs. Many farmers voted to leave Europe because they were fed up with the bureaucracy and then Smiler Gove was made Environmental Secretary. Some said that he was very clever. We don't need clever, we need common sense. Smiler has been got at by the Green Lobby and is keen on banning vital chemicals and seed dressings, slug pellets, Round Up etc.

Farming in Europe will be hamstrung while the rest of the world will continue to use the chemicals and many more that have been banned for many years and the chemicals will return here in the cheap food that we import. Another idea that Smiler has come up with is to use drones for farm inspections. They had better be bullet proof! My long distance eyesight is not as good as it was but if one of these drones appears over the Whitcombe Valley it better stay above 300 yards. Defra have made plans to stockpile food products that come from Europe in the event of disruption. I do not know how you can stockpile vegetables as most products are grown under contract and delivered just in time to the supermarket distribution centres. There is no surplus!

Me, I shall be alright. I am filling my freezer with Game, bacon and frozen vegetables. Other than that I am going to live off the land. Rabbits are coming back and there are plenty of pigeons about. We also have nine deer on the farm, three fallow and six roe. One roebuck has learnt how to knock the lids off the pheasant feeders and has been helping himself to pheasant feed all winter, He looks in good nick and if I have not run out of bullets shooting down Smiler's drones, he had better watch out!



Diary Dates

February

1-28 Snowdrops at Kingston Lacey Gardens
3 Breakfast Club at Haynes
14 Valentines Day Prosecco and Painting at Lewiston School
19-21 Family Fun at the Fleet Air Arm Museum, Yeovilton

March

1 - 6 May A celebration of Bentley at Haynes Motor Museum
5 Pancake Day
7 Midweek Jump Meet at Wincanton Races
29 Brexit
31 Mothering Sunday

Queen Camel Tuesday Group

from Marion Chapman

Our December meeting was a very social, light-hearted affair. After our coffee and huge mince pies one of our members, Anne Aldworth, gave a most amusing and informative talk about the Wing-Walk she did in May to raise money for St Margaret's Hospice. She raised over £1000. Members were shown photographs of the flight.

Marion then read a poem about a young turkey who went on a diet before Christmas to avoid being 'dished up'.

Christmas gifts were given to every member.

The rest of the time we sang carols and other well-known Christmas songs accompanied by Queen Camel's own Trevor on his keyboard. Trevor raises money for Macmillan nurses and he does this with his music and also with the beautiful wooden clocks, bowls etc that he makes.

A happy end to a successful year.

January 15th 2019 saw 50 of us at the Yeovil Golf Club enjoying a really delicious belated Christmas lunch. We have an exciting year's programme ahead of us, starting with a visit from one of the Yetties, Bonny Sartin on February 5th.

We meet on the first Tuesday of the month at the Memorial Hall in Queen Camel.

For further information contact
Maureen McDermott 01458 224 503,
or Marion Chapman 01963 220741.

Christmas in the Gambia

from Jim Adam

A Christmas break in the sun was what we booked. It turned out to be a whole lot more than that.

This was one of my favourite trips that I've taken with Mrs A.

The Gambia sits on the west coast of Africa, surrounded on three sides by Senegal and on the other by the Atlantic ocean. Its beaches are of soft golden sand, fringed by palm trees and small hotel complexes. The temperature sat in the high twenties, drifting occasionally up to the mid thirties, which made the heat comfortable without being oppressive. I wasn't sure what to expect as I hadn't had the chance to do much in the way of research. What I found was a country populated with some of the warmest and friendliest people I've ever met. Whilst on other holidays I've had the feeling that the friendliness is about selling something or getting a bigger tip, I got a real sense of authenticity from the Gambians I spoke to.

A stroll along the beach was our first exposure to the real Gambia as we were approached by the locals, some of whom just wanted to say hello, others who were making their living selling fresh fruit and smoothies and some who had crafts to sell. Even when we declined the chance to buy, the locals were still friendly and happy to chat. It made a refreshing change from some of the other parts of the world we've been.

We took in some of the local sites, hiring a private guide for the day, and visit the sacred crocodile pool and the monkey park. At the pool we got the chance to get up close and personal with live crocodiles. Most of them were relatively docile but a protective female looking after her hatchlings meant we had to keep our distance at one point.



At the monkey park we also got up close and personal with the wildlife, but they were far more timid than the crocs and it required more patience and a bag full of peanuts to persuade them to pay us any attention.



The most moving trip we took was to Kunta Kinteh Island (do you remember the Alex Haley book and TV series *Roots*?) where we saw first-hand, the remnants of the slave trade as it existed under British colonial rule. I felt a genuine sense of shame to realise that the polite society and industrial nation we call our own perpetrated such atrocities in the name of commercial profit.

I was truly humbled when sharing my feelings with our Gambian guide he looked me in the eye and said “That is all in the past now. It will never happen again. Let it go. We have.” And he smiled.



The difference in lifestyle was quite an eye-opener for me. I like to think of myself as well-travelled and having a good understanding of the gap in wealth between the first and third worlds but seeing how the poorest people live out there really brought it home for me.

I have a friend who has been before and who has established links with a nursery school in one of the poorest areas of the capital, Banjul. Using her links meant we could also try and help in a small way and one we knew would be of genuine benefit. We took pencils, colouring pencils, exercise books and balls for the children. In hindsight I wish I had taken more and next time I will.

Our ten days in Gambia were some of the most relaxing, interesting and eye opening I've experienced. So much so that we've already decided we are going back again at the end of the year.

Your spare room could help

from Caroline Cook - SCC

Your Spare Room could change someone's life

How do you use your spare bedroom?

A place to store the laundry or an under-used exercise bike? Why not give that room an amazing purpose? A home for a Somerset child.

The number of children in care in our county has now risen to over 500.

Could you help them enjoy a brighter future?

Brandon and Josh 15 and 13, have been fostered for over seven years now and they can't thank their foster carers enough:

"When we first came to Dave and Paula's house we were really scared, our lives were all over the place. They gave us love, stability and made us feel safe. They treat us just like their own children. We are in a much better place now and looking forward to the future – Dave and Paula say we can stay as long as we like."

For more information call 0800 587 9900, visit www.fosteringinsomerset.org.uk

or come to an information evening: www.fosteringinsomerset.org.uk/events.

Help us spread the word on fostering:

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Can you guess the Veg?

from John Griffin

Gardening Society

from Stephen Sparrow

The Christmas Party was held on the 19th December in the Village Hall. The Hall looked resplendent with a huge Christmas tree (kindly donated by Robin Odgers) and suitably decorated walls. The Chairman welcomed everybody especially the new residents to the village and warned them that the party had some rather quirky traditions which involved mandatory participation. The food was prepared by the ladies of the Gardening Society and was up to its usual high standard and, of course, there was more than enough to go round. During the meal the diners had plenty of time to consider and answer the quiz on "plants in art and literature". By the time we came to the singing of carols people were mellow enough to not worry too much about being in tune or for that matter in time with the music which was provided by Anne Alderman on piano. The evening was rounded off with the 50/50 and raffle draws and the results of the Quiz.

It seemed a thoroughly good start to the Christmas festivities.



from Gerarda Solomon

A Dog's View from the Sofa

from Rudi



My New Year's resolution is to get on better with the OM. We have what you might call a love hate relationship – I love him but he hates me. So my mission this year is to make him

love me – just a little bit. Like many of you with good New Year intentions, I have got off to a bad start.

I overindulged in something unsavoury whilst on a walk, and consequently had a terrible tummy upset in the middle of the night. Unable to get outside, I deposited the contents of my insides at the bottom of the stairs. Now the OM likes to come downstairs first thing in the morning, in the dark and in his bare feet to put his coffee on and, I need hardly write anymore because you already know what happened. Yes, there was a loud SPLAT! followed by the most almighty and blood curdling 'Oh my God!' – loud enough dear reader to wake the rest of the village. I have to hand it to him though – he managed to hop all the way to the sink without putting his foot down – an impressive 30' – leaving the OG to clear up the mess.

As the saying goes, worse things happen at sea. The first daffodils are out so Spring can't be far away. The Six Nations Rugby is coming up so that will keep the OM busy, hoping against hope that maybe, just maybe, this could be Wales' year. I'm looking forward to long afternoons on the sofa, snuggled up together, telly on, fire blazing and tea with lashings of cake – happy days ahead! Come on Italy....!

Village Hall Notes

from John Godley

As ever at this time of year there is little to report except for a lecture on the 22nd February, more below. The next Committee Meeting is not for a couple of weeks where we will discuss the 2019 programme. If any one has any ideas for events please let David Morgan or Lisa Adam know.

The Hall is still standing and finances are in a healthy state thanks to the ministrations of Jenny Jackson.

Alan Peters, who gave an amusing and interesting talk on what a Royal Close Protection Officer was required to do early last year, is returning on the 22nd February to enlarge on what he covered before. Further details will be in Susanna's TWA and on posters nearer the date.

Church flower displays

from Susanna Thatcher



Church Calendar

Sunday, 3rd February 2019 – 5th Sunday before Lent

9.30 am Village Service at Corton Denham

Sunday, 10th February 2019 – 4th Sunday before Lent

4.30 pm BCP Evening Prayer at Corton Denham

Wednesday, 13th February 2018

7.00 pm Sacred Space at Weston Bampfylde

Sunday, 17th February 2019 – 3rd Sunday before Lent

9.30 am BCP Holy Communion at Corton Denham

Sunday, 24th February 2019 – 2nd Sunday before Lent

10.00 am Together at 10

The Cam Vale Benefice Service – Holy Communion at QUEEN CAMEL

The preacher will be The Very Revd Robert Key, Retired Dean of Jersey

Sunday, 3rd March 2019 – Sunday next before Lent

9.30 am Village Service at Corton

Wednesday, 6th March 2019 – Ash Wednesday

7.00 pm Service of Ashing at Corton Denham

Sunday 10th March 2019 – 1st Sunday of Lent

4.30 pm BCP Evening Prayer at Corton Denham

Wednesday, 13th March 2019

7.00 pm Sacred Space at Sutton Montis

Sunday, 17th March 2019 – 2nd Sunday of Lent

9.30 am BCP Holy Communion at Corton Denham

Sunday, 24th March 2019 – 3rd Sunday of Lent

10.00 am Together at 10

The Cam Vale Benefice Service – Holy Communion at SUTTON MONTIS

Sunday, 31st March 2019 – Mothering Sunday

11.00 am Mothering Service at Corton Denham

Clergy Details

Associate Priest: The Revd Preb. Rose Hoskins
01935 440026 revroseanne@gmail.com (days off: Sats)

Benefice Administrator: Rosemary Rymer
01963 441595 admincamvale@gmail.com

VILLAGE WEBSITE: WWW.CORTONDENHAM.ORG.UK

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