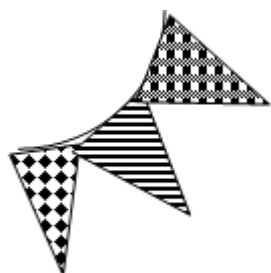


SOMERTON NEWS



March 2024



Do you enjoy

Somerton Fete

If so, please can you help
The summer fete will be on

Saturday August 17th

In order to keep the fete going as a community event,
it will be scaled back a little this year

Please could you help on the day
and/or with planning and preparation

Pre-Loved Stall

Tombola

Cake stall

Games for all ages

Refreshments

Setting up and Clearing up

If many people can help
then everyone can have a chance on the day
to leave a stall for a while and enjoy the fete themselves

Please contact Linda 01493393836, lindakshuker@gmail.com,
if you can help

The next fete planning meeting will be on
April 3rd in the Village Hall at 7pm
please come and share in planning and running
this community event



From the Editors

Welcome to the March edition of Somerton News.

On page 7, John Kett's poem begins with the old proverb about March "In like a lion and out like a lamb". March normally seen as the transition time between winter and spring, a changeable month. There are several old folk lore phrases relating to March weather, including:- "So many mists in March you see, so many frosts in May will be", "A dry March and a wet May, fill barns and bays with corn and hay"

Rain continues to dominate the news. Continual warnings of floods and reports of cliff slips. Looking back on our records, similar amounts of rainfall are recorded over the winter of 2019/20. We are grateful to Jim Bailey for supplying the Martham rainfall information for January and February. From 1st March John Hartley will record the rainfall in Somerton. Many thanks to Bob, Jim and John.

The snow in January was minimal but Bob Fleetcroft has captured some wonderful wintry scenes around the village and Rosemary has written a poem on page 10 of a winter walk. Very little ice but a 'lazy' north wind which goes right through you.

Clocks change forward on 31st March. British Summer Time was first established by the Summer Time Act of 1916, after a campaign by a builder. In 1916 BST began on 21st May and ended on 1st October. Only 4 months of lighter evenings. Over the years, this has altered and there are campaigns that BST be maintained during the winter months and a "Double Summertime" be applied to the summer.

Peter Trudgill's article included a map of how our area would have looked in Roman times is a fascinating reminder of how the area once was. I believe we have readers in Australia who are related to the Howes family and the people mentioned in his article, may have connections with them.

Mothering Sunday is on Sunday 10th March. Mothering Sunday since the Middle Ages has always coincided with the 4th Sunday of Lent, Laetare Sunday. A respite for fasting in the middle of Lent. Originally, it was for people to go back to their mother church, where they were Christened. In later times, Mothering Sunday became a day when domestic servants and those working away from home were given a day off to visit their mother church, with other family members. Traditions included presenting mothers with a bunch of violets and baking special cakes, especially Simnel Cake. I read on the internet, that there is a tradition still in some areas of eating a 'plain yeast-leavened bun, iced and sprinkled with hundreds and thousands' for breakfast.

From your editors. Mike and Penny

My Great-grandmother

There is a piece, on pages 12 and 13, by Peter Trudgill about his great-grandmother, Gertrude Harriett Pitchers, her father and mother and grandparents. As Peter is an Honorary Professor of Sociolinguistics at the University of East Anglia there are many references of how surnames and place names came about. A must read!



Clocks Change

Don't forget – clocks go forward at 1am on 31st March, which is also Easter day.

Events in Somerton Village Hall

Food For Thought

Friday 1st March
6:30 – 8:30 pm

Coffee Morning

On the first Wednesday of each month.

Come along on Wednesday 6th March at 10am for a cup of tea and good company

Somerton Parish Council

Tuesday 12th March
7pm

Hobby Club

Tuesday 19th March
2-4pm

Village Venue

Wednesday 13th March
5-8pm
Chips and curry sauce
Pop in for a chat

Bingo

Tuesday 9th April
Eyes down 7:30pm

A small reminder



Complaints have been received from villagers who are visiting graves in St Mary's churchyard that there is a lot of dog faeces about on the paths and around the churchyard. **PLEASE CLEAN UP AFTER YOUR DOG!**

For a person in charge of a dog it is an offence to not clean up faeces if a dog defecates on designated land. The current maximum penalty is £1,000.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Down to earth
(sharing gardening tips)
Friday 1st March

An invitation to Horsey and Somerton
Villagers and Friends

please come to a Supper Party
West Somerton Village Hall,
6.30 pm-8.30pm

share thoughts & ask questions

so that we can cater for the right numbers,
if you would like to share in the simple supper,
please let Linda & David know 01493393836,
lindakshuker@gmail.com
you are welcome to make a small donation
to help cover costs, any surplus will go to
Somerton & Horsey Churches



Forthcoming Events in Neighbouring Parishes

Easter Craft & Gift Fair

Handmade Gifts, Raffle,
Tombola, Refreshments,
Free Parking Available!

Saturday 23rd March
10am to 2pm
St. George's Church, Rollesby
(Fleggburgh Rd, NR29 5HH)

Sellers - Call: 07917 501349
£10 per table
(in aid of St. George's Church)



*A Service of Evening Prayer
for Mothering Sunday
10th March at 6pm at Horsey Church
all welcome to come
to celebrate and give thanks*

Winterton Gardening Club

Wednesday 13th March – 2pm
Winterton Church Rooms

This month Rosie Ward will be
speaking on 'Trees and Shrubs for
Smaller Gardens'

Mothering Sunday - a poem by John Kett

*An arly daffodil . . . an aconite
A purple crocus . . . there they be, held tight
Together in that titty-totty hand.
But Mother's eyes are bright.
She understand.*

Birdlife with Judy Clift

We are back to unseasonal warmth, to heavy rain and wind, interspersed with an occasional bright clear day; to waterlogged ground and high water levels.

It is the end of winter, with its sadness that the stirring magic of seeing and hearing pink footed geese will soon be no more; that winter swans will be gone; that the stunning short eared owls and hen harriers will have begun to head north again; that the wonderful swirling flocks of lapwing and golden plover will no longer rise in unison from flooded fields; that the vast chattering groups of starlings will not be sweeping low before rising alongside the plovers.



Hen Harrier

Will the barn owls have been able to survive the almost constant rain which soaks their plumage and prevents them from hunting?

Although spring flowers are blooming, trees starting to blossom and grass and weeds grow apace, there is strangely little bird sound: now the over wintering Scandinavian blackbirds have left, no resident blackbird seems to be in song, no song thrushes, no chaffinches, no wheezing green finches. A few groups of goldfinches, a few tits, even the farmyard sparrows are quiet. There is little of the restless activity of early spring. I can't think it can all be down to cats. A shortage of insects? disturbance? perhaps my garden is unusual in its quietness this year.

Lengthening days and promises of new life are part of the joy of anticipating spring: some early swallows and martins have been spotted, duped perhaps by unusual warmth. Chiffchaffs, small greenish brown warblers, are returning, best identified by their "chiffchaff" call. Skittish moorhens chase across the

staithe; water rails, almost always hidden from view, screech enthusiastically among the reeds. Unseen cranes trumpet from afar: maybe they are dancing, who knows?

Marsh harriers display overhead, their squeaky calls alerting to their presence. Any day now and a familiar booming will echo across the marshes as male bitterns seek to attract mates. Look out for early goslings and cygnets, and towards the end of the month, listen for the hurried song of newly arrived sedge warblers as the once silent reedbeds begin to stir.



Marsh Harrier

In woods and gardens, blackcaps will vie with blackbirds as the most beautiful songster; there should be searching for nest sites and foraging for materials. Ivy, though little loved by gardeners, provides excellent cover for nesting: perhaps some could be left until the breeding season is over? A general business and sense of purpose will prevail, often threatened by magpies or cats. I, for one, shall be shouting at both!

Nearer to the coast, and the first wheatears will soon be about, resting, nervous and alert on the land side of the dunes, with the more wary ring ouzels too, flying off at the first sign of a human or a dog.

Enjoy a walk from the concrete blocks towards Winterton: you could be rewarded with yellow hammers, linnets, skylarks, stonechats, crows, a green woodpecker, buzzards, harriers or even a red kite, and it might not be raining!

March at the Museum of the Broads

The Museum of the Broads opens for 2024!

We can't wait to welcome visitors again from Sunday 24 March.

Come and visit YOUR local Museum and discover many stories of the Broads. Families and dogs are welcome and there are activities for all ages. Enjoy a snack in our café or a picnic by the river and take a boat trip to appreciate our unique, watery landscape. We start with a fun, family Easter Trail over the school holidays with themed prizes for children taking part. Don't miss it!

And remember, you buy an annual ticket for the Museum, so pay once and visit as many times as you want throughout the year. We also have combined boat and entry tickets this year, available online. See our website for details and to book.

So, what are you waiting for? Open Sundays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays, we look forward to welcoming you to our historic and peaceful setting by the river.

The Museum of the Broads, Poor's Staithe, Stalham, NR12 9DA, 01692 581681
www.museumofthebroads.org.uk @MuseumBroads on Twitter, Facebook and Instagram

The Vegetable Garden by John Downes

February has been a grim month, the soil is basically waterlogged, and it is pointless trying to venture on it without damaging and compacting the ground. On top of that I managed to get pneumonia, antibiotics have cleared the fluid in my lungs, but I've been housebound since early this month. I've also ended up with a very painful lower back problem. Nil carborundum etc.!

As quite a lot of the plot is clear of weeds, and fairly roughly turned over from earlier crops, my only option is to use a 5 pronged cultivator to break up minor clods and make a decent tilth for seed planting when I am able, (with the help of Jenny) - and no, I'm not going to use her as a roller! A lot of gardeners are using this method, with the addition of mulched compost rather than deep digging, it will be interesting to compare the different methods.

As previously advised, you should've checked and replenished seeds required for this year's crops, and made a plan for planting. Early crops such as leeks, lettuces, beans etc may be planted in trays or individual pots, for planting out as the weather improves. If you have a greenhouse, the inclement weather is a good time to clean and sterilise glass, and canes, pots etc.

THE FUST O' MARCH

*March never come in like a lion t' year;
That come like a lamb . . .
Not wi' the bluster an' not wi' the roar
We reckon t' git, but peaceful, bor,
Wi' sunshine warmin' up evrathing,
The laarks a-climbin' the sky t' sing,
Wi' blackbaads chatterin' t' rew the trees,
An' twigs full o' buds what sway in the breeze,
An' bees a-buzzin' about the heather
What grow in the gareden . . . Ah, lovely wather
We'a had t' day for the start o' March.
An' I haard in the dusk from his high ole parch
A-top o' the fir tree, all alone,
The song-thrush sing t' the fair full mune
A-risin' over the filds, so white,
Cov'rin' the arth with its silver light.
March never come in like a lion t' year;
That come like a lamb.*

John Kett

The Fust O' March is from **A Year Go By** by Norfolk poet John Kett, first published in 1981 (ISBN 0 9507820 0 9) and currently out of print. Second-hand copies are available through Amazon Books for about £5 per copy including postage. Worth tracking down a copy so you can enjoy just over 100 of John Kett's poems about the ebb and flow of the seasons in the Norfolk countryside. Last year we included 11 of John's poems after receiving permission from David Kett, son of John Kett. We are once again indebted to David, who was contacted during January 2021 and gave Somerton News permission to publish one of his late father's poems for each month for as long as we like. There are 8 or 9 poems for each month in **A Year Go By**, so our readers are in for a monthly treat. We would also like to thank Peter Trudgill and members of Friends of Norfolk Dialect for help in tracking down David to ask for his permission to publish his late father's poems.

The 200th Anniversary of the RNLI

A world-leading search and rescue organisation, the RNLI's lifeboat crews and lifeguards have saved over 144,000 lives since its founding in 1824. From triumphs to tragedies; from oar-powered vessels to the boats packed with cutting-edge technology used today; from introducing the first lifeboats on the River Thames to rolling-out a UK beach lifeguard service; from running the UK and Ireland's biggest ever drowning prevention campaigns to working with others to save lives overseas – the RNLI has a remarkable 200-year story to tell.

You may be familiar with the story of Grace Darling, one of the Victorian era's most celebrated heroines, and if you come from Norfolk, will have heard of Henry Blogg – the most decorated person in RNLI history, holder of three RNLI gold medals and four RNLI silver medals. Henry is considered a lifesaving legend for his 53 years of service on the Cromer lifeboats where he saved 873 lives with the help of his courageous crews.



Henry Blogg (centre) with the RNLI volunteers at Cromer.

The RNLI was formed after *HMS Racehorse* was wrecked on a reef off the Isle of Man in 1822, inspiring the beginnings of the charity. Sir William Hillary, who launched the RNLI (first known as Royal National Institution for the Preservation of Lives and Property from Shipwreck) lived on the Isle of Man and witnessed many shipwrecks off the Manx coast. He was made aware of how the townsmen had taken their boats out to *HMS Racehorse* to try to save the crew, battling the heavy seas with much bravery and decided action must be taken to establish a lifeboat service.

Sir William Hillary's vision for a service dedicated to saving lives at sea became a reality in Bishopsgate's trendy London Tavern on 4th March 1824. Tragically over the two centuries, more than 600 crew members have lost their lives trying to save others at sea.

....continued P18

Farming Diary by Sebastian Young

The rain just keeps coming and coming, and there looks to be more on the horizon. There is currently a lot of water sat on arable fields that you would not usually see sitting with puddles and sometimes even worse flooding. March should be the month where spring work really kicks into gear with potato planting, spring barley and sugar beet drilling all in farmer's minds, but if conditions remain as they are it will be the tail end of the month when things really get going. Here's to hoping that this rain comes to an abrupt end and people can get onto the land a bit sooner.

Once things start with the spring work, given the winter we are coming out of, they will not be stopping in a hurry. There will be some very long hours put in by the counties farmers to ensure that their crops are all in the ground and have the best start possible.

The sugar beet season for 2023/24 will draw to a close in March, with the final fields being lifted and deliveries made to the counties factories. Indeed, on a recent visit to the Wissington factory, Kings Lynn, they are forecasting a season end of the final week in March. The lateness of this once again not helped by the weather.

Rainfall figures for Somerton

2024 rainfall figures collected by Jim Bailey. + February rainfall to 23rd Feb.

Month	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019
January	54	57	13	72	50	36
February	84+	5	58	34	80	24
March		66	21	27	14	47
April		72.5	3.5	8	21	13
May		49.5	35	78	8	36
June		17	46	72	47	89
July		108	12	52	35	35
August		42	12	53	69	37
September		37	68	17	82	68
October		164	59	82	103	137
November		99	91	48	35	84
December		66	68	71	114	71
Total		780	486.5	614	598	677

Recordings are in millimetres per month

The 2023 total is the highest since 2012 (936mm)

Records up to Dec 2023 collected by Bob Falgate

A Norfolk Winter Walk by Rosemary Noble

My boots scrunch through snow as crisp as glass,
Disturbing a cloud of flighty linnets feasting.
Pinpricks of diamond ice glint amidst the sunlit track
Where footprints of pheasant, hare and muntjac
Once mingled in cold moonlight. No social distancing required.
A lone fieldfare, grey of wing, picks at scarlet rosehips
Before flying up to a cerulean sky,
Ignoring the threatening clouds behind.
Retracing, I face a storm, a pelt of frozen rain
Pattering on my jacket, transforming it from turquoise to white.
A biting wind picks at my scarf. Head down, my feet
Crack through frozen puddles, towards home, towards light.



Somerton Staithe in the snow by Bob Fleetcroft

My great-grandmother by Peter Trudgill

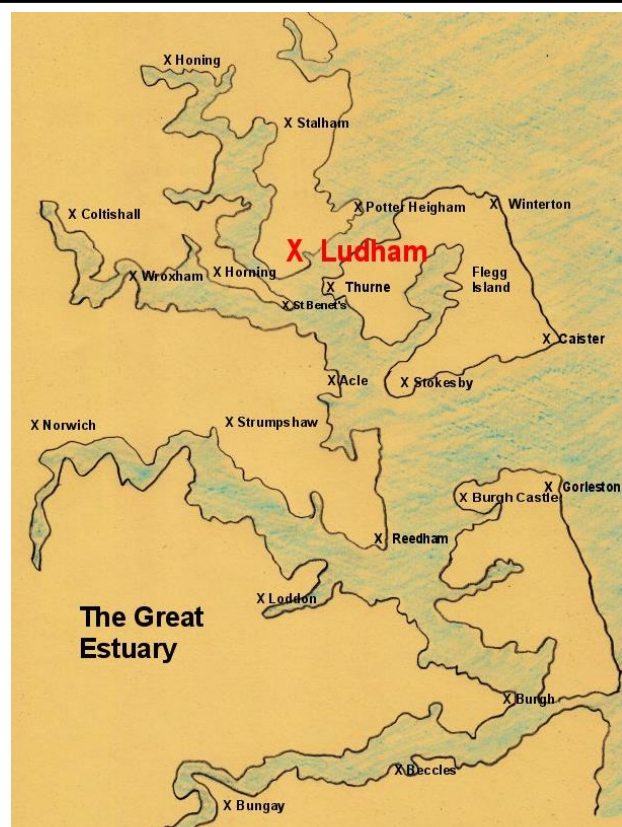
Between 1811 and 1881, the population of Norwich increased massively, from 37,256 to 85,370. This was to a considerable extent the result of in-migration into the city from surrounding rural areas.

At around that time, a young woman called Gertrude Harriet Pitchers, my great-grandmother, was moving the 15 miles south-westwards into Norwich from Martham. Her journey was much easier than it would have been for earlier generations. Martham was on the island of Flegg, though it was by now no longer truly an island as such although it was still surrounded by water, being bordered to the east by the North Sea, to the north by the River Thurne, and to the south and west by the River Bure.

Since mediaeval times there has been a bridge crossing the River Bure to Flegg from Acle, originally constructed in the 11th century, and at that time referred to as Weybrigg. According to the *English Dialect Dictionary*, the form 'brig' has been used rather than 'bridge' in regional varieties of English in Scotland as well as in

the North and Midlands of England as far south as Northamptonshire, Bedfordshire, Huntingdonshire, Cambridgeshire, Norfolk and Suffolk. It is no longer extant in modern East Anglian dialects, but it can still occur in place names such as Felbrigg in North Norfolk. Fye Bridge Street in Norwich was originally called *Fyebrig-gate* (where 'gate' was the Old Danish word for 'street').

There is also a mediaeval bridge to Flegg across the Thurne at Potter Heigham. And there is today also a further crossing of the Thurne at its eastern end: the Thurne's egress to the North Sea has been blocked by sand-dunes, causing it to change direction and flow westwards back into the Bure. What remains of the eastern end of the river is now crossed by a road which was constructed across a causeway between Somerton and Horsey in the mid-nineteenth century, providing a third way of leaving Flegg. Before the road was constructed, the only way to Horsey from the south was along a track behind the sand dunes, which was liable to be flooded at high tide.



Back in Roman times, the area we now know as The Norfolk Broads was under the sea. In place of the rivers and lakes we see today, there was a great estuary. The Romans used the estuary for their ships and guarded the entrance with the forts at Caister and Burgh Castle. Today, Ludham seems miles from the sea, but back then it stood on a bit of high ground looking out over the sea towards Flegg Island. The map below shows the extent of the estuary.

Since Roman times, the sea has retreated and the great sandbar at Yarmouth has formed. The estuary vanished with only Breydon Water remaining, and Ludham was surrounded by the rivers Ant, Bure and Thurne rather than sea. However, the surrounding land has not got any higher and is still effectively at sea level which means that this area is still prone to flooding both from heavy rain and from the sea. You get a bit of flooding most winters, but every now and then, the big one comes along.

Editor's note: This section, the map and text, has come from The Ludham Archive – well worth looking at.

<https://www.ludhamarchive.org.uk/flood.htm>



My great-grandmother by Peter Trudgill

Harriet had been born in 1857 in the east Norfolk village of West Somerton, which is less than two miles from the North Sea coast at Winterton, and her family had later relocated to Martham, just a mile or so away. Unsurprisingly, the names Somerton and Winterton referred in Old English to enclosures or settlements which were utilised by the inhabitants mainly in the summer and winter respectively.

Harriet Pitchers's father Robert had originally come from Saxlingham Nethergate, to the south of Norwich. "Pitcher" was the English name given to caulkers – men who were employed applying pitch to the seams of boats and barrels. Pitchers was a common name in eastern Norfolk, but I do not know how or why he ended up in Somerton, which is rather more than 20 miles from his birthplace, an unusually long distance for those times.

It is true that the geneticist Steve Jones has observed that the invention – and later widespread availability – of the bicycle brought about the biggest ever revolution in human genetics. Prior to the coming of the bicycle, marriages in England generally took place between people who had grown up no more than three miles apart; after the bicycle, this extended to fifteen miles. But bicycles were not readily available in Robert's youth.

Harriet's mother, Sophia Howes, was also from West Somerton, but Sophia's father, George Howes had come from the coastal village of

Sea Palling, in Happing Hundred. Palling in Old English meant *'the people of Pælli'*. Howes is a very common surname in eastern Norfolk and has more than one origin. One possibility in this case is that it came from Old Danish *'haugr'* – 'mound, hill'.

Sophia Howes's mother, Sophia Thain, came from the nearby Flegg settlement of Repps-with-Bastwick. The name Sophia in those days would have had the true English-language pronunciation *"So-FYE-a"*, rather than the pseudo-Italian version *"So-FEE-a"* which has been common in Britain only in the last few decades.

Sophia Howes's father, Benjamin Thain, was also from Repps; and her mother was a Mary Manship, from Martham. Manship is an Old English name – it came from *'gemænscipe'* – 'community', referring to land held in common: Modern Dutch *'gemeenschap'* means 'community'; and so does German *'gemeinschaft'*.

Thain, although it is a name with a particular preponderance in north-eastern Scotland, also has a high concentration in the areas around Flegg. I like to think that maybe some Scottish fisherman, following the herring down the North Sea, landed in Yarmouth and decided to stay. The name Thain itself came from the Old English word *'thegn'*, originally a man who in Anglo-Saxon times held land through military service to some superior.

Peter Trudgill was born in 1943 in Thorpe-next-Norwich, England. He went to junior schools there, and then to the City of Norwich School, before going to King's College, Cambridge, where he studied linguistics and philology. His Edinburgh University PhD thesis was titled *The social differentiation of English in Norwich* (published by Cambridge University Press in 1979). His numerous other publications include *The Norfolk dialect* (Poppyland Publishing, 2003).

He writes a weekly column on European language and languages in the *New European* newspaper. He is the Honorary President of the Friends of Norfolk Dialect Society; a Fellow of the British Academy; Honorary Professor of Sociolinguistics at the University of East Anglia; and Emeritus Professor of English Linguistics at Fribourg University, Switzerland. He was also of great assistance to Somerton News in getting permission from the late John Kett's family to publish the poems in *A Year Go By* which have been a feature of this newsletter since February 2020.

News from St Mary's Church

Services at St Mary's West Somerton and All Saints Horsey and selected services in Flegg North District churches in March 2024

Sunday	3 rd	10:00am	Holy Communion (BCP) – Somerton Church
Sunday	10 th	6:00pm	Evensong for <i>Mothering Sunday</i> – Horsey Church
Sunday	17 th	9:00am	Holy Communion (BCP) – Horsey Church
<i>Palm Sunday</i>	24 th	11:00am	Family Service – Somerton Church
Monday	25 th	9:30am	Morning Prayer for Holy Week – Repps Church
Tuesday	26 th	9:30am	Morning Prayer for Holy Week – Horsey Church
Wednesday	27 th	9:30am	Morning Prayer for Holy Week – Somerton Church
Thursday	28 th	11:00am	Maundy Thursday Holy Communion – Winterton Church
Thursday	28 th	7:00pm	Maundy Thursday Holy Communion – Martham Church
<i>Good Friday</i>	29 th	9:30am	<i>Way of the Cross</i> – starting with a service in Somerton Church and continuing to Winterton Church and the beach via East Somerton Church ruin.
<i>Easter Day</i>	31 st	6:15am	<i>Dawn Service</i> on the beach at Winterton
<i>Easter Day</i>	31 st	9:00am	Easter Holy Communion (BCP) – Horsey Church

West Somerton and Horsey churches will now be open each day from about 8:30am until about 5:00pm for visitors and private prayer.

Everyone is welcome at all our services.

Flowers in the church during February were in memory of Josephine Taylor.

Everyone is welcome at all our Easter services.

St Mary's West Somerton will be joining in Holy Week services and Easter celebrations with other churches in the North Flegg Parishes. Through Holy Week and Easter, we can share in Jesus' journey from Palm Sunday, and his entry into Jerusalem with great celebration, through Maundy Thursday, with its memorial of the Last Supper, into Good Friday, when we remember the cost of Jesus' actions to offer forgiveness to all through his death on the cross, arriving with joy and wonder at the empty tomb of Easter Day and the heart of the Christian faith — forgiveness and new life.

Maybe it is your custom to join in Easter remembrances and celebrations every year or maybe this year could be a first for you, a new experience; whichever it may be, you will be welcome.

Please come and join in any or all of the services to mark these very special days: starting with a ***Palm Sunday Family Service***, continuing with ***Morning Prayer*** at the beginning of Holy Week and ***Maundy Thursday Services of Holy Communion***, leading to a ***Good Friday*** pilgrimage and witness ***Carrying the Cross*** through our villages to the beach, picking up on the beach again for a ***Dawn Service on Easter Day***, before a later ***Easter Day Service of Holy Communion***.

The details of Holy Week and Easter services are above, starting on Palm Sunday and finishing on Easter Day. Everyone is welcome at all our Holy Week and Easter services.

St Mary's West Somerton PCC.

The monthly magazine for the parish of Somerton, distributed free-of-charge to residents and friends.

An 'odd' Easter by Revd Phil Rodd

It certainly seems like it this year, coming on the last day of March – almost like an afterthought, after the long weeks of Lent (and those weeks are intolerably long if you've given up something that's particularly dear to your heart, or to your stomach!). But Lent really is just an 'appetiser'; it's Easter that's The Big One. Because it's Easter that celebrates Jesus Christ risen from the dead. And for twenty centuries the Christian church has proclaimed this Easter faith as if its life depended on it.

Why? Because it does.

As St Paul writes: *'If Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile, your sins are still unforgiven, and Christians who have died are lost'* (1 Corinthians 15.14,17). Putting it bluntly, no resurrection means no such thing as Christian faith. Without the resurrection, Jesus of Nazareth is one more failed Messiah, and Easter is a ghastly mistake, worse than a mistake, a blasphemy, portraying a crucified criminal as divine Lord and Saviour.

'But,' writes Paul in the same chapter, *'Christ has indeed been raised from the dead.'* And that rising marks out Christ as unique, for he has gone through death and come out the other side, never to die again. Which means Easter is relevant not only for today but for all eternity. It's relevant both for those first followers of Jesus who changed overnight from a rag-tag bunch of scaredy-cats, to a courageous body of believers ready to take on the world; and it's relevant too for us today, as we follow in the path of Christ's self-giving love for those around us, and as St Paul goes on to say, as we continue to follow Christ through death to a resurrection like his resurrection.

Do come and celebrate this good news at our Flegg Parish Churches – especially at one or more of the Holy Week and Easter services listed in this newsletter.

Wishing you every blessing for this the greatest season of them all!



Phil Rodd
Team Vicar



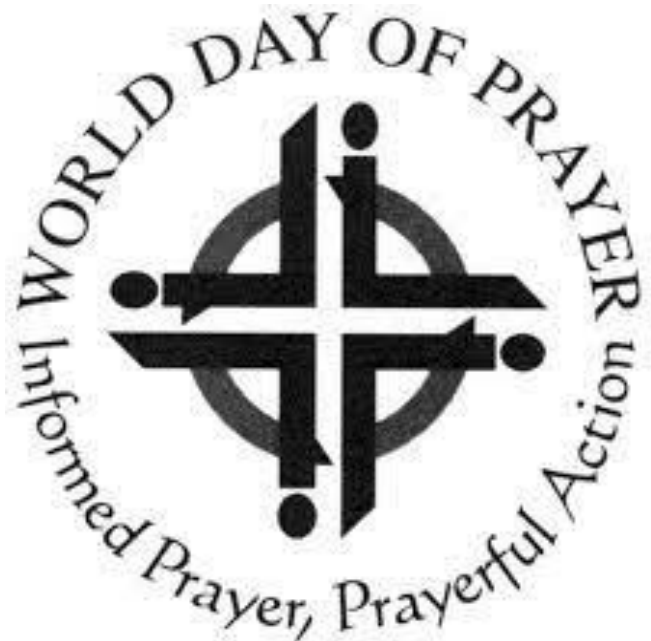
Easter Lilies. There is a different arrangement this year with the Easter Lilies which have become a tradition at St Mary's West Somerton Church. The PCC shall purchase 2/3 dozen lilies and display them in the chancel with the names of all the people who are always remembered at this time. If you would like to make a small donation or wish to add a name to those who are remembered please contact Linda Shuker on 01493 393836.

World Day Of Prayer – Friday 1st March 2024

The 2024 World Day of Prayer has been prepared by an ecumenical group of Christian women from Palestine, the land in which Jesus was born, ministered and died, where the Christian faith began and is rooted. The service is a great wave of prayer in native languages encircling the globe, beginning as the sun rises over Samoa, continuing as it makes its way around the earth, ending back in the Pacific, as the sun sets over American Samoa. We in the Fleggs will be joining with people in over 146 countries and islands around the world to pray with and for the people of Palestine.

“I Beg You... Bear With One Another in Love.”

Ephesians 4:1-3



**On Friday 1st March 2024 at 2:00pm
Hemsby Methodist Church
6 Waters Lane, Hemsby NR29 4NH**

The Worship Service shares stories of three Palestinian Christian women, who witness to the power of bearing together in love. Their stories illuminate the experiences of Palestinian women from three different generations. The symbol of an olive tree is used throughout the worship service. This represents the three generations through the trunk, branches, and leaves of the olive tree.

The Palestinian Christian women who wrote this worship service have invited the world to pray for peace, justice and freedom of religion and freedom of movement. Their prayers specifically call us to pray with women, refugees, persons experiencing homelessness, and all who are sick, dying and grieving. They also call us to confess to our collective role in causing the climate crisis, and to commit to repairing what we have destroyed. Finally, they call us, the global church, to be united in treating all with justice and love.

What is Below the Ground Under Your Feet?

A few weeks ago I went with my husband to visit our son and his family. We had been warned by our son that their lounge was out of action on account of the floor being insulated and therefore it would not be operating as a lounge during our stay. This did not seem to be a problem as there are a few other rooms that are used downstairs namely the playroom.

The house dates from 1910 and is in Kingston upon Hull. Insulating the floor is rather essential as with any house of this age conserving heat is of the utmost importance.

I don't know what readers have in mind when thinking about insulating a floor but it may be similar to what was in my mind. Previous experience of an older house made me believe that the space under a ground floor would probably be no more than eighteen inches in depth. This is not the case with our son's house. The space below the floor boards is about five feet in depth. Workers who need to get underneath the floor can almost stand up in the space. When our son moved into the house we wondered if there was a cellar. There is no cellar probably because no one thought it was needed. Cellars are often places where coal is delivered to the house from the street but this would not have been the case here owing to the house being too far from the road.

This was the first reason for the title of this article. The second occasion was more recent. We joined a group of people who like us were enjoying the Hidden Street Tour situated underneath and above what was the former Ponds Shoe Shop situated on Castle Meadow in Norwich.

One of the reason that I wanted to do this was that like many other people, I thought there were tunnels going underneath Castle Meadow and into Norwich Castle. Apparently that was a story that someone had made up quite sometime ago.

The tour began with our guide giving us the history of the shoe shop. The shop owner held the customers in high regard documenting each one. One particular customer had his first pair of shoes in 1902 when he was eight months old. He subsequently bought his shoes there until 2002 when he bought his last pair at the age of 102. The guide mentioned his name and immediately my husband recognised him as his French teacher from grammar school. The guide was astonished when my husband told him.

The shop was the first shoe shop to have an X-ray machine but in those early days of X-rays no one was aware of the dangers of radiation. Apparently the machine was left on all day.

We moved on to the back of the shop where the stock rooms had been, leaving behind the shop façade. We were in another world. A world of walls, window frames, uneven steps low ceilings and all manner of small rooms, some that had housed weavers families including the looms which they operated with the help of their children who were put in dangerous situations having to climb into the loom while it was in operation in order to retrieve anything that had fallen into the it. There was also danger of fire from the particles of cotton. No flames were allowed anywhere near the looms.

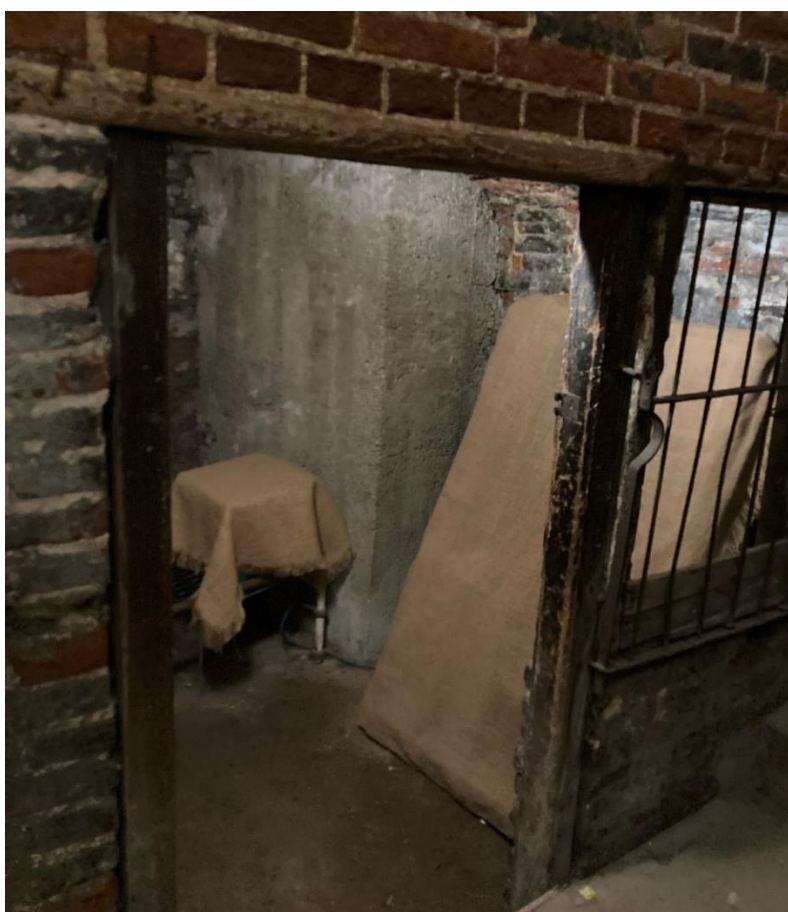
By Margaret David

We found ourselves below ground level adjacent to Castle Meadow. We were standing on what had been a roadway many years ago. Mentioning again life before planning permission, as the road was being constructed someone decided to build a house in the middle of it. Part of this is still visible. This did not deter those building the road as they put the road either side of the house.

On one side of the road where we were standing was a small room that had been a shoe storeroom. Many years before it had been a greengrocers. Apparently the greengrocer kept a pig or two. These lived outside the shop during the day. They were kept for the purpose of eating any leaves or rotten fruit and vegetables that might have been dropped outside the shop. At night they were kept inside the shop to do the same thing. Any manure that might have been manifested during the night was sold to customers the next day. No idea was given as to how this was conveyed by the customers.

While I was listening to the guide giving us all this information it was quite difficult to imagine what life was like over the centuries that have passed since that time. Castle Meadow itself was much lower than it is today. It was a ditch filled with sewage which overflowed in wet weather.

I have always been interested in social history and finding out how people lived many years ago. Carbon dating – which is how much of the history of the back rooms of Ponds shoe shop was discovered – have helped us to understand what we are looking at when the ground under our feet goes deeper than we think.



The Greengrocer's shop in the old street below Castle Mall

The 200th Anniversary of the RNLI – cont.

On 10th December 1886, 27 lifeboatmen lost their lives whilst attempting to rescue the crew from the German barque *Mexico*. After the *Mexico* disaster and the loss of 27 lifeboatmen, a small team organised an event in Manchester that changed the face of fundraising forever – a street collection for the RNLI and you must have seen RNLI volunteers collecting at our supermarkets.

Fifteen years later the Caister Lifeboat disaster happened on the night of 13th November 1901 when nine crew members lost their lives while attempting to launch the lifeboat *Beauchamp* in a brave rescue attempt when a vessel was in trouble on the Barber Sands. The weather that night was extremely poor with lashing rain and a strong gale blowing the heavy sea.

When the *Beauchamp* was finally launched in the early hours of the morning the crew headed towards the stricken vessel but the sea conditions were so rough the boat was forced back towards the beach. As the *Beauchamp* neared the beach she struck the beach bow first. At the same time the heavy sea struck the starboard side and the lifeboat capsized. The masts broke off and the crew became trapped beneath the boat. Three men were the only survivors. Nine *Beauchamp* crew members were lost in the disaster. Seventy-eight years old retired coxwain James Haylett was asked at the subsequent inquest if knew why the crew persisted in the rescue attempt despite the poor weather and sea conditions. He replied that the Caister Lifeboat crew would never give up a ship in distress. This reply was to become the famous phrase "**Caister men never turn back**". The shorter phrase "**Never turn back**" was later adopted by the RNLI as their motto.

During the First World War (1914–1918), lifeboats launched 1,808 times and saved 5,332 lives. Despite having to contend with extremely dangerous conditions, RNLI lifeboat crews saved 6,376 during the Second World War (1939 and 1945) and two RNLI crews joined an armada of little ships for one of the Second World War's greatest rescues: Operation Dynamo at Dunkirk.

On a stormy December evening in 1981, the Penlee lifeboat *Solomon Browne* battled heavy seas and hurricane force winds to reach the *Union Star*, a stricken coaster being swept towards the coast of Cornwall. After several attempts to get alongside the coaster, the lifeboat crew rescued four of the eight people onboard. But rather than turn back to shore, they made a final heroic rescue attempt - and all radio contact was lost. At daybreak, the *Union Star* was found capsized on the rocks by Tater Du Lighthouse and wreck debris from the lifeboat began to wash ashore. This disaster was the last time the RNLI lost an entire crew in action.

In 1969 Eighteen-year-old Elizabeth Hostvedt became the first woman qualified to command an inshore lifeboat and in 2005 Aileen Jones became the first female lifeboat crew member to receive a RNLI Medal of Gallantry. In the 19th and 20th centuries, women helped to launch and recover the lifeboats, after what was to become the Royal National Lifeboat Institution (RNLI) was founded in 1824, but it wasn't until 1967 that the first woman joined as crew. Now, eight per cent of volunteer lifeboat crew are women, who take a full and active part in rescues alongside the men.

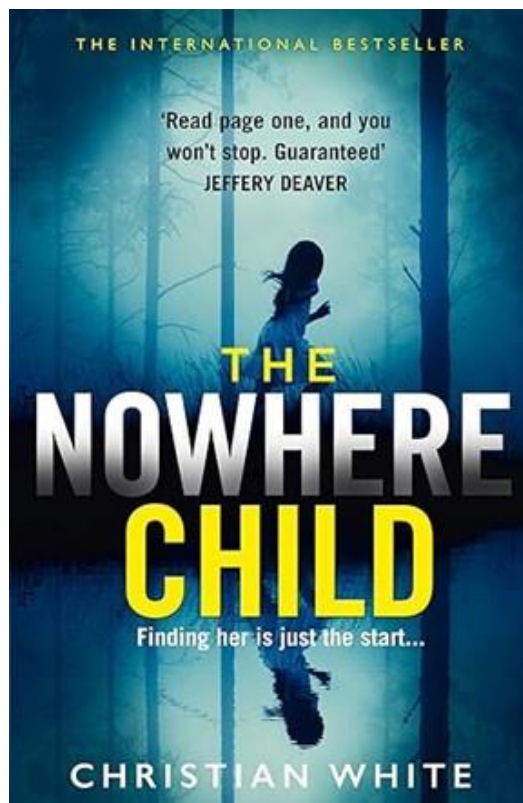


The Nowhere Child – book review by Rosemary Noble

This was on my to be read (tbr) list after someone recommended it.

It's a case of never opening Pandora's Box or be careful what you wish for.

Kimmy Leamy teaches photography in the Melbourne equivalent of an FE college. One day she is approached by a stranger in the coffee bar who tells her she may be the missing Sammy Went, who disappeared from her home in Kentucky twenty-eight years before.



He produces a photo of the missing child, but Kimmy dismisses the idea as preposterous. She was brought up in Australia by her mother, who is dead and her stepfather. She's known them forever and has a half-sister, slightly younger. It's most definitely a case of mistaken identity – or is it?

She begins to nag away at herself because she can see the likeness but then when the stranger returns and produces DNA evidence from the coffee

cup she had discarded, Kimmy's life takes on a whole new direction, one I think she may come to regret. The stranger is her brother who had dedicated his life to finding his sister to resolve the guilt he feels. He won't let her go now that he has found her.

Wow! What a journey Kimmy embarks on to find the truth. Written as then and now, this is a fast-paced book about a dysfunctional family, bizarre religious practises involving poisonous snakes and, yes, I looked them up and these practices did exist until recently. There are twists and turns aplenty, interesting characters and an inevitable sense of danger which Kimmy falls into.

It had me hooked for certain. As a debut novel, this author is certainly one I shall look out for again.

I am not a great lover of crime fiction. There are often too many bodies, bizarre methods of dispatch, villains I don't believe in and sloppy detective work. This one did not fall into that category; it was far more multi-layered. The Libby App had the book on audio only.

A word about audio books, this one lasts for nine hours, and many people enjoy listening while they are doing other things, cooking, knitting, walking, gardening etc. I find audio books take all my concentration, so I try to avoid them. This time I downloaded the Libby App to my phone, plugged in my ear buds and listened. The female narrator, Kirsty Gilmore, switched easily between Australian and American accents and between male and female really bringing the book to life.

It's quite amazing that these books are free to download and enjoy.

SOMERTON DIARY March 2024*You will receive a warm welcome at all these events!*

Day	Date	Time	Event	Location
Friday	1st	2 pm	World Day of Prayer	Hemsby Methodist Church
Friday	1st	6:30 – 8:30	Food For Thought	Somerton Village Hall
Sunday	3rd	10 am	Holy Communion (BCP)	Somerton Church
Wednesday	6th	10 am	Coffee Morning	Somerton Village Hall
Sunday	10th	6 pm	Evensong for Mothering Sunday	Horsey Church
Tuesday	12th	7 pm	Somerton Parish Council	Somerton Village Hall
Wednesday	13th	5 - 8pm	Village Venue	Somerton Village Hall
Tuesday	19th	2 pm	Hobby Club	Somerton Village Hall
Sunday	17th	9 pm	Holy Communion (BCP)	Horsey Church
Sunday	24th	11 am	Family Service – Palm Sunday	Somerton Church

SOMERTON DIRECTORY

St Mary's Church Somerton					
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			Church Warden	Position vacant	
All Saints Church Horsey					
Priest in Charge	Position vacant		Church Warden	Jenny Downes	393314
			Church Warden	Reg Payne	393308
Village Hall			Parish Council		
Bookings	Deborah Ashton	393784	Chairman	Judy Clift	393464
Bookings	Jan Bowyer	393514	Vice Chairman	Position vacant	
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			Councillor	Diane Crane	393641
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Mercury & EDP	Position vacant		Councillor	David Shuker	393836
			Councillor	Richard Starling	393823
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			Email: clerksomerton@gmail.com		
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