

THE BUNTINGFORD JOURNAL



WESTMILL'S ART EXHIBITION IS BACK

Sat 31st May - Sun 1st June

See page 30 for details

£25

The independent journal for Buntingford & Villages published by Buntingford Civic Society

May 2025 Volume 50 | Issue 4

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www.citizensadviceeastherts.org.uk

Buntingfordfoodhub@gmail.com | 07842 889 772



LETTER FROM

The Editor

With the schools on Easter holidays as we go to print this month, we have extra space for a few more community entries and an extra long story from the writer's group on p.18. So I hope you are settled in with a nice cup of tea in hand ready for a good read!

The Mayor's Quiz night was a huge success last month and you can read all about it on p.12.

We are promised more regular articles from our local animal rescue centre RATS and this month they have sent us a heartwarming story about Blue the greyhound which, if like me you are a huge fan of sight-hounds you can read on p.28.

It's great to see the Westmill Art Exhibition back for a 35th year - our cover this month is one of the beautiful paintings from this exhibition - if you would like to read more about how to enter your artwork or when you can go and view all the lovely pieces of art, full details are on p.30.

We also have details of the famous Braughing Fair and Wheelbarrow Race and Dog Show on p.38. Although the fair isn't until July, entries open for the wheelbarrow race on 12th May, so it's time to start thinking about what you'd like to create if you would like to enter this year.

We also have our VE-day celebrations in the town on 8th May details on p.7 - apologies for calling it the D-Day anniversary in the last two issues! Of course we did that one last year! Thank you to the eagle-eyed reader who spotted that for us!

Anne

BUNTINGFORD JOURNAL

MAY 2025

EDITOR

Anne Wright

journal@buntingfordcivic.org.uk

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01763 272 032
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EDITORIAL DEADLINE

Editorial copy deadline for the next Journal is: **15th May**.

Please send all contributions to the editor on the email address above.

The editor reserves the right to edit copy received, and add or omit pictures where necessary.

The views expressed in the letters, emails and articles in the Buntingford Journal are not necessarily those of the editor.

The Buntingford Journal is published by, but is editorially independent of, the Buntingford Civic Society. For information on how to join the Society and have the Journal delivered to your door for free, please email: membership@buntingfordcivic.org.uk

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ON THE COVER

Artwork from the Westmill Art Exhibition

Following the official business at the Society's AGM on 15th April, the attendees were treated to a very informative talk by Heather Falvey entitled "Jottings of two Buntingford vicars – the Layston Parish Memorandum book". The talk was centred around two vicars of "Layston Parish", Alexander Strange, incumbent, 1604 - 1650 and Thomas Heton, incumbent, 1704 – 1748. These vicars kept a memorandum book that detailed records of payments to the poor of the parish and the people that supported these charitable contributions. They also made observations about the residents, some of which are still relevant today. All those that attended agreed that the talk showed that even in the 17th and 18th centuries the elderly and poor residents of Buntingford were supported by the community around them.

Buntingford In Bloom Competition

All residents of Buntingford are invited to take part in Buntingford Civic Society's garden competition.

The competition is open to all gardens in Buntingford, with prizes for Best Front Garden, Best Rear Garden and Best Containers (including Hanging Baskets)

How to enter:

BCS members will have received an entry form with May's copy of the Journal. Entry forms for non-members are available to collect from the Manor House or are downloadable from the Civic Society website at www.buntingfordcivic.org.uk. Simply complete the form and return it to Graham Waite, c/o The Manor House, 21 High Street, Buntingford. Entry forms must be received no later than **Monday 9th June.**



Judging will take place on **Saturday 28th and Sunday 29th June 2025** and the judging panel will be looking for:

- Overall design and appearance
- Choice and quality of plants
- Health of plants
- Cleanliness and tidiness of garden
- Lack of weeds
- Plants that attract birds and insects
- Evidence of water conservation
- Evidence of environmentally friendly gardening techniques

Winners will be notified by the end of July, and the date and venue of the prize giving will be announced in the July issue of the Buntingford Journal. The judging panel's decision will be final.

Graham Waite

Chairman, Buntingford Civic Society



BUNTINGFORD TOWN COUNCIL

www.buntingford-tc.gov.uk

01763 272 222

clerk@buntingford-tc.gov.uk

The Manor House, High Street, Buntingford, SG9 9AB

 @buntingfordtc  @BuntingfordTC

Office Hours: Monday - Thursday 9am-5pm; closed Friday

Local elections will take place on Thursday 1st May at the Seth Ward Community Centre. This is for a seat on Hertfordshire County Council.

District Council elections will take place in 2027. There will also be a polling station at The Manor House which is for Buckland, Chipping and Aspenden residents, all three villages have lost their usual polling stations this year.

The Mayor's Quiz night was very successful with in excess of £3,000 raised for the Isabel Hospice and the Herts and Essex Air Ambulance, grateful thanks to residents.

The Town Council along with local churches and the Royal British Legion are planning an event to celebrate the 80th anniversary of VE Day. This will be held on the **8th May**. A street party will take place on Market Hill from 5pm until 7:45pm, tables and chairs will be available. You are welcome to bring your own picnic or two local food outlets are arranging adults and children's plates to take away. The street party will be followed by a commemorative service at the War Memorial at 8pm, which will be followed by beacon lighting.

A town event is planned for **Saturday 12th July** at the Community Centre. This will be similar to past events with live music, bar, food outlets, free fun fair and face painting. Further details to follow.

Due to local elections and VE Day, the Town Council meetings will be later in the month than usual.

The Manor House is licensed for Civil Ceremonies and many local residents have held their marriage ceremonies in the Grade II Listed Building. Ideal for small ceremonies of up to approximately 30 guests. All enquiries to the Clerk's office where we will be happy to show you around and answer any questions.

The management of the Multi Games Area is now back with the Town Council. If you wish to hire the MUGA, please contact the Clerk's office and we will check availability.

Layston Cemetery is owned and managed by the Town Council, please call us if you have an enquiry.

In line with GDPR Regulations, the Town Council has published a number of Privacy Notices, these can be viewed on the Town Council web site.

Jill Jones PSLCC Cert HE -Town Clerk

Town Council meetings for the months of May are:

Thursday 15th May 7pm

Amenities Committee.

Thursday 22nd May 7pm

Planning and Resources Committee

Thursday 29th May 7pm

Annual Town Meeting at Community Centre.

Thursday 29th May 8pm

Annual Council Meeting and Full Council (Community Centre)

All meetings held at The Manor House unless indicated otherwise.

RIVERWATCH BUNTINGFORD

Dr Derrick Guy

Herts & Middlesex Wildlife Trust,
- Living Rivers Champion
love.your.chalk.stream@gmail.com

The River Rib through Buntingford is essentially urban, and sandwiched between the two sewage treatment works at Therfield and Aspenden. Technically that is quite a challenge to return it back to its pristine condition befitting the rare chalk stream that it is. We continue to work in partnership with agencies that know how to put things right - and who have access to funds that will achieve it. Meanwhile there are some easy wins that cost almost nothing, take little effort but are hugely engaging and make an immediate visual difference.

Litter picking is top of that list. Groups like the scouts and others independently arrange litter pick sessions supervised by themselves. However, the flow of litter is pretty relentless especially after heavy rain. With a minimum of organisation and some forewarning, the Buntingford Town Council can help supply hand picker sticks (with a grabber on the end) and plastic bags. By arrangement, bags can be taken away for disposal by the county council. Unlike parks and pathways etc, a flowing river of course, is inherently dangerous. Even if it looks shallow, parts of the Rib will be out of your depth, so it is essential to be supervised by those properly clothed (meaning waders) and experienced.



Downstream of High St bridge with (L-R) Duncan, Paul, Georgina & family.

Our latest litter pick (as per the photo) was last Thursday 10 April involving no less than Duncan (aka Town Mayor, previously our Chief Constable for many years and finding it difficult to let go of his previous job if the traffic cone is anything to go by), Paul Deerman (our recently retired

police constable), and joined by the Green candidate in the upcoming May elections, Georgina Schwan, and family.

If you think this activity might appeal, please feel free to join us, the more the merrier. For prior notification, sign up to our WhatsApp group : 'RiverWatch - Buntingford'. It is a private (ie closed) group of over 50 members for announcing and organising volunteering events. We also have a closed Facebook group (over 100 members) of the same name for those interested to know what is going on but less likely to join in with active events (- still very welcome of course).

Send a joining request (by answering a few simple questions), to the WhatsApp and / or the Facebook group or for further information, contact me direct via email: love.your.chalk.stream@gmail.com



Little Egret - finding plenty of minnows at River Green



**BUNTINGFORD ACTION
FOR SOCIAL HELP**

**Volunteer Hospital
Driver Service**

Colin Horgan started volunteering with BASH in 2017 as a driver. He soon became much more than a driver organising and taking the phone messages and doing the driving himself whenever he possibly could. He has given so much care and attention to the local people he helps.

In October it became apparent that he was unwell and unable to do the transport coordinating or dealing with the phone calls as he had done. He was in hospital for a long time and he has made a remarkable recovery. There is still a way to go, but you may see him walking about in the near future, so say hello and thank you to a very caring man who is very much missed in our organisation.

In these days of everything digital, how can I talk to someone in person at Citizens Advice East Herts about my problem?

You can come to our Contact Centre at the Manor House, open every Monday from 11am to 1pm. From May 12th, this will change to 10am to 12pm.

What is the Contact Centre for?

While most people can contact us by calling our message line on 01920 459 944 or sending an email, we know that some people may not have internet access or be confident on the phone. The Contact Centres are for anyone who needs a bit of extra help to get the advice they need.

How do they work?

It's a bit like a triage service at a hospital where you are assessed to see if you need a doctor or a nurse. We'll listen to you, so we can work out what help you need. We can talk you through the options for this, set you up on our system, arrange for an adviser to call you back for an advice session, arrange a face to face appointment or point you in the right direction for any additional help.

Can you give full advice at these sessions?

There isn't always time to give full advice, which could take 20-40 minutes and you might need to bring extra paper work or documents. If it's not too busy, we will do what we can to help you move forward with your problem, but we wouldn't have

time, for instance, to help with applying for benefits, so we would need to make an appointment for this.

What if I want face to face advice?

We can arrange that, if it's the best way to help you. We can see you at the Manor House, or another venue in East Herts such as Bishop's Stortford Library.

What kinds of issues do people come to you with?

In the last year, we've seen 99 people at the Manor House, with a massive range of issues including problem debt, housing problems, child access issues, consumer issues and scams. No problem is too big or too small – if we can't help, we will find someone who can.

What should I do if I have an urgent problem?

Our Message Line on 01920 459 944 is always the fastest way to get in touch. We try to get back to messages within 24 hours, although we are closed at weekends. If you miss our call back, our advisers will try two more times to get in touch, we really want to make sure you get the help you need. During opening hours (10am to 4pm) the Message Line has an option to speak with an adviser straight away if you prefer.

Or you can visit our website: citizensadviceeastherts.org.uk where you can find lots of useful links to information that might help with your problem.



Joanne Willett, Trustee
jwillett@wardfremanpool.org
www.wardfremanpool.org
 WardFremanPool

It's Happy Anniversary to us as the Ward Freman Community Pool Group CIO celebrated its first year as a registered charity. The anniversary was marked by holding an AGM and approving the first statement of accounts. Once these are registered with the Charity Commission we will be able to apply for more grants.

Whilst we anticipate that grant funding will pay for the majority of the capital costs to reopen the pool, we do have to raise a certain amount in 'match funding' so our fundraising events continues. So far we have raised £23,500 and we want to continue momentum by raising on average £1,000 a month.

Special thanks go to the Rosmarinus Trust for a donation of £2000, Joanne Sears who donated £491 via Crowdfunder and Jean Cook who helped to sell our 'Shop local, Swim local' bags at the Community Choir, Buntingford Learning for Fun and various U3A groups raising £345.

On April 27th our team of 'Freman Flyers' had a great time raising money for our charity and Home Start Royston, Buntingford & South Cambridgeshire taking part in the Home Start Aquathon at Royston Leisure Centre. We aimed to be the team that did the most lengths of different styles from water polo and lifesaving rescue tows to aqua jogging. Find out how they got on and the final amount of money raised on our website blog: www.wardfremanpool.org/blogs

We have had further meetings with Buntingford Town Council to discuss our request for a grant of £45,000. Whilst they are supportive of the charity's efforts to reopen the pool, they do not feel able to vote on providing a grant of this size until we have secured the lease from Hertfordshire County Council. They in turn are reluctant to provide a lease until we have capital funding in place.



www.buntingfordchoir.co.uk
info@buntingfordchoir.co.uk
Paul Webster

Its early days still with our new choir leader, but things are progressing very nicely. We are learning plenty of new songs, and some very interesting and humorous warm ups. We were so fortunate to find Carole and persuade her to take over our choir. The choir committee are so pleased with the progress the choir is making and hope it will continue for a long time.

If you are interested in singing with Buntingford Choir either just turn up to Millfield School in Monks Walk on a Monday evening at 7.20 for a 7.30 start, or email us at the following address.

info@buntingfordchoir.co.uk

Or for more information go to our website: www.buntingfordchoir.co.uk

MAYORS QUIZ NIGHT



I have been afforded the privilege of being our town's Mayor for the past three years.

As part of my civic role and responsibilities I discussed with my deputy Mayor Jackie, the prospect of arranging a charitable fundraising event. We agreed this first such event would support Isabel Hospice and the Herts and Essex Air Ambulance, both of which operate retail outlets in our High Street.

What was to unfold exceeded our wildest expectations and the support of the community and our local businesses was truly inspiring.

With support from some councillors, council staff and prominent community members we set about arranging the event which resulted in a full Campbell Hall at the Seth Ward Community Centre on Saturday 29th March.

We were also supported at the event by Mayors representing Sawbridgeworth and Bishops Stortford, together with Mr Terry Douris, Chair of Hertfordshire County Council.



I have always held a firm belief that our town 'punches above its weight' when called upon and this was to be no exception.

Importantly, those attending fully embraced the evening and feedback has been positive, importantly indicating enjoyment and fun had by all.

Whilst I would love to publicly thank each individual there are far too many to mention but on behalf of myself and Jackie, please accept our sincere gratitude for making this first such event such a success and helping to showcase our town in such a positive light.

As a direct result of everyone's generosity the evening raised in the region of £3000 clear profit split between the two charities.

The Buntingford Journal is delivered FREE to members of the Buntingford Civic Society, or it can be purchased from:

THE CO-OP , LOCKS, STOCK & MORE , MARK DOEL BUTCHERS, THE CHEESE PLATE, BUDGENS/POST OFFICE, KIM on the CARD STALL

VOLUNTEERS WANTED

Do you have any of the following repair skills?

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Carpentry/Woodwork

Electrical Appliances

Mechanical

Bike Maintenance

Clothes alterations

IT Assistance

Computers/phones

Tool Sharpening

Toys

Would you be interested in donating your expertise & time as part of our Buntingford Repair Café, launching later this year?

If so, we would love to hear from you!

For more information contact Madela

email: madela1@hotmail.co.uk

phone: 07778 298605

The Buntingford Community Project

REED GARDEN CLUB

Sue Huggins

This month's meeting is on **May 14th**
2-4pm in Reed Village Hall

"The road to Novichok"

Neil Dickenson

£3 entrance tea/coffee.

Plant Sale: 24th May

10am start

Outside Reed Village Hall SG8 8AX

CASH ONLY. Lots of bargains.

Several u3a members attended the Mayor's Quiz at the end of March.

The hall was packed with 12 tables of 8. The winning table was a group of friends led by u3a member Chris Thurgill – well done Chris! We had a table made up of u3a Wine Appreciation members who were given the name "Wineos" and came a creditable 3rd. We enjoyed the charcuterie board and there was a raffle and an auction. The supported charities were the Air Ambulance and the Isabel Hospice. The total raised was a splendid sum of around £3k.

Thirty-one members visited St Edmunds College Chapel in April. The Headmaster, Matthew Mostyn, was our guide and told us the story of this oldest Catholic College in England.

The college has 120 in the Prep School and 620 in the Senior School and on our visit the Prep School were in the Chapel rehearsing their Easter play so there was only a limited window for us to visit it. We briefly waited in the corridor outside before various groups of young children and their teachers filed out and Matthew continued his talk.



Refreshments were then provided in the small museum and Matthew pointed out three special items. The first was a very large bookcase which contained some very old books. Matthew explained that they often host historians who come and spend a day at the museum and they have told the college that the books are extremely old and extremely valuable.

The second were the original drawings of the chapel by Augustus Pugin – who helped Charles Barry design the Palace of Westminster and after Barry's death, designed the Elizabeth Tower which houses the bell known as Big Ben.

The third was what looked like a large tall, cabinet – a piece of furniture that would be seen in any older home, but by unclipping two side clips the top half came

Membership of the u3a is open to anyone not in full time occupation.

We meet at the Seth Ward Community Centre on the Second Monday of the month - 1.30pm

Please visit our website for news and details of all our groups.

www.u3asites.org.uk/buntingford - New members always welcome.

down revealing a beautiful 'hidden' altar that would be used secretly by a Catholic family for communion (see photo).

Our Speaker for **Monday 12th May** is Charlie Haylock - The History of Spoken English - We welcome Charlie again for this fascinating talk. Language developed from the Tudors and Stuarts.

My apologies for giving the wrong speaker details for April in my last report – instead of looking at the “List of Speakers 2025” I accidentally used the



“List of Speakers 2024.” I could say it was an April Fool’s prank but no, sadly, it was just my human mistake!

BUNTINGFORD GARDENER'S CLUB

Next Meeting: Wednesday, 7th May

At: The URC Hall, Baldock Road

Doors open: 7:45pm for 8pm start

It's that time of the year to start planting up your hanging baskets, just make sure you harden them off in your porch/ greenhouse first though before you put them out overnight, just in case there's a late frost.

This month we are pleased to have a talk entitled “All Things Roses” by Kerry Austen. Kerry is the head gardener at Rochford International Rose Trials, based in Hertfordshire. Kerry will talk about her work at Rochfords and everything related to Roses.

Come along and have a listen if you want to get the best out of yours.

Our meetings are monthly and always on the 1st Wednesday of the month.

We don't have meetings in January as it's straight after the Christmas break or



August which is typically holiday time. We always have some interesting speakers throughout the year, giving talks on a variety of relevant subjects. We also enjoy outings as well as quizzes.

Annual membership cost is only £20. Don't want an annual membership? Then you are always welcome so come along on a night of your choosing for just £3.

If you would like any more information, then please ring 07766 655 933.

Hope to see you there.

The Speaker at our April meeting let us down at the last minute but, far from panicking, it turned out to be a blessing in disguise! It gave us the chance to bring forward our Annual Meeting and to combine it with our 'New Year Party' which we had to cancel because of bad weather. As a result we enjoyed an evening of delicious food prepared by our committee, table quizzes and a 'pass the parcel' game, and we ended up with a new President, Pat Murray.

This means that on **Thursday May 8th** (our usual meeting night) we will be free to join in with the VE Day celebrations taking part on Market Hill. The WI (which has been going strong in our Town for 107 years) was very active in Buntingford during both world wars. They held garden parties, knitted small garments for

the occupied countries, learned how to make rugs from scraps of material and to 'Make Do and Mend'. They also ran an 'Aid to Comforts Fund' and 'Prisoners of War Fund' and had monthly collections for the overseas Cigarette Fund! The WI Hall (which is now our Tile Shop) was taken over by the military for use as a recreation room for evacuees.

The URC Hall will be open between 7 and 8pm. if anyone would like to pop in for a cuppa and light refreshments and to meet us, although some of us will be circulating around Market Hill during the evening.

If you would like further information about us please contact our secretary Pat on 01763 271 305

BRAUGHING GET TOGETHER

Further to the great successes of our Murder Mystery and Whist Drive, Braughing Get Together will be holding the following events before taking a summer break.

Friday 23 May - Wine Tasting

We present a talk by Platon Loizou, the owner of the 4 Acres Estate Vineyard in Little Hadham to include wine tasting and accompanying charcuterie platter.

There will be an opportunity to buy some wine (card payment only)

Cost is £10/pp payable at time of booking. Please book early as places are limited to about 25.

Our enjoyable evenings are an opportunity to mix, mingle and make new friends, not just from Braughing.

It will be held in Braughing Church Hall with doors opening at 7pm for a 7:30pm start.

To book please contact

Cynthia - telephone 01920 822 230 or 07933 202 547 / email: cynthia.matthews44@gmail.com

Marion - telephone 07887 915 215 / email: marionjsaunders@gmail.com

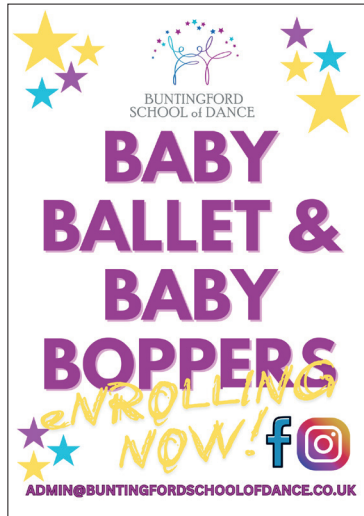
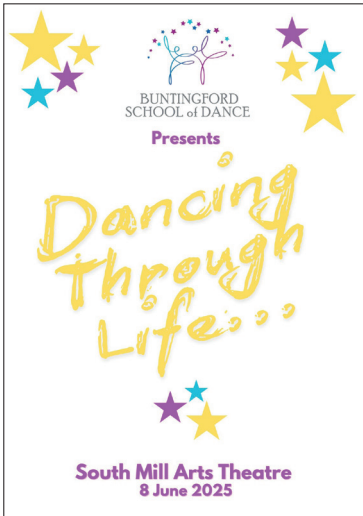
We look forward to seeing you.

BUNTINGFORD SCHOOL OF DANCE



Zoë Eaglesfield www.buntingfordschoolofdance.co.uk

 Buntingford School of Dance |  [buntingfordschoolofdance](https://www.instagram.com/buntingfordschoolofdance)



It's all systems go this month for our Show at South Mill Arts, Bishop's Stortford. We have rehearsals at Freman college in mid May ahead of our theatre rehearsal and performances in June.

If you want to come and see what all our dancers have achieved and

what we have to offer, tickets for performances are available from the venue website southmillarts.co.uk

Performances 11.30am & 3.30pm
Sunday 8th June.

To register for classes please visit our website or use the QR code

THE BUNTINGFORD SENIOR CITIZENS' CLUB

Our Club is 75 YEARS OLD this year, we are having a celebration lunch for members.

Our members are aged 60-102 So why not come and join us for a social afternoon of tea or coffee and Bingo.

We meet every Monday (except Bank Holidays) 1:30pm for 2pm in the Church Hall opposite The Post Office in Baldock Road.

For more information please call Val on: 01763 272019

BUNTINGFORD WRITER'S GROUP

Mary Godfrey

Bluebells in April

The Alarm woke her as usual at five well before dawn, Flora swung her legs out of bed, and her feet touched the icy cold linoleum beneath.

The house was a large Victorian Terrace, cold and droughty.

Stanley had been born in this house, and it was to this crumbling Mansion (she thought) that he had brought his new young bride here in 1945. She was just 22 years old, and Stanley was 29 years old. Four Kingsland Mansions is a fine house but needs modernisation.

Flora found it was a struggle to greet any day with enthusiasm since Stanley died in the Autumn. His bronchitis was possibly the aftermath of his time spent in the trenches in war-torn France in 1943. He had suffered with it ever since then, and this time, it had quickly turned to pneumonia, and she had lost him in a week.

Flora quickly dressed and, shivering in the cold bedroom, made her way to the kitchen, put on the kettle, and made herself a welcome cup of tea.

At 5:45am, she boarded the red Trolley bus every morning, deep in thought and preparing herself for the day ahead. Flora sat at the back and rang the bell to stop at the Chapel Market.

She and Stanley had worked on the market for 20 years, and his family before them.

They had a café, and the market traders would come and enjoy their bacon sandwiches or full English breakfast. Both Flora and Stanley were renowned for their breakfasts.

Today began as any other since the death of Stanley, and Flora greeted her customers with her usual cheery smile, but

as the day stretched out, she felt nothing but despair.

"Morning, lovely Flora", her thoughts were interrupted, "you were deep in thought" Jonathon Morris was a regular. He and Stanley had been good friends since their school days. "What can I get you, Jonathon? You're usual?" she managed a cheery smile. "A bacon sandwich will be just fine. Thanks, Flora." As she prepared his meal, she found herself thinking could she accept Jonathon's offer of friendship and possibly more, he constantly pursued her with invitations to the Cinema or "My daughter is inviting me to lunch on Sunday, why don't you come with me" the look of hope in his eyes shining through. "you could do with a change of scenery you work too hard managing all this without Stan."

Later, upon arriving home, Flora discovered a letter on her doormat, with a Barnstable post-Mark. She smiled to herself. Margaret's letters gave her so much pleasure. Flora had met Margaret during the war when she had been evacuated to Barnstable, and they had corresponded ever since through those years.

She hurried to bring the kitchen fire to life, made tea, and began reading.

Dear Flora, my dear Friend,

I think about you so much, especially these days and wonder how you are coping without Stanley. How do you manage in that big, rambling house?"

Flora read on with growing interest. *I'm writing because we have kept in touch through all these years. I believe a new life for you here in Devon is possible if you consider it for a moment.*

The next Village, Appledore, has a thriving Café ideal for tourists.

The old lady who has run it for many years has decided to retire, and it's up for sale.

Flora, hear me out. I can hear your protests, but this could be perfect for you, a new beginning, a new opportunity; you are only 45; this could be so good for you, a new start.

Thank care for yourself, Flora, and please do give this serious thought

*Your Friend always.
Margaret.*

The train huffed into Barnstable railway station, and Margaret excitedly waved at her from the platform. Margaret lived in the next town, Bideford, where Flora and she had been evacuated all those years ago. Margaret had stayed and married a local man, Brian and raised a family of two boys.

Once Flora, with some trepidation, had decided to move away from her life in Islington, the old house, and the café in the market, she couldn't wait to put the plan into action. She felt excited for the first time in a very long time. Her mind kept returning to the disappointed look on Jonathon's face, and suddenly, she knew she had to take this chance and explore possibilities. Margaret was right; Flora couldn't wait to begin this new life. "If things don't work out for you, please come back; I'll be waiting", he said with a brightness in his eyes.

Flora suspected Jonathon had loved her while Stanley was alive and believed he could look after her now that Stanley had died. She knew he did love her, but now she would break his heart. She planned to start a new life away from Islington and him.

Flora had seized the opportunity and visited the old lady at the end of January, and now it was April, and her new life was about to begin.

Appledore was a quaint fishing village with a thriving business in holiday cottages to let.

Her new home was an enchanting Thatched cottage with briars twined around the front door that would bloom in June into fragrant roses.

With the smell of the salty air and the screech of the low-flying gulls, Flora felt that she had come home and fate had stepped in.

Flora found herself transported back to her childhood when she had been evacuated here during the war to the calmness of Devon, far away from the bombing in London.

Sweet Briar cottage and the adjoining Café were situated just off the harbour along a cobbled towpath. The garden gate led to a small paddock, carpeted with surprisingly early bluebells that appeared to stretch away into the distance to a copse of trees.

This new life suited Flora very well; she quickly made friends in the village, and regular customers frequented the café. Why had she not realised that this new life could be full of opportunities and new experiences? If she could take a chance, and she had.

Flora felt renewed energy; her skin glowed, and her hair had turned a pretty shade of warm chestnut.

One day, shortly after she arrived at Sweet Briar Cottage, Margaret came to see her. "I've come to see how you are settling into village life", she smiled. "I can see that it suits you very well; you certainly have a bloom about you, and you look happy, and I'm glad to see it. I have something for you, don't be cross, I think you will love it" With that, she opened the basket she was carrying, and Flora saw a puppy, to her delight.

Continues >

"Oh, I love it ", exclaimed Flora. "What a darling; how did you know I was thinking about getting a dog." Margaret smiled "he is a Jack Russell cross with not sure what, but he will keep the rats away from the café and be good company for you."

"I will call him Patch because of the one black patch over his eye", declared Flora.

In the following weeks, Patch followed Flora ever faithful; he was always at her heels, and at the end of one day in early spring, she discovered the bluebells. She had closed the café, and together, they explored the lush bluebell wood behind the cottage and along the harbour, breathing in the salty air. The climate felt very different here in Devon. Maybe the seasons come early, she thought to herself.

Flora felt relaxed in this way of life, Chapel Market, and her busy, relentless life seemed far away.

Jonathon had written often, and she looked forward to his letters with news of her former life, but this was her new life, and she was grateful to Margaret and always would be.

One wet and rainy day, the café had very few customers, and Flora decided to write to Jonathon. It was remiss of her (she thought) not to have returned his last letter, and she did look forward to hearing from him. She began,

Dear Jonathon,

Life here in Appledore is probably the best thing I have ever done for myself. I love the cottage, and the café is going well. I seem to have been accepted into village life here, and I have joined the church and now found my way onto the Parish Council and the Women's Institute. Who would have thought it? Certainly not Stanley; he was always so focused on the business, wasn't he?

The walks are lovely; the bluebells behind my cottage make my heart sing, and my

little dog Patch loves to roll in them. You should see for yourself maybe one day.

Life is good for me here, Jonathon. I feel I can breathe again.

I hope you are well,

*With my best wishes
Love from Flora X*

One morning in June, Flora opened the café for breakfast at 7am, and there waiting was a man whose face seemed somehow familiar. She welcomed him in and began the morning breakfasts as the café started to fill with customers; the man enjoyed his breakfast and then stayed and drank several cups of coffee; he appeared to be watching her.

Flora took her coffee and sat at his table in a quiet moment. "Do I know you?" she asked; where had she seen him before? "Don't you remember me?" he asked with a gentle smile. "I'm Simon. We were evacuated here in 1944."

Suddenly she knew who he was "Simon" she gasped "after all these years. "

He told her that he and his late wife had often returned to Appledore. It was a place that had happy memories for him, and he would moor his Cabin Cruiser down at the jetty. This was the place where they liked to step ashore and have breakfast. He told her that his wife had fought a long battle with ill health, and she had sadly died five years ago; sadly, they didn't have children. "Now there's just me roaming the seven seas when I can take a break from business" he smiled wistfully,

They talked for what seemed like hours, both excitedly starting a sentence simultaneously, delighted in their shared childhood memories of living here during the war years.

Flora thought, goodness he was my first love, and he hadn't changed very much

over the years; his hair, although a bit thinner on top, is still sandy, and his skin glows with a deep tan, probably from spending time on his boat, her appraisal told her he was in good shape.

In the weeks that followed through the summer months of 1973, she and Simon spent many happy hours together, often sailing around the bay and going for long walks. When he asked her to marry him and produced a diamond solitaire ring one day, she gasped; she had not expected that.

Fate had stepped in to change her life; could she take a chance on happiness?

Did she want to be married again, now that she had found independence, and did she love him? She wasn't sure in her heart, and her life was complete now. She wondered how her new life would change if she married him. Simon would expect her to make a new life with him away from this place, a holiday retreat for him, but only that, and he would return to his home and business in Exeter. Flora pondered over and over in her mind what she should do.

Simon was getting impatient. "I don't want to press you," he said, but have you decided?"

As the days grew shorter and the café prepared to close for the season, Flora lit the fire in her sitting room and got ready for a cosy night with Patch at her feet. The wind was howling outside, and windows rattled; it was a wild night, but she felt safe. She loved her little cottage and the comfort it gave her; could she give it up to marry Simon?

Suddenly, she heard a car door slamming and a rapid knock on her door.

Simon is becoming persistent, and I'm not ready with my answer.

"Who's there!" she called, carefully opening the door a chink she saw. To her delight, it wasn't Simon,

"Jonathon!" "Whatever are you doing here?" she laughed delightedly. Patch sensed her pleasure and immediately threw himself at Jonathon's feet. "Sorry I couldn't let you know", exclaimed Jonathon, bending to tickle Patch's ears,

"It was a spur-of-the-moment thing." Flora beamed at him. "I'm so pleased to see you; I have missed you." Jonathon explained that he had come to Devon to look at some properties, "I loved your letters describing your life here, and it convinced me to see for myself", he went on,

"I have decided to take early retirement. My Daughter and her Husband want to take over the publishing business. I believe they will make a success of it, and I'm going to step aside to give them a chance."

Flora looked at him, "you mean you might move here?" The thought intrigued her.

Jonathon watched her expression with some trepidation, "Yes, I've sold my house in Islington, and I fancy trying Devon life" he told her that he had never contemplated anything so impulsive in all his 48 years.

"Flora, lovely Flora, will you come with me? I have an appointment to view a house in the next village tomorrow?"

Flora looked up into his warm brown eyes and knew what her answer would be.

Could she retake a chance at happiness? Could she choose between these two lovely men? What should she do? At that moment, she knew it was Jonathon; could she let Simon down gently?

She had made her choice, but it wouldn't be easy, she would tell Simon, and tomorrow she would go with Jonathon to find a new home for him here in Appledore. The future looked bright.

BUNTINGFORD LOCAL HISTORY GROUP

Carol Emery

buntingfordlocalhistorygroup@hotmail.com

This month's talk was given by Linda and Steve Bratt from Furneux Pelham History Group and was entitled "Furneux Pelham 1000 years of history." There is evidence that there was some sort of settlement in the Anglo Saxon times as 9th century pottery was found in a ditch in the village some years ago.

Stocking Pelham, Brent Pelham and Furneux Pelham were originally just one place as described in the Domesday book of 1086 as "Pelehem" a tiny hamlet containing a single farm with a few cottages housing farm workers. It wasn't until about 1200 that it got divided into the 3 Pelhams we know now. Stocking Pelham so named because of a "stockade" (fence) around the church, Brent Pelham originally Burnt Pelham following a fire there, and Furneux Pelham named after the family who were lords of the manor in the 1100-1200's. What no one can agree on is how the place name was spelt or pronounced. Over the years there have been numerous spellings Furnell, Forneys, Funes, Furnix, and many more. Even today there are disagreements on how it should be spelt, Furneaux or Furneux are both used depending on who is spelling it.

At the centre of the village is St Mary the Virgin church built in the 12th century but has been refurbished over the years. Outside there is a clock on the tower with a plaque stating "Time Flies" above the clock and "Mind Your Business" below the clock.

During the 1860's the Calvert family from Furneux Pelham Hall refurbished the chapel and stained glass windows attributed to William Morris and Edward



Burne-Jones before they became very famous were installed. The church still has a bible dated 1639 which belonged to Henry Hancockes who was the vicar in the 1600's. Another vicar Reverend Bray for some reason hated buckets and the only time the floors of the vicarage could be cleaned were whilst he was preaching on a Sunday. When he died, they found a cart shed full of gin bottles, the contents of which he must have consumed during his time as the vicar. Another vicar Henry Grindle paid local children to burn pieces of what was the rood screen on bonfires so only a very small piece of it remains.

During more recent renovations the floor of the church had to be lifted and underneath was discovered a crypt where they found the bodies of 26 members of the Calvert family, past occupiers of Furneux Pelham Hall.

There were also 2 chapels a congregational and a methodist. Florence Lake who lived in the village and was a catholic, she got tired of having to travel to St Richards in Buntingford or

St Edmunds College for services so got permission to convert part of a barn at Tinkers Hall where she lived into a catholic church. It closed in 2013.

The biggest and grandest building in the village is Furneaux Pelham Hall, (it is spelt with an "a" in it as that's how one of the owners liked it to be spelt.)

The hall was originally built in the late 16th century probably built by a builder/bricklayer from Newport who married a local lady. The house is in brick with a tiled roof. In about 1670 Richard Calvert remodelled it adding Dutch gables as can be seen in the picture. Richard Calvert and his family owned two of the largest breweries in London. They specialised in brewing porter a dark ale like Guinness. They later brewed India Pale Ale as porter didn't travel well on East India ships going to India. Indian pale ale was far more hoppy and travelled better on the long journey.

Felix Calvert was the first person to deposit money £1600 now worth about £185,000 in C Hoare and Co bank when it opened in 1672. This is a family run bank which is still in business today and has the ledger showing Felix's deposit.

The Calvert's lived at the hall for many years although they also owned property in London. In the early 1800's they rented Furneux Hall to Mr Rayment and by the mid 1800's William Rayment started brewing from the hall. He later went onto build a brewery in 1860 at Barleycroft End where they produced beer until 1987. They invested in a lorry very early on as one of the furthest pubs they delivered to was in Duxford and it took a whole day to make the journey there and back with a dray and horses. Between Furneux



Pelham, Barleycroft End East End upper and lower there were many pubs all apart from the Brewery Tap have closed over the years. Furneux Pelham had The Star, White Lion, The Yew Tree, Millwright Arms in Barleycroft End, in East End now called Upper East End, the Two Brewers, The Hoops and The Black Horse and the Bald Faced Stag in Clay Chimneys.

Continues >

BUNTINGFORD LOCAL HISTORY GROUP CONT...



Mary Wheatly wife of a former vicar, established a charity to teach 8 poor children to read and write in 1746. A small school was set up in a cottage which was replaced in 1851 by a national school and then this was demolished and a new school opened in 1872. This was sold to be converted into a house and a new school built to replace it which is still in operation today. The charity still exists to help people with education.

The village used to have a small shop which became Well House occupied for many years up until her death by Baroness Shirley Williams a former labour MP.

There was a blacksmith's forge as well, now also a private house.



Furneux Pelham History group meets every 3rd Wednesday of the month in the village hall and all are welcome to attend.

Our next meeting is on the **13th May** in the library at 2pm its called "Time Gentleman Please". It costs £2 per person which includes tea or coffee.

Angie Ward

angie.ward@hsrsc.org.uk
www.hsrsc.org.uk
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Calling All Local Legends – Join Our Volunteer Fundraising Crew!

Home-Start is building something exciting – and we want you to be a part of it!

We're setting up a brilliant new volunteering team to work alongside our Fundraising Manager and wonderful supporters to help dream up, design, and deliver amazing fundraising events across Royston, Buntingford, and South Cambridgeshire.

Whether you've got a knack for planning, a flair for fun, or just a big heart and a bit of time – this is your chance to make a real impact in your community. We're talking quiz nights, fun runs, coffee mornings, cake sales, maybe even something wild and wacky – the more creative, the better!

By volunteering with us, you'll be:

- Helping raise vital funds for families who need our help
- Gaining hands-on experience in event planning and fundraising.
- Meeting like-minded people who care as much as you do.
- And, let's be honest, having a pretty good time along the way!

Let's make some magic happen – together.

If you're interested, curious, or just want a friendly chat about getting involved, we'd love to hear from you.

Drop us a message, share this post, and help us spread the word.

e: events@hsrsc.org.uk

Let's make Royston, Buntingford and South Cambs the beating heart of Home-Start's fundraising fun!

THE HUNDRED PARISHES SOCIETY

www.hundredparishes.org.uk

Ken McDonald, Secretary



A barn is essential for a working farm, to store produce, tools and machinery and to house livestock. The Hundred Parishes has many fine examples of ancient barns which are still in use today, albeit sometimes for a purpose not envisaged when they were built. Some have been converted into homes while others have quite varied new uses.

In 1994, Thorley church purchased a dilapidated 16th-century barn which, following restoration, opened for community use as St Barnabas Centre. At Duddenhoe End, the thatched Hamlet Church started life as a barn.

Ashdon and Westmill village halls both began life as barns in the 17th century.

Great Bardfield and Great Saling each have an ancient barn that has been converted into a retail outlet with café, respectively The Blue Egg and Timbers.

In Chrishall, the Red Cow pub offers accommodation in the adjacent 500-year-old thatched barn.

In Little Easton, the Countess of Warwick converted one of her barns into the Barn Theatre. It was used by many famous performers of the early 1900s and still occasionally serves that purpose, on other days being part of a tea room and events venue called Little Easton Manor.

In Great Bardfield, a Grade-I listed, 16th-century brick barn at Great Lodge now serves as the Anne of

Cleves Barn wedding venue.

In Widdington, Grade I-listed Priors Hall Barn is a fine example of a medieval barn, dating from the 14th century and now owned by English Heritage. It is said that 400 oak trees were used in its construction. The large doors on either side could be opened for threshing, with the draught blowing the husks away from the grain. Priors Hall Barn is free to visit, open at weekends from April to September.



St Barnabas Centre, Thorley



Hamlet Church, Duddenhoe End



Ashdon village Hall



Westmill village hall



Priors Hall Barn, Widdington - inside



Priors Hall Barn, Widdington - outside



Barn Theatre, Little Easton

1984 - 2024



r a t s

Celebrating 40 Years of Animal Rescue

Blue's Second Chance

RATS Animal Rescue, a small animal rehoming charity based in Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire, is used to dealing with cases of unwanted and abandoned animals – rescuing them, nurturing them and finding them loving forever homes.

This month is a story of a neglected greyhound called Blue who was recently rescued by RATS from a local pound.

When Blue was found, he was barely more than skin and bone. The two-year-old greyhound weighed only 17kg - half of what he should. His frail body was covered in bite wounds, his ribs juttied out sharply, and his dull eyes reflected nothing but exhaustion. Whatever his story was, it looked like there was no happy ending...

But hope found Blue.

He was taken out the pound by RATS and immediately placed in foster care. Blue was weak and barely able to lift his head, but he clung to life. His fosterer took him in, determined to give him the love he had never known. Day by day, he ate small, nourishing meals, had a few trips to the vets to clean his wounds, and received whispered words of comfort as he was loved by everyone he met.

At first, Blue barely had the energy to move. He slept nearly solidly for three days, but with each passing day, he grew





stronger. His two furry foster brothers encouraged him to play, their wagging tails a reminder that life could be joyful. Blue, once almost too tired to stand, started following them around the house, his broken tail flickering with the first signs of happiness.

Three months later and the transformation is nothing short of miraculous. Blue has blossomed into a healthy, happy dog. His weight has doubled to a sturdy 33kg,

his wounds have healed, and his sleek grey coat shines in the sunlight. He runs with his brothers across the fields, ears flapping, his heart full of joy.

His fosterer never stood a chance - she had fallen in love. When the time came to find him a home, she realised he was already where he belonged. Blue, once a broken soul, now has a family of his own. He is no longer a forgotten dog. He is loved, and he is home.

WESTMILL ART EXHIBITION 2025

Having had a couple of years off, we are very excited to announce that the ever popular Westmill Art Exhibition is coming back!

First started in 1986, and having missed just the odd few years (Covid related of course!), 2025 will be it's 35th year of taking place and we want to make it a big one.

This year all funds raised will go towards an upgrade project that Westmill Church is undertaking in order that the building can then be used for alternative activities, as well as the obvious, in the future. The aim being to benefit both the church and the community at the same time.

A huge variety of artists will be exhibiting. We attract both professional and amateur artists, predominantly from the local area. If you feel you would like to exhibit anything yourself, please don't be shy at coming forward. You can contact the organisers on alex@alexphotos.co.uk or 07768 790 902 for further details.

Otherwise, please put **Saturday 31st May - Sunday 1st June** in your diary to support the local community by coming along to Westmill Church for a viewing, and maybe even a purchase, of some wonderful and inspiring art.

Look forward to seeing you there!



BUNTINGFORD LIVE!

WESTMILL ART EXHIBITION 2025

St Mary the Virgin Church
Westmill SG9 9LJ

Saturday 31st May, 10.00am - 5.00pm
Sunday 1st June, 11.00am - 5.00pm

Come along and support the 35th year of this wonderful event, featuring local artists' work for sale at affordable prices. All funds raised will go towards Westmill Church.

We look forward to seeing you there!

FREE ENTRY!





United Benefice of
Aspenden, Buntingford
and Westmill

UNITED BENEFICE OF ASPENDEN, BUNTINGFORD & WESTMILL

Reverend Kirsty Wainwright



CONTACT DETAILS

website: www.achurchnearyou.com/benefice/32-012BK/

email: unitedbeneficeabw@gmail.com | 07484 345 027

C/O St Peter's Church, Chapel End, Buntingford, SG9 9AL

[unitedbenefice](https://www.instagram.com/unitedbenefice) | [UnitedBeneficeABW](https://www.facebook.com/UnitedBeneficeABW)

OUR SERVICES FOR MAY 2025

Sunday 4th	9:30am	All Age Worship	St Mary the Virgin, Westmill
	9:30am	Morning Worship	St Mary's, Aspenden
	11:00am	Holy Communion	*Edwinstree Middle School
Sunday 11th	9:30am	Sung Eucharist	St Mary the Virgin, Westmill
	9:30am	All Age Worship	St Mary's, Aspenden
	11:00am	All Age Worship	*Edwinstree Middle School
Sunday 18th	9:30am	Holy Communion	St Mary's, Aspenden
	11:00am	Holy Communion	*Edwinstree Middle School
Sunday 25th	9:30am	Sung Eucharist	St Mary the Virgin, Westmill
		No Service	St Mary's Aspenden
	11:00am	Morning Worship	*Edwinstree Middle School

*Please note whilst St Peter's will be closed as restoration works are being carried out, our ministry and mission will continue. Our weekly Sunday services will relocate to **Edwinstree Middle School, Norfolk Road, SG9 9AW**. For further information about the restoration project please visit our website.

Please visit our website for the latest information about our services, events and courses and you can also follow us on our social media channels.

Direct links to our 3 church Service and Event pages:

St Mary's Aspenden: www.achurchnearyou.com/church/7834/service-and-events/events-all/

St Peter's Buntingford: www.achurchnearyou.com/church/7839/service-and-events/events-all/

St Mary the Virgin Westmill: www.achurchnearyou.com/church/7851/service-and-events/events-all/

REGULAR EVENTS HELD AT ST PETER'S CHURCH



Prayer for Buntingford

or further information please see St Peter's Church Notice board or visit our website.



Morning Prayer

9am Every Tuesday and Thursday mornings, we pray together using the Church of England Daily Prayer book, with bible readings, a reflection and a psalm.

It is a quiet, gentle gathering to prepare for the day ahead.

We have moved this to Zoom during the cold months please contact us for the link.



Monday Morning Coffee

For further information please see St Peter's Church Notice board or visit our website.

St Mary's Church Aspenden
Website



St Mary the Virgin Church
Westmill - Website



St Peter's Church Buntingford
Website



plant sale
Saturday 3rd May
9:30am - 12pm
on behalf of
St Mary's Aspenden
outside St Peter's Church

All monies raised will go towards
St Mary's Church Aspenden



The
United
Reformed
Church

CHRIST CHURCH

Baldock Road, Buntingford. SG9 9AA

www.buntingfordurc.org.uk

 URCbuntingford

Minister: Rev.Sue Fender
revsuefender@gmail.com | 01223 375 588

Secretary: Peter Godbert
buntingford.urc@talktalk.net | 01763 281 359

SERVICES at 11am / JUNIOR CHURCH IN THE HALL at 11am

May	4	Holy Communion	Rev Sue Fender
	11	Morning Worship	Penny Flynn
	18	Morning Worship	Rev Allen Morton
	25	Morning Worship	Rev Dr Robert Pope
June	4	Holy Communion	Rev John Proctor

Regular Events

MONTHLY BIBLE STUDY

After Easter we will be holding a new Ecumenical Bible Study on Wednesday lunch time.

We will meet for lunch from 12.30 and our bible study will run from 1.00 – 2.00 pm.

Entitled Influential Women we will look at the stories of the women of the New Testament. Some only get a brief mention and we may not remember them, others have played a significant part in the life of the early church. All of them have story to tell us.

Next meeting 7th May

COFFEE & COMPANY

Meets every Thursday, 10:30am to 12:30pm, in the URC Church Hall. If you're elderly, living alone, new to the area, perhaps working from home, and would like some company, come along to share Coffee, Cake, Company and Chat. All are welcome. Just turn up and give a small donation for the refreshments.

Attend2Health Hosts Free Drop-In Clinic for Mums and Babies

Attend2Health is excited to announce a special Drop-In Clinic for Mums, offering expert advice on baby health and sleep. This event provides a fantastic opportunity for new and expectant mothers to receive free guidance from leading specialists in paediatric osteopathy and infant sleep.

Joining us will be:

Meghan Carolan – Osteopath
with a Postgraduate Certification
in Specialist Paediatric
Osteopathic Practice

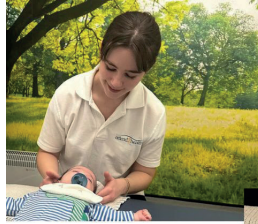
Lauren McQuade – Owner of Ready Steady Sleep Consultancy,
specializing in infant sleep solutions

When & Where?

Attend2Health 27 High Street
Buntingford SG9 9AB

Tuesday, 29th April & Tuesday, 20th May

9am – 10am



'Meghan is very gentle and has works wonders for my baby. Highly recommend!'

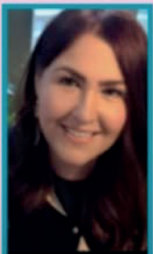
The photos show just how relaxed my son is by the end of the cranial osteopathy treatment.'



Whether you're concerned about your baby's feeding, digestion, sleep, or development, Meghan and Lauren will be available to provide practical tips and professional advice to help you and your little one thrive.

No appointment is needed—just drop in for a friendly chat!

For more information, contact Attend2Health on 01763 87 80 87.



'Lauren at Ready Steady Sleep is a hidden gem. We were put in touch with her services through a recommendation from our son's nursery and we have had amazing sleep results. Our son is now able to independently self soothe to sleep within 5 minutes as opposed to taking 1 hour to go to sleep with a parent lying next to him before. Best of all, he is sleeping through the night every night; no more hourly night wakings! We highly recommend Lauren at Ready Steady Sleep to anyone who is facing sleep issues with their child. Her approach is a gentle, nurturing and very effective in managing sleep issues.'





BUNTINGFORD FILM CLUB

Bringing Cinema back to Buntingford

David Woollcombe



BUNTINGFORD FILM CLUB NEWS

LAST SHOW OF THE 2024 / 25 SEASON

RALPH FIENNES

in



This multi-award-winning, box office success and all-round triumph of a film is our choice for the last film for our 2024/25 season. Based on the Robert Harris book, it tells the story of how a new Pope is selected by a bunch of scheming and, in this story, hilariously corrupt, Cardinals. It is brilliantly scripted and will keep you on the edge of your seat throughout; It won the British and American Oscars for the best-adapted Screenplay Oscar for script-writer, Peter Straughan. A superstar cast led by Ralph Fiennes, Stanley Tucci and Isabella Rossellini are likewise gripping. If you have seen it – you will appreciate it more on a second viewing and, if you haven't, come see it on our big screen. With another Papal Conclave in the not-to-distant future, this film gives a wonderful behind-the-scenes look at what could happen when the Cardinals convene again in the Sistine Chapel.

– Saturday May 10th at 7.30pm – the Community Centre –

All tickets: £8.00 (to include a glass of wine or beer + snacks!)

At: www.tickettailor.com/events/buntingfordfilmclub

or at Sanctuary, 42 High St. Buntingford

Film Club Annual General Meeting

Friday 20th June @ 7.30pm at the Stables, 57 Wyddial Road, SG9 9AX.

Come along to review Film Club policies and help us plan & choose films for the 2025 / 26 season.

FIRST SHOW OF THE 2025 / 26 SEASON
Ariana Grande

In



– Friday September 12th at 7.30pm – Sword Inn Hand, Westmill –

(doors open at 06.00 – meals, drinks and Barbecue food on sale)

All tickets: £8.00 *(bring your own chairs and warm rugs!)*

At: www.tickettailor.com/events/buntingfordfilmclub

or at Sanctuary, 42 High St. Buntingford
or at the Bar of the Sword Inn Hand, Westmill



BRAUGHING FAIR AND WHEELBARROW RACE

Saturday 12th July 2025 | 12 noon until 6.00pm

Our preparations for the Braughing Fair and Wheelbarrow Race are now firmly underway.

The categories for the races, and the entry fees, remain the same as last year as per the table here:

(One thing for which the price hasn't risen this year!)

There is no theme for your fancy dress so let your imaginations run wild. **The entries**

open on Monday 12th May at 8am so please go to our website to enter. www.braughingwheelbarrowrace.com

Age	Advance Entry Fee	On the Day Entry Fee	Info
6 - 12 years old	£5	£7	
13 - 17 years old	£8	£10	
Adult & Child Race	£10	£15	Child must be between 6 and 17 years of age
Adults Men/Women/Mixed	£10	£15	

Prizes for Race Winners & 'Best Dressed Wheelbarrows'

Dog Show Timetable

Saturday 12th July 2025

Entry Fee: £2 per class

You can enter in advance via our website from Monday 12th May: www.braughingwheelbarrowrace.com

1:15pm Beautiful Bitches

Open to female dogs of all ages and breeds. Judges are looking for attractive dogs in good condition.

1:30pm Handsome Hounds

Open to male dogs of all ages and breeds. Judges are looking for attractive dogs in good condition.

1:45pm Cutest Puppy

Open to all dogs under 1 year of age. The title speaks for itself!

2pm Best Young Handler (8 to 16 years old)

Open to children aged between 8 and 16 with any breed, age and gender of dog (The child must be able to control the dog at all times)

2:15pm Best Rescue Dog

Open to any breed, age and gender of rescued dog.

2:30pm Dog The Judge Would Most Like To Take Home

Judges are looking for friendly dogs of any breed, age and gender, with good personalities.

The Judges' decision is final and remember it is just a bit of fun!

Dogs entered at owner's own risk

PLEASE PICK UP AFTER YOUR DOG (bags available at dog show registration)

KEEP DOGS ON A LEAD AT ALL TIMES

Any incident involving a dog is the owner's responsibility.



Volunteers to help clear up on Sunday 13th July

A big thank you to the people who go to the Ford and help sweep up the sand from the beach on the Sunday morning each year. You know who you are – you just turn up without being asked – thank you.

This year we would be very grateful for extra helpers on Sunday morning from 9am onwards to clear the fields, stack the bales, take down banners, move rubbish bins, litter pick, etc. If you are free for an hour or so to help, with a pair of gloves and some cable tie snippers, it would be very much appreciated.

Sponsorship Opportunity

We are hugely grateful to all our sponsors who generously support the event each year. You will have noticed their banners on display and their names in the programme. The event relies on this support to ensure that this annual event continues and delivers funding for village amenities.

If you, or your Company, would like to be a sponsor, please do not hesitate to email us at:

**info@
braughingwheelbarrowrace.
com**

We look forward to hearing from you.

BFWR Committee



Report on another successful Comedy Night

On Friday 21st March we ran another comedy night in the Bunters Suite at Seth Ward. This was the fourth in our series of twice-yearly comedy sessions, hosted by the ever-popular Tom Toal, and the event was a sell-out. Tom is very skilled at engaging the audience with his brand of humour and is always able to find the funny side in some of our local issues. This time he had the audience in fits of laughter whilst discussing the topic of the swimming pool!

Tom was followed by Robin Ince (Infinite Monkey Cage) and then Philip Simon (School's Out Comedy Club) who closed out the first half of the evening.

After the interval Tom returned, and was followed by John Ryan (The Weakest Link, Stand Up Britain), who rounded off the evening.

The audience were fantastic, with lots of interaction with the comedians, often giving back as good as they got!

Lots of giggles and laughter all night, and so many positive comments afterwards.

Keep an eye out for booking tickets for our next Comedy Night on **Friday 19th September**.

Tickets are still available for Maytime Music on Friday **2nd May** 7:30pm at St.Mary the Virgin Church, Westmill when Andrew O'Brien will be bringing 20 of his talented young musicians from St. Edmund's College to entertain us once again. It promises to be an enthralling evening!



Tom Toal

Entry is free but we advise you to book your seats on our website: **buntingfordlive.org** as capacity is limited.

Donations will be gratefully received at the end of the evening. These will be shared by the church, Buntingford Live, (to cover costs) and our local Air Ambulance Charity.

There will be a pay bar serving wine, soft drinks and snacks.

Drag Night On 23rd May...Completely Sold Out!

Westmill Art Exhibition 2025

Saturday 31st May 10am- 5pm

Sunday 1st June 11am-5pm

Come along and support the 35th year of this wonderful event, featuring local artists' work for sale at affordable prices. All funds raised will go towards Westmill Church.

BUNTINGFORD LIVE!

Maytime Music

Featuring students from
St. Edmund's College

Friday
May 2nd, 7.30pm
St. Mary The Virgin Church

FREE ENTRY

Director of music
Andrew O'Brien is bringing a group of talented young musicians to entertain us with a variety of solo and ensemble works.

There is limited capacity in the church so please book your **FREE** seat on our website buntingfordlive.org

Donations will be gratefully received at the end of the evening, which will be shared by the church and Buntingford Local Income for the Home and the local St. Andrew's Charity

Alcoholic and soft drinks will be available from a paid bar

You may find the benches a little hard so it might be worth bringing a cushion

BUNTINGFORD LIVE!

WESTMILL ART EXHIBITION 2025

St Mary the Virgin Church
Westmill SG9 9LJ

Saturday 31st May, 10.00am - 5.00pm
Sunday 1st June, 11.00am - 5.00pm

Come along and support the 35th year of this wonderful event, featuring local artists' work for sale at affordable prices. All funds raised will go towards Westmill Church.

We look forward to seeing you there!

FREE ENTRY!

Further details are on p.30

We look forward to seeing you there.

Sunday 8th June 1-3:30pm we're thrilled to be holding a **Summer Jazz Event** in The Stables Garden
Tickets £12 Licensed Bar.

As you will see from the featured poster we are lucky to be having the Peter Rudeforth Jazz Band who are already well known in the area.

The 6 instrumentalists are:

Peter Rudeforth- trumpet and vocals

Julian Stringle- clarinet

Alistair Allan -trombone

Martin Wheatley -banjo & guitar

Sandy Burnett -double bass

John Elmer -drums

It should be an afternoon of toe-tapping jazz, blues and swing.

BUNTINGFORD LIVE!

Sunday 8th June
1pm - 3.30pm

At The Stables Garden

Entry via gate on Church Street
Buntingford SG9 9AS

LICENSED BAR

Please bring a chair or picnic rug for your comfort!

TICKETS £12

Reservations for Buntingford Live are essential. Please book your seat early!

A fun afternoon of toe-tapping jazz, blues and swing!

LIVE!

Continues >

Think of the great era of the 1920s and 1930s and of Louis Armstrong, Fats Waller and Benny Goodman. Add a dash of blues, New Orleans and British trad and you're sure to have a good time.

The musicians are of the finest calibre. They have travelled the globe, performing at festivals, major concert halls and jazz clubs world wide.

Between them, they have played hundreds of performances in the bands of Chris Barber, Kenny Ball and Acker Bilk and many more.

We are of course hoping for a beautiful sunny afternoon... but have a Plan B in case the weather lets us down. You will find details of this on our website when you book your tickets on ticket tailor.

We have another 'completely different' offering on: **Friday 13th June** In The Bunters' Suite At Seth Ward At 7:30pm

Tickets £10 via our website on ticket tailor
Licensed bar

'Uncanny' - Featuring Nell Phoenix

A full-time London based performance storyteller who will offer chilling and rib-tickling entertainment!

Her repertoire wildly ranges through folk, fairy, urban tales and mythology. She tells, and teaches story-telling skills at the Royal Opera House, the British Museum, the Crick Crack Club, schools and far-flung festivals. She is passionate about story-telling as a modern performance and art and runs the best story club night in London.

'Phoenix is a mercurial and captivating performer' —Dave Fargoli



Nell Phoenix

'Phoenix is an amazing storyteller. Her voice is acrobatic, one moment a gutturally wolffish growl, the next sweet as sugar'

'I found her performance stunning, full of wit and extraordinarily poetic' —
Rheingold, Berlin

Dates For Your Diary

Friday 19th September 7.30pm Comedy Night in Bunters Suite Seth Ward

We're happy to announce that we have another concert in Westmill Church featuring students from Haileybury College.

This is booked for **Thursday 25th September 7.30pm**

We are delighted to say that we have secured a booking of

'A Christmas Carol 'with Guy Masterson!

This will be on **Friday 21st November**

The next issue will have date of a Candlelit Carol event

Watch this space for news of more events in the next issue of the journal

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As the flowers bloom and the days get longer, May brings with it a sense of renewal, growth, and fresh possibilities. We set dates for our summer camps with adults and children alike. Our Easter Children's Camps were completely booked up within 3 days.

We still have a few subsidised places for our Move Meditate & Relax dates towards the end of the year

Ware Priory - 17th May – FULLY BOOKED

6th September - 7 spaces left

20th December – 13 spaces left

9.30am-1.30pm

Includes entry drinks & Danishes & a cold buffet lunch. Tea, Coffee & Biscuits throughout

Please do refer to community initiative website below for more information and other workshops we are running

Not only do we run community classes but also classes for the local U3A

Monday Circuits – spaces available at Seth Ward Community Centre, 10.30am Pop along and have a look

Thursday – Seated Full Body Work United Reformed Church Hall 1pm

Can't get to classes, then pick & Mix a challenge for May:

Our popular 2 hour sessions will be back in May 2025



- 10,000 steps
- 1-minute plank
- 50 squats
- 20 pushups
- 15-minute walk outside
- Try a new workout
- Meal prep a healthy lunch
- Drink 2+ liters of water
- Sleep 7–8 hours
- No added sugar for the day

Want to come to an Exercise Class or fancy one of our FREE workshops then contact me on: 07956 647 806

Jaquie Smith Personal Trainer & Chair of Community Initiative Charity

www.communityinitiativecharity.com | www.jacqui-smith.net



WHAT'S ON - DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

MAY 2025

- Friday 2nd** Bunts Live! Maytime Music p.40
- 3rd/4th** Bowls Club Open Days
- Wednesday 7th** Gardener's Club: "All Things Roses" by Kerry Austen p.15
- Thursday 8th** WI: VE Day celebrations taking part on Market Hill. p.16
- Saturday 10th** Film Club: Conclave p.36
- Monday 12th** U3A: Charlie Haylock - The History of Spoken English p.14
- Tuesday 13th** History Society Time Gentleman Please p.22
- Wednesday 14th** Reed Garden Club: "The road to Novichok" Neil Dickenson p.13
- Friday 16th** BALA: AGM Lunch p.46
- Tuesday 20th** Free Mum's & Babies Clinic at Attend2Health p.35
- Friday 23rd** Bunts Live! Drag Queen Night SOLD OUT p.40
- Friday 23rd** Braughing Get Together Wine Tasting with Platon Loizou from 4 Acres Estate p.16
- Saturday 24th** Reed Garden Club: Plant Sale p.13
- Saturday 31st & Sunday 1st June** Bunts Live! Westmill Art Exhibition p.30



LOOKING AHEAD

- 8th June** Bunts Live! Summer Jazz Afternoon p.41
- 8th June** Buntingford School of Dance: Dancing Through Life Show p.17
- 13th June** Buntingford Live! Uncanny featuring Nell Phoenix p.42
- 12th July** Braughing Fair & Wheelbarrow Race & Dog Show p.38
- 12th Sept** Film Club: Wicked p.37
- 19th Sept** Bunts Live! Comedy Night p.40
- 25th Sept** Bunts Live! Westmill Church Concert p.42

REGULAR EVENTS

MONDAYS:	TUESDAYS:	WEDNESDAYS	THURSDAYS:	FRIDAYS:	WEEKENDS:
From 8.30am: Buntingford Market	7.30–9pm: Braughing Sing Community Choir in Jenyn's School Hall	Buntingford Meditation Online at 8 pm and once a month in Saint Peter's Church. To join the group the best way is to contact me via the website - www.mindful-worklife.com/buntingford-meditation New meditators are welcome and guidance is given on how to meditate in the sessions.	10.30am–12.30: Coffee & Company in the URC Church Hall		Sun, 9am: Norfolk Road Playing Fields Junior Parkrun
10–11.45am: Chatter Table at the Manor House – 1st & 3rd Mondays			2–3pm: Mind & Music at Standon & Puckeridge CC		Sat, 10am: Walking Football at the MUGA, Norfolk Road Playing Fields
Morning Coffee 10-12 St Peter's					
EVENTS IN THE LIBRARY:					
10.30–11am & 11:30 -12pm: Baby Rhyme Time (songs, rhymes, actions and puppets, for ages 6 weeks to 3 years)	10.30–12.30: Jigsaw & Chat club		10.30 – 11am: Storytime (storytelling with props, for ages 2-5 years) 11am: Chair Yoga with Kim	4-5pm: Lego Club for children	
11.45am–12.45pm: Forever Cycling at the Community Centre -1st & 3rd		10-11am Chatter & Natter, Buntingford Coffee Shop			
1.30 for 2pm: Buntingford Senior Citizens' Club at URC Hall		12- 4pm Braughing Shed Group			
7.30–9:30pm: Buntingford Community Choir at Millfield School					

Minibus Trips May 2025

	TIME	DESTINATION	PRICE
APRIL			
Thurs 1st	9:30-3	Lakeside Shopping Centre, Thurrock	£12
Tues 6th	10-2	Bickerdikes Garden Centre	£6
Tues 13th	9:30-3	Southend	£13
Thurs 15th	9:15-12	Bishops Stortford	£5
Wed 21st	11:30	Pub Lunch	£5
Wed 28th	9:30-3	Bury St Edmunds	£12.50
Fri 30th	10:30-2:30	Bury Lane / Dobbies	£5

All trips start from the Benson Hall car park unless otherwise agreed

To book a seat or for more information: 07870 638 480
(please be prepared to leave a message)

AGM Lunch

Friday 16th May, 12–1:15pm

(sausage rolls, cakes, raffle)

at **URC Hall, Baldock Road**

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Parish Deacon: Paul O'Connor

Regular Services at St Richard's Buntingford

Mass - Sunday 9.15am
Mass - Tuesday 7.30pm
Holy Hour - Friday 5.00pm

Services at St Thomas's Puckeridge

Mass - Sunday 11.00am
Mass - Thursday 12.30pm



If you would like your child baptised, to get married, or to find out about the other sacramental programmes, please speak to the priest or deacon after one of the masses.

Further information is available on the parish website: parish.rcdow.org.uk/buntingford/

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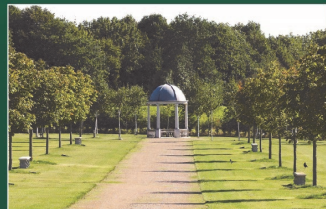
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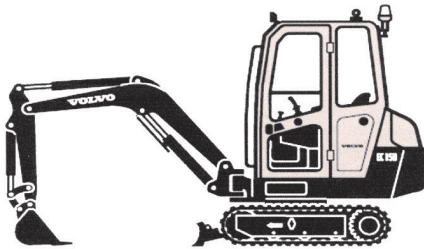
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Email: laystonpreschoolandnursery@gmail.com

Web: www.laystonpreschoolandnursery.com

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- 6.30pm - Cottered Bell Ringers at St John the Baptist Church.
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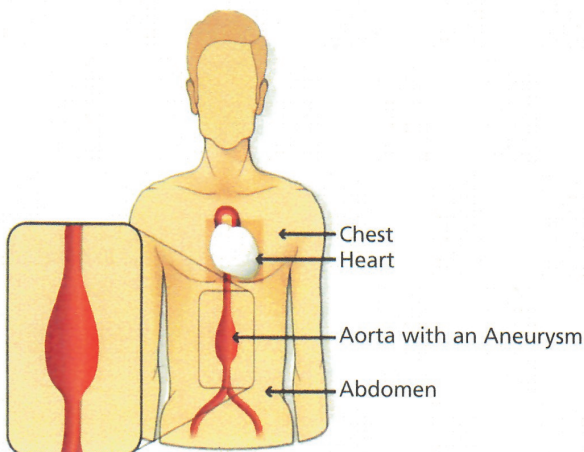
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WHO ARE WE?

We are your local amenity group, established in March 1971 initially as a conservation group covering the ancient parishes of Buntingford, Layston, Aspenden, Wyddial and Throcking.

We obtained charity status in 1993.

Our main aims are to secure the preservation, protection, development and improvement of features of historic and public interest within the locality and endeavour to promote high standards of planning and architecture while our archives are a source of reference on local geography and history.

Over the years, the Society has broadened its interests within the community. Whilst conservation issues will always be important to us, we now try to take a greater interest in many other local organisations and activities.

WHAT HAVE WE DONE?

Publish the Buntingford Journal

Restored the town pump twice and Town Cage once

Initiated erection of Christmas lights in the High Street and Market Hill

Present an annual school civic award

Updated the set of Town Trails with the Discovering Buntingford booklet.

Erected a Town Sign and replaced it on a like for like basis in 2018

Installed a seat on the hill to Layston Cemetery and paid for works at the Layston Cemetery

Erected Town Gateway signs complete with Planters and currently pay for the plants

Contributed financially to the Fremantle College sports hall, Buntingford Film Club, previous

Buntingford Carnivals, Summer Arts in Buntingford 2022 weekend, and gave a grant to the Friends of the River Rib and Quin

Paid for the Local History Group competition prizes in 2023

Done River Rib and town cleans

Fitted a sign in the Police Station Community Garden and paid for new plants there in 2019.

Were actively involved with the production of the Neighbourhood Plan

Arranged Buntingford in Bloom competitions

Updated the circular walks on local footpaths leaflet in 2017

In 2024 paid for roses and a plaque in memory of Queen Elizabeth II and for the Coronation of King Charles III at the new cemetery

Hosted 2 annual Civic Day walks

WHAT ARE WE PLANNING TO DO?

Monitor future housing development and continue to work with local organisations for the benefit of Buntingford, including the River Rib Project. Are now sourcing a replacement plaque for The Cage. Are looking to host a third Civic Day Walk, arrange a fifth Buntingford in Bloom competition and be part of a D Day commemoration event in May

TO JOIN PLEASE SEE THE MEMBERSHIP FORM ON OUR WEBSITE
www.buntingfordcivic.org.uk

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Buntingford 2025

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When: Last Tuesday of each month,
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29th Jul	26th Aug	30th Sept	28th Oct	25th Nov	No meeting in Dec

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A programme of speakers will be planned as requested - find out about these on the Carer Support Hubs page on our website or contact us.

There are also monthly groups in Ware (last Friday of the month) and Royston (first Thursday of the month) contact us for details.

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For more information call Keith Edwards on 01763 272 032 or email advertising@buntingfordcivic.org.uk

For one-off adverts or to advertise a specific event, contact the Journal editor, Anne Wright, email journal@buntingfordcivic.org.uk. Adverts for charitable or community events are normally free of charge.

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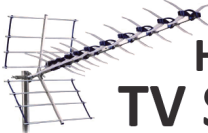
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A blue, splatter-like graphic containing the text 'BUNTINGFORD LIVE!' in white, bold, sans-serif font. The word 'LIVE!' is larger and more prominent, with an exclamation point.

**BUNTINGFORD
LIVE!**

The title 'WESTMILL ART EXHIBITION 2025' is centered in a large, white, bold, sans-serif font against a background of orange and red brushstrokes.

WESTMILL ART EXHIBITION 2025

The address 'St Mary the Virgin Church Westmill SG9 9LJ' is centered in a white, sans-serif font against a background of red and orange brushstrokes.

**St Mary the Virgin Church
Westmill SG9 9LJ**

The text 'Saturday 31st May, 10.00am - 5.00pm' is centered in a white, sans-serif font against a background of red and orange brushstrokes.

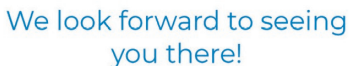
Saturday 31st May, 10.00am - 5.00pm

The text 'Sunday 1st June, 11.00am - 5.00pm' is centered in a white, sans-serif font against a background of red and orange brushstrokes.

Sunday 1st June, 11.00am - 5.00pm

A paragraph of text in a blue, sans-serif font, centered on a white background. It describes the 35th anniversary of the event, local artists' work for sale, and that all funds raised go to Westmill Church.

Come along and support
the 35th year of this wonderful
event, featuring local artists' work
for sale at affordable prices.
All funds raised will go towards
Westmill Church.

A short paragraph in a blue, sans-serif font, centered on a white background, expressing anticipation for the event.

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you there!

The text 'FREE ENTRY!' is centered in a white, bold, sans-serif font inside a blue, splatter-like graphic in the bottom right corner.

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