

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

# Buntingford Journal



**The countryside near Cold Christmas, on one of the Hundred Parishes' circular walks – it could almost be Owles Lane.**

*Inside this month:* In memory of Joyce Jackson and John Makin; the 20's Plenty for Buntingford campaign; the third and final instalment of the Local History Group's guide to Buntingford street names; and how local people, clubs and societies are coping with Covid.

**70p**

**September 2020  
Volume 45, No.4**



# SEPTEMBER 2020

20's Plenty for Buntingford Campaign .....	5
A10 Buntingford Southern Roundabout Upgrade .....	20-21
Anstey First School – Owlets Preschool Class .....	41
Attend2Health .....	9
BALFF – Christmas in Bournemouth .....	22
Barkway Park Golf Club .....	48
Buntingford Civic Society – Chairman's Letter .....	4
Buntingford Community Choir .....	48
Buntingford Dramatic Society .....	32
Buntingford Gardeners' Club .....	8
Buntingford In Transition – Build Back Better in Buntingford .....	17
Buntingford Local History Group – Street Names in Buntingford, N to Y .....	31-33
Buntingford Town Council .....	18
Buntingford Town Twinning Update .....	11
Buntingford U3A .....	40
Buntingford Unsung Hero Awards 2020 .....	23
Buntingford W.I. ....	45
Care Packs help 50 Buntingford households .....	29
The Cheese Plate .....	9
Church Services .....	14-15
East Herts Citizens Advice – Universal Credit .....	34
East Herts Council – Poster Competition .....	22
Editor's Letter .....	3
Edwinstree Middle School .....	42-43
Essex & Herts Air Ambulance – Winning sculpture designs .....	44
Exercising Online with Jacqui Smith .....	25
Freman College .....	43
Friends of the Rib & Quin .....	16-17
Hare Street Road Gardeners' Association .....	38
Home-Start – The Funding Challenge & East Herts Lottery .....	10
The Hundred Parishes Society – Circular Walk Routes .....	24
Hyde Hall Farm – Harvest 2020 .....	12-13
In Memory of Joyce Jackson .....	6-8
In Memory of John Makin .....	35-37
Isabel Hospice – Host a virtual or garden Tea Party! .....	33
The Magpie by Brian Lemay .....	39
News from Your District & County Councillor Jeff Jones .....	19-21
Royston & District Ramblers – Walks programme starting soon! .....	48
Royston's Virtual Balloon Race – In aid of Home-Start .....	11
Sandon's Drive-Thru Fete .....	13
Short Story – 'The River' by Chris Kell .....	28-29
Street Names in Buntingford / Part 3 – N to Y .....	31-33
U3A .....	36-37
Useful Local Information .....	2
Vyse – 'Water, Water Everywhere and not a drop ...' .....	46-47
Ware & District Photographic Society & Standon Hand Embroidery Group .....	45
'Zoom Life ...' with Irene Gibson .....	26-27

# USEFUL LOCAL INFORMATION

<b>POLICE STATION:</b> Baldock Road, Buntingford	Non-emergency telephone: 101 In emergencies dial 999
<b>GAS:</b> <b>ELECTRICITY:</b> <b>WATER (Veolia):</b> <b>SEWERAGE (Thames Water):</b> <b>FLOODLINE:</b>	Emergency (gas leaks) – Freephone 0800 111 999 Emergency (power loss) – Freephone 0800 7838 838 Emergency – Freephone 0800 376 5325 Emergency – Telephone 0800 316 9800 Emergency – 0345 988 1188 or 0845 988 1188 Environment Agency Incident Line: 0800 80 70 60
<b>DOCTORS:</b>	<b>Buntingford Medical Centre</b> – White Hart Close Tel: 01763 271362 (24 hours)
<b>B A S H (Buntingford Action For Social Help):</b>	Providing transport for hospital and doctors appointments. Tel: Colin Horgan 07733 091731
<b>DOMESTIC VIOLENCE, RAPE, RACE or HATE CRIME:</b>	Confidential Information Helpline: 01992 554440 (in emergency, dial 999)
<b>LOCAL COUNCILS:</b>	<b>Buntingford Town Council</b> – 01763 272222 <b>East Herts District Council</b> – 01279 655261 Housing – 01279 714714 Benefits – Freephone 0800 373852 For emergencies out of office hours: 01279 655261 Adult Care Services – 0300 123 4042 Children’s Services – 0300 123 4043 <b>Hertfordshire Highways</b> – 0300 123 4047, or report faults online: <a href="http://www.hertsdirect.org/highwayfaults">www.hertsdirect.org/highwayfaults</a>
<b>BUNTINGFORD LIBRARY:</b> High Street, Buntingford <b>Currently closed due to Coronavirus</b> – these are the usual opening times. Other libraries in East Herts are open.	<b>Opening times:</b> Mon, Tues, Thurs 10:00 – 17:30 Friday 14:00 – 17:30 Saturday 09:00 – 13:00 <b>Telephone enquiries</b> – 0300 123 4049 Option 1 – Renewals 03:00–23:45 every day Option 2 – All other enquiries Mon–Fri 08:00–20:00, Sat 09:00– 6:00
<b>CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU:</b> The Manor House Market Hill, Buntingford	<b>Opening times:</b> Monday 10:00 – 16:00 Tues & Wed 10:00 – 13:00 <b>Telephone advice:</b> Mon to Fri 10:00 – 16:00 Call 03444 111 444
<b>HOUSEHOLD WASTE &amp; RECYCLING SITE:</b> Watermill Industrial Estate Aspenden Road	<b>Usual opening:</b> Mon to Fri 17:00 – 20:00 Sat & Sun 10:00 – 13:00 <b>Currently closed due to Coronavirus. Our nearest open recycling site is in Royston.</b>

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, please email: [membership@buntingfordcivic.org.uk](mailto:membership@buntingfordcivic.org.uk)

# EDITOR'S LETTER

The Journal is back, following what must have been the strangest few months most of us can remember. I hope you managed to get hold of our last issue, April, which didn't make it into the shops due to the lockdown. Boxes of copies were left in various places for people to help themselves, and we owe thanks to Madela Baddock for delivering copies to all our Civic Society members. This month we're back to our regular distributors, with one exception: my husband John Makin, who delivered the Hare Street Road round, was terminally ill throughout the entire Covid lockdown and died on 5<sup>th</sup> July. John is the subject of the second 'In Memory of' article this month on pages 35-37; the first is about Joyce Jackson, who died in May. Joyce was a lovely lady who was involved with many local organisations over the years. Her husband Bob pays tribute on pages 6-8.

Many people have said it must have been doubly difficult caring for John with lockdown going on, and perhaps in some ways it was, but in others it wasn't. It felt like everyone was in the same boat – sometimes it felt as if the whole world had stopped for John! It hadn't, of course, but this virus has reminded us all that life is precious and fragile and we need to get our priorities right and look after it. It has been heart-warming to see how people have rallied round to help others and you'll find several articles this month give examples of this. It is also good to read that Nevetts Care Home has been brought out of mothballs (page 19). I can't help thinking it should never have been closed!

One thing we can all do to help ourselves stay healthy is more exercise and two of our local personal trainers – Jacqui Smith and Irene Gibson – reveal how they have kept the show on the road online (pages 25-27). Royston Ramblers are starting up led walks again (page 48), but if you prefer to do things in your own time, The Hundred Parishes Society are encouraging people to try their circular walks (page 24 & cover photo).

It was noticeable that the lockdown reduced the volume of traffic in and around Buntingford, which was fantastic for cyclists and walkers. With traffic now back to or even exceeding pre-lockdown levels, a campaign has been launched to at least slow it down. Read about the '20's Plenty for Buntingford' campaign on page 5. We also have the third and final instalment of the Local History Group's guide to Street Names (page 31-33) and details of how to nominate people for the Unsung Hero Awards 2020 (page 23).

John was also my Journal proofreader, dropping whatever he was doing to check pages for me at the last minute. I have another volunteer, but I didn't have time to get it together this month, so any mistakes in this issue are entirely down to me.

**Christine Noble**

**Editorial copy deadline for the October 2020 Journal is  
Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> September 2020**

**Copy and diary entries:** Christine Noble – 01763 273095  
68 Hare Street Road, Buntingford SG9 9HN  
**email: [Journal@buntingfordcivic.org.uk](mailto:Journal@buntingfordcivic.org.uk)**

**Advertising enquiries:** Keith Edwards – 01763 272032  
**email: [Advertising@buntingfordcivic.org.uk](mailto:Advertising@buntingfordcivic.org.uk)**

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



# Buntingford Civic Society

(Reg. Charity No. 1014873)

[www.buntingfordcivic.org.uk](http://www.buntingfordcivic.org.uk)



Well it is certainly good to be 'back' following our enforced lockdown. I sincerely hope that you are all well and that you and your loved ones have not been too badly impacted by the COVID implications. Most strange times, but I have been continually amazed and impressed with the amount of good-natured and well-meaning people and groups that we have in Buntingford.

The Buntingford Town Council-backed 'Here to Help' initiative used a raft of volunteers to assist the elderly and housebound who could not access shops for essential food stuffs and medicines. Our thanks to the volunteers and Alex Kannold who, along with Alex Georgiou of the Town Council, coordinated the effort. Liam, the Manager at the Co-op, and his staff were also instrumental in the success of the scheme, as were the Buntingford Relief in Need Charity who donated £2000 to the scheme.

James Radley, on behalf of the Buntingford Chamber of Commerce members, made up 50 'parcels' of essential food stuffs and vouchers to be used in Buntingford retail outlets. These were distributed by Edwinstree School to known families in need and by Karen Lavers at the foodbank (see page 29 for more on this story).

I am sure there were many other initiatives that I was not aware of – you know who you are and my thanks also go to you.

We are not out of the woods with the virus yet and we must all still be vigilant. 'Normal' life may still be some way away and it is sad that so many events that would normally have brightened our lives through the year have had to be cancelled – the VE Day 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary, the Arts Festival, the Car Show and the Christmas Market have all fallen foul of the virus. Let us hope that 2021 will see a return to a more 'normal' way of life.

As we look forward, I would urge you all wherever possible to use our wonderful High Street shops and the now thriving Monday market – they all need, and deserve, our ongoing support.

On a final sad note it is with regret that I heard of the passing, in May, of Joyce Jackson. Joyce was a most-valued and long-serving member of the Civic Society Executive Committee – she was a gentle and most caring person and will be sadly missed. Our condolences go to her husband Bob and his family.

**Graham Bonner**, Chairman Buntingford Civic Society  
[graham\\_bonner123@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:graham_bonner123@yahoo.co.uk)

**Buntingford Civic Society** was established in 1972 with the aim of improving the fabric of the Town. It has led or been involved in many restoration and enhancement projects and in planning, communication and financial support to improve aspects of life in Buntingford. **Annual household membership is just £10** and includes delivery of the Buntingford Journal (10 issues a year) to your door. If you would like to join Buntingford Civic Society, an application form is available on the website at [www.buntingfordcivic.org.uk](http://www.buntingfordcivic.org.uk). Or you can email the Society's Membership Secretary, Peter Hay, at [membership@buntingfordcivic.org.uk](mailto:membership@buntingfordcivic.org.uk).



20's Plenty for Us

...making your place a better place to be

Buntingford

### Why 20mph?

- 20% fewer casualties in 20mph areas
  - More walking and cycling
    - Less pollution
    - Less noise
    - Less fear

... and a better quality of life for everyone.

### 20's Plenty for Buntingford Campaign

During **Lockdown**, people in Buntingford started to notice a dramatic reduction in traffic passing through the town as a result of the travel restrictions imposed by the Government. Many residents noticed how quiet it was, and felt a reduction in their stress levels, as noise and air pollution diminished and families started cycling again. Since the end of lockdown there has been a dramatic increase in traffic travelling through the town – far in excess of the pre-lockdown levels (which were already becoming a cause for concern) and cyclists have disappeared from the roads once more.

Desperate to find a solution, campaign organisers came across the **National 20s Plenty for Us Campaign** – which promotes a mandatory introduction of 20mph speed limits in all urban and residential areas. There are already **22 million** people living in England and Wales who benefit from the implementation of a 20mph speed limit in their local community.

**20's Plenty for Buntingford** aims to show **Hertfordshire Councillors** that this is a popular policy with the people who live and work in the town. The growing popularity of our **Facebook Group** has already demonstrated a ground-swell of support for the campaign. We will build on this to urge local councillors to put forward a motion to vote for the implementation and funding of a **Total 20 Plan for Buntingford**.

### Join the Campaign

Mailing List/Contact: [buntingford@20splentyforus.org.uk](mailto:buntingford@20splentyforus.org.uk)

Facebook: @20's Plenty for Buntingford

Twitter: @20Buntingford

Visit our website: [www.buntingford.20splentyforus.org.uk](http://www.buntingford.20splentyforus.org.uk)



## In Memory of Joyce Jackson 1938–2020

Joyce passed away on 5<sup>th</sup> May this year. Until some five years ago, she had been actively involved in several local organisations. This involvement started not long after she moved to Buntingford in 1965.

Joyce was born and brought up in Luton. It was in Luton that she met Bob in 1960 and they were married in 1962. Their first daughter Catherine was born there in 1964. That same year they decided to get onto the housing ladder. With Bob then working in Stevenage, they found that a small development of new houses was planned in Buntingford (at that

time a small town with less than 2000 people) on what was later to become the western end of the Monks Walk estate. They moved into their new house in July 1965. Their second daughter Helen was born there the following year.

There was an influx of younger mothers into the town in the mid to late 1960s, many of whom were looking for social contact outside their immediate family group. Joyce's first move, along with some other new Mums, was to join the Aspenden Women's Institute which became absorbed into Buntingford WI a few years later. (The western end of Monks Walk was, until 1987, in the parish of Aspenden). Little did she know it then, but this was to be the start of an activity which later took up quite bit of her spare time. Joyce soon became a member of the WI committee, taking on various roles over the years.

In the late 1970s, a visiting officer from the Hertfordshire Federation of WIs approached Joyce and persuaded her to become a Voluntary County Organiser (VCO). In this role, she helped to set up several new WIs across the county and, in a few cases, wind others up when they became unviable. After a few years, she became chairman of the County Organisation Sub-Committee (comprising all the county's VCOs), a role she held for several years in the 1980s and 1990s. Joyce became a member of the County Performing Arts Sub-Committee in the 2000s and organised a range of events and talks across Hertfordshire. The Christmas Carol concerts were particularly popular. When the WI County Federation was asked by the Hertfordshire Branch of CPRE (Campaign to Protect Rural England) to provide two people to act as judges for their Best Kept Village competition, Joyce was one of the two they nominated; it was another activity she enjoyed until 2015 when she felt that her failing memory meant that she should resign. The competition changed over the years during which Joyce was involved, from Best Kept Village to Village of the Year and then the Rural Living Awards.

Ward Freman School (now Freman College) was opened soon after Joyce came to Buntingford. Mr. Nobes, the first Headmaster, was keen to integrate the school with the local community. With few pupils in the school's sixth form initially, he opened some A level classes to local adults. Joyce joined the English Literature class taught by John Barber and duly passed her A level exam. It was around this time that Richard Lambert, the Music Master, set out to create a small chamber choir made up of staff and others. Joyce had previously sung in a choir in Luton and decided to apply. She was accepted after a brief audition. The choir, called Chanticleer, gave concerts in local churches and in 1982 travelled to perform in Buntingford's twin town Luynes. Whilst there, they gave a



Joyce lining up with WI colleagues for their entry in the 2010 Buntingford Carnival

concert one afternoon in Tours Cathedral. Joyce also sang in a WI choir. On one occasion, the choir participated with other Hertfordshire choirs in a performance of Verdi's Requiem in the Royal Albert Hall, an experience that Joyce thoroughly enjoyed. Mr. Nobes also helped to establish the hospital transport service BASH and Joyce was one of the first volunteer drivers.

The Buntingford Branch of the WEA (Workers' Education Association) was set up sometime in the early 1980s to provide a daytime series



Chanticleer Choir performing in Luynes in 1982, with Joyce front row centre.

of ten weekly lectures during the autumn and winter terms. Joyce became treasurer after a year or two, continuing to do this until 2015. The Buntingford Branch rebelled against the demands of the WEA national organisation in the early 2000s and became an independent body taking the name of BALFF (Buntingford Adult Learning For Fun). Joyce was also a member of the Buntingford Civic Society Committee from about 2000, becoming its secretary after a few years until retiring in 2015 due to declining health. She was a Trustee of the Bishop Seth Ward Almshouse Charity during the same period.

Joyce's first priority was always her family. She believed in being at home to support her two daughters as they grew up. She was a good cook and dressmaker and enjoyed gardening in her spare time. Curtains and the girls' dresses were very often made by her. BALFF Summer Lunch attendees enjoyed the fruits of her culinary activities and family members always sang the merits of her pastry skills. After her daughters married and had families of their own, Joyce liked nothing better than to be with the grandchildren and see them grow into adulthood. She, with her friendly smile, is sorely missed.

**Bob Jackson**

## BUNTINGFORD GARDENERS' CLUB

Gardening is one pastime that it has been possible to continue, but our Club has not meet since March. Instead we have been keeping in touch by email. Members have been sending photos of their gardens for circulation, a couple of which I have included here.



A physical meeting does not appear to be possible anytime soon. It would have been our Annual Show this month and with so much time on our hands I am sure the flowers and vegetables would have been worth showing.

It has been a strange time weather-wise, very dry for most of the time with only intermittent rain. Although in recent weeks the heavens have opened, in general we are more likely to be dry, so here are some watering tips:

- Ideally, water either early in the morning or at the end of the day when it is cooler.
- A few drops of detergent added to the water will help stop run off when the surface of the soil is dry.
- Focus on the soil around the root area when watering.
- Water pots and containers daily in hot weather. Terracotta pots lose moisture quicker than plastic ones so may need watering more often.
- Flower borders need a good soaking probably only once a week.

**Lesley Lowers, Club Secretary**

# News from The Cheese Plate

The Cheese Plate were delighted to launch their new evening service, The Meat Plate, at the start of August. On offer are delicious grazing plates (right) of cheese, charcuterie and seafood, with extras such as breads, olives, vegetables and salads.



All can be accompanied by fabulous wines and quirky soft drinks, as well as finished off with the finest Italian Gelato. A perfect option for relaxed weekend dining with the safety of social distancing. They are also offering 'bubble bookings' to further put customer minds at ease. Please ring Toby on 01763 271533 to find out more and book your table!

## attend2health

wearing full PPE. We have Chiropractors, Osteopaths, Sports Massage therapists, a Podiatrist, a Physiotherapist and Reflexology all available at the clinic and we are open 7 days a week.

I am also very proud to announce that Attend2Health has been awarded a Patient Service Award by WhatClinic. They reward the clinics who demonstrate a clear and measurable commitment to patient service. This award means a lot to us as only 5% of clinics in the country will get an award and they use patient reviews as well as how quickly we respond to calls etc as the criteria. We always strive to do our best for our patients and it is great to see this recognised.

**Louise Hampton**

I'm pleased to report that after a tough few months Attend2Health is fully open again. We are leaving gaps between appointments to avoid too many people being in reception at one time and we are

Chiropractor  
Osteopath  
Pain relief  
without  
medication

Take better  
care of your  
body  
Sports Massage  
Reflexology

We won the prestigious  
**WhatClinic**  
Patient Service Award!

SERVICE  
AWARD  
2019



## Royston, Buntingford & South Cambridgeshire

Supporting parents when it matters  
because childhood can't wait

Registered Charity No. 1105385

Hello from Home-Start, the charity supporting local families who are going through tough times. With our team of highly trained volunteers, we offer confidential and non-judgemental care and support to families with young children who are facing mental or physical health problems. Described as a "life-line of reality" during lockdown, our volunteers have been helping families via video calling, text messages and telephone, waiting expectantly for the day we can offer our services face-to-face again.

### A Funding Challenge

Lockdown hasn't only affected our service provision. We are an independent charity responsible for securing all our own funding. Ordinarily, this funding comes from a variety of sources including trusts, foundations and the generosity of our supporters. One of our major sources of income is the events we run, but this year holding events has been a bit of a challenge! To bridge the gap, we've started hosting a whole series of virtual events, from online literary discussion with local authors to "at home" tasting events. Details of our activities are available on our website: [www.hsrsc.org.uk](http://www.hsrsc.org.uk)

### Playing the Game of Life – The East Herts Lottery

Those of you who have been in touch with Home-Start via email might have noticed the little paragraph at the bottom of our emails, offering the chance to win £25,000. Sounds pretty good doesn't it? We are pleased to be one of the good causes supported by the East Herts Lottery. During the COVID-19 outbreak, financial support from this Lottery has made a big difference to keeping Home-Start operating, enabling us to continue our services to help families in crisis. £10 pays for one of our volunteers to provide over-the-phone support to a family for an hour. £20 pays for a virtual family group: a great chance for parents and children to socialise online, giving everyone some much-needed human contact during lockdown.

### How it works

Playing the East Herts Lottery is simple, with funds going straight to local causes in the East Herts area. Every time a £1 ticket is purchased, the Lottery gives 50p to your chosen cause, 10p shared equally to the other causes in the area, 20p towards the prizes, and the final 20p pays for administration of the Lottery.

If you're online, you can sign up for an account on the East Herts Lottery website at [www.easthertslottery.co.uk/](http://www.easthertslottery.co.uk/), choose your good cause to benefit from your tickets, and start playing. If you're not online, you can call the dedicated Lottery number – **01279 912777** – to register your details and purchase your tickets over the phone.

If you're already a Home-Start supporter, buying East Herts Lottery tickets, thank you! If you haven't joined yet, why not give it a try? After all, who doesn't want to be in with a chance of winning £25,000?

If you'd like to know more about what we're doing during COVID-19 and beyond, you can follow us on Facebook (@hsrsc.org.uk), Twitter (@HomeStartRSC) or Instagram (@homestartroyston) to keep up to date with our news and events. To contact Home-Start go to our website: [www.hsrsc.org.uk](http://www.hsrsc.org.uk) or email [admin@hsrsc.org.uk](mailto:admin@hsrsc.org.uk)

**Home-Start Royston & South Cambridgeshire**

**Unit 6, Valley Farm, Station Road, Meldreth, Royston, Herts. SG8 6JP.**

**t: 01763 262 262 e: [admin@hsrsc.org.uk](mailto:admin@hsrsc.org.uk) [www.hsrsc.org.uk](http://www.hsrsc.org.uk)**

## BUNTINGFORD TOWN TWINNING UPDATE

Since our last article that was published in the April Journal, little has changed because of Coronavirus. Our committee members remain shielding or distancing.

We have, however, asked our French and Spanish twin towns, Luynes and Olvega, what their thoughts for the future are at the moment. So far Olvega have replied that they would like to re-start next year with a visit to Buntingford, which is thus putting everything back by a year. As this goes to press we are still waiting to hear from Luynes what their plans might be.

Our next planned meeting is our AGM towards the end of November. Hopefully by that time our lives will have returned to something resembling normal.

Steve and Mary Deeks

**We're nearly there – the balloons are going up! The Rotary Club of Royston's Virtual Balloon Race takes off on 14<sup>th</sup> September** as part of an exciting new competition in aid of a well-known local charity. It's called a Virtual Balloon Race because, of course, these aren't real balloons. Rotarian Tony Briar, from Bassingbourn, explains:

"We've sold hundreds of balloons already, and we're hoping to sell hundreds more. It works like this: first, you buy your virtual balloon (as few or as many as you like) from the club at £3 each. You get to choose the shape, colour and helium content. Then it will be launched to race for seven days against thousands of others from around 20 fund-raising causes. It will respond just like a 'real' balloon to wind, temperature and weather and you can track your balloon's progress on Google Earth. The balloons that travel the furthest in a week will be judged the winners.

"The first prize is £500, the second an Apple iPad and there are lots of lesser prizes, each winning a £10 book token. And if we manage to sell more than 500 balloons, then the one from our area that goes the furthest will get an extra £50. We think the event will particularly appeal to youngsters and we are appealing to mums and dads to support us."

**Funds raised will go to Home-Start (Royston, Buntingford & South Cambs)**, which has been supporting local families in the area since 1983, working alongside parents through all kinds of tough times. It is particularly in need of help itself at the moment as families struggle to cope with the Coronavirus pandemic. To find out more and to buy balloons go to the Royston Rotary Club website at:

[www.roystonrotary.com/balloonrace.htm](http://www.roystonrotary.com/balloonrace.htm)



News on the race is featured on Rotary Radio ([www.rotaryradiouk.org/](http://www.rotaryradiouk.org/)) and on Radio Neptune ([www.radioneptune.weebly.com/](http://www.radioneptune.weebly.com/)) in Buntingford.

## Hyde Hall Farm – Harvest 2020

Harvest 2020 will be remembered as a whirlwind affair with glorious, unbroken weather for most of July and half of August – before it came to an end in a biblical deluge! Before the rain arrived we successfully gathered our crops in safely dry and in good condition, which was fabulous after what has been a year of extremes. Those of you with good memories may recall me bemoaning our lot back in autumn last year as we struggled to sow our crops in wet and horrid conditions. We managed to get pretty much everything in the ground, only for us then to experience one of the driest springs in memory putting these crops under huge stress as they ran out of the moisture they need to develop. But rain arrived in the nick of time and this resulted in a pretty good harvest.



We grow **Oilseed Rape** for its oil and this achieved a yield of 3.25t per hectare, which is about average here. Then came **Wheat**, our biggest crop in terms of area grown, which we grow for use in breadmaking; the yield was slightly down on our 5-year average, but a lot better than we feared at times over the year. Finally we harvested our **Spring Barley** which is destined for animal feed and this did better than expected – so overall you see a happy, positive farmer in the photo above (we do exist!).

We are already busy preparing the land for next year's crops, with the Oilseed Rape already planted and currently growing like fury after 70mm of rain at the weekend. The Wheat will not be planted until the end of September, once the soil has been cultivated and left for the weeds to germinate so we can spray them off to give next year's crop the best clean and weed-free start as possible.

I am only too aware how fortunate we are to be in an industry that has been so little affected by the ongoing Covid situation. Our day to day job has not really changed as social distancing within your tractor cab is unsurprisingly not difficult. Away from the farming side, however, we are seeing the effects of Covid with our office units that are let out to local businesses. Fortunately, most of our tenants have not been too badly hit, but for some it has been tough. This side of our business has expanded over the past 15 years and the number of people who come to work on site has grown, so when that just stopped in lockdown the farm seemed eerily quiet. In some ways it was nice but, in all honesty, I missed the interaction we enjoy with everyone who comes here daily, and hopefully they feel the same. I passionately believe that this is one of our biggest selling points – not seeing me every day, but the lovely rural environment with plenty of space as opposed to a concrete industrial estate in a town or city.

And to that end a shameless advert for a beautiful new office unit (right) we are just completing for any reader out there looking to relocate or start a new business. The barn dates to approximately 1750 and has been painstakingly restored, mainly by Buntingford resident Andy Miller who has done an amazing job. It will be finished in early September and could easily house a medium or large business.



I'd love to hear from any readers with questions about the farm or anything else so feel free to email me on

[ben@hydehall.com](mailto:ben@hydehall.com) or take a look at our website: [www.hydehall.com](http://www.hydehall.com)

## Sandon's Drive-Thru Fete

Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> September, 2020, 12 noon – 4pm

In this year of extraordinary change, Sandon is holding its first Drive-Thru fete with the 'Rainbow of Hope' as the theme to raise much-needed funds for the community. Using a map that can be purchased on arrival, at various points of the village, visitors are invited to explore:

- Table-top stalls in front of houses selling lockdown clear-out items, toys, books, home-made jams & chutneys, and home-grown fruit, vegetables & plants.
- Different village gardens, many of them open for the first time.
- The rainbow trail – with prizes to be won!
- Refreshment stalls selling cream teas, or burgers from the barbecue, perhaps to go with a glass of wine or pint from the bar.
- Traditional fete stalls – tombola, guess the number of sweets in a jar, goal in the hole.
- Win £250 on the 250 Grand Prize
- Local footpaths and cycle trails



Gay Ayton, one of the organisers, said: "We've had to be creative for this year's fete and [are] delighted that villagers are rising to the challenge in their ideas for the Drive-Thru. As well as being something fun to do, it offers an opportunity to visit Sandon with its listed buildings and Grade 1 listed church ... and also raise much-needed funds for the community – do join us."



# Christ Church

Baldock Road, Buntingford SG9 9AA

**Minister:** Vacant

**Secretary:** Peter Godbert / Tel: 01763 281359  
buntingford.urc@talktalk.net

A decision will be made shortly regarding the re-opening of the Church and Church Hall and this will be announced on the website: [www.buntingfordurc.org.uk](http://www.buntingfordurc.org.uk)

**Website:** [www.buntingfordurc.org.uk](http://www.buntingfordurc.org.uk)  
**Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/URCBuntingford](http://www.facebook.com/URCBuntingford)

## ST RICHARD OF CHICHESTER Catholic Church

3 Station Road, Buntingford. Telephone 01763 271471

**Parish Priest:** Reverend Father Cyril Chiaha

See the Church notice board or check with your parish priest for current arrangements regarding Mass times and Confessions.



## The Ash and Quin Valleys Group

St Mary the Virgin



ST. MARY'S  
FURNEUX PELHAM

St. Mary's  
Stocking Pelham

## Living God's Love

Rev'd Julie Gawthrop 01920 823531

### Services for September 2020

#### St Mary's, Braughing

Sun 6 <sup>th</sup>	11.15am	All Age Holy Communion
Wed 9 <sup>th</sup>	9.30pm	Holy Communion (said)
Sun 13 <sup>th</sup>	10.00am	All Age Morning Worship
Wed 16 <sup>th</sup>	9.30am	Holy Communion (said)
Sun 20 <sup>th</sup>	11.15am	Holy Communion (also live streamed)
Wed 23 <sup>rd</sup>	9.30am	Holy Communion (said)
Sun 27 <sup>th</sup>	9.30am	Holy Communion
Wed 30 <sup>th</sup>	9.30am	Holy Communion (said)

#### St Mary's, Furneux Pelham

Sun 6 <sup>th</sup>	9.30pm	BCP Holy Communion
Sun 13 <sup>th</sup>	11.15am	Holy Communion
Sun 20 <sup>th</sup>	9.30am	Café Church
Sun 27 <sup>th</sup>	11.15am	Morning Worship Harvest Thanksgiving (also live streamed)

St Mary's, Stocking Pelham – No Services



# United Benefice of Aspenden, Buntingford and Westmill

We hope that you are all keeping safe and well; you are in our prayers and thoughts throughout these uncertain and unprecedented times, both now and in the future.



Reaching our community is important to the Benefice, albeit challenging, but not impossible! So, thinking outside of the box, we are able to provide ...



**Church at Home Packs** – either delivered to your inbox or your front door. The pack allows you to worship at home either by yourself or with your family, including Bible readings, prayers, reflections and much more. Not forgetting the little people of the household – there is our Little Sparks section too (see below).



**Sunday Zoom Service** – If you can, please join us at our Sunday Zoom Services held each week at 11:15am. All of us together (virtually) worshipping and giving thanks, all from the comfort of your own home.



**Little Sparks Zoom on Sundays** – Church is not just for the big people in the household, we also think of the little ones in your homes and we are offering the opportunity for them to join us for our Little Sparks Zoom Service held each Sunday. The service is full of fun activities and games.

## Sunday Services in Church

We are delighted to be able to offer Sunday Communion Services in our Churches.



St Mary's Aspenden, St Peter's Buntingford and St Mary the Virgin Westmill, are currently taking it in turns to hold a Communion Service on Sunday for those who are able to attend.

**We follow government guidelines of social distancing and Covid Hygiene rules.**

Please contact us for further information, including Church At Home packs, Zoom Services, or Sunday Services in Church (*location, dates and times*)

Email [admin@unitedbenefice.org.uk](mailto:admin@unitedbenefice.org.uk) or call **07484 345027**

You can also follow us on Social Media

Facebook: [@UnitedBeneficeABW](https://www.facebook.com/UnitedBeneficeABW) Twitter: [@BeneficeUnited](https://twitter.com/BeneficeUnited)

Instagram: [@UnitedBenefice](https://www.instagram.com/UnitedBenefice)





Although we have not been able to hold our Spring or Summer meetings because of the lockdown, things have been busy behind the scenes within FORQ. The opportunity to record the wildlife of the Rib and Quin catchments has continued, within the limitations of local walks for exercise.

Details can be seen on the project map on the iNaturalist website. At the time of writing there had been 520 observations, with 286 species identified.

A new way to record memories of the rivers and of living in the Rib and Quin valleys has been launched on the Friends of the Rib and Quin website. Named 'Voices of the Rib and Quin', this social history project aims to collect memories and, if possible, record interviews that document what it was and is like to live in the valleys. It was inspired by the oral histories collected by East Anglian historian George Ewart Evans, from the farm and country workers in the villages and towns surrounding Blaxhill in Suffolk. We hope it will develop into an archive that can provide a living history to connect those living here in the present with those that lived here in the past. You can find the 'Voices of the Rib and Quin' page from the main menu on our website; select History, then Social History.

FORQ were delighted to be able to participate in the Buntingford Walking Market on Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> August. Our stall, on the banks the Rib at Chapel End, in conjunction with Buntingford Plants and Gardens, was very well attended and through the tremendous efforts of Gilly and Joanna the plant sale and raffle raised an amazing £90! Thanks everyone.

The popularity of the plant sale provided a terrific opportunity for members of the FORQ Exec to talk to Buntingford residents about the current plight of the Rib and Quin. The flow of both has been severely depleted over the years to the trickle that now runs, especially in the summer months. We were also able to discuss specific efforts to improve the Rib as it passes through Buntingford and to advise on the plan prepared by Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust for Buntingford Town Council in 2019.

We had planned to hold a 'River Tidy and Litter Pick' in Buntingford on Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> August, but regrettably this has had to be postponed.

As reported previously, FORQ have joined with several other Chalk Stream groups. It has been great to learn from their experiences and together we feel we can have a larger voice. This has resulted in the formation of the Chalk Aquifer Alliance; see <https://chalkaquiferalliance.wordpress.com/>

The Chalk Aquifer Alliance supports the restoration and protection of water quality and flow in our chalk streams and the reduction of abstraction to sustainable levels. These unique freshwater ecosystems are suffering from over-abstraction and pollution and as they all share the same 60-million-year-old chalk bedrock it's high time that there was a single entity to defend them.

The Alliance is mindful that the challenges faced in the East and the Southeast of the country may not be the same as those faced in the West and the North, but we are keen that any and all independent chalk stream groups, friends and supporters should be able to join us if they wish. The Alliance feel there is plenty of common ground and that there are benefits to being able to share knowledge and understanding across river groups.

The Environment Agency issues a Water Situation Report for Hertfordshire and North London each month, which makes interesting reading. Hertfordshire and North London received 114% of long-term average rainfall for the month of June, but the downpours on

the 17<sup>th</sup> June contributed half of the month's total precipitation. Some effective rainfall occurred in the chalk catchments, but the month-end soil moisture deficit remained significantly above the long-term average.

Pauline Ayres, Communications FORQ

## Build Back Better in Buntingford

Buntingford in Transition are delighted to be back in the Journal and we really hope that you and your families have remained resilient to Covid-19 so far. These last few months have certainly given us reason to reassess our lives and how we live them. Many are taking a serious look at their work/life balance, for instance.

You will probably remember that at the beginning of lockdown there was a serious issue of shortages of food and household products. Food security is an important subject and one which the Transition movement feels can be addressed within communities. All we need is land and the expertise and enthusiasm to use it well. The community garden in Buntingford is just the start of community food-growing areas we would like to see more of. If anyone would like to know more about how to get involved in the community garden and community growing, please email Madela at [buntingfordintransition@gmail.com](mailto:buntingfordintransition@gmail.com)

One negative effect of the pandemic has been the huge amount of disposable plastic we are seeing – understandable, but a real setback in trying to eliminate single-use plastic. One way everyone can help is to buy or make a washable face covering rather than using disposable ones. Locally made fabric face coverings are available to buy in Buntingford's very own zero waste shop, *Replenish and Reuse* in the High Street. The shop is helping us to stock up our cupboards plastic free – if you haven't been in yet, you will be surprised at the variety of food stuffs, beauty and cleaning products available.

On the plus side, nature has been given some breathing space by the pandemic and we are seeing both flora and fauna flourish where it hasn't for many years. Although work has been held up due to Covid-19, there is much to do in our town and a good place to start is the river Rib. Friends of the Rib & Quin (left) would be grateful for any help and support to restore our rare and precious chalk stream to a healthy state. You can follow their activities and contact them through their website [friendsoftherib.wordpress.com/](http://friendsoftherib.wordpress.com/)

Behind the scenes Hertfordshire County Council have also been busy compiling the Sustainable Hertfordshire Strategy and have marked the first anniversary of declaring a climate emergency with a document outlining their aims and actions taken so far. You can read of their progress at: [www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/about-the-council/news/news-archive/declaring-a-climate-emergency-one-year-on](http://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/about-the-council/news/news-archive/declaring-a-climate-emergency-one-year-on)

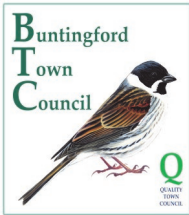
Now, more than ever, we have a window of opportunity to make positive changes in our lives, not only for ourselves but for the benefit of future generations. We would love to have more members and hear your ideas of how to make Buntingford a more resilient community so please contact us if you would like to get involved.

Madela and the Team, [buntingfordintransition@gmail.com](mailto:buntingfordintransition@gmail.com)



WHAT DO YOU WANT  
BUNTINGFORD  
TO LOOK LIKE IN  
2050?





# BUNTINGFORD TOWN COUNCIL

## A QUALITY TOWN COUNCIL

Hopefully, the Town is now slowly coming back to life after the Government-imposed lockdown in March. During the lockdown our volunteer scheme came into play and we had over 100 volunteers helping approximately 180 people. The community spirit in the town really came to the fore and it was humbling to witness the willingness of local people to help others. The Town Council is very grateful to all those who gave their time to assist those who needed help.

We have re-opened the playgrounds with restrictions, but urge users to sanitise before and after use of the play and gym equipment. The Multi Games Area is run by Everyone Active, who also run the Ward Freman Swimming Pool. We believe the pool will re-open in September along with the MUGA. The Community Centre has also been closed and we have taken advantage of the down-time to have some decorating done. Full risk assessments have been carried out and we hope to open the Centre at the beginning of September, again with restrictions. At the moment we cannot take bookings for parties or changing rooms.

You may have noticed that the CCTV has at long last been installed. This is managed by the Town Council.

The lockdown restricted work on the new cemetery, but work has now recommenced and we hope to open the cemetery in the very near future.

At the time of writing the Town Council offices are closed to the public, but we are working and if you need to see us in person please call to make an appointment, we will be happy to see you.

We have an empty office at the Manor House, on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor. If you are interested in leasing an office please give us a call, the office comes with one parking space.

**Jill Jones MILCM Cert HE, Town Clerk**

**Office hours: Monday–Thursday 9:00am–5:00pm; closed Fridays**

The Manor House, High Street, Buntingford SG9 9AB

Tel: **01763 272222** email: [clerk@buntingford-tc.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@buntingford-tc.gov.uk)

Twitter: [@buntingfordtc](https://twitter.com/buntingfordtc) Facebook.com/[BuntingfordTC](https://www.facebook.com/BuntingfordTC)

Website: [www.buntingford-tc.gov.uk](http://www.buntingford-tc.gov.uk)

**In line with GDPR Regulations, the Town Council has published a number of Privacy Notices. These can be viewed on the Town Council website.**

### Town Council meetings for September 2020

Thurs 3 <sup>rd</sup> Sept	7:00pm – Amenities Committee
Thurs 10 <sup>th</sup> Sept	7:00pm – Resources Committee
Thurs 24 <sup>th</sup> Sept	7:00pm – Full Council

**All meetings will be held remotely.**

Details for observing the meetings can be obtained from the Clerk's office.



## News from Your District and County Councillor, Jeff Jones

It has been a long time since my last article for the Buntingford Journal, as we have been subjected to the unprecedented Covid-19 pandemic and a three-month lockdown. We have all had to adapt to a new way of life during and since lockdown, with communication via Zoom and Facetime becoming the new norm and a lifeline to seeing friends and loved ones.

It has been business as usual at Council, albeit working from home and with meetings held virtually. Lockdown has now been eased, but the virus is far from gone. We still need to remain vigilant and observe social distancing measures and Government guidelines, to control the virus until an effective vaccine is finally found.

### Play Your Part Campaign

A new campaign has been launched by Herts County Council as part of the Stay Safe Hertfordshire project. The aim is to encourage Hertfordshire residents to take personal responsibility for protecting their communities from Covid-19 by carrying out four simple actions:

1. Washing your hands
2. Socially distancing
3. Wearing face coverings where required
4. Isolating and getting tested if you develop symptoms

For the campaign to have the greatest impact, it is vital that statutory, voluntary, community, business and private organisations across Hertfordshire take an active role in promoting it. If you would like any posters or leaflets to help promote this campaign, please contact me and I will arrange delivery to you.



**Nevetts Care Home** was brought out of mothballs to help free up bed space for local hospitals during the pandemic. An army of contractors spent two weeks transforming the rundown building into a first-class facility, allowing coronavirus patients to recover before



Testing my bed-making skills and unpacking boxes at Nevetts.



finally returning to their care home or residence. I was particularly pleased to be able to help out organising a group of volunteers to kit out the 40 bedrooms and arrange an appeal for donation of books, DVDs, CDs etc. The staff recruitment process has seen many of the positions filled by residents of Buntingford and the surrounding villages.

### **Covid-19 Infection Rate**

I am often asked what the infection rate figures are for our area. So I have included below the latest rates for Hertfordshire and East Hertfordshire at the time of writing. I am pleased to say that infection rates here are falling. *Note cases are reported by date of test. Due to the time lag in getting results, data is subject to change.*

#### **Hertfordshire COVID-19**

**Total number of cases** (as of 2/8/20): **4,314** cases, or **363** cases per 100,000 population

**Total deaths** (as of 24/7/20): **1,089** deaths, or **92** deaths per 100,000 population

#### **East Hertfordshire COVID-19**

**Total number of cases** (as of 2/8/20): **419** cases, or **280** cases per 100,000 population

**Total deaths** (as of 24/7/20): **101** deaths, or **67** deaths per 100,000 population. This total breaks down as **60** deaths in Hospitals, **31** in Care Homes and **10** in other places (homes, hospices, elsewhere)

**First week of no COVID deaths in Hertfordshire Care Homes** – Provisional figures show that there were no COVID-19 deaths in Hertfordshire care homes in the week ending 7<sup>th</sup> August (there were two the previous week, the last on 30<sup>th</sup> July). Care home deaths from all causes in Hertfordshire rose from 38 in the same period last year to 54.

**Volunteer and People Assistance Cell (VPAC)** – Operation Shield formally closed on 31<sup>st</sup> July. Over 110,000 food parcels have been delivered to individuals and over 11,000 to organisations since VPAC was mobilised. Those residents who received support from the operation have been helped to identify alternative pathways of accessing food which can meet their needs in the longer term. Work continues to distribute any excess food stock to organisations that have been supporting the Covid response, e.g. Foodbanks and District/Borough/Parish Councils.

As of 30<sup>th</sup> July, there were 43,485 Hertfordshire residents on the government's shield list and although from 1<sup>st</sup> August these individuals are no longer required to shield, the Government shielded records will continue to be updated through new diagnoses. This will ensure that there is a complete list should there be a need for people to shield again due to a second wave or a local outbreak.

I know that there have been many local volunteer schemes helping residents with shopping, medical prescription collections, or simply befriending. Many thanks to all the volunteers who have supported and continue to support our most vulnerable residents.

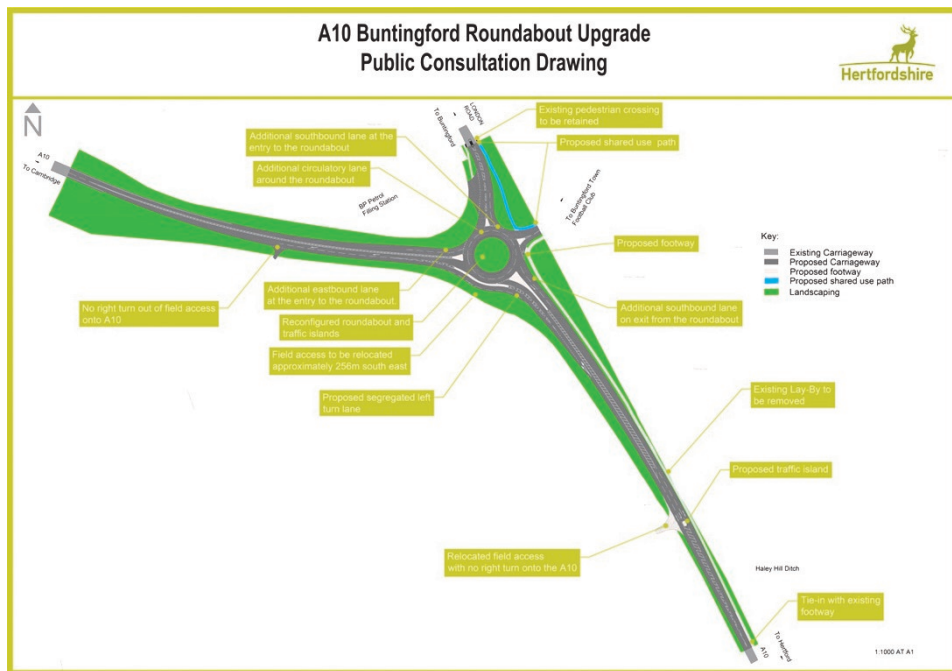
### **A10 Buntingford Southern Roundabout Upgrade Consultation**

HCC is developing an improvement scheme to upgrade the roundabout at the junction of the A10 and London Road. This roundabout currently has queues and delays during peak periods and this is forecast to worsen in the future due to growth in the wider area. The improvement is identified in the Council's Local Transport Plan and EHDC's Local Plan. The Council is currently seeking funding for the project, so is unable to commit to a delivery date at this time. However, we are seeking the views of local stakeholders to ensure that we are ready to deliver the project should the opportunity arise.

#### **The Proposal**

By now, Buntingford residents should have received a copy of the proposed plan (above right). The scheme proposes reconfiguring the existing oval-shaped roundabout to a

## A10 Buntingford Roundabout Upgrade Public Consultation Drawing



circular shape, with the following features to improve capacity. We believe the scheme will significantly benefit local residents and businesses as well as users of the A10.

- A segregated left turn lane from the A10 (South) to the A10 (North West);
- Additional lanes at the entries to and exits from the roundabout;
- Providing a section of new shared cycle and walking path at the eastern arm of the roundabout to link to the football club and proposed school;
- Realigning the footway adjacent to the southbound carriageway, closing the layby South of the roundabout and amendments to private field accesses to the west of the A10 to accommodate the above changes;
- Signing to an alternative route for cyclists parallel to the A10 between Buntingford and the Puckeridge area along lightly trafficked roads.

### ***Want more information?***

You can find more information, including the scope and proposed stages of the project, on the project web page at [www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/A10Buntingford](http://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/A10Buntingford). If you do not have access to the internet and would like more information, please call 0300 123 4047.

### ***Have your say***

Your views are important and will be considered during the detailed design stage. Please go to [www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/A10Buntingford](http://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/A10Buntingford) to complete a short questionnaire and submit any comments you may have about the proposals. Alternatively, you can email your comments to: [A10Buntingford@hertfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:A10Buntingford@hertfordshire.gov.uk).

### **Councillor Advice**

I receive many requests for advice and help on District or County Council matters. If you have concerns that you need help with I am always available – contact details below.

**Clr Jeff Jones, District and County Councillor, Buntingford Ward**  
07836 232963 / [Jeff.jones@hertfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:Jeff.jones@hertfordshire.gov.uk)



## Could your winning poster design be a breath of fresh air?

Do you get irritated by parked cars and vans sitting waiting with the engine left on as they pump out fumes and pollute our air? If you'd like to help improve air quality near you, send us your design for an eye-catching poster to encourage drivers to turn off their engines – the best ones may be turned into road signs by East Herts Council for use in our main car parks. Your poster could show a car park, or a street near where you live, or it could be a more general design. Graham McAndrew, executive council member for sustainability, said:

“We’re looking for colourful striking designs that will make drivers think twice about leaving their car engines idling. We’d like to announce the winner on national Clean Air Day – 8<sup>th</sup> October. Pollution harms the health of millions. Clean Air Day is a chance to find out more about pollution, share information and help make the air cleaner and healthier for everyone. Creating a climate in which everyone is encouraged to adopt a sustainable lifestyle is a key plank of the council’s work and this competition is a step in that direction. We are committed to reducing our impact on the environment.”

Email your poster design to [communications@eastherts.gov.uk](mailto:communications@eastherts.gov.uk), either by scanning it in or taking a photo. The designs will be considered by an independent judge and the winning designs will be showcased on Twitter, Facebook and Instagram.

Please include your name, age, town or village, and a daytime contact number. If you prefer to post your design, the address is East Herts Council, Wallfields, Pegs Lane, Hertford SG13 8EQ. **The deadline for submissions is Monday 14<sup>th</sup> September.**

## BALFF – Buntingford Adult Learning For Fun

Dear BALFF Members

I am sure it will come as no surprise to you that the committee have decided to cancel our 10-week course due to start in September because of the Virus. We all feel very sad that we have had to do this, and we thought long and hard before taking this decision. We have consulted our tutor, and she agreed that it would not be a good idea to go ahead in these uncertain times.

We are, however, still planning our Christmas break in Bournemouth – see below.

Keep safe and well, Julia Peacock (Chairman)

## CHRISTMAS IN BOURNEMOUTH

**I am organising a Christmas break in Bournemouth, leaving Buntingford by coach on 23<sup>rd</sup> December and returning on 27<sup>th</sup> December.**

We will be staying at Bournemouth’s **Royale Hotel**, which has: Free WIFI; Golf nearby; Indoor pool; Lift to all floors; Restaurants; 24-Hour Service.

Highlights of the trip will be: Christmas Hotel Festivities and Entertainment; Christmas Tree Wonderland; Christmas Market; Beaulieu Motor Museum and Abbey; Visit to Salisbury.

If you are interested please contact me, **Julia Peacock**, on **01763 272584** or email [Julia@goldenmaggot.com](mailto:Julia@goldenmaggot.com) for a brochure.

# BUNTINGFORD UNSUNG HERO AWARD 2020

Buntingford will honour 2 local people who have made a significant, voluntary, positive contribution to our community:

- 19 years old or under winner
- 20 years old or over winner

## Who deserves to win?

Tell us who deserves this accolade.

Get your nomination form from The Manor House or various outlets around the town or nominate online at [www.b-hero.co.uk](http://www.b-hero.co.uk)

Buntingford Town Mayor will announce the winners at the Annual Lights of Love Ceremony on Friday 27th November 2020.

Closing date for nominations: 1st November 2020.

### BUNTINGFORD UNSUNG HERO AWARDS 2020 – HOW TO NOMINATE

You can nominate online at [www.b-hero.co.uk](http://www.b-hero.co.uk), or complete a paper nomination form – available from The Cheese Plate, in The Co-op, or from 37b High Street – and return it to The Cheese Plate.

*The Awards are sponsored by Buntingford Town Council, Buntingford Chamber of Commerce and Buntingford Civic Society.*



## The Hundred Parishes Society

[www.hundredparishes.org.uk](http://www.hundredparishes.org.uk)

We continue to add circular walk routes to the Society's website. There is no need to travel far. The walks range in distance from 1 mile to 10 miles and the routes have been chosen for the quality of scenery, or heritage, or both. The route descriptions seek to add to your knowledge of the places you pass. Each route description can easily be downloaded from the Other Walks section of our website

[www.hundredparishes.org.uk](http://www.hundredparishes.org.uk) – and then printed. We try to make the route description as easy as possible to follow and we have a small team of volunteers who check them. We welcome feedback and comment.

Shorter walks tend to focus on a single interesting town or village, for example Bartlow, Clavering, Great Dunmow, Hatfield Broad Oak, Hildersham, Much Hadham, Sawbridgeworth, Stebbing or Thaxted. Some routes combine town and countryside, for example from Buntingford, Saffron Walden or Standon. Others are mainly countryside routes, such as those starting from Broxted, Henham, Little Hadham (right), Matching or Wareside.



Some routes range over two or more parishes, for example, the 7 mile-route between Pleshey and Great Waltham or 8 miles between Albury, Braughing and Furneux Pelham. Two different routes run between Finchingfield and Great Bardfield. An 8-miler starting from Chrishall (below) passes through four parishes and offers extensive views from upland paths in the Essex / Cambridgeshire / Herts border area.



These are just some examples to give you a flavour and to whet your appetite. If your favourite place isn't mentioned yet why not let us know, we are regularly adding new walks. Even if you think you know your local area, I assure you that, not far away, there is more to be found and enjoyed!

**Ken McDonald**  
Secretary

## Exercising Online!

From the beginning of lockdown, we have run our exercise classes online to keep all our class delegates fit and healthy. At first it seemed strange exercising online, but it soon became the norm, helped along by the usual class banter as they all became my online fitness family. We also ran a selection of social evenings with Bingo, quizzes and fun Friday nights.



Our Zoom classes became very creative as we used brooms, towels, cushions, cans and chairs to challenge the body, and our age range was massive. We certainly offer diversity, progression and regression! We even had a few ex-members who had moved away from the area re-join us, with members signing in from Brighton, Scotland and even from New Zealand!

When lockdown was eased to allow outdoor exercise classes from 14<sup>th</sup> July we started up a selection. Then the heatwave arrived, but people still came to classes – you can see some of our exercisers trying to keep to the shade of the trees in the photo below.

From the beginning of September, when local halls will be allowed to re-open, we will be returning to some indoor classes as well as continuing our Zoom sessions, which are still buzzing. No Covid is going to keep us down!!!

**Jacqui Smith, Personal Trainer**



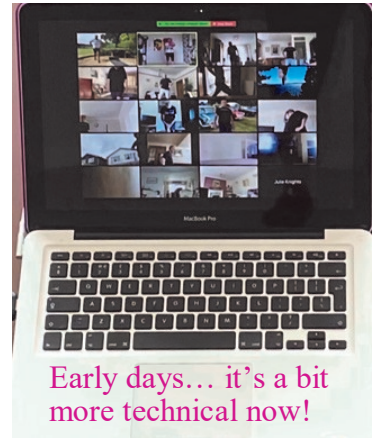


## Zoom Life ...

Back in March, the week before lockdown I was a busy Personal Trainer and Fitness Instructor. Life was great, classes were buzzing ...

then the dreaded Coronavirus was unleashed on us! I went from running around all day, every day, to a total standstill, wondering whether or not I'd be able to keep my job, let alone manage to keep our amazing staff.

When things happen unexpectedly, we often have an inbuilt gut instinct which kicks in, and sometimes it can lead to extraordinary results. If someone had asked me before the 18<sup>th</sup> March what 'Zoom' was, I'd have said it was a song by Fat Larry's Band from the 1980s! However, as most of us now know, it's a video conferencing platform accessible on many devices, from the humble phone to an ageing laptop. I spent the next 2 days working furiously on setting up space to work, making and testing calls with other instructors to see how this 'Zoom' could be made to work for fitness online. After all, I didn't spend 10 years in the army with the Royal Signals, working on high-tech communications, to allow a major pandemic to stop me from keeping calm and trying to carry on, in that traditionally good old-fashioned British sense!



I sought the help of local company 'Marketing Zone' and explained what I needed to get moving online, then Mark and I devised a plan to utilise my website, to gather information safely and take payments online. Within just 24 hours, Mark had everything in place, he's so good! We were ready to launch ...

I've never been a fan of emails, I think that if people want to join classes they'll come, so why send them lots of emails? Well, it seems that when the world goes into lockdown, your new best friend becomes the internet, together with email communication. Armed with all the new-found tools and information at my fingertips, I was up and running (literally!). Our first weekly email was sent, outlining our plans to overcome the Covid situation and how classes would be running online via our new friend 'Zoom'. Our assumption at the time was it would be for 3 or 4 weeks. Little did we know what lay ahead.



We arranged for our equipment to be lent out to those who wanted it. Donna, Karen and I dropped everything off safely wherever we were asked, and with everyone using proper equipment we've been able to create more interesting workouts. Holly became mobile technical assistant, visiting those who needed help to set up tablets and iPads for ZoomFit. She spent a fair few hours in the sun that week, sitting on people's driveways, working her magic. By the time Boris locked us down on Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> March, we were already off the starting blocks and a step ahead of the game!

The first few weeks were funny and frustrating in equal measure, as three instructors learned how to become screen stars, employing a different method to teach, as well as technical gurus with microphones, leads, amps, and bright lights! We also had to be technical engineers helping class participants learn how to use this new fangled Zoom thing!



One minute you'd be chatting away and the next you were staring at a blank screen ... and that was just the first time I forgot to plug the charging cable into the laptop, there were many more blips to follow! Like the time the laptop totally crashed, leaving me dancing on an iPhone in the garden, with Holly flicking through to check we'd not lost anyone – somehow we hadn't! Then there was the time my husband, a local firefighter, got a call to action and flew past me and the live screen in his underpants! I'm just thankful he hadn't made it into his planned shower or the screen view could have been X-rated! Holly has a Golden Retriever who has taken to online classes and regularly makes an appearance. She used to sit on the stairs and just listen, but now she comes in and loves nothing more than observing a bit of ball work, although she's confused as to why us 'hoomans' use paws and not our mouths to pick up the ball!

I never imagined back in March that we'd be still running classes online in September, but here we are, in the new 'normal' and we're still growing our audience and reaching out to more people. Some enjoy doing lots of classes, some just like to join their one favourite class a week, some enjoy our outdoor classes (when the weather allows), and some just drop me a note to say how much they enjoy our emails every week! We have people on holiday still able to get their workout in, and we have people who use our WhatsApp groups to book classes and/or get advice. We've even had a successful Quiz night and have another one planned. It's not just about fitness, it's also about socialising, and this has kept all of us in touch – even though we're not together, we can still see and hear each other. It's opened a whole new world for us all!

We really have all pulled together as a Fitness Family, which makes everything we have worked so hard to achieve these last few months worth all the effort. We love all our groups and we are so grateful that they have stuck by us and supported us through these extraordinary times. We will keep ZoomFit classes as part of our offering now, even when we can return to halls. It's convenient, easy to use, and there are a wide variety of classes available. We also have a Members Only private FaceBook group, which has a lot of classes available to do at a time that suits you.

If you would like to join in any of our classes, have a look at our online page on the website: [www.irenegibson.co.uk](http://www.irenegibson.co.uk). All the Zoom classes plus private FaceBook group access cost just £10 for the whole week! We offer 4 different Pilates techniques, Cardio, HIIT training, Bootcamp, Dance Fit, Chair Exercises, Personal Training and outdoor Child-Friendly Mum classes. We hope to have indoor classes in community halls back up and running soon. We will publish details in the Journal, or you can take a look at our information on Facebook (**Irene Gibson PT**) and Instagram (**irenegibsonpt**).

Finally, let me take you back to the 1980s. Not only was it a great decade, I also think they may have had a premonition of what was to come in 2020 ... in the words of the legend who was Aretha Franklin, **'Who's Zooming Who?'** Stay fit, stay safe, and we hope to see you on screen soon!

**Irene Gibson**

## THE RIVER – A Short Story

The temperature drops to 30 degrees in what passes for winter in Tamil Nadu, making it possible for a young British woman with a social conscience to breathe the air without passing out. Helen, slumped against the window of a bus driving through luminous green fields, gazed at egrets on sparkling water courses and marvelled at the constantly blue sky, her view only obscured by dirt thrown up by unsurfaced roads. The thought of cool water in a river after many days of hard physical work should have made her delirious, but any excitement was tempered by what she knew of India's desultory attempts at public hygiene. Perhaps the Thamirabarani would not attract the hordes of people bathing in the Ganges, but she preferred not to think about that too much. Her object was to get home without malaria or some other microbe-related disease. A swimming costume under a cheesecloth kaftan and jeans, a towel in a plastic bag and a large bottle hanging in a water-carrier across her shoulders, and she was ready for the river.

Helen was not alone, even though she was largely silent: she and her fellow volunteers had opted for an afternoon bathing, their village school-building all but finished. It was taking forever to drive to this unpronounceable river – the enormity of the subcontinent only becoming apparent with the road trip. Indian buses, half crate, half truck, meant sitting on her thumbs on the wooden seats wishing she'd accepted the offer of a cushion.

She dragged herself out of her reverie, stretched and then crouched along the bus as it stopped, joining the others on a dirt track beside the road. A waft of hot air hit again as she and her lanky fellow exiles followed a diminutive guide down a hidden path. Undergrowth was thick here, a tangle of dry grass and cork trees, and the group quickly transformed from tourists to a giggling, grimacing gang of children on a school outing.

At the end of the path and in front of them, glistening rather than streaming, lay the still water of a wide rivulet. The banks, verdant with unknown plants, offered a gentle slide down into clear crystal water. The group paused in silence. Helen pondered the risks of swimming: she had spotted water buffalo a few miles upriver and young women washing their hair under a bridge. But the water looked clean here, as clear as a lake in Cumbria. She knew there were no crocodiles or snakes. Their Indian guide – what was his name? – had withdrawn to a safe, good-mannered distance as these white-skinned people shouted their excitement and stripped off superfluous clothing, heeding his last warning: "Don't put your face into the water!"

Used to letting water envelope her whole head and body when she swam, Helen held her chin up self-consciously as she let herself down into the river and took her first strokes. The feel of it was glorious. Still and gentle, the water lit in patches by sun streaming through trees, she could have stayed there all afternoon, all day if she could. The only sound was of heavier breathing and loose limbs passing through water. What was there ever to say in such moments of bliss?

It took 10 minutes or so before someone spotted the first bag. Silently, floating midstream, a blue plastic carrier bag cruised into the middle of the careful swimmers – a bag just like the ones used in every market in every country in the polluted world. Instinctively, Helen swam out of its way. There were cries of 'Ugh' and 'Aargh' from some of the others, some flailing around, some heading to the bank as the detritus drifted slowly past. It would have done no harm, but it represented a fouling of this beautiful place. The spell was broken and the group left the water and towelled themselves dry, ashamed to have released themselves even for a moment from the worries of the world.

Our globe's surface is 71% water, the rivers only a small part of the water we see, but each river flows into the oceans. Helen thought of the river as she joined the others waiting for a bus to take them back to the village – a village where plastic bags were a

luxury and there was no refuse collection, only dogs to deal with litter. Of course bags would land in the river and the river would take the bags out to sea, and the sea creatures would then swallow the bags.

What can I do? Helen thought. Generation Z and anxious to do something of value in the world, she hadn't yet found her purpose in the small town of Buntingford. Am I going to spend my life caring for the planet and its inhabitants in far-away lands? If I do, can I still find joy? She thought of the river she had just swum in, its beauty and tranquillity, and she thought of the tiny River Rib in her home town. And then she remembered that the River Rib was itself strewn with cans, shopping trolleys and tennis balls.

I know, she thought. I will open a little shop in Buntingford's High Street and insist that customers come with their own containers for their purchases, and I will issue no plastic bags. I will call it "Replenish and Reuse" and help others to think about the planet.\* She smiled to herself as the bus arrived, and for the first time felt like chatting to the others.

**Chris Kell, Buntingford Writers' Group – 07816 935396**

(\*Conclusion made up by the author – bears no relation to the actual history of the shop.)

## Care Packs help 50 Buntingford households

Businesses in Buntingford have provided 50 Care Packs worth over £100 each to local residents in need during the Covid19 pandemic. The packs contained grocery vouchers, essentials such as hand sanitiser, tinned goods, toilet rolls, gloves and masks and gift vouchers for High Street goods and services, as well as money off vouchers. This kind-hearted initiative was organised by James Oliver Radley of J Oliver Radley Opticians as a volunteer for the Buntingford Chamber of Commerce. Radley explained: "COVID-19 affects us all in some way or another and I wanted to do my bit. I am very thankful for these donations from businesses across the Park Farm and Watermill industrial estates and the High Street."



The businesses and individuals that contributed include: Alex Kanold, Attend 2 Health, Autofix, Bonneys Boutique, Buntingford Pharmacy, Buntingford School of Dance, Colosseum Dental, Co-op Supermarket, Crazy Daisy, Delissimo, Direct Carpets, Envie Hair and Boutique, Flutterby's, Hemingways, Irene Gibson Personal Training, J. Oliver Radley Opticians, Keith Ian Estate Agents, Leggate Associates, Liberro Electronic Cigarettes, Locks, Stock & More, Mark Doel Butchers, Marketing Zone, Mindful Worklife, Morvend, Mummy SOS, Nutwood Development, Oops!IT, Replenish & Reuse, Riverside Taxis, Sharpe Print, Sir-Ink-A-Lot, Suave Barbers Shop, Buntingford Coffee Shop, The Cheese Plate, The Dentist, The Room Hairdressing, Touch of Glamour and Travel Stop.

Mark Ganellin, Chair of the Buntingford Chamber of Commerce, commented: "These are tough times so it's heart-warming that Buntingford businesses have pulled together as a force for good, it's just a super community and businesses are working hard to be there for their customers as lockdown eases." Working with The Buntingford Relief In Need Charity, 25 packs went to families identified by Edwinstree School and 25 were distributed by Buntingford and Villages Food Bank.

ISABEL'S  
TEA PARTY!

Host your own virtual or garden tea party with your nearest and dearest

Call us on 01707 382500 or visit [www.isabelhospice.org.uk/teaparty](http://www.isabelhospice.org.uk/teaparty) to register for your FREE Isabel's tea party pack!

**Message from Adam our Head of Community & Events:**

"The support of our local community is invaluable to Isabel Hospice. Our income has fallen dramatically since the pandemic and we really need your help. We need you to fundraise for Isabel in any way you can whilst adhering to government guidelines around social distancing. We can support you all the way. Want to find out more? Please contact our fundraising team to see how we can work together to support our doctors and nurses."

T: 01707 382500 E: [fundraising@isabelhospice.org.uk](mailto:fundraising@isabelhospice.org.uk)

## Buntingford Local History Group's Guide to Street Names in Buntingford / Part 3 – N to Y

- Neale Drive** – Thomas Neale was a private in the 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion Bedfordshire Regiment. He died aged 26 on 9<sup>th</sup> October 1917. He is commemorated on the Tyne Cot Memorial in Belgium and Aspenden's War Memorial.
- Norfolk Road** – This one is a mystery. There seems to be no association with Norfolk and no one seems to know how it came to be called Norfolk Road.
- Norris Way** – Herbert Richard Norris was a Corporal in the 5<sup>th</sup> Battalion Yorkshire Regiment. He died aged 26 on 3<sup>rd</sup> February 1918. He is buried in Buntingford Cemetery and is commemorated on Buntingford War Memorial.
- Nut Slip** – This road takes its name from a field belonging to The Manor of Corneybury that is shown on a map dated 1744 held at Hertfordshire Archives.
- Oak End** – There were several large oak trees on this site.
- Olvega Drive** – Named after the Spanish town of Olvega that was twinned with Buntingford in 2006.
- Owles Lane** – This lane leads to Owles Hall and Owles Farm, one of the many large farm houses in and around Buntingford.
- Paddock Road** – This was originally a paddock.
- Parker Drive** – Joseph Parker was a private in the 7<sup>th</sup> Battalion Bedfordshire Regiment. He died aged 35 on 26<sup>th</sup> November 1917. He is buried in Artillery Wood Cemetery, Belgium, and commemorated on Buntingford War Memorial.
- Parkside** – Named for Corneybury Park in the grounds of Corneybury Farm which stands opposite it. Corneybury Park was once used for the recreational pursuits of the inhabitants and not for farm land.
- Peasmead** – Named after a field.
- Philips Way** – H C Philips fought during the war and is commemorated in the porch at Aspenden Church.
- Pigs Nose** – One suggestion is that the name was originally Piggys Eye, meaning a secret, secluded place, and that this was later modified to Piggys Nye and then to Pigs Nose. Alongside Pigs Nose is a path called Pigs Snout Lane.
- Pipkin Drive** – Ernest Harvey Pipkin was a private in the 9<sup>th</sup> Battalion Royal Fusilliers, City of London Regiment. He died aged 19 on 11<sup>th</sup> September 1918. He is buried in Peronne Cemetery in France and commemorated on Buntingford War Memorial.
- Plashes Drive** – Plashes means small puddle, the sound of splashing. There is also a farm in Standon called Plashes and a road in Puckeridge called Plashes. There was mention in a 1932 newspaper of Plashes House, which was next door to Miss Lushington's house, so perhaps that's how the drive in Buntingford got it's name.
- Porters Close** – The Porters farmed several large farms in and around Buntingford including Corneybury Farm. They owned 100 High Street and the land at the rear of the house, on which Porters Close was built.
- Rayment Close** – Herbert Charles Rayment was a private in the 7<sup>th</sup> Battalion Royal Fusilliers, City of London Regiment. He died aged 29 on 30<sup>th</sup> January 1917. He is buried in Varennes Military Cemetery in France and commemorated on Buntingford War Memorial.
- Reed Close** – Herbert Joseph Reed was a private in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion Bedfordshire Regiment. He died on 11<sup>th</sup> July 1916, aged 21. He is commemorated on the Thiepval Memorial in France and Buntingford War Memorial.

- Rib Way** – Named after the River Rib which flows through Buntingford. It was built on the old Adam and Eve site, originally a public house with an orchard and fields to the rear, then later a petrol filling station and allotments.
- River Green** – Next to the River Rib, this was originally a grassed area.
- Riverside** – This area of houses adjacent to the river is served by a complex of roads known collectively as Riverside.
- Rowland Hill Court** – This block next door to the Post Office is named for Rowland Hill, who was born in 1795. Hill was the originator of the penny postage system and credited with developing the postal service.
- Seymour Road** – J Seymour died during the First World War and is commemorated on Cottered's War Memorial
- Sharp Drive** – Fred Sharp was a 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant in the 10<sup>th</sup> Middlesex Regiment. He died aged 23 on 3<sup>rd</sup> August 1918. He is buried in Thelus Military Cemetery in France and commemorated on Buntingford War Memorial.
- Skipp's Meadow** – Mrs Skipp was a local school teacher who owned this land in the 1950s.
- Smith Way** – Bertie Smith was a private in the 4<sup>th</sup> Battalion Duke of Cambridge's Own, Middlesex Regiment. He died aged 25 on 2<sup>nd</sup> July 1916. He is commemorated on the Thiepval Memorial in France and on Buntingford War Memorial. Arthur Smith was a private in the 11<sup>th</sup> Battalion Queens Own, Royal West Kent Regiment. He died aged 30 on 8<sup>th</sup> February 1917 and is commemorated on the Menin Gate, Belgium, and on the Buntingford War Memorial.
- Snells Mead** – This estate took its name from a field called Snails Mead which appeared on the map of Corneybury Manor dated 1744 now held in Hertfordshire Archives. The developers asked for the name to be changed to Snells Mead.
- Spencer Close** – William Arthur Spencer was a private in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion Royal Fusiliers, City of London Regiment. He died aged 23 on 9<sup>th</sup> May 1915. He is commemorated on the Menin Gate, Belgium, and on Buntingford War Memorial.
- St Francis Close** – Named after St Francis House, built in 1878 as a Grammar School then called Hillside. It later became a home for inebriates and then a convent school, first for boys with learning difficulties and then for handicapped girls.
- St Georges Mews** – Named after The George and Dragon Inn which stood on this site. The properties that occupy the mews today would have been part of the inn.
- Station Road** – This led to Buntingford Railway Station, situated just off this road.
- Station Yard** – This is built on part of the old railway station yard.
- Stearn Way** – John Holder Stearn was a Lieutenant in the 14<sup>th</sup> Battalion Durham Light Infantry. He died aged 23 on 3<sup>rd</sup> December 1917. He is commemorated on Cambrai Memorial in France and Buntingford War Memorial. He was awarded the DSO and Croix De Guerre.
- Sunny Hill** – May have been so named simply because it sounded pleasant and is built on a hill.
- The Causeway** – The definition of a causeway is a raised way over wet ground or water. The road leads from the ford to Layston Church. The older lane was called The Causey and may have been associated with common land. It runs alongside the playground of Layston School which used to be an area of open public grassland.
- The Folly** – There used to be a kissing gate at the end of this road which led into a meadow that is now part of Monks Walk. The cottages at the beginning of The Folly were once called Flint Cottages and the road was known as Flint Row. It was the house opposite that was called The Folly, after which the road was named.

**The Old Dairy Mews** – Built on the site of Aylotts Dairy.

**The Pyghtle** – ‘Pyghtle’ is a name for a small, oddly shaped or situated piece of land which did not fit into the layout of the medieval field system.

**The Tannery** – Named for the town’s tannery that was on this site; it closed in 1925.

**The Willows** – Named after the willow trees that stand in this development.

**Tylers Close** – A ‘tyler’ is a role within a masonic lodge. He is the outer guard who stops people who are not members from entering the lodge. The former owners of the land here were involved in the freemasons, hence the reference to Tylers.

**Union Terrace** – Bridgefoot House, opposite this terrace, was the workhouse which was also known as The Union, leading to the name Union Terrace.

**Vicarage Road** – At one time the old Vicarage stood on this land but it fell into disrepair and was demolished in the 1960s, making way for the houses that now make up Vicarage Road.

**Warboys Close** – George Frederick Warboys was a private in the 1/4th Hallamshire Territorial Force Battallion, York and Lancaster Regiment. He died aged 25 on 18<sup>th</sup> April 1918. He is commemorated on the Tyne Cot Memorial in Belgium and on the Buntingford War Memorial.

**Watson House** – Charles Watson was a private in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion Bedfordshire Regiment. He died aged 28 and is buried at Lijssenthoek Military Cemetery in Belgium and commemorated on Buntingford War Memorial.

**Wheel Wright Court** – Originally there was a wheelwright on this site.

**Whitby Close** – Hugh Whitby is commemorated on the war memorial in Reed.

**White Hart Close** – Named after the White Hart Inn which stood on the High Street at what is now number 87. Part of the land this development was built on belonged to the White Hart Public House.

**Windmill Hill** – There used to be a windmill on this hill.

**Woods Way** – Named after Chris Woods who was a local councillor, his wife Eunice a former mayor.

**Wyddial Road** – The road leading to the hamlet of Wyddial.

**Yew Tree Court** – There is a yew tree in the grounds of this development.

## Buntingford Dramatic Society

In common with so many local groups and societies, our usual activities have been severely curtailed since March. We were poised to begin rehearsals for our summer production and looking forward to entertaining our loyal audiences when shutdown began. Whilst missing our regular Thursday rehearsals in our much-loved Benson Hall, we have continued to meet every week online. The joy of ‘Zoom’ meetings has allowed us to continue with script readings, story telling and our now regular and very competitive quiz nights! Future plans are still being made but it will be a while before we are back doing what we love. In the meantime we send our very best wishes to Journal readers and all our members, friends and supporters.

**Further information can be found at : [www.buntingforddrama.uk](http://www.buntingforddrama.uk)**

**Email : [admin@buntingforddrama.uk](mailto:admin@buntingforddrama.uk)**

## EAST HERTS CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

The Manor House, Buntingford

### Drop-in:

Monday 10:00am – 4:00pm

Tuesday 10:00am – 1:00pm

Wednesday 10:00am – 1:00pm

### Telephone:

03444 111 444

Monday – Friday

10:00am – 4:00pm



**citizens  
advice**

## Universal Credit

**Last month I signed up to Universal Credit for the first time, after I was made redundant. I am looking for a new job but I'm not sure if there's anything more I need to do to ensure I keep getting Universal Credit?**

When you apply for Universal Credit you'll agree a Claimant Commitment with your work coach. A Claimant Commitment is a record of the responsibilities that you have accepted to receive Universal Credit payments. Your claimant commitment will be updated each time you see your work coach.

When you agree to your Claimant Commitment you will be put into one of four work-related activity groups (sometimes called "conditionality" groups). These set out the tasks you're expected to complete in order to receive your full benefit payment. You can check which group you're in by logging into your Universal Credit account online and checking your Claimant Commitment. If you're not online, you will have been provided with a paper copy of your Claimant Commitment. This will tell you which group you're in and what tasks you'll have to do regularly to get Universal Credit. These tasks could include writing your CV, signing up for job alerts, or applying for vacancies.

In order to show how you have completed the to-do list set out in your Claimant Commitment, you should keep a record in your Universal Credit online journal, or in a paper diary if you're not online, of the tasks you've completed and how long they took.

Some claimants, mainly those who have applied for Universal Credit for the first time since the outbreak of COVID-19, may not have a Claimant Commitment yet. Those who claimed before the outbreak will have had their Claimant Commitment suspended during the outbreak and had no work-related requirements imposed.

From 1<sup>st</sup> July the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) has said it will be calling all claimants to help them to prepare for work, so people should expect to be contacted to set up the Claimant Commitment. They do not need to contact the Department for Work and Pensions in the meantime. The DWP has said that they will take a common-sense approach to work-related requirements and that those who are shielding, or have childcare responsibilities because of COVID restrictions, etc. will have their Claimant Commitment tailored to reflect their circumstances.

For further advice contact Citizens Advice East Herts:

[www.citizensadviceeastherts.org.uk](http://www.citizensadviceeastherts.org.uk)

**Tel: 03444 111 444 / 01920 459 944**

If you would like to contribute to the *Buntingford Journal*,  
please contact **Christine Noble** on **01763 273095**  
or email [Journal@buntingfordcivic.org.uk](mailto:Journal@buntingfordcivic.org.uk)

## In Memory of John Makin 1945–2020



John was not a native son of Buntingford, he moved here in 1988, escaping the rat race of London, like so many others who have made a similar move. But he fell in love with the town straightaway and the Town loved him back, making him feel right at home.

John Christopher Makin was born in Bromley on 4<sup>th</sup> January 1945. His dad, Percy, had been invalided back from the desert campaign in North Africa and his mum, Fay, was a nurse and they met in hospital. John had very happy memories of his childhood and playing in the woods in Kent. The family lived first in Coney Hall and then, a few years after his brother Keith had come along, in a new council house in Elmers End. John was a bright and cheerful boy, who had no problem passing the 11-plus to go on to Grammar School in Epsom. He had a talent for languages and was generally good at school, although he did show a bit of teenage rebellion – John knew his own mind, and had a mischievous streak that was never far beneath the surface. He loved swimming and was good enough to compete for the county. It was fortunate that he did – in later years he would save people from drowning on two totally separate occasions. He also enjoyed playing rugby and cycled everywhere, although as soon as he was old enough he ditched the bicycle and got a motorbike. And inspired by Elvis he got his first guitar and started a band with some school mates.

From school John went on to Swansea University to study German and this was where he discovered his love of Welsh singing and of folk music. He spent a lot more time involved with the folk club than studying for a degree, but he certainly learnt a lot of songs. He also learnt he wasn't tough enough to play rugby with the big boys – from here on he would remain an enthusiastic spectator, from the stands or his armchair.

After university John's first job was with Gestetner in Tottenham. Anyone of a certain age will have heard of Gestetner – every office in the world had their machines and John enjoyed communicating with people from all over the globe. But the urge to make music was still there and after a while he left his secure job to try to make it in the music business. He had a good strong voice, which he kept throughout his life, and was an accomplished acoustic guitar player. It was a great time to give it a go and for a while John was part of that buzzing late 60s London music scene. He had some successes, and it gave him lots of material for name-dropping in later years, but it didn't always pay the rent. In a total change of direction he took a job milking cows down in Dorset, but eventually he decided, as he put it, to "swim downstream" instead of against the flow, and he went back to Gestetner who welcomed him with open arms. There was another reason for going back to a proper job – he was getting married, to Sue, his first wife.

In the early 1970s, disillusioned with life in London, John and Sue moved up to Scotland. John was offered a transfer to Weir's, a paper mill owned by Gestetner, and this was the start of his career in the paper trade. Before long their son Tom was born, bringing great joy to both of them, but their own relationship wasn't working and John moved out of the family home when Tom was still a toddler. As he told it, he turned up one night at the



door of a friend from the local pub with his guitar under one arm and a duvet under the other, begging a bed for a couple of nights. That friend was Ken and John stayed not for two nights but two years, and in that time he and Ken became like brothers. But eventually the cottage they shared was condemned by the local council, Ken married his school sweetheart Maureen, and it was time for John to move on.

He needed something to happen, and it did. He was offered a job with a stationery merchants called Barnetts in Dagenham, with double the salary plus a company car. It wasn't just the money that appealed. After 10 years in Scotland he was still the 'English bloke'. As he described it, he got tired of strangers coming into his local pub

asking him if he was there on holiday. It was the right opportunity at the right time and marked the start of his career heyday. He worked with a great bunch of people, some of whom became treasured friends, and work was fun until he wound up as the boss of around 70 people. Instead of doing things himself, he was managing other people and their problems while they did things. It wasn't his cup of tea. Fortunately a new boss came into the firm – now owned by Stora, Sweden's oldest company – and he soon spotted that John was a square peg in a round hole. He gave him a new role – launching a new brand of photocopying paper nationwide. Breathing a huge sigh of relief, John threw himself into the task of selling Multicopy and established it as a premium brand. He earned the company a fortune and himself the unofficial title 'Mr Multicopy'.

When the company relocated to Waltham Cross, John started house-hunting further up the A10. As he told the story, he went into an estate agents in Royston where a young slip of a girl said: "I've got just the thing for you. It's just come in." There were only two things that John definitely wanted – a garage and a garden. "Has it got a garage?" he asked. "No", came the reply. A garden? "Not really, but go and see it. It's down the road in Buntingford. You'll love it." It was No.1 Gatehouse Mews and she was right, he did love it. He got himself a motorcycle, something he hadn't been able to have for years, and bought a boat that he kept up at St Ives. The Crown even had a folk club where he could go and belt out a folk song or two. He felt he'd come home.

John had first met Chris, who would become his second wife, back in 1982 when her best friend Mel got together with Jonathon, an old friend of his from university. Mel and Chris came up to visit John in his new house in the Spring of 1988, just after he'd moved in. They



didn't know the address, just that he was in a place called Buntingford where they'd never been before, but it wasn't a problem – just they asked in the Crown where the landlord and customers all knew where they would find him. One of the joys of small town life! In October 1992, Jonathon separately invited both John and Chris to a memorial day for a folk singer he and John had known from Swansea days, and this was the event where they finally paired off. John introduced her to motorcycling, and Chris, who lived in central London at the time, showed him a different side to the 'Big Smoke'. For six years they spent weekends together and went on motorcycle-camping trips all over Europe and up to Scotland and the Orkneys, when they took Tom with them. Then one day, en route to a rally with motorcycling friends from Germany, John had a serious accident. A car pulled out from a T-junction right in front of him, the bike slammed into it and John somersaulted high over the car and landed on the other side. Chris watched the whole thing from her own bike coming up behind and feared the worst, but given how bad it looked John got off lightly – a broken leg, bruising, concussion.

He'd had a brush with death and got away with it, but he needed looking after for a while and it was in this period that Chris realised she could give up city life after all. So it took a motorcycle accident to finally get them together. Or as John would say, the Good Lord



gave them a kick in the right direction. It wasn't long before they bought the house at 68 Hare Street Road and moved in in January 99. It was a wrench for John to leave his beloved Gatehouse Mews, but he didn't regret it. Not only did the new house have a proper garden, there were allotments over the road and he took one immediately, making new friends in the process. After a while they decided to get married. That was 14 years ago.

Just 3 weeks after moving to Hare Street Road, John's life took yet another turn when he was made redundant. The first thing he did was switch from ready-made cigarettes to rolling his own and then he embraced his new life, but without his steady hand at the helm Multicopy sank almost without trace. John became the 'Toby', or market supervisor, for Buntingford's Monday market in the days when there were plenty of stallholders who still had to pay rent. He spent a few summers working at the Henry Moore Foundation. And he worked as a gardener. Shortly before he retired, they got a dog – Toby.

Just into the New Year of 2012, John received a phone call with news that no parent should have to hear. His son Tom, who had Type 1 diabetes, had died from serious complications connected with his condition. Life was never the same again. The decline in John's own health began at around this time and eventually he was diagnosed with diabetes himself. Gradually many of the things he and Chris loved to do together became impossible for John – like trips in the campervan that had replaced the motorcycle, and even walking the dog. He got himself a mobility scooter, and some readers might remember him shooting up and down the road on it as fast as it would go. He used it to deliver the Journals up Hare Street Road, a delivery round he had done for many years.

John always had the ability to accept whatever life threw at him, and that included his final illness, diagnosed in March this year. "Inshallah" he used to say, as God wills. He was a generous and gentle man, who lived life on his own terms and in the end got his final wish – to die at home and not in hospital. He passed away peacefully on 5<sup>th</sup> July. His friends remember his wry sense of humour, his patience and honesty, his words of wisdom and his capacity to enjoy life. Rest in peace, John.

**Chris Noble**



## HARE STREET ROAD GARDENERS' ASSOCIATION

### Thinking of taking on an allotment? A new boy's perspective

One of the activities that has really helped me through this stressful last few months has been the ability to visit my allotment. I find it incredibly peaceful and rewarding. We still take all the necessary Covid precautions, including social distancing and hand hygiene, but actually I think most allotmenters including myself prefer to be solitary and simply get on with growing produce.

Our site is on the edge of the Taylor Wimpey estate off Hare Street Road, so we are surrounded by lovely countryside. There is an abundance of wildlife and frequent surprises, such as the toad that jumped out of my strawberry bed the other day.

We moved to Buntingford four years ago and noted the allotment site. My wife suggested taking on an allotment and I duly applied. I have enjoyed gardening and have a greenhouse but had never considered an allotment. I was offered a plot on what was still a farmer's field. I remember being quite intimidated at first as it seemed a huge task. However, over time it has slowly developed into a working allotment.

Our Association is a very friendly one and there are always experienced plot-holders on hand ready to offer advice. That is what really got me going and 2017 was surprisingly successful. Three seasons on I tend to grow what I am confident with and of course you need to like eating it.

Our Association has a social side (active up until lockdown) which has included barbecues, visits to local nurseries and competitions for children – the 2020 one is who can grow the biggest pumpkin? If you exercise along the footpath beside our allotments I am confident you will spot the probable winner. I just want to know what the plot-holder is feeding them! We have also just established a closed facebook page and that is proving excellent for ongoing advice.

To conclude, I thoroughly commend the idea of having an allotment. Why not give it a go? You just need time to visit your plot regularly to keep weeds etc. under control. If you are new to allotmenting it is suggested that you do not need to cultivate the whole plot straightaway but can develop it steadily over time. If you are interested in joining our Association contact our Chairman, Roy Ellard, at:

**[hsgassociation@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:hsgassociation@yahoo.co.uk)**

One of my early allotment rewards in 2016 was having, aged 64, my first shed!

**Martin Tuck**  
Committee member



# The Magpie

There is a supposedly an old Chinese curse that goes “May you live in interesting times”. Unfortunately, over the last few months we have all had to live in “interesting times” that we would have rather avoided. Like many others I have spent a lot of time in the garden, literally watching the plants grow, and observing nature. With the lack of human activity this spring animal life has thrived.

I have watched birds of all shapes and sizes nesting in or within a few yards of my garden. One species that seems to have grown in huge numbers this year is the Eurasian Magpie (*Pica pica*). Although coloured black and white, in certain lights it has an iridescent blue sheen to its wing feathers. The bird does seem to gather in small groups or ‘gangs’ and has an unmistakable noisy, rattling, staccato alarm call. It is an aggressive opportunist omnivore eating fruit, insects, animal road kill, leftover food scraps, and the eggs and chicks of smaller birds.



There are so many old wives’ tales and superstitions surrounding this remarkable and very noisy bird, and some people believe them to this day. I once knew a very senior and highly intelligent executive whom I discovered was very superstitious of magpies. If he was out and saw just one magpie he then had to drive round until he could see at least one other. The old rhyme that goes with this superstition is something like this:

*“One for sorrow, Two for joy, Three for a girl, Four for a boy, Five for silver,  
Six for gold, Seven for a secret never to be told, Eight for a wish, Nine for a kiss,  
Ten a surprise you should not miss, Eleven for health, Twelve for wealth,  
Thirteen beware it’s the devil himself.”*

Over time, the notion that magpies were bad birds morphed into the idea that they bring bad luck. However, according to the old rhyme, it is only seeing a lone magpie that is supposed to bring bad luck. An old rural tale says that if you see a lone bird, to ward off bad luck you should raise your hat and say “Good morning Mr or Mrs Magpie, how are your children?” The bird is supposed to collect shiny objects like jewellery to add to its nest, although there is no reliable evidence to support this. It’s a very inquisitive bird and will pick up shiny things to examine them, but drop them again quite quickly.

So, back to my garden and my own observations. A pair of crows nested in the large beech tree opposite my back garden. Much to Katie’s disgust, the adults and then the growing young came down to my pond every evening to drink and if the doors were open she would chase them off. One morning there was a dreadful commotion as a gang of magpies landed in the beech tree and tried to drive off the crows. More crows came in support of the crow family and the noise was really tremendous, enough to bring out my neighbours to see what was going on. To my surprise, eventually the magpies did drive off the crows. Then a magpie went to drink from my pond and Katie tried to chase it away too, but the magpie just hopped into a tree, only two feet above Katie’s head, and let out its alarm call. Several more came and after a few minutes Katie gave up, deciding that discretion was the better part of valour as, deafened by the noise, she retreated into the house. So that’s how aggressive magpies can be! But I don’t see them in the garden now, so the moral victory goes to Katie, I think.

**Brian Lemay**

# Buntingford



**Learn, Laugh, Live**

for group quizzes, committee meetings and indeed the monthly meetings – see the note from our Chairman below.

We have had a Lockdown Photo Competition, for which members emailed in their photos. Roy Ellard, Group Leader for the Digital Photographic Group, chose as the winner Linda Marsh for her photograph “Locks in Lockdown” taken on a trip to Bakewell in the rain. The locks were on the bridge to the car park. The committee’s chosen winner was Maureen Brighten for her picture of a lone tree which she took on a walk going towards Owles Hall. Roy and the committee both highly commended Marion Ling for her photograph of boats out of the water, awaiting the return of people at Stanborough Lakes, Roy placing it third and the committee joint second. Congratulations to Linda, Maureen and Marion.

We would like to welcome all newcomers who have recently moved to Buntingford. The Third Age Trust is a self-help movement for people not in full time occupation. Normally we meet once a month, on the second Monday, at the Seth Ward Community Centre – doors open 1.30pm. We have over 30 interest groups – our subs are just £10 a year with a small charge to cover the cost of belonging to an interest group.

**Jean Cook**

## **From our Chairman Jim Farquhar:**

“So far we have had 3 monthly meetings by Zoom and have more planned. It is certainly not the same as meeting in the Seth Ward Community Centre – you can’t really have a good chat with your friends when there are lots of other people on the call, and you have to provide your own cup of tea (!) – but the talks have been very interesting and you do get a chance to see your friends in the call before or after the meeting and occasionally exchange a quick hello. It also means that we are no longer restricted to speakers within easy travelling distance – our last speaker was in Staffordshire and gave us an excellent talk about schools in the times of our youth. That brought the memories flooding back!.

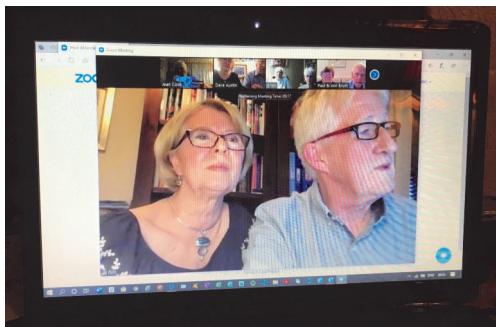
“We are monitoring the guidance from the government and from the Third Age Trust (our parent organisation) to see when it is sensible to consider restarting more of the interest groups but clearly activities will be limited for some time to come.”

Please visit our website for information on our groups:

[www.u3asites.org.uk/buntingford](http://www.u3asites.org.uk/buntingford)

2020 will forever be known as the year of Covid19 the virus that affected everyone – some more than others.

From the very beginning of Lockdown on the 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2020 our Interest Groups ceased to function. Sadly our groups are still not up and running and this has impacted on local halls and coaches. Many of our members have kept in touch by telephone, FaceTime, WhatsApp and Zoom. Zoom, unknown by many before the pandemic, has been used



Ron and Maureen Brighten posing the questions in a U3A Zoom Quiz.

# Owlets Preschool Class at Anstey First School



From 2 years  
(no need to  
be out of  
nappies)



Preschool  
places  
available  
from  
September  
2020



# COME AND PLAY

**Monday – Thursday, 09.00–13.15.**

*Email [admin@anstey.herts.sch.uk](mailto:admin@anstey.herts.sch.uk) for prices and further details.*

*15 hours funding available for eligible children.*

**Owlets Preschool Class.  
Anstey First School. SG9 0BY**

**01763 848346  
[admin@anstey.herts.sch.uk](mailto:admin@anstey.herts.sch.uk)**



# Edwinstree Middle School



A Voluntary Controlled Church of England School

*As a Christian school, we recognise the unique and wonderful in everyone.  
As a community, we support one another to flourish and live life in all its fullness.*

**Thank you** to the Buntingford Journal for giving us the opportunity to thank our community for their care and support, during what I can only describe as the most difficult period of time I have had to face in my 13 years of Headship.

At the outset of the Coronavirus pandemic, we were eager to support our amazing Key Worker families, to help them keep working and provide a safe and caring environment for their children to continue with their education. Our students were given the message that learning is central to their life and that despite what was happening around us, we would commit to providing learning that was engaging and meaningful.

**So thank you to ...**

**Our students** ... who took on board the message that their learning was important and by continuing to work hard they were investing in themselves and their future. We are so impressed by their commitment.

**Our parents** ... for their resilience and patience in taking on the role of the teacher at home, for persevering with the work we provided, for asking questions when they needed support from the teachers, and for recognising the pitfalls (but bearing with us) of an online system that was designed for homework now being used to create a virtual school. We know and understand that the best learning always occurs when a child, parent and school are working together and our parents were amazing!

**Our staff** ... who swiftly took part in significant training for online learning, who genuinely spent hours preparing online learning for children, as well as providing hard copy for those without computer access, while supporting and teaching the growing number of students who attended school from March right through to the Summer holidays. This includes our amazing Caretaking Team and the Site Manager who worked so hard to help create a school that was prepared for social distancing. The team continued to work hard throughout the summer with the new boiler installation, ICT cabling and preparation for a full return to school whilst continuing to follow the Government's social distancing guidelines

**Our Governing Body** ... many of whom are Key Workers, including our Chair and Vice Chair, who found the time to master the online Zoom or Teams meetings, in order to provide the school with ongoing support.

**So many in the community** ... who helped us to support our most vulnerable families, particularly those on zero hours contracts who swiftly fell into difficulty when their contracts ended and they were without furlough. Buntingford Town Council, the Parish Food Bank, Pearce's Farm Shop in Puckeridge, Tesco in Royston, our local Co-operative in town, and Mill End Plants, all played a part in supporting our families to make it through some difficult times and continue to offer support into the future. We also had a number of generous parents offer the money that they had paid out for cancelled school trips. This money will go towards a future fund for those families who have already lost their job or are at risk, and at the moment this fund will support the purchase of new uniform and equipment.

**The Local Authority** ... for their careful, considered and continuous support and advice on how to interpret and manage Government advice.

**The Church ...** for its ability to help us see a way through the difficult times and remind us of the importance of supporting each other. The Church and the Local Authority will play a significant role in the future, by helping support bereaved families and students.

**The Rib Valley Heads ...** who quietly and calmly communicated throughout the pandemic to support each other during the minefield of decision-making and expectations that constantly changed and continue to do so. I feel really lucky to work with such a supportive and wise group of individuals, who helped support the school community.

As we prepare for September, we are excited to welcome our new Year 5 students to Edwinstree for the two days induction at the start of the Autumn term. We know that they will find Edwinstree a school with a big heart that will help them settle sensitively into their new community and the strange world of a Covid-19 protected school. We are particularly looking forward to seeing our Year 8 students, who have been unable to attend school since March, and welcoming back our new Year 6 and Year 7.

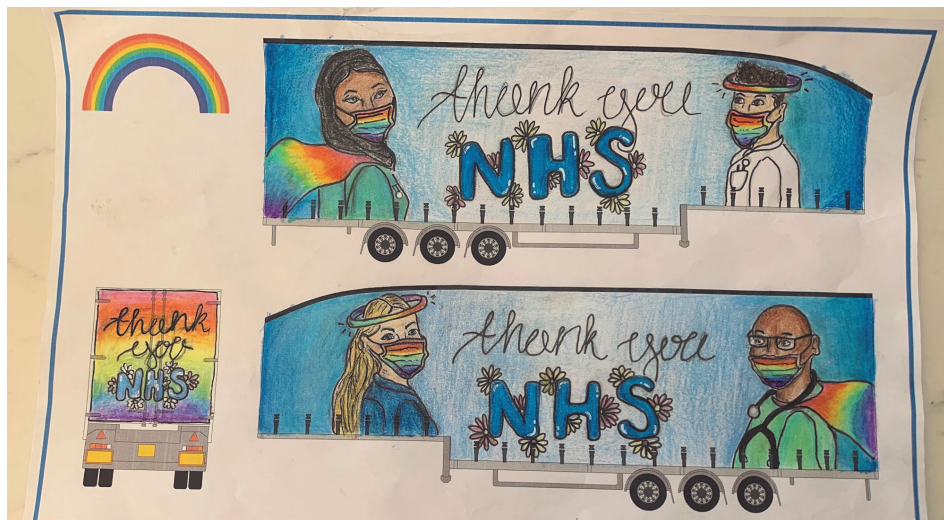
Parents and staff know that we will be communicating with them throughout the holidays and updating them on any changes we may need to make to our new timetable plans as Covid continues. We are keen to make sure that all students are in school and, fingers crossed, we will be ready to welcome everyone back to Edwinstree. The time apart has reminded all our staff why they love their roles and how much they have missed their interaction with the lovely children of Buntingford and surrounding villages.

**Jo Gant, Headteacher**

# Freman COLLEGE

Royston based Freman College student Rose Norris has been productive during lockdown. Rose entered an art competition looking for young artists to express the nation's gratitude to health and care workers on the frontline by creating a thank you / stay at home livery design

for a trailer. Rose was judged to be the overall competition winner and her design, pictured below, will now be displayed on a 45ft double-decker trailer. Rose also received £100 worth of art supplies and a hamper. What a talented girl.





## Essex & Herts Air Ambulance

Your local life-saving charity

## Air Ambulance selects winning designs for airbase sculptures

Essex & Herts Air Ambulance (EHAAT) has chosen the designs for two sculptures which will have pride of place outside the charity's airbases at North Weald and Earls Colne. Twenty-seven design students from Harlow College submitted their designs which were whittled down by a panel of judges to a final five. The winning designs, by students Leah Jelf and Kiera Harkett, were then selected from the final five by EHAAT crew, staff and volunteers. Kiera's design will be placed outside the Earls Colne airbase later this year, while Leah's will be installed at the charity's brand-new North Weald airbase when it opens next year.

One of the judges was Claire Smith, mother of an airlifted patient and a trustee of the charity, who said: "It has been a pleasure to be involved with this project, and I have been immensely impressed with the creativity, flare and dedication shown by the students ... the chosen designs will be wonderful additions to our air bases ... and I have no doubt that they will provide inspiration to all in the EHAAT community. Well done to the winners, and all the participants – they should feel justifiably proud of their efforts."

Jane Gurney, CEO of EHAAT, said: "Both Leah and Kiera should be really proud of what they have achieved. Before the lockdown it was wonderful to meet the students .... Everyone was so enthusiastic and inspirational and we were blown away by their hard work and creativity. I am really looking forward to seeing these very special sculptures being unveiled in the future."

For the latest news about EHAAT's new airbase at North Weald and to see time-lapse footage of the build in progress visit [ehaat.org/north-weald-airbase/](http://ehaat.org/north-weald-airbase/). Supporters can be part of the build through the charity's Buy-a-Brick campaign.



Leah Jelf discussing her design, and the students from Harlow College with members of the judging panel (below).



## BUNTINGFORD W.I.

What a strange Summer this has been! When Buntingford W.I. members got together at our meeting in March we did not think for one minute that it would be our last gathering for several months and that most of us would be 'confined to barracks' for several weeks. Our President, Veronica, and Secretary, Pat, both made sure that they kept in touch with us, mainly by email, and regularly forwarded copies of the Hertfordshire Federation newsletter. We were hoping to be able to meet up at our annual Garden Party, but having taken advice it was decided that this unfortunately had to be cancelled.

We are making plans for when we will all be able to meet again and are busy working on a new W.I. Christmas display for the Library, even if it can only be displayed in the window. We are also working on making a very special wreath to be placed on the War Memorial; this will be something different from the usual red poppy wreath, but you'll have to wait until November to see it.

We were so very sorry during the lockdown months to hear the sad news that Joyce Jackson had passed away. Joyce was a much-valued member of Buntingford W.I. for many years and is greatly missed by us all. She trained as a W.I. Advisor and gave us much help, encouragement and inspiration over the years. We send our heartfelt sympathy to her husband, Bob, and her family.

I would normally at this point tell you what is planned for our September meeting but this has had to be cancelled. We are still keeping our fingers crossed that we will be able to go ahead with our own Carol Service in December, which was such a success last year, and also a New Year Lunch for members.

Fingers crossed that normal service will be resumed in the not too distant future. If in the meantime you would like further information about Buntingford W.I. please feel free to contact our Secretary, Pat Webb, on 01763 271305.

**Val Hume**

## Ware & District Photographic Society

The Ware & District Photographic Society has had to suspend its regular meetings at Thundridge Village Hall due to the Covid19 virus. In the meantime the Society has been holding Zoom presentations for its members and it has been decided to continue with these evenings from September to December this year. The Annual Exhibition in November has been cancelled but it is hoped to hold one in the Spring and a virtual PDI exhibition is also being investigated. New members are very welcome, from beginners to experienced photographers. If anyone is interested in joining the Society, please email the secretary at [wareps.org.uk](mailto:wareps.org.uk) for further information or visit the Society's website: [www.wareps.org.uk](http://www.wareps.org.uk).

### Standon Hand Embroidery Group restarting in September

Following discussions with our Tutor, Julie Walsby, the monthly Standon Embroidery Group will be recommencing on **Tuesday 8th September** from 2–4pm in the Main Hall at Standon Village Hall. New members are always welcome. If anyone is interested in joining this group of embroidery enthusiasts, please telephone Barbara Norris on **01920 822104** for further information.

# **Water, Water Everywhere and not a drop ...**

## **Enough of Covid? Well here's something we can do something about**

We as individuals, and especially us English (I trust that's not upset any snowflakes), are obsessed with the weather and now we have around the clock and around the globe weather reports we are in our element(s). In days of yore we had the old folk adages like "red sky at night" etc, but now we have fair damsels and the occasional token (non-gender specific) male popping up at every juncture to acclaim the next disaster heading our way and the weather is even given a name! There are minute by minute reports of coming doom due to global warming and it's all down to us.

I admit that in the last 200 years we have literally stoked the fires, but in the grand scale of this planet there have been greater lurches of climate, the ice ages for example. What happened there? Did somebody leave the fridge door open?

I have always thought and argued over the past 50 years or so that climate is another challenge we have to face and it is going to take ingenuity and common sense to make use of what we have, rather than trying to stop the inevitability of Earth's progress. Indeed it should be acknowledged that the answer to our current dilemma is staring us in the face, but due to the determination of a few we cannot sort it out.

The answer is, of course, use the biggest component in the day to day running of this planet for our own ends and given the right impetus we could sort most of civilisation's ills in one concerted effort. I speak, of course, of water! The surface of the planet is covered in the stuff and we humans, and no doubt many other creatures, are made up of at least 50% water. Its energy and regularity is unquenchable (excuse the pun). It always surprises me that we have not used it more, although we did have a go in the 1800s with canal systems and then hydro-electric systems, but greed got the better of us and we thought it preferable to dig like troglodytes to extract coal for power as we had lots of desperate people looking for any work available.

Then, of course, way back when, some middle-eastern chap, puffing on his hubble-bubble pipe, thought: "I wonder what we could do with that viscous black stuff coming up out of the sand?" Well the Chinese allegedly used it first c. 2000 BC, and even that claim is challenged by the Egyptians at 4000 years BC. But for millennia they did little with it except using it light their lamps. It took the world until the 19<sup>th</sup> century to start to utilise this black gold to its full potential. Here we go, exploitation and colonisation to the front of the debating circle. By the way, do you think any of us locals are overdue for reparations for being enslaved by the Romans / Vikings / Normans, or is there a statute of limitations on the subject?

There was little or no recognition of the potential efficacious uses of H<sub>2</sub>O. No, by now the world was in the grip of black gold and nobody thought that pollution-free water (which would be mostly free to everybody) if used properly could be the answer to all our ills. It could be an unending source of virtually free power for ever.

**The Buntingford Journal is delivered FREE to members of the  
Buntingford Civic Society, or it can be purchased from:  
THE CO-OP • DELISSIMO • LOCKS, STOCK & MORE • MARK DOEL  
McCOLL'S (The Post Office) • PIGGOTTS**

Imagine pollution-free tidal power guaranteed four times a day, no unsightly great big windmills stuck in our seas made from materials that will take years to rot down when they break, and solar panels planted on land that we need to grow food. Instead, 'green' combustion engines running on Hydrogen instead of these ridiculous electric-powered automobiles which will need more electricity than our power stations can ever produce. Unless we go for Chinese nuclear power.

We, and indeed other countries, could use not only wave power, but combined with desalination plants (it's been around for thousands of years, folks) we could irrigate the deserts and dry regions using our canal systems and rivers as a national grid. Imagine if Australia had set about irrigating the interior of their country and how that would have helped during their recent disasters. We could harness our waterways to generate power – we know it works because it was happening 100 years ago.

So why do we persist in heading directly into world disasters when we have the answers? Could it be anything to do with power – and I don't mean the electric kind? As I write I see a major protagonist in this lobby is currently having a meltdown with their dividends as (blaming Covid) our oil needs drop.

We have also overlooked the power that controls much of the water on Earth: the Moon. It is not for nothing that we use the non-PC term 'lunatic' for people who are allegedly affected by the Moon. I know we have to use other terms to explain away why people act as they do, like driving like maniacs around our town so we call them loonies! But we are loonies for not harnessing this wonderful asset of water. Doing away with livestock and going vegan won't fix it, and neither will designing new high speed trains made by the Chinese to get us faster to Birmingham (who wants to get to Birmingham faster anyway?).

The Greens ought to concentrate more on these water-driven (literally) ideas and spend less time munching on their vegan, garlic encrusted sarnies. Come on you latter-day hippies, stop stressing about the rising tides, you never did use it much anyway (Phew! Smelly), and put the ideas into practice and save the planet.

Let's separate the water into its two components, Hydrogen and Oxygen. We could use the existing nuclear stations to get the splitting process started so we don't waste all the effort used in getting an electric car industry going. Meanwhile, use all our combined brain power to miniaturise kit to use in combustion engines so they can run on the hydrogen component, rather than the preferred present electricity option, as we know that even if we had enough charging capacity it would take too long to top up all the cars and trucks.

We could help things along if we use computers to work for us as they were designed to and reduce air miles, or any other miles, by acknowledging that, in reality, face-to-face conferencing is just a jolly. Also, if the Earth is heating up, why do we all want to sit in some foreign land round a swimming pool or on a cruise ship that gobbles up energy and makes you sick as an extra? England is the best place to be. And as for that HS2? We should use a monorail alongside the existing rail tracks, whilst existing rail stock could be given high-speed wifi just in case you don't get to Birmingham 20 minutes earlier. What we want is lateral thinking and a good investment might be in hydrogen cell development.

Excuse me whilst I put the milk bottles out.

**Vyse**

If you would like to **advertise** in the *Buntingford Journal*, please contact **Keith Edwards** on **01763 272032** or email **Advertising@buntingfordcivic.org.uk**



Just before the lockdown in March, the Choir Committee took the decision to suspend choir meetings. We will not consider resuming until it is safe for us to sing together. Reading through Government guidelines, it looks like this is going to be a long time away.

So we had a look at what technology was available to us and went for an online Zoom choir practice. It has been a fantastic success with up to 30 members joining in. Never underestimate the computer skills of our many 'silver surfers'! Unfortunately, due to the delays with different broadband speeds, we cannot sing together as a choir, so it is singing alone to the backing tracks. We can see each other and chat between songs. To keep some variety to the evenings we have included theme nights – Billy Joel, colours and musicals were very popular, plus a not-too-taxing weekly quiz. Many thanks to our fantastic Musical Directors and Committee for keeping the choir together.

For more information go to our website: [www.buntingfordchoir.co.uk](http://www.buntingfordchoir.co.uk)  
Or email: [info@buntingfordchoir.co.uk](mailto:info@buntingfordchoir.co.uk)

## Barkway Park Golf Club

The recent spell of warm dry weather has encouraged local golfers to take to the links and enjoy some sociable exercise. With many other sporting activities restricted, the course has been very busy. The club itself has been catching up on the competitions which were not played during the lockdown. The **Captain's Day Open**, with 56 entries, was won by Ron Seenandan with 41 points, Teresa Dyson won the ladies event and former member Steve Kane topped the visitor's leaderboard. The seniors' section (The Barkers) are currently playing two competitions a week. The **Willow Cup** (a Texas Scramble), played in support of Bob Wilson's Charity which organises special days for children with short life expectancy, was won by Paul Milne-Smith, Ashley Smith and David Brett with a net score of 65.3, but more important was the money raised.

The club continues to accept new members of all ages and abilities.

**Tel: 01763 848215**

## Royston and District Ramblers Group

### WALKS PROGRAMME STARTING SOON!

Royston Ramblers will be offering led walks again from September, but with the risks of Covid-19 still very much with us, they are changing their booking system and walking practices to minimise potential spread of the virus and ensure everyone's safety. Numbers on walks will be limited and it is no longer possible just to turn up and join a walk – booking is essential. For more information on the new rules and to book a place on a walk, go to their website at:

[www.ramblers.org.uk/royston](http://www.ramblers.org.uk/royston)