

COOMBE BISSETT AND HOMINGTON

EXPRESS

Issue No 254 December 2020/January 2021



Winner of Oak Class and Overall Winner of the Coombe Bissett Primary School

Christmas Card competition 2020 - Edward Sartin

VILLAGE DIARY

Due to Government guidance few events are planned for December and January. Please check with the organisers of the group or event or visit the village / clubs website when the restrictions for life following this lockdown are announced. Hopefully the following will be able to go ahead.



Bats of Coombe Bissett Down, **Tuesday 8th December 7pm via ZOOM**
Fox & Goose Christmas Raffle and Meat Draw, **Friday 18th December from 8pm.**
Covid-19 Carols, Donkey Field Coombe Bissett, **Sunday 20th December at 6pm**

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Welcome to this edition of the Express. Another day another lockdown! Hopefully there is light at the end of tunnel as several vaccines in development seem to show promise for future use. Fingers crossed. Missing for a few months have been updates from the School but they have been busy with other priorities. A different approach is taken in this edition see pages 17 and 18. Following his interview in the last Express, Ron Shorland has taken pen to paper and written about some of the memories from his life the first part can be found on pages 15 and 16 and a poignant Christmas Story comes to us from Judy Artiss.

As usual the Christmas cover comes to us from the winner of the long standing annual Christmas drawing competition amongst the pupils at Coombe Bissett Primary School. They were judged this year by Aileen Webb, who lives in Homington. Full details can be found on pages 13 and 14.

Sadly, Chris Burton died recently, she was 97. Chris moved to Coombe Bissett with her husband in 1977 and took an active part in village life. Our thoughts are with her daughters, Lesley and Julie. She will be remembered fondly by all who knew her. A Tribute to Chris can be found on pages 10 and 11.

We welcome and hope the following new neighbours have settled into their new homes and will enjoy living in Coombe Bissett:

- Alice Ulrich and Razvan-Dragos Pop who have moved here from Poole in Dorset to live at Rowdens, they say they love Coombe Bissett, which is so nice to hear.

It was good news to see Coombe Bissett come first and win the Best Small Village category, in the Wiltshire Village of the Year Awards. Sadly no big prize just the recognition of what a great place it is to live and some publicity in the local papers.

Knowing what Christmas will be like and planning for it is difficult for all of us this year as we do not know what the next few weeks will bring in terms of lifting restrictions. On behalf of the Express committee and all its helpers, I wish you all a peaceful and joyful Christmas however you spend it and let us hope things do improve in 2021.

Many thanks to all our contributors over the last year and we look forward to receiving future articles from you in the future.

Submissions in **MS word** and advert requests should be sent to the email address below.

Latest submission date for next issue 5pm 20th January 2021
Sue Dyer email: cbandhexpress@outlook.com Phone: 01722718514

Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal 2020

This year due to Covid restrictions we were not allowed to have any house to house collecting. The sudden 2nd Lockdown meant that the boxes in the Shop, Pub and School had to be removed at very short notice and banked at the start of the week before Remembrance Sunday. Despite this, our two villages raised £728.76 in total. The collection from the Service at the War Memorial amounted to £449. 80 and the balance from the boxes in The Fox and Goose, Coombe Bissett Stores and the School. When Gift Aid has been added the total sent to the RBL amounts to £856. 21. Sadly this is about one third of what we usually raise for the Royal British Legion. However under the circumstances a great amount for which many thanks. Let's hope we are back to normal in all respects for 2021!

Angela van der Horst



Chalke Valley Benefice



Parish of Coombe Bissett with Homington

Team Rector

Revd Catherine Blundell – 780134

Team Vicar

The Revd Canon Jenny Taylor – 503081

Churchwarden

Mollie Lampard - 718517

Lay Pastoral Assistant

Ruth Morgan



As I write this Christmas is four weeks away and we are in a complete state of unknowing. Will families be able to come together? Will we be able to worship together in church? Will we be able to sing carols? We simply do not know although I am hopeful that Church services will restart in time to celebrate Christmas together. It will be different, it may well seem odd but the meaning, the reason and the underlying joy that Christmas brings cannot be submerged under the swamp of restrictions. The deep truth that God gave unconditional love to his world in that tiny baby is a truth that has traversed centuries and continents to reach us in this 21st century in these villages in Wiltshire.

It is unbearably sad that there are thousands who have died since last Christmas and our hearts go out to their families and their friends and our prayer must be for them all, we think especially this month of Lesley and Julie as they mourn their dear Mother and our dear friend, Chris Burton. Our prayer that something of the truth of Christmas will bring them comfort and hope, for as we read in the Gospel of John (3:16) *God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life.*

The churches and congregations of Coombe Bissett with Homington wish all of you a blessed and peaceful Christmas that will bring hope to us all.

Revd Canon Jenny Taylor

Anna Marie- a Christmas Story

Judy Artiss

25 years ago , the BBC held a competition to find a true story to feature in a special Christmas Day 'Songs of Praise' commemorating the 50th anniversary of the first Christmas of Peace after the Second World War.

Now my dad Jack loved to tell a storyespecially if it took him on a trip down memory lane, so he was thrilled when his entry was chosen and a production team arrived at his home to film him recounting his tale.

We are now 75 years on from that first Christmas and once again facing another Festive period in uncertain and difficult times, so I thought you might like to hear my father's words.....

"I was 21 years old and a radio operator serving with the Reconnaissance Regiment of the 49th (West Riding) Infantry division when WW2 ended in Europe and we were sent, as part of the Army of Occupation to Neheim-Husten, a small town in Germany's Ruhr valley.

Many large houses had been commandeered as billets and my troop was allocated a very fine 3 storey house with beautiful accommodation. Unsurprisingly, there was a strict 'no fraternization' policy in force and it was blatantly obvious to all that the German's hated their conquerors. If any off-duty British soldier went out for a walk, he had to be accompanied by at least one other soldier and each had to take his personal rifle or revolver with him for protection. However, despite these circumstances we did try to be kind and friendly towards the local children.

The children used to stand outside our mess hall and would often receive titbits of food. Some of us made real friends with the children and my favourite was a flaxen haired, blue eyed little girl with a beautiful smile who must have been about 12 years old. She was called Anna Marie. I never met her mother but I knew her father had not returned from the war.

Christmas Day 1945 dawned and after eating my Christmas dinner I was relaxing in the sitting room when one of my friends popped his head round the door to announce I had a visitor. It was Anna Marie who, with a shy smile, thrust a crumpled brown paper bag into my hands and, in a halting mixture of German and pidgin English said "that's for Noel". Inside were a few broken biscuits made from some ersatz ingredients. Not much by today's standards but a very precious gift at a time of such shortage and hardship. I'm humbled to say that I hadn't thought to give her anything ... although subsequently I did find some chocolate for her.

I don't know what happened to her and her family or if her father was ever found, but I do know that with those few meagre crumbs, that little girl built a bridge of hope and reconciliation between her nation and mine and managed to show that love really could conquer hate.

I never forgot her."



Services in Chalke Valley Benefice - December 2020

BCP = Book of Common Prayer (Traditional Language), CW = Common Worship (Contemporary Language)



Pattern of services for the re-opening of our churches for public worship. Please note that if the Covid 19 situation changes, these service details might also change. Please check your church noticeboard and weekly e-bulletin

| | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|--|
| 6 December 2nd Sunday of Advent | 9.30am 9.30am 11.00am 11.00am 11.00am | Parish Communion (CW) Parish Communion (CW) Family Communion (CW) Family Communion (CW) Morning Service | Broad Chalke Britford Ebbesbourne Wake Coombe Bissett Odstock | Catherine Blundell Jenny Taylor Catherine Blundell Jenny Taylor Anna-Claar T-Rosingh |
| 13 December 3rd Sunday of Advent | 9.30am 9.30am 11.00am 11.00am 11.00am 3.00pm | Family Communion (CW) Parish Communion (CW) Morning Prayer (BCP) Family Communion (CW) All Age Service Service for Advent Season | Nunton Bowerchalke Charlton All Saints Coombe Bissett Alvediston Fifield Bavant | Anna-Claar T-Rosingh Roger Leake Anna-Claar T-Rosingh Jenny Taylor Biddy Trahair Biddy Trahair |
| 20 December 4th Sunday of Advent | 8.00am 9.30am 9.30am 11.00am 11.00am 11.00am 3.00pm | Holy Communion (BCP) Parish Communion (CW) Parish Communion (CW) Parish Communion (CW) Morning Prayer (BCP) Parish Communion (CW) Crib Service | Bowerchalke Odstock Bishopstone Berwick St John Ebbesbourne Wake Homington Nunton | Roger Leake Anna-Claar T-Rosingh Jenny Taylor Catherine Blundell Biddy Trahair Jenny Taylor Anna-Claar T-Rosingh |
| 23 December | 6.00pm | Nativity Procession and Carols by Firelight | Alvediston | Catherine Blundell |
| 24 December CHRISTMAS EVE | 5.00pm 6.30pm 7.30pm | Communion round the Crib Crib Service Family Communion | Bishopstone Homington Nunton | Jenny Taylor Jenny Taylor Anna-Claar T-Rosingh |
| 25 December CHRISTMAS DAY | 9.30am 9.30am 9.30am 9.30am 11.00am 11.00am 11.00am 11.00am | Family Communion (CW) Family Communion (CW) Parish Communion (CW) Parish Communion (CW) Parish Communion (CW) Parish Communion (CW) Family Communion (CW) Family Communion (CW) | Bowerchalke Broad Chalke Britford Odstock Charlton All Saints Berwick St John Coombe Bissett Ebbesbourne Wake | Roger Leake Catherine Blundell Jenny Taylor Anna-Claar T-Rosingh Anna-Claar T-Rosingh Roger Leake Jenny Taylor Catherine Blundell |
|  27 December 1st Sunday of Christmas | 10.00am | Short Benefice Communion (CW) | Bishopstone | Catherine Blundell |
| 3 January 2021 THE EPIPHANY | 9.30am 9.30am 11.00am 11.00am 11.00am | Parish Communion (CW) Parish Communion (CW) Family Communion (CW) Family Communion (CW) Morning Service | Broad Chalke Britford Ebbesbourne Wake Coombe Bissett Odstock | Roger Leake Jenny Taylor Roger Leake Jenny Taylor Anna-Claar T-Rosingh |

Ministry Team:

Team Rector ~ The Revd Catherine Blundell: 01722 780134

Team Vicars ~ The Revd Canon Jenny Taylor: 01722 503081, The Revd Dr Anna-Claar Thomasson-Rosingh: 01722 238267

Curate ~ The Revd Roger Leake: 07947149456 Licensed Lay Minister ~ Mr David Blundell: 01722 780134

Team Administrator ~ Mrs Emily Broomhead: 07890 262376

URC Ministers ~ The Revds Ana & Tod Gobledeale 01722 330980, The Revd Jackie Lowe: 01722 780008

Assisting Ministers:

The Revd Canon Ann Philp: 01722 555178, The Revd Kate Rosslyn Smith: 01722 780011

Lay Worship Leaders:

Yvonne & Kevin Follett: 01747 828785, Caroline Lamb: 01722 780789, Sally Leaver: 01722 780447,
Naomi Martin: 07713031774, Don Morgan: 01722 718557, Richard Morgan: 01722 338868, Adrian Taylor: 01722 325862, Gill Riley: 01722 780538,
Janet Roe: 01725 519242, Biddy Trahair: 01722 780666, Rhoderick Voremberg: 07785 304142, James Wardroper: 01722 718152



Services in Chalke Valley Benefice - January 2021

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| | | | | |
|---|--|---|--|--|
| 3 January THE EPIPHANY | 9.30am 9.30am 11.00am 11.00am 11.00am | Parish Communion (CW) Parish Communion (CW) Family Communion (CW) Family Communion (CW) Morning Service | Broad Chalke Britford Ebbesbourne Wake Coombe Bissett Odstock | Roger Leake Jenny Taylor Roger Leake Jenny Taylor Anna-Claar T-Rosingh |
| 10 January BAPTISM OF CHRIST | 9.30am 9.30am 11.00am 11.00am 11.00am 3.00pm | Family Communion (CW) Parish Communion (CW) Morning Prayer (BCP) Family Communion (CW) All Age Service Evening Prayer (BCP) | Nunton Bowerchalke Charlton All Saints Coombe Bissett Alvediston Fifield Bavant | Anna-Claar T-Rosingh Catherine Blundell Anna-Claar T-Rosingh Jenny Taylor Biddy Trahair Biddy Trahair |
| 17 January 2nd Sunday of Epiphany | 9.30am 9.30am 11.00am 11.00am 11.00am | Parish Communion (CW) Parish Communion (CW) Parish Communion (CW) Morning Prayer (BCP) Parish Communion (CW) | Odstock Bishopstone Berwick St John Ebbesbourne Wake Homington | Anna-Claar T-Rosingh Jenny Taylor Catherine Blundell Roger Leake Jenny Taylor |
| 24 January 3rd Sunday of Epiphany | 9.00am 9.30am 9.30am 11.00am 11.00am 11.00am 11.00am 6.00pm | Holy Communion (BCP) Parish Communion (CW) Family Communion (CW) Parish Communion (CW) Family Service Holy Communion (BCP) Morning Prayer (BCP) Evening Prayer | Berwick St John Charlton All Saints Broad Chalke Bishopstone Nunton Alvediston Coombe Bissett Bowerchalke | Roger Leake Anna-Claar T-Rosingh Catherine Blundell Jenny Taylor Adrian Taylor Catherine Blundell Roger Leake Lay Led |
| 31 January CANDLEMAS | 10.00am 10.00am | Benefice Communion (CW) Benefice Communion (CW) | Ebbesbourne Wake Homington | Catherine Blundell Anna-Claar T-Rosingh |
| 7 February 2nd Sunday before Lent | 9.30am 9.30am 11.00am 11.00am 11.00am | Parish Communion (CW) Parish Communion (CW) Family Communion (CW) Family Communion (CW) Morning Service | Broad Chalke Britford Ebbesbourne Wake Coombe Bissett Odstock | Catherine Blundell Jenny Taylor Catherine Blundell Jenny Taylor Anna-Claar T-Rosingh |

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**Covid-19 Carols in the
Parish of Coombe Bissett with Homington!**

**Sunday 20th December
6.00 pm**

**We are HOPING to hold a “Carol Event” on
the Donkey Field, Coombe Bissett**

Wear wellies.

**Bring torches, chairs and mulled wine and
maybe umbrellas!**

Face masks are optional.



**Please be aware this may have to be cancelled if
Covid Restrictions are not lifted or if it is
pouring with rain!!**

**Our Christmas Services
are also different this year:**

**Christmas Eve at 6.30 pm in Homington
The Blessing of the Crib**



**Christmas Day at 11.00 am
in Coombe Bissett
Family Communion around the Crib**



Come and Celebrate Christmas Together!



Tribute to Chris Burton

written and read at her funeral by her daughters Lesley and Julie.

Born 12.05am on 17th December 1922 in Bishop Auckland, Co. Durham, mum was one of four children, one brother and two sisters, one being a twin, Auntie Ellen. Mum, being the strongest twin with a fighting spirit, was always protective of Ellen (Jella) and always stuck up for her, fearlessly! I used to ask mum why Ellen became known as “Jella” and mum always said, in her matter-of-fact way, it was “because she liked jelly”!!

Mum enjoyed a very modest and simple childhood, growing up in Stanley, a mining town in County Durham. A grim place one might say, but with a strong sense of community and great resilience against a backdrop of harshness and hardship. She often told us of the long walks to Beamish which she enjoyed with “Jella” taking only a bottle of water to last a whole day; and the occasional school trip to Whitley Bay or South Shields, which had to be saved up for weeks in advance but were such a treat.

Mum spent a great deal of her childhood being looked after by her maternal grandmother. She often spoke of “Muddy” who was one of those wonderful selfless women who kept everything together; cooking, knitting, sewing for all her grandchildren. Our great grandmother was a strong influence in mum’s life and she regularly came up in conversation. We really wish we could have met her.

Mum loved school and could easily recall her teachers, most of whom had amazing names like Miss Bibby!) She excelled in needlework and cookery and learned poems with great delight, one or two of which she would recite frequently during her last years. Her favourites included *Tewkesbury Road* by John Masefield, *Overheard in a Salt Marsh* by Harold Monro and *A Child’s Song in Spring* by Edith Nesbitt about trees. It was such a delight to hear mum slip into her childhood again. She always remembered making Angel’s Kisses in the cookery class and the teacher, Miss Cruickshanks, saying “Those kisses are rather large, Julia!”

In May 1941, aged 19, mum’s life changed forever when she joined the Women’s Auxiliary Air Force (the WAAF). Mum just loved it and served for 4 years, mainly stationed in Crosby-on-Eden, near Carlisle where she met our Dad in 1944, who was at that time an Instructor attached to the RAF Operational Training Unit. Mum was very popular and she always said she had lots of admirers, who were, she hastened to add, strictly air crew! I always remember her saying that she treated all her admirers as friends, nothing serious. She had a strong moral compass and a great sense of what was right and what was wrong. She often told us of one young man she had a special fondness for but funnily enough she said the tabs on his shoes put her off a bit!! All the boyfriends simply faded from view when she met Dad. He was the one who was shy, mended her bicycle lamp and gave her sound advice on how to keep safe in the black-outs. Mum and Dad married in St Andrew’s Church, Stanley on 4th April 1945. A very simple wedding; a tailored suit and a 3-tiered wedding cake made by her best friend Dinah. On marriage, Mum had to leave Crosby-on-Eden as in those days married couples were not allowed to stay on the same station! Quite different times then.

Mum and Dad celebrated 60 years of marriage, and during that time, and for a good part of it, they led a full life in the Royal Air Force, always keeping together as a family with us - no boarding schools. Dad gave Mum a cookery book in 1951 (Good Housekeeping) with an inscription “To my Darling” - and above it, written in pencil and still very clear, 42/- ! The book details all the homes they shared during their long marriage and the method of cooking used in each kitchen. It is a great record and lists 24 homes, the last entry being *Ebble Edge, Coombe Bissett - 2nd May 1977- electric.*

Wonderful memories were made in postings including Cyprus, Singapore, Scotland and Norway with swimming, golfing, skiing, dancing, entertaining and great friendships forged. There were periods in-between when Dad was on unaccompanied tours abroad, which meant there was just the three of us and sadly no grandparents to help, but mum simply took control and with her abundance of common sense, gave us everything we needed.

Mum learned to play golf in her early forties at the Royal Island Club in Singapore, and ski in her late forties on the winter slopes of a Norwegian golf-course. She was competent in both and very proud to have achieved two holes in one whilst a member of High Post Golf Club here in Salisbury where she played until she was 88. Mum always said that she could give anyone a good game. She never fussed at the tee but would go straight up to it and consistently whacked the ball straight down the fairway, chipping and putting with hardly a pause. She would be generous with new lady golfers and was always happy to give them games to improve their handicap. It is lovely to see many of mum's golfing friends here today.

On Dad's retirement from the RAF, Mum and Dad moved to a new-build house in Coombe Bissett in 1977 naming it "Ebble Edge". After many years living in other people's properties such as RAF hirings and married quarters, it was a real delight for them to be the first occupants in a brand new house. The creation of a completely new garden there was quite an achievement. Although mum didn't really take to gardening, she really appreciated the glory of it; and the view of the church from the lounge window. During the last few years she would often look at the sky and the drifting clouds and say "It's so still", "Nothing moving" or "Sky blue is a lovely blue".

Mum enjoyed village life very much. She loved to walk as much as possible, watch the tennis up the hill here and take part in the village flower show - winning prizes for her Runner Bean Chutney and Lemon Curd. Mum was always a good cook and she could rustle up scones and sponge cakes almost blindfolded.

She missed Dad every day after he died in April 2005, which was shortly after receiving a card from the Queen in celebration of their 60 years of marriage. The card still has pride of place in the house today.

Mum struggled with the frustrations of Dementia during her last few years but she never lost her sense of humour, or her integrity. She was always elegant, well mannered, appreciative, funny, and modest. She had a deep sense of duty, loyalty and honesty. She was never envious or greedy. She was a good person who lived her life well. Never one to express her inner thoughts, we knew her feelings ran deep and true.

She loved the birds, the pets that shared our lives, the warmth of the sun and the company of friends of all ages. She was stronger, braver and wiser than she ever knew and we will always feel so very proud of her. The memory of our mother will never leave us.

May Chris Rest in Peace and Rise in Glory. Amen

CHAV

The Parish Council referral tasks mentioned in my last report are underway, some completed and some still waiting to be done, but the wet weather does not mean that the tasks can always be done. We need a long dry spell !.

One task completed is the small carpentry task in replacing the timber surround to the notice on the Old Hut site.

Another task completed is the treatment with wood preservative of the gates at the entrance to the cemetery in Pennings Drove. The CHAV who dealt with this task caused a little concern to various village residents because he took the gates off the hinges and took them to his own home and they were there in his garage for a few days whilst he prepared them for the wood preservative treatment. Some villagers who walked that way reported that the gates were missing thinking they may have been stolen but an excellent job now done with the gates safely back in place.

The same CHAV was also going to treat the bench which has been in the cemetery for almost 25 years but on close inspection it proved to be not worth doing as two of the legs were rotten and as it was rotting elsewhere it was considered to be unsafe to sit on so the Parish Council have agreed to purchase a replacement with the memorial plaque being transferred to the new replacement bench.

There are three other benches which need wood preservative treatment and also the Parish Council notice board next to the old telephone kiosk, but these are on a CHAV's list to do but we need the dry weather.

That is it for this report apart from wishing you all a happy Christmas and an improved but prosperous New Year.

Gerald Bundy.

CHALKE VALLEY LINK SCHEME



The CVLS provides good neighbour support with transport and practical help for residents.

For Transport Requests Phone: 718780
(Roger Brown, Anna Mynott or Debby Underhill in rotation)

For Care and Support Phone: 421270 Debby Underhill

There is no set charge, but you are invited to make a donation towards our administrative costs.

Our co-ordinators and drivers are all volunteers and there may be times when you will be asked to leave a message which will be answered as soon as possible. Please give our co-ordinators as much notice as you can.

Queen's Award for Voluntary Service

Registered Charity No 1076335

COOMBE BISSETT PRIMARY SCHOOL

Christmas Cards

This year we are indebted to Aileen Webb from Homington for undertaking the unenviable task of judging the class and overall winner from a sparkling collection of entries.

The winners are as follows:

| | |
|-----------|-----------------------|
| Oak Class | Edward Sartin |
| Elm Class | Toby Davis |
| Fir Class | Tilly Paterson |
| Ash Class | Phoebe Richter |

The overall winner and therefore our front cover this year is:

Edward Sartin Oak Class



Elm Class – Toby Davis



Fir Class – Tilly Paterson



Ash Class – Phoebe Richte

Memories of my Life by Ron Shorland (Part 1) - The Perfect Gentleman

I was flattered when approached by Rachel about putting down what my long life had consisted of and how I ended up in Coombe Bissett.

It started at Mill Hill, Middlesex, which subsequently became part of the borough of Hendon, London, NW4, and becoming Mill Hill, London, NW7. We were known as London in the countryside. We housed the Headquarters of the Middlesex Regiment and the Regiments Barracks and several hundred acres of land where the Regiments trained and carried out manoeuvres. A poignant memory of my childhood was going with my father when the soldiers marched to St Paul's Church on Sundays he keeping in step, me trying to. At the age of eleven we changed from junior to senior school, no eleven plus in those days just the choice of C of E or Roman Catholic. We had to await the change as air raid shelters were being constructed. Senior School was St Marys; here I met my first girlfriend. A Jewish girl called Phyllis Lee; we were friends almost until I joined the Navy when we lost touch.

We made some reference to the war in the previous issue, a few more remarks might be appropriate: We had at Mill Hill a gas works with the storage holders for the gas, an enormous size and plainly visible for miles. Also a large six bay viaduct which took the electric trains above ground which came to Mill Hill until they went underground at East Finchley on the return journey. When the pickup shoe on the train left the live rail there was an enormous flash like lighting. There were several anti-aircraft gun sites around where we lived and when firing in unison the noise was frightening, and of course what went up had to come down, in the form of shell splinter, where they came down on solid ground we children were avid collectors until the novelty wore off. Later in the war we had the unmanned flying bombs and finally the rockets. Both of these were indiscriminate, the flying bombs which travelled until their engine stopped, most came straight down but some glided on and they arrived with no forewarning as there was no engine noise. The rockets were fired from Holland in a huge arc which took them to a height of seventy miles a loud bang as they broke the sound barrier on re-entry to the earth's atmosphere and an enormous explosion when the two ton warhead exploded. One of the worst hit was Smithfield meat market on a Saturday and rumour had it killed almost two hundred people. We read after the war that fourteen hundred of the rockets had been aimed at London.

On the day I joined the Navy, myself and about twenty four others mustered at Charing Cross recruiting office where we had a medical inspection, a doctor and an attractive nurse taking notes. One idiot said I hope I don't get an erection which caused several others embarrassment but raised a smile on the nurses face.

In the afternoon we caught a train to Portsmouth Harbour station. The battleship VANGUARD was moored there and after taking the Royal Family to a tour of South Africa and back, a very impressive ship.

Our destination was Gosport which we went to on a ferry all seated on the upper deck, the weather was bitter and we were all frozen stiff on arrival at HMS St. George. We were all hungry and were taken to the galley; we were too late for a proper meal and were given a portion of unheated steak and kidney pudding with some tinned spinach, it was revolting but we ate it anyway as there was nothing else. That meal gave me a lifelong aversion to spinach.

Next day we were to be issued with our uniforms. We had a brief lecture from the petty officer who was to be in charge of us in the first part of our training, it was short and sweet, "If any of you want to go home to Mum now is the time, once you signed for your uniform you're in the Navy."

This period began to get better as the weather improved and we spent time at Whale Island the Navy's Gunnery School. We learned to use the Lee Enfield rifle and the Lanchester automatic which could fire twenty four bullets in just over ten seconds. We also learned rowing on the twenty four foot whaler and the thirty two foot cutter, most enjoyable.

The photo in the last Express, of the class with rifles, was when we mounted the honour guard when the white ensign was hoisted, the same happened when the ensign was lowered at sunset.

In May 1947 we were deemed to be fit to start the second part of our training and we were sent on 10 days leave and given railway warrant to travel to Wetherby in Yorkshire when the leave ended. I took one of my mates home on our leave as he had no home to go to just lodging. I took him to London to see my old work mates at I.C.I. They had moved from Mill Hill because the school they had used in the war had been re-occupied by the school and were now in an empty hotel building in Park Lane while their proper headquarters were refurbished. I took him past Buckingham Palace and the first sentry gave us a but salute because our uniform and peaked hat made him think we were officers, I went up to him and saluted and explained we didn't warrant a salute he shouted to the next sentry and the message went on to the others.

The camp at Wetherby had been built to hold German prisoners of War and some opted to settle here and not return home. While they were being checked they stayed in the camp and did much of the maintenance and cleaning work, but we kept our own quarters up to scratch.

The course was getting used to all the rule books which on the administration side the Royal Navy operated, also running the payment ledgers of ships crews and also officers pay accounted, the latter was strictly confidential. The bible for all this was K.R.A.I., Kings Regulations and Admiralty Instructions. If you couldn't find the answer to your problem therein it would tell you which rule book to consult.

In September we were tested on how much of the course we had absorbed and then went to our chosen home port. There were three choices; Chatham, Portsmouth and Devonport. I chose Chatham as it was nearest to London.

My first job was in the lost property office in Chatham Barracks. There were dozens of kitbags lost or mislaid; of deserters, people who had died and some lost and the owners not traced. The job was to see if we could find a clue of a home address which we could send any valuables to, four of us and an officer to make sure we didn't pocket any goodies.

This didn't last long and I was soon on my way to join H.M.S. Jutland, a Battle Class destroyer in a flotilla of four ships all named after battles; Agincourt, Aisne, Corunna and Jutland.

We were the junior ship of the four and so got several fag end jobs. First job was to St Peter Port in the Channel Island on Armistice Day, to march to church and join the service and leave for home immediately after. Second job on Navy Day anchor off Broadstairs and open the ship for visitors who were ferried out on our 32 foot motor cutter, shown all-round the upper deck, gun turrets, boforsguns, torpedo tubes, anti-aircraft guns and squid anti-submarine weapon. But not allowed inside the ship they would probably have been surprised to see how we lived.

There was a lot of criticism at this time even in Parliament that the Royal Navy home fleet consisted of five ships, we four and the cruiser, Swiftsure. The Admiralty responded by crewing a number of ships of the reserve fleet and with the five afore mentioned put on a show of strength in the Western Approaches. This was well photographed and pictures appeared in the papers next day. At the end of this display the ships split up, some went back o Reserve, some went to the West Indies. We went to South Africa with the Aircraft carriers, Triumph and Theseus. On this voyage was when we anchored off St. Helena to deliver mail from the U.K. We first went to Gibraltar to top up with fuel this was important for stability to help the ship stay low in the sea. Water was no problem we had condensers on the ship to produce our own. Progress was extremely slow we were restricted to 10 knots, in Admiralty words an economic cruising speed – painful on a ship capable of 36 knots but that speed would burn fuel very quickly.

We refuelled again at sea from a Royal Fleet Auxiliary which was sailing with us. On arrival at Simonstown we should have waited for a tug to berth us but our Skipper did it on his own and with superb seamanship.

Second day in smartened up we went ashore to the sailors canteen and all had the same food, steak, egg and chips, what a treat.

Then it was back to business, we went to Cape Town and did a ceremonial march through some of the centre of the city. Later that day the aircraft carriers were open to the public, they responded so much that some were unable to come aboard. The Triumph was a fleet carrier and as such, had a very long flight deck and a Royal Marine detachment. They were in dress uniform and gave a display of counter marching which made you proud to be British. To finish the day the ceremony of sunset was performed by the Royals. The centre piece of this was when three buglers played the call we know as 'Sunset', this was actually, as the sunset, so evocative it made me well up. I have a cutting from the Cape Argus on the following day which says, "Many of the visitors were so moved they had tears in their eyes".

After this highlight we sailed for the last part of our visit, Durban. On the way we spent a day at East London and another at Port Elizabeth. On arrival at Durban there was a lady all dressed in white who sang a song of welcome from a pier. My older brother was in the Navy in the war, a sick berth attendant on a hospital ship en-route to the Far East which called in at Durban sometime in 1943, and he told us about this lady when he came home after war, what a coincidence. She was there when we left Durban to start on our return voyage, and she sang the wartime song, "Now is the hour when we must say good bye." As many of the crew we could muster gave her three cheers and blew kisses till she went out of sight.

To be continued.....

COOMBE BISSETT PRIMARY SCHOOL

LOCKDOWN AND BACK TO SCHOOL

An interview with Tom Gabriel
(Aged 6)

Tom, what did you miss most about school?

playing it with my friends.

What was different when you went back?
my desk had moved!

that was really funny!

What was the best thing?
Seeing my teacher.

It made me happy.

At the end of the Summer I felt happy to be going back to school after such a long break. I was excited to see my friends again. When I went back to school it was very different. We have lunch in our classrooms and play at different times in other classes. It felt strange but I got used to it after a while. I know this year Christmas might be different, but I'm looking forward to it all the same and hoping we can still celebrate it at school.

By Florence Paterson
Aged 9 years

Isa Gabriel age 9

Going back to school after lockdown

I never thought I would miss school but it turns out I did. I missed... pizza on Wednesdays (School pizza is the best), playing bulldog in the playground and most of all, just being with my friends. My mum's teaching was ok but, let's be honest, she's not a professional!

The first day back felt new and exciting because there were lots of changes. There were lots of weird sellotape marks on the floor which I realised were where we were meant to walk. There was hand sanitiser EVERYWHERE! (and it smelled like vinegar-yuk!) We had to all sit in pairs on different desks and, big news, we got our very own set of stationery, including glue stick - AMAZING! Whole school assemblies were on Zoom, with each class dialling in. It was funny because Mr. Baringer-Adams (our Headteacher) sometimes sounded like a robot when the screen kept freezing!

It all feels normal now so when it goes back to old normal it will feel strange again (but I won't miss the hand sanitiser!).

Christmas this year might be different but that's ok as long as Santa still comes!

COOMBE BISSETT PRIMARY SCHOOL

LOCKDOWN AND BACK TO SCHOOL

Hi, my name is Amelia and I am 9 years old. During lockdown I had a lot of freedom, and then it was time to return back to school! I'm grateful that school, & clubs started back gradually as it might have been too much. By the way my Mum is still nagging me to do my homework, I find it very irritating. Now back to the thing I'm meant to be writing about. Things have been weird at school, not just because I have a new class and new teacher but also because we're in bubbles and we can't see any other year group.

I don't even know the names of the new reception class! Going back to school hasn't been that bad after all because I get to see more than six people and I love maths and art (My teachers teach it way better than my Mum and Dad!). I now know I like history as well.



My family & I are now looking forward to Christmas. I've already designed my Christmas cards. I know things might be different this year.

Hello my name is Hatty I am 10 years old I have lived in Coombe Bissett for 2 years but I have always been at Coombe Bissett primary school. Then covid came in March 2020 I was scared what was going to happen to the school, family, friends. At first I enjoyed being at home my brother was homeschooling me it was very quiet we watched horrible histories. My mum was working from home which was unusual for her. She had lots

of team calls. Most of my clubs were on Zoom, apart from horse riding, gymnastics. When we got told we were going back to school I was excited and nervous, what it was going to be like. I couldn't wait to see my friends, I missed them so much. hopefully this doesn't happen again and stay safe!!

by Hatty
Cooper

Aged 10



News from the Village Show Committee

Getting Festive with Foliage!

By Caroline Welfare, Coombe Bissett Blooms

It's that time of year again when our thoughts turn to Bells and Holly, and I love all things green and red but for me it's more to do with using the natural environment and what I can find in my hedgerows. I am fortunate to be able to forage freely from my garden and always find enough to produce gorgeous Christmas decorations. So many options if you have a small amount of time and lots of creative imagination.

I'd like to share a few tips and tricks to create your own wreath, table centre or garland using what is freely available from within the Coombe Bissett boundaries. Firstly the base and possibly the most important part of the design. I use young hazel and/or willow whips that are turned into wooden circles. It's the



like to



backbone of the creation and on which all the foliage is held together. You can use floral foam (I'm not a fan as it's completely non-degradable and made from oil waste products) or metal rings packed with moss. For inside displays it's best to find a container that can hold water or sit on a plate with moss to keep the stems moist. Fireplace or stairwell garlands won't last too long so I tend to put them up for just the week before Christmas.

And now to the foliage, slightly controversial as this may lead to using part of the country code known as foraging rights, there are 3 main pieces of legislation that cover this; Countryside Rights of Way Act 2004, Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 and The Theft Act 1968. You are allowed to forage, it is not illegal if you follow the rules:

- It's always best to seek permission from the landowner first, some areas prohibit foraging
- Never up-root a plant and only take what you need and leave enough for the birds
- If you can't identify the plant, leave it and never take anything from a protected species

I like to use anything that is evergreen, a mix of greens and leaf form is brilliant, try using brown bracken too, it adds a lovely contrast. My favourites are conifers, ivy, holly (non-spiky version), catkins, pussy willow and yew. I always pay a visit to our local Christmas tree farm in Ebbesbourne Wake, grown on site and very reasonably priced.



Then finally the colour and decorations, obviously red is a must at Christmas using rose hips and holly berries, but I also really like to use dried flowers from my cutting garden. Larkspur, Helichrysums, statice, gypsophila, solidago, eryngiums, nigella seed heads add beautiful colour to the design. Pinecones, an absolute must have, but for that extra special something add feathers if you can find them.

It's best to arrange using a similar pattern and materials throughout the design. Once you've started make sure you have enough to finish it off, there's nothing worse than having to nip out into the cold to gather more material. Use a few different colours, not too many as it can look confused and remember to fill the space leaving no empty sections unless that's part of your design. Some of my wreath making customers last year did leave part of the wooden ring exposed to show off their skills!

To finish with my last words and a subject close to my heart.....spare a thought for the environment this Christmas. Try not to use too much plastic, source responsibly and support local businesses.

MINUTES OF COOMBE BISSETT PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD VIRTUALLY ON
TUESDAY 10 NOVEMBER 2020

Present: Councillors: D Rattue, D Hobson, P Crosthwaite, C Chelu, S Gledhill, A Bird and G Bundy.
N Heron (Clerk). Wiltshire Cllr. R Clewer. Member of the public – A Lack

- 54 Apologies for absence – R Maycock
- 55 Public Questions Time – A Lack enquired whether the Parish Council had received a report back from Wiltshire Council regarding the footpath from Shepherd's Close to Stocksbridge Lane. G Bundy reported that no report has been received and the Parish Council will chase this up.
- 56 Minutes of the last meeting – the minutes were proposed as accurate by C Chelu and seconded by P Crosthwaite and accepted by all as a true record.
- 57 Declaration of interest – G Bundy declared an interest in the Neighbourhood Development Plan and D Rattue declared an interest in the Stocksbridge Lane repairs. They will therefore not take part in any Parish Council considerations. There were no additional declarations of interest in items on the agenda.
- 58 **Matters arising:**

2021/2022 Budget and Precept: D Rattue and the clerk assessed operating costs, asset maintenance and capital costs and considered that the precept should be kept the same as last year at £11K, a figure which has remained constant since 2012. D Hobson proposed and G Bundy seconded that this be accepted and that the Budget itself will be set at a later date. All were in favour. The Financial Policy agreed in the September 2020 meeting will be set aside for this year due to the current unique circumstances and the Parish Councillors will consider Capital and New Project costs when social distancing rules allow them to meet in person. R Clewer advised that the Band D calculation may be slightly different than previous years due to an increase in Universal Credit applications.

Neighbourhood Development Plan: S Gledhill reported that the NDP is progressing in accordance with the required process. A draft of the plan has been completed by the NDP Steering Committee who are now awaiting a decision from Wiltshire as to whether or not there is a requirement for an environmental survey on the two proposed sites. The findings of the survey for the community views on the sites will not be published until a decision on an environmental study is made but the intention is that the community should have sight of the findings of the survey within the next 2-3 months.

Buildings/Structures of Heritage importance: S Gledhill reported that if we believe there are any additional buildings, structures or areas which are not currently listed by English Heritage we have the opportunity to put these in the Neighbourhood Plan as important heritage places for our community. C Chelu has prepared a list of buildings and structures within Coombe Bissett. D Hobson proposed that we should add only exceptional structures or properties that have been missed by English Heritage in the past, such as the Plague Stone. C Chelu's list will be looked at by the Parish Councillors for discussion at the next meeting. and the Parish Councillors will look at these for discussion at the next meeting.

Gates across bridleways in Coombe Bissett: G Bundy reported that Wiltshire Wildlife Fund have started work on the gate down towards the Blandford Road end having improved the access road into the site. The fly tipping episode in Shutts Lane has been dealt with. The Wiltshire Council Officer in charge, A Howson, has agreed that WC will come to complete the work on behalf of the Parish Council once the PC have purchased the bollards. G Bundy will provide the clerk with the specification of the bollards for purchasing, the estimated cost of these is £100.

Donkey Field – Fence, Padlock, Encampment: G Bundy reported that the materials for the fence will be delivered towards the end of next week and the work will then commence once the contractor has arranged for any underground cables to be checked. Due to the recent illegal encampment the Parish Council will purchase a padlock for the new gate and will endeavour to ensure the gate is locked.

Speed Indicator Device on the A354: A Turnbull who manages the SID has asked G Bundy to mention that wherever the indicator is in place it has a positive effect on the majority of drivers. There has been no speed watch undertaken in Homington for a while and volunteers are needed. A Bird will post a request for volunteers on Facebook. Speed Watch will continue and the SID will be moved around when all the poles are in place.

Stocksbridge Lane Repairs: The potholes in the lane have been repaired by the contractor of the new development. The clerk presented two estimates received from contractors for the completion of laying tarmac on a section of the lane. S Gledhill noted that the lane is a dedicated footpath and not a road and that any lane wide asphaltting would directly benefit the residents of only four properties. S Gledhill therefore proposed that the Parish Council do not undertake works to further improve the lane. G Bundy is in agreement, C Chelu is against, D Hobson, P Crosthwaite, A Bird abstained. As a result S Gledhill's proposal has passed and repairs are not approved. The Parish Council will all inspect the lane in the coming months and the matter of repairs may be revisited at a later date.

Headstones policy in Pennings Drove Cemetery: There is no current headstones policy and G Bundy has agreed to draw one up. The Clerk will respond to the Challis family who have requested a headstone to mark the cremated remains of Roland Challis.

Bench in Pennings Drove Cemetery: The bench in Pennings Drove Cemetery has been destroyed as it was deemed beyond repair. G Bundy proposed that a new bench is purchased to match the one recently donated by the Challis family. C Chelu seconded and all are in favour. G Bundy will source a bench and the plaque from the original bench will be affixed to it.

Appointment of WebMaster: The post of voluntary webmaster will be advertised on Facebook and on the website. A Lack has offered to help whoever takes up the role.

59 Parking on Recreation Field: CB Down Project 17 November 2020

60 Parking on Donkey Field: none

61 Notices on Donkey Field/beechn tree: Remembrance Sunday Service 08 November 2020

62 Correspondence received:

- Alistair Lack – decision to stand down as Editor of CB Website
- Chris White Funeral Directors requesting headstone for R Challis
- Wiltshire Wildlife Trust – works to improve section of bridleway from Blandford Road to the barn to be completed late September.
- Fraser Corsan – outlining concern raised by several villagers over proposed Avalon site as suitable for NDP.
- ROSPA – inspection of the play area has been completed
- Julian Haines from WC – agreeing that further work is required on the Packhorse Bridge which will be undertaken in 2-3 months
- J Challis – requesting headstone in Cemetery
- Friends of the Ridgeway – regarding signposting and waymarking a new National Trail route between Salisbury and Win Green called Cranborne Drove Way
- Letter of appreciation from H.M. Lord Lieutenant of Wiltshire - Sarah Rose Troughton
- Mr G Bundy – expressing concern that the NDPG is in danger of not achieving its primary objective of delivering housing for older residents as identified in the housing needs survey. (N.B. this was not discussed at the meeting as the letter was received after the Agenda had been finalised).

63 Planning

Planning received:

Application Ref: 20/08856/FUL - Application for full planning

Proposal:- Proposed two storey rear extension and alterations

At: Deegan House, Blandford Road, Coombe Bissett, Salisbury, Wiltshire, SP5 4LH

Planning approved by Wiltshire Council:

Application Ref: 20/07836/VAR – Variation of Condition

Proposal:- Variation of condition 2 of 19/10768/FUL to allow for alterations and raising of roof of approved building

At: Lower Coombe Farm, Blandford Road, Coombe Bissett, SP5 4LJ

Proposal:- Ash (T1) - Fell: signs of Honey Fungus

Ash (T2) - Fell: signs of Ash Dieback & overhangs neighbour's shed

Ash (T3) - Fell: signs of Ash Dieback,

Ash (T4) - fell: next to other Ash trees with Dieback. Replace with Yew.

Ash x 3 (T5, T6, T7) - fell. Small Ash trees showing early signs of Ash Dieback. Replace with 1 x Bird Cherry

Ash (T8) - fell: signs of Ash Dieback

Ash (T9) - fell: loss of light to neighbour - replant with 1 x Yew

Leylandii (T10) - fell: tree is dead. Replant with 1 x Dogwood and 1 x Hazelnut Fir (T11) - fell:

Elm (T12) - fell: tree is dead (Dutch Elm Disease). Replant with 1 x Stone Pine. Please note Trees 13 & 14 below have

NOT been seen by Shane Verion (Tree Officer)

Willow (T13) - reduce to 10 ft (branches falling from height into garden)

Willow (T14) - reduce to 10 ft (branches falling from height into garden)

At: Karelea, Stocksbridge Lane, Coombe Bissett, SP5 4LZ

Application Ref: 20/07364/FUL – full planning

Proposal:- Reinstatement of roof destroyed by fire and associated repairs

At: Cross Stone, Homington Road, Coombe Bissett, SP5 4LR

Application Ref: 20/07365/TCA – work to trees in Conservation Area

Proposal:- T1 - Yew - 1m reduction all round to remove the damaged area and keep the tree at a reasonable size given its proximity to the house.

At: Cross Stone, Homington Road, Coombe Bissett, SP5 4LR

Application Ref: 20/08252/TCA – work to trees in a conservation area

Proposal:- Fell Ash Tree

At: Karelea, Coombe Bissett, Salisbury, Wiltshire, SP5 4LZ

Application Ref: 20/06576/FUL

Proposal: Demolition and alteration of a number of existing relatively modern barns

At: Homington Farm Barbers Lane Homington SP5 4NG - approved with conditions

Application Ref 20/07691/TCA – work to trees in a conservation area

Proposal: Field Maple tree – crown and lift to 4m and lightly thin canopy

At: Thakeham, Homington Road, Coombe Bissett, SP5 4LY

Planning appeals:

Appellants: Mr & Mrs Royal, Cranbourne Farm, Old Blandford Road, Coombe Bissett

Proposed Development: Conversion of two existing agricultural barns to form a single storey residential dwelling (Use Class C3) and carport, associated landscaping and access

Appeal start date: 04 September 2020

Planning refused:

Application No. 20/06673/CLP

Proposal: Certificate of lawfulness for works to main barn and agricultural building including new metal sheet roofing, new concrete floors and blockwork walls reclad in existing metal sheet cladding.

At: Cranbourne Farm, Old Blandford Road, Coombe Bissett, SP5 4LF

64 Reports from representatives

Highways Warden – C Chelu advised that he has asked G Axtell from Wiltshire Council to consider disguising the ugly man hole covers on the concrete which have recently been installed at the Stratford Tony junction. R Clewer has offered to look into this on our behalf and will advise further.

Flood Warden – P Crosthwaite advised that Flooding notice has been sent to the Express asking everyone to clean drains and unblock gulleys.

Playground Warden – A Bird has received the annual playground inspection report and will act on arranging any necessary repairs.

65 Finance

Outgoings 09.09.20 to 10.11.20

| | | |
|-----------------|----------------------|----------|
| Bawden | Grass August | £133.42 |
| Cricket Club | Paint for benches | £5.00 |
| A Burnett | NDP Salary | £1379.40 |
| Bawden | Grass September | £133.42 |
| Playsafety Ltd | Play area inspection | £82.20 |
| Office Expenses | | £798.89 |

Income 09.09.20 to 10.11.20

| | | |
|----------------------|---------------|---------|
| Chris White Funerals | Cemetery fees | £120.00 |
| Ian Newman | Cemetery fees | £100.00 |
| Wiltshire Council | Precept | £5500 |
| NatWest | Interest | £0.29 |
| NatWest | Interest | £0.26 |

Balance on accounts:

Current Account £18,073.20

Reserve Account £32,140.93

Total Balance £50,214.13

66 Date of next meeting: 12 January 2021

Vacancy for Parish Webmaster

Our current webmaster has decided to step down after 10 years and the Parish Council is looking for a volunteer to run the Parish Website.

If you are interested in doing this please apply to the Parish Clerk by e-mail.

parishclerkcoombebissett@gmail.com

Tennis Club Report

Janet Finniss 718346

At the time of writing we are back in lockdown with the tennis courts closed for 4 weeks. We were very fortunate to have been able to play lots of tennis over the summer months and managed to complete the Red Leader competition. The final match was played on Saturday 24 October, in extremely wet conditions. Well done to John, Gaye, Adrian & Gillian for braving the weather to play their last match before the deadline. 10 pairs took part, with the eventual winners being Nicky Green and Nigel Maryan. Congratulations to them both.

FLOODING: BE PREPARED

With winter around the corner please take time to read the following and ensure that you and any vulnerable neighbours are prepared in the event of flooding

- Check that road drains are clear of debris and not blocked. If safe to do so, clear surface debris yourself. Wiltshire Council will clear drains once a year but residents living near open ditches need to ensure they remain clear. Any blockages to drains on highways need to be reported direct to Wiltshire Council (www.wiltshire.gov.uk).
- If your property is bounded by or has a river, ordinary watercourse, ditch or stream flowing through your land or garden you have riparian rights and responsibilities. For those renting, check with the owner who is to manage these rights and responsibilities. As a reminder, where they relate to flooding, these responsibilities include:
 - You must maintain the bed and banks of the watercourse, and also the trees and shrubs growing on the banks.
 - You must also clear any debris, even if it did not originate from your land.
 - You must keep any structures that you own clear of debris.
 - You must keep the bed and banks clear of any matter that could cause an obstruction, either on your land or downstream if it is washed away.

Find out more from www.environment-agency.gov.uk or 03708 506506

- Find out if your home or business is at risk of flooding by visiting the Environment Agency website www.gov.uk/environment-agency or www.gov.uk/check-if-youre-at-risk-of-flooding
- Flood warning service – sign up for free flood warning and groundwater service by calling Floodline 0845 988 1188/0345 9881188 or visiting www.gov.uk/sign-up-for-flood-warnings. Warnings can be received by phone, text, email or pager.
- Neither Wiltshire Council nor the Parish Council has a duty to provide sand bags or other temporary flood defences to properties although help will be provided, if possible. It should be noted that **it is the property owner's responsibility to protect their property from flooding. If you know your property is at risk of flooding it is strongly recommended that you make your own arrangements for obtaining sand bags.**
- In the event that you need sand bags, limited supplies of both sand and bags are stored in the Village Pound, by the church in Coombe Bissett.
- Check pumps are working, sumps are clear, and hoses are in good condition.
- In the event of serious flooding where portable pumps are insufficient the Parish Council has a powerful pump available, supplied by SSE. If you need to use this pump please contact David Parson (718516). The Parish Council also have available 2 small portable pumps for emergency use, please contact Pippa Crosthwaite (718260). However, **if you know your property is at risk of flooding it is strongly recommended that you obtain your own pumps.**
- Consider investing in flood protection for your house or business e.g. flood doors, automatic self-closing air bricks, non-return valves on pipes, air brick covers.
- The Environment Agency produces leaflets giving advice and information on what to do before, during and after a flood, riparian responsibilities, and protection against groundwater flooding. For more information, contact the Environment Agency on 03708 506506, email enquiries@environment-agency.gov.uk or visit the website www.environment-agency.gov.uk

Know your Neighbours

This editions neighbour loves travelling and has had the fortune of travelled a lot. Even though we cannot travel a huge amount now, the adventures can still be out there, just not as far afield.

Who Am I?

Born in Glasgow in 1947, our neighbour's father was a doctor in the army medical core so it was likely from the off stead that they would not stay put for long. At 2years old they moved to Gibraltar, which came with much improved weather, beaches but hazardous hills. An accident occurred where our neighbour fell off her trike on a downhill high-speed run and split her cheeks open. To this day when she gets red faced the scars reappear to remind her of the terrifying incident.



Her father was moved back to the UK, Netley, Southampton, but after 2 years they were stationed in Kenya. The British government had just declared a state of emergency in Kenya due to the uprising of the Mau Mau - a guerrilla campaign against Europeans and fellow Africans. Although it contained many elements of anti-colonialism, the rising was primarily about land ownership and who was to rule Kenya once the British withdrew. The Mau Mau murdered a number of white settlers, but the vast majority of their victims were fellow Africans. The family with their three young children moved there in 1953. The new Commander in Chief thought providing medical treatment was one way of winning 'hearts and minds' and gaining useful intelligence, so our neighbour's father was particularly useful.

Her life in Kenya was a happy time despite having to be escorted to school with an armed guard. Hearing hyenas laugh at night-time and she remembers one day having to stay in at school as a lion was roaming the street! She also gained another sibling during their stay in Kenya.

They returned to Scotland for a 'proper education' well, the children did anyway. So, they moved in with Grannie, literally. Our neighbour had to share a bed with her and was woken up with her saying her prayers every morning.

Our neighbour went to the girl's grammar school in Glasgow followed by Glasgow University for three years where she gained an arts degree and met her first husband, Richard at the Ski Club. For a further year, at Jordan Hill College, she completed her teacher training and a diploma at the same time.

Whilst teacher training our neighbour was sent to practice in the roughest area of Glasgow, the Eastend and Gorbals. Her teacher thought it would be good for a sweet, ex grammar schoolgirl to experience the rough, slum areas of Glasgow!! These areas were eventually knocked down and redeveloped.

Give Up?

Aileen Webb's (as we know her now) first job was in a school in the centre of Glasgow in 1968, her class had 50 pupils. One day, a Mother complained that Aileen had not had time to listen to her child reading!!!

Aileen got married in 1969 and they moved to Windsor as Richard was training to be a pilot near Oxford so Aileen changed schools. In 1971 they moved to Lambourn as the M4 had just been finished and it was a good location for both of their jobs, Aileen was now teaching in Hungerford. In 1972, Aileen fell pregnant with Caiti so had to leave her teaching job as they did not keep jobs open then. Jamie came along in 1973 and then Duncan in 1977, Aileen held a part time job as a special need teacher in between. Getting the children to swimming etc., was difficult so they were looking at moving to a city when they saw a plot of land come up near Salisbury, in a village called Coombe Bissett. In 1981, Rudgwick was built and they moved in.

Aileen returned to teaching when Duncan started school.

Betty East, a teacher living in Homington, from Coombe Bissett Primary First School retired in 1986 so Aileen filled the vacancy until 1993. Aileen left teaching and became a classroom Special Needs Co-Ordinator, working in Ringwood. She started dating Jim Webb in 1996.

In 2000 Aileen joined the Stroke Association as a dysphasia support organiser and retired in 2010.

She married Jim in 2007 and lives in Homington (where Betty East lived). She loves gardening, attends (when it's on) University of the Third Age (www.u3a.org.uk) volunteers for Horatios Garden, weekly (when it's on) as a gardener (www.horatiosgarden.org.uk), transports for the monthly villages lunch (when it's on) and is on the church cleaning and flower rota ("which is a laugh really as I can't do flowers" says Aileen).



Quick Fire Q&A



Thanks to Aileen Webb

1. What was/is your nick name? *Laili- by my sister and Aunt, could not say Aileen, I guess*
2. If you could time travel, when would you go? *1950's, my Kenya time*
3. What is your pet hate? *Litter and fly tipping*
4. What is your favourite TV programme? *Gardener's World and Grand Design*
5. What do you like most about living in CB & H? *Friendly, community spirit*
6. What is the silliest way you have been injured? *Lifting a wet Duncan out of the car, twisted by back and had to lie flat for a month*
7. Where is your favourite place in the world? *West Coast of Scotland*
8. What is your favourite food/dish? *Fish Pie*
9. What is the best piece of advice you have received? *To buy a house, not to spend money on rent, said by my Father*
10. Would you rather.....get a paper cut between your fingers every time you turn a page or bite your tongue every time you eat food? *Bite your tongue as probably not as painful!!*

Interviewed by Rachel Coombs



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By the time you read this article we would have been through another lock down and hopefully are open once again.

However, if we have not had the lock down lifted then a lot of what is in this newsletter may not be applicable.

We are still preparing for us to be open and hopefully, be as busy as we can be for the Christmas period.

We do not at this time have many pre-Christmas bookings as it appears people are waiting to see what restrictions will be put on us in this area.

We are planning to open for Christmas Day lunch and have already taken quite a number of bookings. However, we still do have a few places left should anyone like to join us for this very festive day.

We hope to do our usual Christmas Raffle and Meat Draw on Friday 18th December from 8pm.

Due to the restrictions we were on before lock down, tables will have to be booked in advance with a maximum of 6 people to a table, **even for drinks only**. Last orders for food will be at 8.00 pm on this night.

Unfortunately, due to the government guidelines we will not be hosting a Christmas Carols evening this year with any of our usual bands or musicians, but we will be playing Carols on the background music system on Christmas Eve for those who would like to sing-a-long quietly. Again, tables have to be booked in advance for this night.

Unless things change, we would not be able to allow people to come into the pub on Christmas Day for drinks as is the usual tradition, unless a table has been booked in advance. However, we are looking at using the patio area for people to join us for a mulled wine or other drinks.

At this present time, we are unable to say what we are doing on New Years Eve but should anything change we will advertise wherever we can to let you know.

Should we still be in a lock down situation we will probably carry on with some Take Away food and drinks, however we will need to monitor this as the Take Away service in November has been a lot slower this lock down than the first one. The details and menu can be found on our Website and Facebook pages as well as the Coombe Bissett Facebook page.

Should we remain in lock down or be forced to lock down again in January, I seriously believe that without some substantial help from the Government we may struggle to continue in the New Year.

Myself and Sue will try our best to keep the Fox and Goose open and we thank everyone who has supported us during these difficult times.

Mark Wyeth the local Salisbury knife sharpener will **not** be at the Fox and Goose in December. Mark hopes to be back in February next year.

We wish you all the best Christmas you can have and hope 2021 is a better year for all.

Very best regards

Keith and Sue

Coombe Bissett Down

Update by WWL, Community Engagement Officer, Melanie Evans

Coombe Bissett Down provides a wealth of outdoor education opportunities for schools and colleges in the Salisbury area and beyond, where children and young people can discover more about Wiltshire's chalk landscape and the specialist species that inhabit it, on the chalk downland itself.

Recently, pupils from Coombe Bissett Primary School hand harvested wildflower seeds from the reserve, including Devil's-bit scabious and wild carrot, which was subsequently sown on a small chalk bank in the school grounds. The children look forward to observing their germinating seeds, which will provide opportunities to discuss seasonal changes throughout the school year.

Pupils from Wylve Valley Primary School also enjoyed a visit to the reserve where they learned about rocks and living things and their habitats. The children particularly enjoyed a fossil hunt where they carefully scoured the chalk for any signs of preserved shells from ancient marine creatures.

The reserve has also provided opportunities for older students to undertake practical conservation tasks and accredited training. Students from Wiltshire College sowed and plug planted wildflowers on the constructed chalk butterfly bank. Species included horseshoe vetch (the sole food plant of the Adonis blue butterfly) and kidney vetch (the only food source of the small blue butterfly). By introducing these chalk grassland wildflowers to the butterfly bank we hope to establish new colonies of these priority species of butterfly.

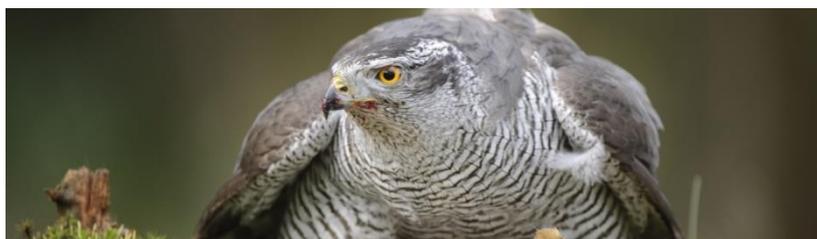
Students also planted trees to create a new hedgerow along the fence line adjoining the cricket pitch. Trees planted include wild pear, dog rose, hazel, crab apple and hawthorn. Once established, this new hedgerow will provide more nesting opportunities for birds, shelter for small mammals and food sources for wildlife through winter.

Throughout the lockdown periods a suite of free online resources about Coombe Bissett Down and the wildlife which can be observed there have been produced and are available to download from the new Wiltshire Wildlife Trust page on the village website. Resources include themed colouring sheets, a wildflower guide and quiz, a bat factsheet complete with sound recordings of echolocation calls and much more!

Over the coming weeks there will be a programme of free online talks. The first talk in this series will be delivered by Gareth Harris from Wiltshire Mammal Group. Gareth undertook a bat survey at the reserve last year which included recordings of rare species. On Tuesday 8th December, 7pm, Gareth will be presenting a talk about his findings and the bats of Coombe Bissett Down. To book your free place please contact CBDDproject@wiltshirewildlife.org

Please also look out for weekly blog posts written by local resident and volunteer, Oliver Davies. Ollie has spent the last two months capturing footage of mammals on the reserve using a trail camera. Each week we shall be updating you on Ollie's finds through the Coombe Bissett Down project blog which can be accessed through the link provided below. In the first blog there is some wonderful footage of a herd of Roe deer! www.wiltshirewildlife.org/Blogs/coombe-bissett-blog

And finally, during a bird survey undertaken at the reserve earlier this month, a Goshawk was observed 200 metres south of the reserve being mobbed by crows! Sadly it did not pass over the reserve during the survey so could not be recorded on this occasion, but it was an exciting encounter nonetheless!



Goshawk, Andrew Mason.

| Week Ending | | TEMPERATURES | | | RAINFALL |
|-------------|----|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------|--------------|
| | | Average Daily Maximum Deg C | Average Nightly Minimum Deg C | Average Mean Deg C | Total Inches |
| Sept | 6 | 18.4 | 10.3 | 14.4 | 0.26 |
| | 13 | 20.1 | 11.6 | 15.9 | 0.02 |
| | 20 | 22.2 | 12.4 | 17.3 | - |
| | 27 | 16.1 | 9.4 | 12.8 | 0.55 |
| Oct | 4 | 14.3 | 9.2 | 11.8 | 3.59 |
| | 11 | 14.4 | 8.9 | 11.7 | 0.44 |
| | 18 | 12.5 | 7.0 | 9.8 | 0.20 |
| | 25 | 14.3 | 10.1 | 12.2 | 1.87 |
| Nov | 1 | 14.0 | <u>9.4</u> | 11.7 | 1.33 |

Monthly Figures

| | | | | |
|-----------------------|------|------|------|---------------------|
| January | 8.7 | 5.3 | 7.0 | 4.94 |
| February | 9.7 | 5.3 | 7.5 | 6.98 |
| March | 10.5 | 3.9 | 7.2 | 2.33 |
| April | 16.6 | 6.5 | 11.6 | 3.34 |
| May | 19.2 | 8.0 | 13.6 | Trace |
| June | 20.5 | 11.9 | 16.2 | 2.61 |
| July | 21.9 | 13.0 | 17.5 | 1.21 |
| August | 22.6 | 15.2 | 18.9 | 4.77 |
| September | 19.0 | 10.7 | 14.9 | 1.18 |
| October | 13.9 | 9.0 | 11.5 | <u>6.93</u> |
| Year to date rainfall | | | | <u>34.29</u> inches |

September

September was a dry, reasonably sunny and warm month. Rainfall occurred on just eight days and totalled 1.18 inches which is less than half the September norm.

The first week saw temperatures in the high teens and reasonable amounts of sunshine. The middle two weeks saw a notably fine late summer spell with temperatures and sunshine well above normal. The third week saw the best of this with almost unbroken sunshine and maxima in the low to mid 20'sC. The warmest day in the month was the 14th with a maximum of 24.2C. The last week also saw plenty of sunshine but with more seasonal highs in the mid-teens and some cold nights with the first ground frost on 27th/28th (+3C).

October

October was a very wet month. Measurable rainfall occurred on each of the first nine days and on each of the last twelve days. The month's total of 6.93 inches was 70% above average and it was the second wettest October I have recorded. (Wettest was 8.36 inches in 2004). Looking at Don Thorne's Bishopstone rainfall records (1951 to 1987) there were just two wetter Octobers, one of these was the exceptionally wet October of 1960 for which Don recorded a total of 11.1 inches.

It is perhaps, not surprising, given the amount of time rain was actually falling in October that my estimate of 61 hours of sunshine made it the dullest October in my records, although only narrowly beating last October's also a miserly total of 64 hours. Over the years my estimates have given an average of 116 hours for October. Indeed, I reckon there were twelve days in the month where the sun did not shine at all. There were no ground frosts in October and the lowest overnight temperature was 5C on 8th/9th.

Summer 2020

This summer's rankings in the temperature, rainfall and estimated sunshine hours was as follows:-

| | TEMPERATURES | | | RAINFALL | SUNSHINE HOURS |
|---------------------|------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-------------------------|------------------------|
| | MAX | MIN | MEAN | | |
| 2020 | 21.7C | 13.3C | 17.5C | 8.29 Inches | 482 |
| Average since 1987 | 21.5C | 12.3C | 16.9C | 7.01 inches | 572 |
| Ranking in 34 years | 12 th | 5 th | 7 th | 8 th Wettest | 8 th Lowest |

There were few highlights of note this summer. It was not the worst of summers, but it was certainly not the best of summers. Each of the three months produced some spells of warm, sunny and dry weather but the general theme was disappointing with too few warm evenings to enjoy sitting in the garden.

Here are some more stats in case you haven't had enough!

| | JUNE | JULY | AUGUST |
|---------------------------------|------|------|--------|
| Days with measurable rainfall | 12 | 8 | 14 |
| Days with little or no sun | 8 | 11 | 5 |
| Days with full or near full sun | 8 | 6 | 4 |
| Days above 21C (70F) | 13 | 20 | 22 |
| Days above 24C (75F) | 6 | 8 | 8 |
| Days above 27C (81F) | 2 | 1 | 8 |
| Estimated hours of sun per day | 5.5 | 5 | 5.5 |
| Fine warm and sunny days | 7 | 12 | 11 |

Southern Prince - 21.2.70 - 12.5.70

This was the last time I was to sail on the Southern or Western Prince as they were both sold the following year. They were both built in 1955 and sold in 1971. In 1973 the Western Prince, renamed Mariner, sank during a voyage from Havana to Kobe, 500 miles east of Yokohama. The Southern Prince having been bought and sold several times arrived in 1978 name Bitas, at the Kaoshung breaker's yard. However, I had to complete my one and only voyage on the Southern Prince.

I joined the Southern Prince in Newcastle. She had been laid up on the Tyne throughout the winter and was in a pretty sorry state. The crew accommodation was uninhabitable. We had to get shore cleaners on board to clean the whole accommodation block. Only then did the Ratings agree to sign on.

Our cargo-handling derricks were seized up as the grease at the wheels had dried up so the derricks would not swivel. We were chartered to a Dutch firm who sent a surveyor across to inspect the vessel. We had 16 derricks which took us a week to overhaul, grease or renew the topping lift runners, and the cargo winch wire runners.

We loaded general cargo for the Caribbean at the usual ports: Hamburg, Rotterdam, Amsterdam, Antwerp and lastly Rouen, halfway up the Seine to Paris. In Rouen we loaded our special locker at the after end of No.5 Tween deck with cases and cartons of wines and spirits. Our ports of discharge were: La Guairá (the port for Caracas, Venezuela's capital), Curacao, Aruba, Santa Maria (all 3 Netherland Antilles) Barranquilla (Venezuela) and Carahena (Columbia).

The master was very near retirement so just let me get on with my job. However, he was always available if required. Our first port of call was Caracas; we had to anchor overnight to wait for a berth.

It was a very calm night so the Captain said that the Senior Apprentice could take my 0400-0800 anchor watch. At about 0500 Mike, the apprentice, banged on my door saying we had a fire in No. 5 hold and black smoke was billowing out of the Tween deck cowl ventilators. With alarm bells ringing the whole crew were preparing to fight the fire.

These days ships have large bottles of CO₂ which can be discharged into any part of the ship. The Southern Prince had to use the steam used to run the cargo winches. First we had to cut off all means of air being drawn in by the fire. We pulled off the cowls on the ventilator shafts and blocked them with wooden plugs. Meanwhile the engineers were blanking off the steam pipes to the deck and modring winches and removing the blanks from the steam lines leading to the holds and Tween decks. These procedures only took a few minutes so when we were sure all the vents were sealed off we sent steam into the Tween deck and lower hold of No. 5 hatch. At daylight the main deck around No. 5 hatch had paint peeling off and the deck plates starting to buckle at the after-end of the hatch. We were certain the fire was in the Tween deck near the special locker. The Captain was keeping the Port Authority informed and asked for firemen to be sent out to us. Surprisingly they sent a Harbour Pilot and a couple of tugs to take us into Port.

Once alongside the firemen tried to get into No.5 Tween deck but it was absolutely choc-a-bloc with cargo. So we took a couple of hatch covers off and started to discharge the cargo in the smoke. Soon they could see the seat of the fire right at the after-end of the Tween deck. Within half an hour of pouring tons of water into the hatch, the fire was out.

We had discovered from our cargo plan that right across the front of the special locker were a few dozen bags of lamp black. This is a very fine black powder which is a derivative from refining of crude oil to petroleum. It is very prone to spontaneous combustion and that is exactly what it did. But what a mess! From what I could discover it is used in the production process for car and lorry tyres.

All of the cargo in the lower hold and Tween deck was an insurance write-off on completion of discharge. We opened up the Special Locker containing wine from Rouen. There must have been almost 30 tons of

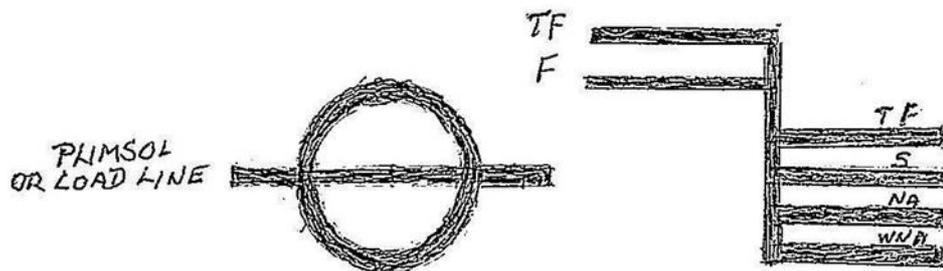
wineApproximately 600 bottles! Every single bottle was blown, not a cork left, the heat from the fire and steam had popped the lot.

For the rest of our stay in port we had to employ shore cleaners to get the hold and Tween deck ready for our next cargo of bulk sugar which was contracted by Tate and Lyle's for discharge at their factory in Liverpool Docks.

All the holds and Tween decks had to be washed out and the hold bilges quickly dried and lime-washed. The limber boards (the sturdy wooden boards covering the bilges) were covered with burlap and secured with battens to prevent sugar from entering them.

So from our last port of discharge (Cartagena) we sailed on the short voyage to Ocho Rios, tying up at the same berth used by Ocean Monarch, where we had berthed there a couple of times ten years before. A very pleasant stay in this port, compared to the north coast of South American ports, we were able to load between 9 and 10,000 tons of unrefined sugar which was loaded onto a belt from the stockyard half a mile inland. The idea, of course, is to load the deepest possible draught and to arrive at the discharge port on an even keel (same draft reading fore and aft). With 5 or 6 hundred tons to the load completion, it stops and the Mate makes his decision where the final will be loaded to: the load line or Plimsoll line.

The lines are 1" thick and there are 6 sets of draft marks. One on each side of the Bow and Stern (4) and one on each side of the loadline and near as possible (but not interfering with, the loadlines) on completion all 6 draft marks are read and the average of the 6 is noted. If it is a stillwater reading then the weight of the water displaced minus fuel, fresh water, stores, permanent ballast (if any) and people, it will give a pretty accurate weight of cargo loaded. If there is a swell getting an accurate reading is just guess work. A ship is really just a big weighing machine!



- TF TROPICAL FRESH
- F FRESH
- S SALT WATER SUMMER.
- NA NORTH ATLANTIC
- WNA WINTER NORTH ATLANTIC (ABOVE 36°N)

Our problem with the final trim calculation and distribution of the last cargo for trimming came when I asked for 600 tons to complete, with directions on which holds the cargo should go into. It seemed to be taking a long time. When questioning the foreman he checked that the final tally on the belt was 800 tons and I only required 600 tons. Well it's all on the conveyor belt now so you have to take it; I cannot leave any cargo on the belt. So at the end we were 200 tons overloaded. The Captain was very laid back about it and said we will stay south of the WNA line 36° N, before crossing over to winter. Using fuel and water would bring her up 5" so we would be 3" overload at arrival in Liverpool. Anyway I hope the cost in freight the shipping company received made up for the extra fuel. Certainly an extra day on charter with the extra miles steaming would help.

Before we could start on our voyage home we had to repack a gland in around the rudderstock, (the rudder attachments). The steering engine which has the power through a quadrant attached to a rudder post. The compartment is called the steering flat. Below this is the transom space which sits as the stern curves to accept the rudder and propeller. The gland through which the rudderstock enters the transom. This gland was leaking,

flooding the transom space and had to be replaced. Below the transom is an open space where the rudder post enters the hull. Shielding the rudder post, up to the transom, is a circular metal plate protecting the rudder post and the watertight seal into the transom which was completely flooded now that the defective seal was below the waterline.

We sailed from Ocho Rios round the island to the south coast port and capital, Kingston. A small engineering firm was employed to fix the problem. First they had to stop the leak into the transom, pump it dry and then repack the gland. We wondered how they were going to stop the leak. It was unbelievably simple. A diver went down three times with bags of sawdust and opened them up beneath the circular protection plate. The sawdust floated up swelling and surrounding the faulty gland. The transom was pumped dry and the gland repacked. Job done! So off we sailed to Liverpool entering the lock at the top of high water. Tied up safely, no problems, I stayed during discharge. The regular Chief Officer returning on completion! Tate and Lyle said it was the largest single shipment they had ever received at that factory!

Pizzaro - 22.7.70 - 16.11.70

This was a complete change for me. A large cargo ship taken over in 1955 by Furness Withy from Pacific Steam navigation Co. (PSNC). It was a steam turbine round about 12,000 gross tons. Whilst I was on leave there was a dock strike in Liverpool so it was not possible to load a general there. When the strike ended the ship could not spare the time to load a general cargo as she was needed to bring a full cargo from the west coast of South America. So we loaded a bulk cargo of fertiliser for Esmeraldas in Ecuador. The Captain, a Welshman, had worked for PSNC all his life and was a small man: pleasant and not easily disturbed. He was not familiar with bulk loading. The ship was three very distinct accommodation standards. She was able to carry 12 passengers, in very good, 6 ensuite air-conditioned cabins. Their diner saloon was large enough to take all passengers and officers. Bulkheads were sheathed in etched glass depicting scenes of the Andes and Gauchos on horseback. There was a comfortable sitting lounge and bar and a small set out reading room. All very splendid! Our accommodation was quite poor: no air conditioning, no separate toilets. The ship was only five years old but very poorly maintained. I do not blame the crew but the PSNC management. Their policy was to paint over everything, never mind the rust lying beneath. You could stick a knife through the bottom of her wooden clinker-built lifeboats.

The voyage to Panama was fine and on arrival at Esmeraldas we were berthed at a pier with a single fixed crane, which is a pain to have to move the ship up and down the pier. Discharge continued in two shifts ending about 2330 hours. One evening the Captain and I were watching the discharge from a walkway round the forepart of the Bridge. The crane was using a grab and the crane driver was not making a very good job of it. Apart from the grab wires a single wire, attached to the mouth of the grab, helped to keep the grab steady. For this to work the crane driver had to keep an even weight on the guide wire. We were watching at No. 3 hold. The crane driver was not using the guide wire properly. The over taut single wire was causing the crane boom to whip and there was a loud crack; all wires flying out, the crane boom lying across the partially opened hatch. Not being as quick as the Captain who was crouching below the bulwarks he asked me if it had hit anyone. There were two men standing on the unopened bit of the hold, now only one left. They were standing side by side. It took one, who died instantly, and left the other untouched. The crane driver ran off into the jungle.

I remember it was two days before a policeman came to make enquiries. The poor fellow who was killed was an industrial chemist and had no right or reason to be on the vessel at all.

Loading the cargo, more or less general, was very interesting. In two holds we carried fishmeal, wet hides, ore in bulk, copper and tin ingots. In the Tween decks: copper wire, and No. 1 hold a great load of balsa wood which weighed about 10 tons. Most of the cargo was loaded in Valparaiso but some in Antofagasta, Iquique and Lima.

On arrival to the UK I was asked to standby the ship whilst she was discharging. We discharged for a few days in London and Eileen was able to bring Mark and my brother in law to have a look round in London.

Edenmore - 2.2.71 - 23.8.71

Back to the Edenmore again, with a very good Master, Ron from Hull. Still on the British Steel Charter we were bringing 15,000 tons of iron ore back to the UK every couple of weeks or so. One voyage we went to Monrovia

but unusually we loaded for Trieste after leaving Monrovia. The main engine room cooling pipe had collapsed. The engineers wanted to put a cement box round the broken pipe. The alternative was to wait for a section of new pipe to be sent from the UK. By this time we were very near Freetown to do the job and get some more sacks of cement as well. Chippy, the Second Engineer, and I started to build the wooden frame. It

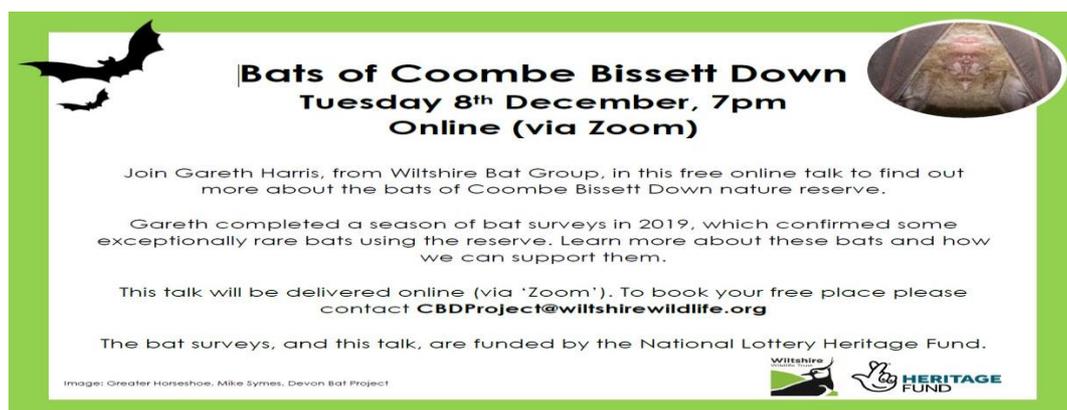
was very hot and at the bottom, the engine room, even hotter. It took us two and a half days to do the job, making sure the last dollop had hardened before applying some more. The first lunchtime, after leaving Freetown, the Second Steward (in charge of the bain-marie) collapsed in the pantry. We carried him up to our one-bed hospital and found his temperature was rising. We tried to cool him with what little ice and fans we had but shortly after his temperature reached 109° he died. We had to bury him at sea and he lived in Liverpool. The Mission to Seamen offered to give his family a service as we committed his body at approximately the same time as the family service would end. However, very sadly, they were not interested so the next day we sewed him up in canvas and weighted him down with a couple of old cargo shackles. We stopped the ship and after a short service from the back page of the Shop Master's Medical Guide he slipped down and disappeared into the Atlantic.

The rest of the voyage to Trieste was very peaceful but on approaching Captain Ron said he did not feel very well. He did not look great and asked if I could make the approach top port and pick up the pilot. Ron went down to his cabin and by the time we were alongside he seemed to be ok. He paid a visit to the doctor. Ron was ok, the discharge went very well and in two days we were on our way to Sagunto on the west coast of Spain to load a full cargo of iron ore for Newport in South Wales. This was one of our favourite ports. Just before arrival we were plodding westward through the Med when Ron telephoned me from his cabin. He said he was worried about his health after the Trieste episode so had had a look through the SMMG and decided he had had a heart attack approaching Trieste. When he returned from the Doc in Sagunto they had confirmed his suspicions. Now a problem, he would have to 'Pay Off'. So he asked if I could take over as Master and he would be a passenger. Not allowed. He could not fly for 3 weeks after his attack, (still over two weeks to wait), but of course you could still go home by train. I had to go to the British Consulate in Valencia to have my Master's Certificate checked, the ships 'Articles of Agreement' and my discharge book endorsed.

So the big day came for me, sailing from port, and my first command. The Pilot went, said we were ok, and two minutes later we were aground on a sand bank! The chart showed an unbouyed 5 fathom (30' patch) we just caught the edge of it. Astern movements and the returning pilot, we could not break the suction. We had to sit and wait for a couple of tugs to come down from Valencia. It must have been a record: two minutes from taking his ship from the pilot and he put her on a sand bank.

On arrival in Newport the Shipping Master, (MOT rep), held an inquest into the death of our Second Steward. Ron had followed all the guidelines correctly. The Company allowed me to stay as Master and take the ship around to Falmouth for her bi-annual dry dock.

Eileen drove our Morris 1100 with Mark, then five, down to Falmouth. She was seven and a half month pregnant with our twins and had great difficulty getting and staying behind the steering wheel. It was mid-summer the weather was great and we had so much to look forward to. The new Master joined just before we left dry dock to go on our travels again. It was another 12 years before I had the joy of taking command on another vessel. Captain Ron recovered and returned to sea, he was still sailing when I left the Company.



Bats of Coombe Bissett Down
Tuesday 8th December, 7pm
Online (via Zoom)

Join Gareth Harris, from Wiltshire Bat Group, in this free online talk to find out more about the bats of Coombe Bissett Down nature reserve.

Gareth completed a season of bat surveys in 2019, which confirmed some exceptionally rare bats using the reserve. Learn more about these bats and how we can support them.

This talk will be delivered online (via 'Zoom'). To book your free place please contact CBDDProject@wiltshirewildlife.org

The bat surveys, and this talk, are funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund.

Image: Greater Horseshoe, Mike Symes, Devon Bat Project

Wiltshire WILDLIFE HERITAGE FUND

History on our Doorstep:

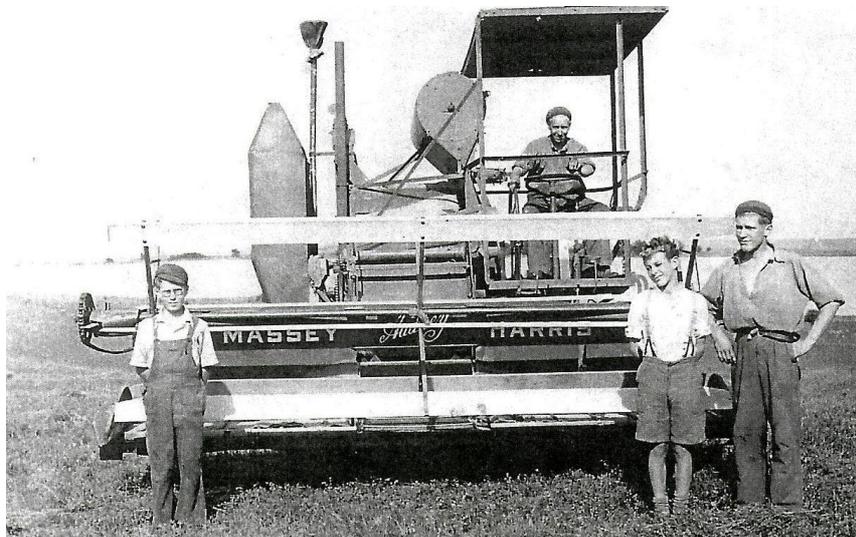
Sharon Hallis

In this issue we take a peek at Homington and just a few interesting facts about a village that saw its beginnings in pre-historic times and is detailed in the Domesday Book.....

“Osberne the Priest holds Humitone. (Osberne was the priest for Britford) Alsi held it in the time of King Edward and it was assessed as two hides. Here is one plough land. There are two cottagers, 3 acres of meadow and 6 acres of pasture. It is worth 30 shillings.” Domesday Book 1086

I recently chatted with Will Tozer and it was a delight to hear some of his fascinating family history. The family have been in the village for about one hundred years and, my goodness, have they seen some changes in that time! Originally farming was by horse and manpower, with tractors only arriving later in the ‘roaring 20’s’. The first combine harvester (a pretty common site these days across our counties) only appeared in the village in 1946!

Photo: One of the first large combines to come from Canada in crates and assembled by H & C Farris (Coombe Hill). Len Ford, Fred Peach, Derrick Whatley & Doug Ford



Will, and his sister Jean, saw the shop and bakery finally sold in 1957 (now Nelson House opposite the Church) when the shopkeeper, Gerald Freyling, relocated to the new shop in Coombe Bissett. Both were members of the first Sunday School in the Vicarage Barn which fell into disrepair after a fire and was, eventually, taken down. Also, the family witnessed the decommissioning of Homington’s Police ‘station’ (now Rose Walls), Christian Tozer (Will’s grandfather) bought Homington Farm (originally part of Longford Estate) in 1929. You may not know this, but Christian and his wife Mary Louisa were buried on the Down having had a ‘disagreement’ with the church some time past; their graves marked by a small obelisk.

Christian’s son, Jack, was well known for his charm and generosity...alongside his volatile and eccentric nature. 1934 saw the purchase of Barber’s Farm (from King’s College Cambridge) increasing the size of the original farm significantly. So, you think you know Homington but did you know

1250 The Church of St Mary Homington was built and has been a place of worship (with many additions) until this day! Its tax to Pope Nicholas was £5.00 per annum (I wonder what that would equate to today?) as recorded in 1291. The village is not without its scandal either.....see below!

16th Century Looking closely at the West Tower Arch we could speculate that the defacing of the corbel was, possibly, carried out during the Reformation but being a small rural church it was an unlikely target so there may well be some other reason for its damage; lost in the passing of time.

1604 An extract from the Church Register states: “Mary Robins having been caught in the abominable and detestable act of adultery is ordered to attend the parish church of Homington and, standing before the congregation after the Gospel, clothed in a white sheet, confess her sins....

18th Century excavations (probably in Barber's Lane) revealed a skeleton suggesting that Homington has been inhabited for over 3000 years. You may have heard of the 'Beaker People', (as was the famous Amesbury Archer) so called because of their distinctive pottery and burial style. They migrated from Europe and brought life-changing skills to the British Isles. A low mound, on Homington Hill may be evidence of Bronze Age residents. Ample evidence of round huts reveals a substantial Iron Age community spanning from Homington House to Dogdean Farm. There is even an exhibit at the British Museum from Homington Barrow...a flat-bladed dagger. All of which places the village well and truly into the history books.

1888-1894 Bishop John Wordsworth of Salisbury, inspired by a visit to St. Andrew's, instituted a nine-hole golf course at Dogdean Farm. Homington Golf Club originally had twelve members and subscriptions were fixed at 2s 6d. The first Honorary Secretary was Mr D K J McDonald. 1894 saw a change of farm ownership and Mr Tyrwhit Drake was not pleasantly disposed towards golf, raising the rent to £10.00 per annum and so many restrictions that the Club relocated to the now South Wilts Golf Club site.

1938 Brought an esteemed accolade: a beautiful painting of Homington St. Mary (amongst others of the village and Coombe Bissett) by Henry Lamb MC RA. He lived at Brookside, now Brook House, in Coombe Bissett

1952 A Point to Point Steeplechase (built by Jack Tozer and Bert Ford) of three and a half miles and eighteen jumps could be found on Homington Down. It transferred to Larkhill in 1957 due to rising costs for maintenance and operation. Humourously, a horse of 'note' and its rider (Robbie McKie) had access to the course for practice. When it came to the actual race, it ran off to the corner where it had always left the course, and headed for the stables!

1953 Saw the final year of a working village blacksmith. Frederick George 'Smithy' Feltham (b.1878) worked the bellows and furnace in a small brick building between Odstock Road and Barber's Lane (demolished for a dwelling in recent years). Frederick had a busy life shoeing horses and the like. He could be seen visiting local farms and businesses on his postman's bicycle with its large frame to carry all his tools. He would never see a horse go shoeless for lack of money to pay a bill. Multi-talented Frederick was a keen dart player AND a musician in the Odstock Band!



And finally, can we claim the world's oldest man was a Homington resident as indicated by a marble slab in the church?

"Here lyeth, Body of George Stanley, Gent., who died Oct. 19th, 1719, in ye 151 the year of his age." (*sic*)

So, if these few snippets whet your appetite for our wonderful local history there is plenty more to be found. We welcome future articles with a historic theme so please do get in touch.

With thanks to Will Tozer and Bill Feltham for information..... and an idyllic glimpse of times gone by.



COOMBE BISSETT AND HOMINGTON VILLAGE HALL

December 2020 January 2021

In these days of Lockdown and uncertainty it is impossible to say when any form of normality will return. It continues to be very frustrating and disappointing for us all. Hopefully with the imminent arrival of a selection of Covid vaccines, it will be possible, in the not too distant future, to accept bookings again for at least some activities in the Village Hall. Larger gatherings may be delayed until well into the new year. The Management Committee will continue to be guided by the advice we receive on the safe operation of community halls and will endeavour to open again just as soon as this is possible.

In the meantime we wish all our regular and ‘one off’ users, together with everyone else in the villages, a Merry Christmas and a safe and healthy New Year.

Don Morgan Chairman of the Village Hall Management Committee.

VILLAGE CINEMA

**WE ARE HOPING TO RETURN WHEN CONDITIONS PERMIT WITH A WONDERFUL SELECTION OF FILMS FOR YOU TO ENJOY, SO DON'T FORGET US , WE WILL BE BACK IN THE NEW YEAR.
In the meantime we wish you all a very Happy Christmas and a Healthy and Safe New Year.**

Remember ,

If you would like to book the hall, check our rates on www.coombebissett.com where you can also find a booking request form. Email bookings and enquiries to Rachel Coombs on hall@coombebissett.com

Regular events at the Hall :

Painting classes

For all abilities and medium.

These are held alternate Thursdays , 10.30 – 12.30, outside the main school holidays .

For more information please contact heatheroliver@btinternet.com or call 07731506928

Drama Club

The Drama Club tries to do a Spring production and a pantomime each year,

Rehearsals are held Tuesday and Friday evenings .

Everyone is welcome. The Drama club needs support backstage with scenery, costumes etc.etc. Scene shifting, refreshments, lighting, parking and more, as well as actors.

If you are interested please contact :

Lynn Mills (chairman) 01722718438

Tina Chelu (treasurer) 01722718351

Kirstie Finton (secretary) 07519002582

Parkinson's Short Mat Bowls Club

Especially for sufferers of Parkinson's disease , the Club meets every Friday morning at 10.00am.

If you are interested please contact David Germain on 01722 718531

Pilates Classes

Weekly Pilates classes on Tuesday at 9.15am till 10.15am

Low impact exercises which safely strengthen the body and improve flexibility.

£7.50 per class payable in blocks of 10.

Contact : Claudine 07788 587937 for more information.

Badminton Club

The Badminton Club will open again on Wednesday evenings again in early September through to May .

We have one court , the games are run on a peg system so it works well and is fair, spare rackets are available .

Everyone is welcome , for more information please contact Jane White 01722 718485 or 01722 718670