



Christ Church Hilderstone

# PARISH MAGAZINE

*A celebration of village life*

**Christmas Edition 2022**

## WHAT'S ON:

### NOVEMBER:

Saturday 26 <sup>th</sup>	Monthly Arts & Crafts Market Pop Up Pub With food by John Hill	10am – 1pm 5pm – *10pm from 6pm	Village Hall Village Hall
Monday 28 <sup>th</sup>	Wreath-making Workshop	10am – 12.30pm	Village Hall

### DECEMBER:

Thursday 1 <sup>st</sup>	Wreath-making Workshop	1pm – 3.30pm	Village Hall
Sunday 4 <sup>th</sup>	Christingle Service	11.15am	Christ Church
Tuesday 6 <sup>th</sup>	W.I. Christmas Party	7.15pm	Village Hall
Wed'day 7 <sup>th</sup>	Wreath-making Workshop	7pm – 9.30pm	Village Hall
Friday 9 <sup>th</sup>	Sam Handley's Quiz Night With food by Cod for Duty Pop-up Pub	7pm 5pm - *10pm	Village Hall Village Hall
Saturday 10 <sup>th</sup>	Christmas Fair	10am – 1pm	Village Hall
	Christmas Tree Festival	10am – 4pm	Christ Church
Sunday 11 <sup>th</sup>	Christmas Tree Festival	2pm – 4pm	Christ Church
Thursday 15 <sup>th</sup>	Table Centre Workshop	4pm – 6pm	Village Hall
Saturday 17 <sup>th</sup>	Village Christmas Show With bar	7pm - *10pm	Village Hall
Saturday 24 <sup>th</sup>	Family Crib Service Midnight Mass	4pm 9.45pm	Christ Church Christ Church

### JANUARY:

Sunday 1 <sup>st</sup>	United Benefice Service with Bishop Michael of Lichfield	10am	Fulford St Nicholas
Tuesday 10 <sup>th</sup>	W.I. 'Crafty envelopes'	7.30pm	Village Hall
Saturday 21 <sup>st</sup>	Burns Night Supper	7pm – 11pm	Village Hall
Saturday 28 <sup>th</sup>	Pop Up Pub	5pm - *10pm	Village Hall

*Dates & Times may change. Please check in advance of an event. \*Last orders at the bar in the Village Hall are 10pm, with the bar closing at 10.30pm prompt.*

# Helping you Keep in Touch with Events:

## **Christ Church, Hilderstone:**

Vicar There is currently no Incumbent at Christ Church.  
Churchwarden Audrey Stringer Tel: 01889 505638

**Parish Council:** 7.30pm on 4<sup>th</sup> Wed. of each month in the Village Hall  
Parish Clerk Nikola Evans, Email: [clerk@hilderstone.staffslc.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@hilderstone.staffslc.gov.uk)  
[www.hilderstone.org.uk](http://www.hilderstone.org.uk). Visit their 'Events' page for details of forthcoming activities.

**Hilderstone W. I.:** 7.30pm on 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of the month, Hilderstone Village Hall.

President Miss Pat Saul Tel: 01785 812580

## **Hilderstone Village Hall:**

Bookings Debbie Britton Tel: 07810 332559

**Facebook @HVVH60, Twitter @hvh50, Instagram hilderstone\_village\_hall –  
Web Site [www.hilderstonevillagehall.com](http://www.hilderstonevillagehall.com). There is also an email service,  
notifying those on the mailing list of forthcoming events.**

## **Neighbourhood watch:**

Stone Ash Connor Tel: 01785 234129

Hilderstone Sue Stubbs Tel: 01889 505203

## **Staffs. County Councillor:**

Ian Parry Tel: 07831 510381

Email: [ian.parry@staffordshire.gov.uk](mailto:ian.parry@staffordshire.gov.uk)

## **Stafford Borough Councillor:**

Andrew Harp Tel: 01889 505400

## **V.I.N. (Village Information Network):**

This email service notifies those on the mailing list of events, news, etc in the village or affecting those living here. Contact: [richard.pilcher1@btinternet.com](mailto:richard.pilcher1@btinternet.com).

## Letter from the Editor



ABOVE: View over the fields to Christ Church by Audrey Stringer.

With December comes all the excitement of Christmas, as we venture into the loft to find our decorations, face the somewhat daunting prospect of all those presents to buy, and enjoy the anticipation of celebrating this festive season with family and friends.

Hilderstone comes into its own at Christmas: when it comes to celebrations, we certainly know how to put on a good show, and this year is no exception. Admittedly, as the nights draw in and the temperature drops, we yearn for a real fire to sit in front of and stay toasty warm (*especially if it is as inviting as that pictured by Daisy Tandy-Fullager, aged 8 OVERLEAF TOP*). But here are some of the events the village is putting on during the festive season, to lure you away from that cosy fire.

Following the great success of the Christmas Tree Festival last year, the Christmas Tree Festival is once again making an appearance at Christ Church, this time featuring Nativity Scenes from around the world (10-11 December). This beautiful Georgian church will be bedecked with twinkling Christmas Trees and is a sight to behold. There will also be the Christmas Market in the Village Hall on that Saturday, offering a perfect opportunity to do a little Christmas shopping whilst enjoying refreshments in the Café. What could be better?

We should not, however, overlook the true meaning of Christmas and its importance in the Christian calendar. Christ Church will be celebrating with a selection of services, specifically geared to all those within its community. We start with the Christingle Service, popular with young children, and the Youth Club has kindly agreed to assist us in making the Christingle oranges to present to members of the congregation, so a big thank you to them.

Next is the time-honoured Crib Service at 4pm on Christmas Eve, designed to appeal to families of all ages. Out come our nativity characters and the children are encouraged to be actively involved throughout the service. This year, we are honoured to have Bishop Matthew of Stafford officiating at the service.



And finally, we have the Midnight Mass which, somewhat confusingly, is actually held at 9.45pm! Like all our services during Advent, Christmas Carols abound as we celebrate the true beginning of Christmas amongst friends and family. Do come along to the church during this special Christmas period, as it always looks its most spectacular with all the decorations adorning the church.

Christmas would not be complete, however, without our very own village Christmas Show, would it? For several years now an intrepid group of



villagers has produced concerts, pantos, and sketches to amuse the good folks of Hilderstone and raise much-needed funds for local causes. This year, along with supporting the Village Hall, it will also be raising funds for Lupus UK and, we hope, helping to raise awareness of this crippling illness within our community. It is certainly NOT an event to miss – whatever your age.

There are to be two performances: a matinee for young families and a later performance, complete with bar (see the advert in this magazine for details). There is plenty of audience participation and merriment and, whilst we do not have an Elf (as drawn by Lily-Mae Clark, aged 9 – ABOVE), we do have a host of other characters, from Cinders, evil Queens and Henchmen to, of course, a Fairy Godmother. Do come along and support this most festive of events.

When we must finally face the task of taking down all our lovely decorations and getting back to 'normal', we look to the year ahead. Well, we have that covered too! A Hilderstone Village Calendar 2023 has been produced, featuring the winners of the Photographic Competition. The images are stunning and reflect a real joy in the beautiful countryside we are so fortunate to live in. I would recommend you order a copy or come along to the Christmas Market where they will be on sale. Proceeds will go to Christ Church Hilderstone and the Village Hall, so please do make sure you order your copy.

So, we will all be busy in the weeks ahead it seems. Please come along and support these village events, which are all run by volunteers, whose work throughout the year keeps this small rural community thriving. Your support is very much appreciated.



It is just left for me and the team at the Parish Magazine to wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. We hope you enjoy this Winter Issue and look forward to seeing you all over this festive period.

*(Pictured LEFT: a lovely Christmas Tree with festive best wishes, by Christopher Gordon-Creed, aged 7).*

### VILLAGE HALL LOTTERY DRAW WINNERS:

#### August:

<b>Ball:</b>	19	£100
	36	£ 50
	67	£ 25
	3	£ 10
	16	£ 10

#### September:

<b>Ball:</b>	6	£100
	9	£ 75
	27	£ 50
	83	£ 40
	22	£ 30

#### October:

<b>Ball:</b>	32	£100
	50	£ 50
	61	£ 25
	13	£ 10
	24	£ 10

# From your Parish Council

## Village Flower Boxes

Many householders might have noticed that a number of the village flower boxes are no longer being attended to, apart from the one on Roebuck Bank near the build out. The reason for this is that Bill Holmes, our resident grounds man of 30+ years, has now retired (6 months ago).



We have attempted to use a contract service to continue the maintenance in many parts of the village, including the flower boxes, however, it is not the same as having a person in the village giving attention to the flowers and weeding as Bill used to do. This work was always paid for from Parish Council finance budget.

As the service and appearance of these boxes, which added colour to our village, has now lapsed, the Parish Council is asking residents if they would like to take on the responsibility for a flower box, or even sponsor the cost and maintenance.

The Parish Council has been supporting the resident who maintains the excellent display on Roebuck Bank and has to be commended. We would now like to replicate this across the whole village.

The Flower Boxes and areas that need to be adopted are:-

Dingle Lane Junction  
Children's Play Area  
Eastholme Bus Shelter  
Telephone Box  
Village Green



Village Gate Eastholme  
Village Gate Cresswell Road  
Village Gate Hilderstone Road

If, as a resident or a business, you feel you could take on this responsibility, please contact the Parish Clerk ([clerk@hilderstone.staffslc.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@hilderstone.staffslc.gov.uk)). Thank you for your continued support in helping keep our village looking its very best.

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## Litter in our Lanes

Unfortunately, litter from passing vehicles continues to be a problem for our village and its country lanes. We are grateful to all those who regularly collect this litter and help us keep our village looking its best. If you come across litter in and around our village, please pick it up if you can and place it in one of our bins located around the village or alternatively take it home with you. If you are unable to pick it up, please report it to either myself or Street Scene at Stafford Borough Council. For fly tipping, please report it to Street Scene at Stafford Borough Council on Tel: 01785 619000.

*My email is [philip.davies73@btinternet.com](mailto:philip.davies73@btinternet.com)*

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## Local Footpaths

We all appreciate how restorative a walk in the countryside can be, especially on lovely crisp winter days. We are fortunate to have many attractive public footpaths in our area for all to enjoy. To find our footpaths, go to: [www.staffordshire.gov.uk/environment/rightsofway/footpaths-bridleways.aspx](http://www.staffordshire.gov.uk/environment/rightsofway/footpaths-bridleways.aspx)

If you find any problems (damaged stile, blocked footpath etc), please take photos if possible & email them to me and I will inform the Rights Of Way department at the County Council.

*Phil Davies, the Parish Council footpaths officer*



# HILDERSTONE WI

**We meet on 2nd Tuesday in the month, at 7.30pm at the Village Hall.**

\*Christmas Party            7.15pm Tuesday, 6th December 2022

\*January Meeting            7.30pm Tuesday, 10th January 2023

'Crafty envelopes' by Lynda & co

\*February Meeting        7.30pm Tuesday, February 14th

'Growing up in the 1950's' by Pat Saul



We wish everyone in Hilderstone a Merry Christmas and a safe, healthy & happy 2023. *For more information on the Hilderstone Women's Institute, please contact Pat Saul (Hilderstone President) on Tel: 01785 812580.*

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## Christmas Craft Events in aid of Donna Louise

Back by popular demand, Ann Evans is hosting a series of **Wreath-Making workshops** in Hilderstone Village Hall, with all proceeds going to the Donna Louise Trust. This is one event that must not be missed – whatever your skills, or lack thereof! Tickets are priced between £39 and £45 (see below).

Monday 28<sup>th</sup> November    10am – 12.30pm    Light refreshments - £39

Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> December    1pm – 3.30pm        Light refreshments - £39

Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> December 7pm – 9.30pm        Prosecco - £45

### **A Table Centre workshop:**

Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> December   4pm – 6pm            £20

**Look out for details on the Village Hall Noticeboard and its Facebook page. To book, please ring Ann on Tel: 0770 488 2781 or email: [hilderstonevillagehall@gmail.com](mailto:hilderstonevillagehall@gmail.com). Places are limited so book early!**

## From Your Village Hall

It continues to be a hive of activity at the Village Hall as we host a full programme of events for the local community. We have our regular Pop-up Pubs once a month, with guest caterers, including Fish & Chips, Mexican, Pizzas (pictured RIGHT) and much more besides. This event has proven popular, with young families opting to come along early, around 5pm, whilst our 'older' guests come along throughout the evening.



We also have our Monthly Arts & Crafts Market and Café on the last Saturday of the month, from 10am to 1pm. Barbara's home-made Staffordshire Oatcakes, with Bacon, are not to be missed!



In addition to this, we had our Barn Dance, in support of the Scarecrow Weekend (3<sup>rd</sup> September) and, whilst it is fair to say that most (if not all) of us proved dismal when it came to following instructions, it was an hilarious evening (pictured LEFT), and a good time was had by all. It should be noted, however, that the children fared much better than the adults when it came to the dancing.

Music, as always, has proven a big hit in the village. Not content with having hosted one of the finest guitarists in the country when Gordon Giltrap performed live at the Village Hall (in July), October saw us host The King, Elvis himself (or at least Mark Clay, an Elvis impersonator). There was much singing along to Elvis' hits and many took to the dance floor too.

October also saw us host the Village Dinner, an event which pre-Covid had been an annual favourite in the village and organised by Joan Carr. Since leaving the village, however, Joan has handed over the reins to the Village Hall, which now hosts the event. Sadly, Joni Talks, who was scheduled to perform at the dinner, was unable to attend, but the good people of Hilderstone managed to fill the void with much chatter, laughter and excellent food. Congratulations to all those who hosted a table – there were some excellent ‘themed’ tables and guests entered into the spirit of the occasion suitably dressed for the roaring 20s, James Bond etc.

November is proving just as busy at the Village Hall, with the Film Night showing *The Secret Life of Walter Mitty* and our Mexican Pop-up Pub event (26<sup>th</sup>). Anne Evans will also be running the first of her Wreath-making sessions, with two others booked in for December. This offers a great opportunity to learn all the secrets behind the perfect Christmas Wreath with friends. It is, however, a popular event, so early booking is recommended. *(See details in this magazine).*

And then, of course, we find ourselves in December. We start off with Sam’s Quiz Night on 9<sup>th</sup>, followed by the Christmas Fayre on Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> December, where there will be an array of lovely Christmas ideas on offer, plus refreshments at the Café. Also, as is now traditional, the Christmas Show will herald the start of Christmas for many, with an array of colourful characters, a sing-along and audience participation. With the new sound system in place, we are confident the singing will be better than ever (Oh no it won’t I hear you cry!).

*So, as you can see, we cater for everyone in the village, so why not come along and join in one, or all, of our activities? Details of events and a booking service, are available through the Village Hall Facebook Page, and you can also keep up-to-date on the Hall’s website and Instagram pages too plus the noticeboard outside the Hall’s entrance.*

Bookings: Debbie Britton - Tel: 07810 332559

**Facebook @HVH60, Twitter @hvh50, Instagram hilderstone\_village\_hall –  
Web Site [www.hilderstonevillagehall.com](http://www.hilderstonevillagehall.com).** There is also an email service, notifying those on the mailing list of forthcoming events.

# ALL THE MAGIC OF CHRISTMAS!

What is Christmas without our annual Christmas Show in the Village Hall? Well, its back again by popular demand, on Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> December.



Packed full of Christmas jokes, sketches, costumes and all your favourite Christmas characters (including a Fairy Godmother and Ugly Sisters, though not as you may remember them), this is an event for all the family.

There will be a Matinee performance at 3pm and a second performance at 7pm, where a bar will also be available.



All profits from this show will go to Lupus UK and Hilderstone Village Hall.

***To book your tickets, please visit the Hilderstone Village Hall website or Facebook page (details at the front of the magazine).***

# Hilderstone Village Hall Youth Club

Youth club has a lot going on as we build up to Christmas.

- Firstly, we are taking part in the **Christmas Tree Festival** again this year, which the children are really excited about as they won last year! They are hoping their decorations are even better than last year!
- We are also creating a **Nativity scene** for the church's Christmas Tree Festival, so keep a look out for it when you visit the church.

- Finally, what the children are most looking forward to is our **Christmas party**. After bringing the reindeer to the children last year at the Village Hall, we are going to Amerton Farm this year to see them. This is on Thursday 15th December. All the children are so excited about going to play at the farm and meeting Santa and his reindeer.



*ABOVE: A fabulous reindeer by Isobel Evans, aged 5. I wonder if it is Isobel riding the reindeer or Santa Claus?*

If any children are interested in coming along to the Christmas Party, or learning more about our Youth Club, please contact Debbie.

**Tel: 07989 130014 for more information.**

## Cooks Tips



### Chocolate Shortbread Treats

*This lovely tea-time treat is easy to make for children and perfect for Christmas.*

#### **Ingredients:**

4oz	Caster Sugar
8 oz	Butter
10 oz	Plain flour
2 oz	Rice Flour

#### **Method:**

Soften the butter and cream together with the sugar. Mix in the flour and rice flour to form a dough. Wrap in cling film and chill in the fridge for 20 minutes.

Roll out on a floured surface. The thickness is a personal choice depending on how thick you like your biscuits.

Cut into lovely Christmas trees, hearts etc and place on a baking tray. They will spread out a little, so space them out.

Cook on Gas 3 / 150 °c for 30 minutes approx. and transfer onto a cooling wire.

When cool, melt some chocolate and spread on the biscuits with a knife or pastry brush, then add sprinkles or your own choice of topping. If they are to hang on a tree, remember to make a hole in the top of each one when still soft after they come out of the oven.

(The rice flour is important as it makes the biscuits crunchier).

Happy baking



# Children's Christmas Wordsearch



B	T	H	T	R	E	E	K	L	B	P	X
H	S	G	J	O	L	L	T	M	A	R	Y
S	T	A	R	H	T	R	E	M	U	J	L
H	H	Q	N	M	Y	T	J	G	B	A	A
E	G	A	J	E	S	U	S	H	L	U	N
P	I	O	O	Y	C	R	V	B	E	Y	G
H	L	T	S	U	A	R	W	S	S	K	E
E	P	O	E	L	N	J	U	M	P	T	L
R	H	T	P	R	D	S	I	R	E	F	L
D	T	H	H	A	L	K	I	N	G	S	K
S	H	Y	T	R	E	D	C	X	Z	J	L
P	Y	P	R	E	S	E	N	T	S	H	T

Star  
Joseph  
Tree  
Candles

Angel  
Shepherds  
Kings  
Baubles

Mary  
Jesus  
Presents  
Lights



# Hilderstone Photographic Competition



I would like to thank everyone who submitted photographs into the competition for the 2023 calendar.

We had over 80 entries and we were overwhelmed by the number and quality of the photographs. It was difficult to select just 12 photographs to be included in our Hilderstone Calendar, with an additional photograph for the back and front covers. Such was the quality of the submissions, that we have decided to show some of them here, along with examples of the winning photographs which appear in our 2023 Calendar.



Entries were received from:  
*Dawn Bourne, Millie Dyer, Phil Gooding, Sarah Hamilton, Delia Harvey, Roger Higginson, John Hill, Charlie Hughes, Nick Jenkinson, Richard Pilcher, Sue Pilcher, Alice Rosedene, Nick Simpson, Audrey Stringer, Jenny Stubbs and Bethany Tabernor.*

The aims behind the calendar were three-fold. Firstly, we wanted to highlight points of interest and the beauty of our village and surroundings.





Secondly, we wanted to involve as many of the residents of the village to provide the basis of the calendar. And lastly, we wanted to raise some much-needed funding for key assets in our village, Christ Church and the Village Hall.

Thanks also to Eleanor Bane and Iain Britton for the judging and the compilation of the calendar.





The Hilderstone Calendar 2023 is available to pre-order, by contacting either Tim Dyer (email: [timie.dyer@talk21.com](mailto:timie.dyer@talk21.com)) or the Hilderstone Village Hall Facebook page. There will be also be copies available to

purchase at the Christmas Fayre in the Village Hall on Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> December. Priced at £7.00, this calendar is a first for our village and truly reflects the beautiful countryside and village landmarks. Please do help us raise funds for our Village Hall and Christ Church, and also support this, our first, photographic competition and calendar.

Get your cameras out for 2023 and take some more stunning photographs throughout the year!



**PAGE 1** *Runners-up in the competition but really beautiful images.*

*TOP: Bethany Tabernor; BOTTOM: Millie Dyer.*

**PAGE 2** *TOP: Bethany Tabernor; BOTTOM: Alice Rosedene (June in our calendar).*

**THIS PAGE** *TOP: Alice Rosedene (January photograph in the calendar)*

*ABOVE: Nick Simpson (The front cover of the calendar)*

## Burns Night Supper - 21<sup>st</sup> January 2023

There's no better way to shake off the winter gloom than a night of revelry to celebrate the birthday of someone you've never met, never heard of or even cared about. We are of course talking about Scotland's most famous son; not Billy Connolly, Jimmy Crankie, or Kenny Dalglish, but the one and only Robbie Burns.

So dust off your tartan scarf and plaid shirt to spend an evening eating, drinking and dancing to all things Scottish. Poetry and The Proclaimers, it doesn't get much better than that!



Tickets are £25 per person; including a traditional Burns supper, a dram of whisky and glass of fizz on arrival. (Vegetarian and gluten free haggis to be requested when booking tickets)

To book tickets, please email [hilderstonevhbookings@gmail.com](mailto:hilderstonevhbookings@gmail.com) and for further details please check out the village hall website at [www.hilderstonevillagehall.com](http://www.hilderstonevillagehall.com).

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**Recycle  Charity**

Recycle your empty Inkjet Cartridges &  
Help us raise money for our village church and reduce landfill.  
Sorry we cannot accept toner cartridges.  
**Please note we can no longer recycle phones.**

There is a box inside church for your donations but if you need your donation to be collected, please call Phil Davies on 01785 747836.

The total raised in 2022 was £31.75.  
Thank you to everyone who donated.

# FAMILY CHRISTMASES

*By Harry Titley*

When I reflect on Christmases past  
Memories of family seem to last.  
Wartime brought a culture shock.  
No gifts to put into my Christmas sock,  
No cards, no shops with toys and lights,  
No street lights on the darkest nights.  
Necessity is the mother of invention.  
Not to let us down was our Parents' intention.  
Decorations and cards were all home made.  
Wooden toys were with what we played  
Carved by uncles with pen knives and tools.  
No wood work lessons at pre-war schools.  
Santa Claus visits continued still.  
Mince pies, glasses of port and much goodwill.  
Carols and prayers were offered each day  
To those of our family so far away.  
And we wished them, as we do to you,  
A Very Happy Christmas and a New year too.

*JOY AT CHRIST'S  
BIRTH*



*Christ Church Hilderstone*

***Joy to the world,  
the Lord has come!***



Loving Jesus,  
you were born in a stable  
but worshipped by the angels.  
Be with all who are lonely,  
and with all who feel distant from celebrations.  
Be for us a living hope that lightens their hearts.

*Amen.*

*The PCC and  
all the Congregation  
at Christ Church*

*wish you a  
Happy Christmas  
and a  
joyful New Year  
2023.*



# The Hilderstone Christmas Tree Festival

10<sup>th</sup> - 11<sup>th</sup> December 2022

**Following last year's success, Christ Church is again holding its Christmas Tree Festival.**

We are hoping for even more sponsors and therefore more trees, aiming, as always, to bring festive cheer to the village during a special time of year.

This year's event will be even better, featuring Nativity sets from around the world.

Everyone will be welcome to visit the Church to enjoy this Festival and maybe indulge in a glass of Mulled Wine and a Mince Pie or Two (it is Christmas after all)!

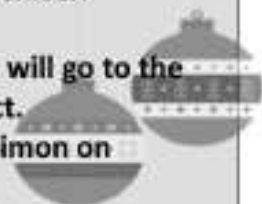
There will also be a Craft Table, where children (or those who are young at heart) can make a Christmas Tree Decoration.

Any business, organisation, or group (whether that be friends or family) are welcome to participate in designing and decorating a tree.

Costing just £25 to sponsor a tree, each tree comes complete with lights. Sponsors to decorate w/c Monday 5th December.

**All proceeds from the Christmas Tree Festival will go to the Christ Church Access for All Project.**

**For further information please contact Simon on [sa.shaw@rocketmail.com](mailto:sa.shaw@rocketmail.com)**





## The Christmas Tree – a symbol of Light

Christmas Trees lighten up the darkness, not least the fabulous specimens in our church, so marvellously decorated for our Christmas Tree Festival. As you sit in church before a Carol service or on a Sunday, take a few moments to look at the trees, to enjoy them. They point upwards, they draw our eyes beyond ourselves, and their light and colour enlighten our vision and bring joy to our hearts. That's exactly the point of the Christmas Tree and it is the point of all our Carol singing and festivities, of present-giving and tinsel, of feasting and sharing.



Christmas needs to enlighten the future with new possibilities for change and for fresh hopes to become reality, like our trees, to help us see beyond the everyday and be caught up in a brighter vision, to uplift our spirits and show us what is possible when people work together to overcome need, using our skills, energies, and resources for the good of others.

So as Christmas approaches in your own home and family, when you take out the decorations and erect the Christmas Tree once again, think not only of how it delights the senses, but also of how it can bring hope and change in our world. And long after Christmas has been and gone let finding those stray pine needles also remind you of the continuing presence of God-with-us, Emmanuel, as the prophets called this Jesus.

The Christmas Trees in our churches will shine out throughout Christmastide and you will be most welcome to join us at any of our Christmas Services. Wherever you are this Christmastide, enjoy the Christmas Tree and see in it the promise of change, light in the darkness,

*A Festive Christmas Tree by Bella Hughes, aged 7.*

which the birth of the Christ Child brings.

## Church Matters: Readings & Prayers

*Many are still hesitant to come to church and join in our worship so we have listed the readings for each week. We hope to see you soon. Unless stated otherwise, our services begin at 11.15am every Sunday.*

Date	Service	Reading 1	Reading 2	Visiting Cleric
27th Nov	Advent	Romans 13.11 to end	Matthew 24.36-44	John Sterling
<b>4th Dec</b>	<b>Christingle Advent</b>	<b>Romans 15.4-13</b>	<b>Matthew 3.1-12</b>	<b>Gerald Gardiner</b>
11th Dec	Advent	James 5.7-10	Matthew 11.2-11	Linda Lucking
18th Dec	Advent	Romans 1.1-7	Matthew 1.18-25	Brian Whittaker
<b>24<sup>th</sup> Dec</b>	<b>Crib Service 4pm start</b>	<b>Hebrews 1:1-12</b>	<b>John 1: 1-12</b>	<b>Bishop Matthew of Stafford</b>
	<b>Midnight Mass 9.45pm</b>			<b>David Howard</b>
<b>1<sup>st</sup> Jan FULFORD</b>	<b>United Benefice</b>	<b>Galatians 4: 4-7</b>	<b>Luke 2: 15-21</b>	<b>Bishop Michael of Lichfield</b>
8 <sup>th</sup> Jan	Epiphany	Ephesians 3: 1-12	Matthew 2: 1-12	Graham Fowell
15 <sup>th</sup> Jan	Epiphany	Corinthians 1: 1-9	John 1: 29-42	John Sterling
22 <sup>nd</sup> Jan	Epiphany	Corinthians 1: 10-18	Matthew 4: 12-23	Graham Fowell
<b>29<sup>th</sup> Jan</b>	<b>Candlemas Epiphany</b>	<b>Luke 1: 69-73</b>	<b>Mark 4: 35-41</b>	<b>John Sterling</b>
5 <sup>th</sup> Feb	Epiphany	Corinthians 2: 1-18	Matthew 5: 13-20	Gerald Gardiner
12 <sup>th</sup> Feb	Epiphany	Romans 8: 18-25	Matthew 6: 25-34	Roy Ball
19 <sup>th</sup> Feb	Epiphany	Peter 1: 16-22	Matthew 17: 1-9	Archdeacon Megan
26 <sup>th</sup> Feb	Lent			Linda Lucking

## News from Christ Church

Whilst Christ Church remains in Interregnum (ie without an Incumbent), it continues to serve its community by holding weekly services, thanks to visiting clergy stepping in to officiate, as well as ensuring all our usual important calendar events, such as Harvest, Remembrance Sunday and Christmas, are celebrated within our rural community.



*ABOVE: an example of the lovely Harvest displays in church. RIGHT: our very own Auctioneer Extraordinaire, Hazel Woodward, at the Harvest Supper.*



**HARVEST FESTIVAL:** For those who attended the Harvest Festival on 9<sup>th</sup> October, I hope you agree that the church looked resplendent, bedecked with the rich hues of Autumn colour, fresh produce donated by villagers, and the kind harvest boxes brought by locals for our Harvest celebrations. Harvest provides an opportunity for us all to pause to think how thankful we are for the food on our table when so many around the world still go

hungry. Perhaps this year, more than most, we see just how much we have come to take such food for granted, as we see shortages on shelves and the struggle many

face with feeding their family or heating their homes.

This year we also celebrated the many other jobs and hobbies people in our village do, including upholstery, gardening, cooking and machine maintenance.

**REMEMBRANCE SERVICE:** This is always a poignant date in our calendar and was made all the more so thanks to the participation of three of our own village veterans, Steven Bane (Parachute Regiment), Delia Harvey (Women's Royal Air Force) and Iain Britton (RAF). It was very moving to see those who have served our country process with the wreaths, alongside Christine Clark, representing the Women's Institute and Roy Clark, representing Hilderstone Parish Council. This is the first year that a dedicated wreath from Hilderstone veterans was presented, alongside the W.I and the Parish Council.



The presence of these veterans really brought home to those of us present with them at this service just how high a price many made during warfare, and the memory of those who were injured or never returned home.



Steven Bane served during the Falklands War, during his career in the Army. Dee was with the Women's Royal Air Force for 5 years, whilst Iain Britton served 9 years with the RAF and recalls: "I think the highlight was being despatched to Ascension Island with 29 Squadron, to put the RAF on the Falklands." Our sincere thanks to them for taking part in this service.

*PICTURED ABOVE (Left to Right: Steven Bane, Christine Clark, Rev'd Roy Ball, Dee Harvey and Iain Britton as they process down to the War Memorial to lay their wreaths.*

## Churchyard Tidy Up



*ABOVE: This striking photograph of the Churchyard is by Roger Higginson and was submitted to the Hilderstone Photographic Competition.*

It has been a strange year for us all: first we have unprecedented dry weather, threatening so many of our flora and fauna, and this is then followed by heavy, and persistent rain, leaving our gardens sodden.

At Christ Church, we continue to work towards achieving a good balance between maintaining the churchyard for visitors, whilst also encouraging greater diversity amongst the wildlife and the habitat they require. The grass is cut several times a year to keep the new section of the churchyard looking well-manicured, but care has also been taken to allow an area for long grass and wildflowers, much loved of insects, birds etc. Our Bug Hotel continues to provide a

welcome habitat for our little friends, and the trees are inspected and maintained to ensure they continue to thrive and offer invaluable shelter to wildlife.

On top of all this, we have a dedicated, and hard-working team of volunteers, who form our Churchyard Tidy-up Group. Meeting each month between March – October, they tend to the paths, flower beds and shrubs in the churchyard and car park, ensuring we provide a pleasant and well-cared-for environment for all. I would like to sincerely thank all the people who have volunteered throughout the year and who have worked so hard in keeping our Village Churchyard looking so nice and cared for. The churchyard is open to all and we encourage members of our community:

With its sweeping views across the open fields, where sheep graze, it is a place of beauty and wonderful peacefulness. All are welcome to come and sit awhile.

We would welcome more members of the church and villagers to join us next year. Some members of the team are able to do heavier work but there are lots of smaller jobs and we always enjoy coffee and a chat at 11am.

---

### **LICHEN in your CHURCHYARD:**

Have you ever stopped to take a close look at the intricate and beautiful living patterns that decorate the stonework within burial grounds? These are organisms known as **lichens**. They are easy to find at any time of the year but seem to stand out particularly during the winter months when other wildlife takes a



step back. Although found almost anywhere on land, churchyards and other burial grounds have long been known to be an important home for lichens as a result of the rich variety of stone substrates for them to grow on. They may also be found on wooden structures such as benches and lychgates, as well as on the bark and twigs of old trees. Churchyards and other burial grounds provide a stable and protected place for lichens.

Churchyards and burial grounds are of supreme importance for lichen conservation. Of the 2000 UK lichen species, over 700 have been found in burial grounds. Almost half of these are rare and seldom if ever occur in other places. Our burial grounds are lichen sanctuaries.

*An extract from 'God's Acre'.*

## Our Queen Remembered



It is hard to believe that our Special Jubilee Edition of the Parish Magazine, in which we paid tribute to her late Majesty, Queen Elizabeth, was just this summer passed. I am sure Her Majesty would have been honoured to have seen so many wonderful pictures of her, those famous



Corgis and, of course, her horses. Many thanks to the Hilderstone Youth Club, for all the pictures which filled our Jubilee Edition. I am sorry that we couldn't show them all again.



It seemed somewhat fitting to include just a few here again as we pay tribute to our wonderful monarch and the many, many years of loyal service and dedication she gave to our country and the Commonwealth.

We wish His Majesty King Charles III a long and successful reign as Monarch.

*TOP LEFT: Lyra Edwards aged 11. TOP RIGHT: Lottie Heath, aged 3. MIDDLE RIGHT: Bella Hughes, Aged 6. BELOW LEFT: Lilly Kite, aged 9. MIDDLE: Christopher Gordon-Creed, aged 6. RIGHT: Isabel Evans, aged 5.*





# BEHIND THE HEDGE

*By Harry Titley*



When people get to know where we live, we are often asked what lies behind our roadside hedge. Maybe, you have even wondered yourself. When I pass somewhere that is screened from view, or, more likely, when I am held up in a traffic jam, I

get "curiouser and curiouser". Given where we live and whilst I am aware that it's difficult to take a peek when your on a sharp bend and on a road filled with 'determined to be' formula one drivers! I can understand that some of us are noseys, but in the nicest possible way of course. So, as I have been invited to write a few lines about the history of our property, it seems to me that 'BEHIND THE HEDGE' is an appropriate title.

When we arrived at St. Mary's Cottage in 1986 there was only a small amount of hedgerow and we decided to solve this issue as soon as possible. So, we popped down to our favourite nursery and crammed as many as possible of the Thuja Conifers into our car as we could. We were advised that these were not only fast-growing, but also had a lovely fragrance and, when clipped, would re-grow providing we were not too heavy-handed!! That was the first bit of gardening we did and were greatly chuffed to see it growing before our eyes.

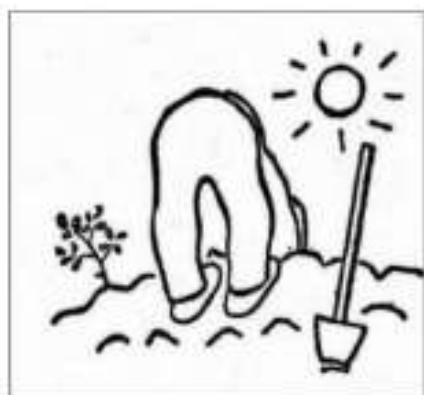
First of all I would like to make it clear that I am not a gardener. I garden, but I don't know a Turk's Cap from a Turban Buttercup. I now know a Turk's Cap because my wife, Ann, showed some to me in the garden and making it quite clear that whenever I am asked what it's called I must give its correct nationality, as some people can be a bit sensitive about these things!! I also



know what a Turban Buttercup is because I looked it up. Why these horticulturists give plants such funny names really goes beyond understanding. They either use Latin that no-one can translate, or pre-historical 'verbige' that's even worse. Why not use 'Ranunculus'. I know all about them; we have some round our pond.

However, I must stress again, I am not a gardener. So, just in case anyone forgets, I have inserted a picture of myself for those of you who want some professional horticultural advice and to remind you I am not the man. What I do like is to get into the garden. It's my lifelong passion. I particularly like digging.

I like digging holes be it land drains, holes for this or that, or simply when I am planting a tree or shrub. I come from five generations of miners on both sides of my family, so I guess I must have inherited the gene. Also, passed on to me was my Granddad Titley's pick he used when working in Diglake Pit and my other Granddad's hand-forged rake, both made in the



1800's. They made tools to last in those days. I should note that when I was young we only had two granddads per family, otherwise I might have had a shed full of tools by now!! However, with these, my trusty spade and fork, my dear wife's help and knowledge, I have to say that we have knocked up a not too bad bit of a patch.

Well, here goes, this is just a sketchy historical overview about our home and neighbourhood and I am sure someone will put me right if I get things wrong. We live in one of a scattering of cottages bordered on its southern side by the Harrowby Estate on the old Turnpike Road, now Sandon Road. I have no idea where the Tollgate was situated, but writing this makes me think what an opportunity I missed when founding H.A.L.T. (Hilderstone Action to Limit Traffic) some twenty years ago. I should have campaigned for the reintroduction of the Turnpike Acts that used the tithes to keep the

roads in good repair and limit traffic. It is not generally known, but at that time more than 98% of the Hilderstone population supported our campaign. Ah! Well!!

The cottages were built around the 1860's to mainly accommodate local workers. There were two cottages on our land side by side. One fell into disrepair and was dismantled in the late 1960's. A number of cottage industries were carried out within these few homesteads. The father of a large family, close by, was the local wheelright, maker and repairer of wooden wheels from dog carts to fashionable coaches. He was a proficient cabinet maker and people were reputed to come from far and wide to make use of his skills. Above the coach house, attached to his house, was a well-kitted out workshop which was left untouched for fifty years after his death. We had the privilege of having seen it. The cottage that fell into disrepair had been the home of the village cobbler and his shoe repairs were carried out within a wooden shed adjacent to our driveway. When we started to clear the land we dug up so many old boots to shoe all of Hilderstone and enough soles and tips to cobble them all six times over.

## **OUR FIRST CHRISTMAS IN HILDERSTONE**

When we moved into our new home we were faced with an almighty task both inside and out. We have never been afraid of hard work and have grafted since first we wed. However, our Christmases were always special and very much family orientated, so the move to Hilderstone and its impending labours did not change this so special of seasons in any way whatsoever. The garden was put on hold until the weather improved and inside until the holiday season was over. Our main focus was on our family as, I am sure, were most of us and still are I sincerely hope.

Just a few days before Christmas Day we were visited by a choir of at least ten or so cheerful folk who wished to sing Christmas carols for us. They were wrapped up to their dripping noses and yet they sang three of our favourites as though wanting to welcome us into their community. We have no idea to this day who they were collecting for, but we thanked them and dropped

into their collection box as much as we could afford. It was an inspiring introduction to our new home.

We were both raised as Methodists and were delighted to discover a Methodist Chapel on our doorstep. So, on Christmas Eve, we took ourselves off to the Chapel Christmas service and were welcomed into its small community like the greeting of the prodigal son. After the service we were given tea and mince pies and their best wishes. Sadly, I guess, because of the falling numbers of the congregation, it was sold off soon after as a private residence.

When I was a toddler, a mere three years old, I was playing in front of the fire with my marbles. I have since discovered that it was Sunday the third of September 1939, the day war broke out. We were regularly visited on Sundays by our relatives because it was the only day we could all get together as a family. I have remembered all my life that I was spoken to,



rather sharply, by my Auntie Jessie. She said "you won't get any presents in your stocking this year, my lad". Of course, I was too young to understand what she mean, and, presumably carried on playing with my marbles, but throughout the war and beyond, like most children, we didn't expect any gifts, either at Christmas or on birthdays. It makes you wonder whether all kids had an Auntie Jessie!!

***Our thanks to Harry for his contribution to this magazine and we look forward to reading his next instalment in the Spring. I can testify, through personal experience, that the garden Harry and Anne have created is truly beautiful and a testament to many years of tender care by two enthusiastic (and dedicated) gardeners.***

## Hilderstone Heritage, Part Thirty-Nine

At one time, villagers wishing to travel by train had two nearby choices: Cresswell (as featured in Article Thirty-Eight) and Aston by Stone railway station. The latter was opened by the North Staffordshire Railways Company on 1st November 1901. It was on the Stoke to Colwich line and closed to passengers on 6th January 1947. Goods were loaded at the station until 13th August 1962.



The earliest trade directory dates to 1617 and covered London. Eventually directories appeared for other cities and, from the late Eighteenth Century, for the Counties. The Post Office started publishing directories in 1799 and in 1835 Frederick Kelly bought the copyright. Hence the Post Office Directories are often referred to as 'Kelly's Directories'. The first detailed directory of Staffordshire appeared in 1818.

These 1864 and 1874 Post Office Directories of Staffordshire (RIGHT – 1864 copy), in precis, the Directories record that:

These 1864 and 1874 Post Office Directories of Staffordshire (RIGHT – 1864 copy), in precis, the Directories record that:

"Hilderstone is a township in the Hilderstone quarter of Stone parish but it forms an independent ecclesiastical district; and is a village  $4\frac{1}{2}$  miles east-north-east from Stone railway station and  $3\frac{1}{2}$  north from Sandon station and the same distance from Cresswell railway station; 134 from London,  $8\frac{1}{2}$  from Stafford,  $42\frac{1}{4}$  from Birmingham, 48 from Manchester, 30 from Macclesfield, 69 from Liverpool, and 47 from Chester and Derby; in South Pirehill Hundred, Stone Union, Deanery [Trentham Deanery by 1874] and County Court District,



Lichfield Diocese, and Stafford Archdeaconry, North Staffordshire.

Christ church, founded by the late Ralph Bourne, Esq., lord of the manor, and consecrated in 1833, is a very handsome stone structure, in the mixed Norman-Gothic style having a low square tower with a spire 40 feet in height. The interior is neatly fitted up; it has a chancel and nave supported by four pointed arches, aisles and organ loft; and a three-light window of stained glass - the centre subject the Saviour instituting the Last Supper. It contains about 300 sittings, 160 of which are free for the poor. The register dates from the year 1833."

In 1864: "The living is a perpetual curacy, value about £100, in the gift of John Bourne, Esq.; the Rev. Thomas Barge Jenkinson, B.A., is the incumbent". By 1874: "The living is a Vicarage, yearly value about £120 with residence .... and held by the Rev. Robert Smythe Hopkins AB of Trinity College, Dublin".

"Here is a Wesleyan chapel built in 1822. The schools, for children of both sexes, were established by Mr Bourne in 1819." By 1874 the school is recorded as a "National School. Henry Panks, Master; Mrs Martha Panks, mistress".

"Hilderstone Hall is a neat modern mansion, with plantations and pleasure grounds, east of the village. It is the seat of John Bourne Esq., lord of the manor and principal landowner. The soil is in some parts gravel, in others clayey; subsoil gravel and clay. The chief crops are wheat, oats, and barley. The township contains 1,960 acres of fertile land."

In 1861 the population was 448, but by 1871 had reduced to 411. In 1874 the Parish Clerk was William Woodward.

In both 1864 and 1874 the Carrier was William Cope, who went to Uttoxeter on a Wednesday, and to Stafford on a Saturday.

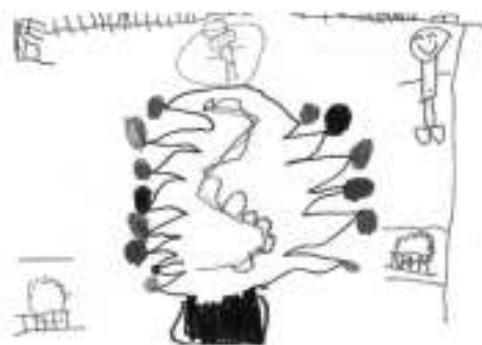
In 1864 the Postmaster was Henry Tams, and in 1874 the Postmistress was Mrs Mary Harper. The messenger arrived from Stone at 8:10am (later 8:00am) and departed at 5.10pm (later 5:20pm); on Sundays they arrived at 10:00 am. The nearest money order office was at Stone.

# Thank you for your Support in 2022

As the winter sets in and we all look forward to the magic that is Christmas, we hope this Christmas Edition of the Parish Magazine gives you plenty of ideas of what to do during the festive season. Please do support as many of our local activities as you can and help us keep our valuable village assets, and local charities, thriving in these difficult times.

See you for our Spring Edition in early March. And remember, any pictures, comments, stories etc, would be most gratefully received!

Email: [Eleanor.bane@safersystems.co.uk](mailto:Eleanor.bane@safersystems.co.uk).



ABOVE: James Gordon-Creed, aged 5, has drawn this lovely Christmas Tree.

## Parish Magazine Donations.

Over this past year, the advertisers and readers of the magazine generously donated enough money to keep our publication running. We would like to thank all those who have supported this magazine, and a special welcome to our new advertisers also.

If you could help towards the cost of printing this magazine, we would be so grateful. Contact Phil Davies: [phil.davies73@btinternet.com](mailto:phil.davies73@btinternet.com)

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• Send us your pictures, articles etc for our Parish Magazine. Email: Eleanor.bane@safersystems.co.uk

- Make a donation towards the upkeep of the Parish Magazine. Contact: phillip.davies73@btinternet.com
- Recycle your old ink cartridges at Christ Church. Contact Phil Davies (as above).
- Support our annual Best Kept Village initiative and keep our paths, driveways etc clean, tidy and attractive. Contact Hilderstone Parish Council for details.

---

Thank you for donating you used ink cartridges, which raised £31.75 for Christ Church.

ABOVE: A cheerful snowman by George Hughes, aged 10. RIGHT: Two lovely Christmas Trees by Everly Westwood, aged 6.



**Merry Christmas from all the team  
on the Parish Magazine.**



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