



Christ Church Hilderstone

PARISH MAGAZINE

A celebration of village life

Easter Edition 2023

WHAT'S ON:

MARCH:

Saturday 4 th	Earthquake Coffee Morning	10am – 12pm	Village Hall
Tuesday 14 th	W.I.	7.30pm	Village Hall
Saturday 25 th	Monthly Arts & Crafts Market Pop Up Pub With South American food -Tako	10am – 1pm 5pm – *10pm	Village Hall Village Hall
Sunday 26 th	CLOCKS SPRING FORWARD		

APRIL:

Sunday 2 nd	Palm Sunday Family Service	11.15am – 12.15pm	Christ Church
Thursday 4 th	Polling Day – Polling Station	7am – 10pm	Village Hall
Sunday 9 th	Easter Day Family Service	11.15am – 12.15pm	Christ Church
Tuesday 11 th	W.I.	7.30pm	Village Hall
Sunday 16 th	Christ Church APCM	12.15 – 12.45pm	Christ Church
Saturday 27 th	Monthly Arts & Crafts Market Pop Up Pub With Wood Fired Pizza Co.	10am – 1pm 5pm – 10pm	Village Hall Village Hall

MAY:

Saturday 6 th	Coronation Event – live TV of the Coronation	See Facebook for details	Village Hall
Tuesday 9 th	W.I.	7.30pm	Village Hall
Saturday 27 th	Monthly Arts & Crafts Market Pop Up Pub With Track & Taste	10am – 1pm 5pm – 10pm	Village Hall 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 4th Wed. of each month in the Village Hall
Parish Clerk Nikola Evans, Email: clerk@hilderstone.staffslc.gov.uk
www.hilderstone.org.uk. Visit their 'Events' page for details of forthcoming activities.

Hilderstone W. I.: 7.30pm on 2nd Tuesday of the month, Hilderstone Village Hall.
President Miss Pat Saul Tel: 01785 812580

Hilderstone Village Hall:
Bookings Debbie Britton Tel: 07810 332559

See the Village Hall article in this magazine for details of the new Hallmaster Booking Service. Facebook @HVH60, Twitter @hvh50, Instagram hilderstone_village_hall – Web Site 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

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.

Spring

A Poem by Harry Tittley

Today I caught a waft of May,
From exactly where, it's hard to say,
And then I saw across the way,
Beyond a field of new mown hay,
A Hawthorn swathed in purest white,
A hoary blossom reflecting light,
As scattered snow so fresh and bright
Rests on a hedge at Winter's height.
Fragrance borne on gentle breeze,
Drifted through adjacent trees
And then continued by degrees
Until it almost seemed to seize
My psyche, awakening forgotten joys,
Of walks down lanes with girls and boys,
Of blithe and fun-filled childish noise
That only carefree youth enjoys.
Too soon the reverie was gone.
Of scented zephyr there was none,
Just memories to reflect upon
And youth-filled times to ponder on.

Letter from the Editor



I am sure I am not alone when I say that Spring leaves me chomping at the bit to get my gardening clothes on and head out into the lovely Spring sunshine (with the occasional shower!). Indeed, as I sit in my office the sunshine is streaming through the window and I can see plenty of bird activity in the hedgerow, below which sits a host of new shoots and a lovely display of Snowdrops. What

could be better – apart from being away from my desk and in the garden of course?!

Spring brings such promise: we see shoots appearing, followed by a riot of colour; we see birds starting to nest; short Winter days giving way to longer Spring days; new-born lambs frolicking in the fields; and, of course, we remember the importance of Easter in the Christian calendar. It is, in essence, a time of celebration and thankfulness – and at a time when we need it most.

In our village, we are gearing up to the Coronation celebrations (5th May). We are also holding a Coffee Morning to raise funds for the victims of the earthquake in Turkey and Syria (4th March) and hope you are able to join us. We have the launch of our 2023 Photographic Competition and much more besides.

It is just left for me, on behalf of the Parish Magazine Team, to wish you all a Happy Easter and hope we all manage to enjoy plenty of Spring sunshine. And don't forget – *clocks spring forward on 26th March!*

Eleanor

From your Parish Council



On behalf of the Parish Council, Cllr Jim Davies, Chairman, welcomed Roy Clark and presented him with a gift of 2 rose bushes to mark his recent retirement as a councillor and thanked him for his 30 years' service to the Council.

Village Handyman

The parish council is looking for a village handyman to carry out various ad-hoc village maintenance requirements:

- Planter box maintenance
- Bus shelter repairs
- General tidying

If you are interested, please contact the parish council clerk – clerk@hilderstone.staffslc.gov.uk.

Village Maintenance

Hilderstone Parish Council has noted that various areas are looking a little untidy and politely request residents maintain their frontages, including the curb side. Should anyone require assistance with this, please contact us and we will be able to put you in touch with a landscaper that can help.

The areas that Hilderstone Parish Council is responsible for are as follows:

- Eastholme/Whitesytc island
- Severn Trent Corner
- Grass verge at the railings
- Roebuck Hill
- Small area in Dingle Lane
- Village Green
- Roebuck Flowerbeds
- Various flower boxes around the village.

Any public areas not on the above list are not the responsibility of the parish council.

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.

Village Flower Boxes

Following the success of the excellent display on Roebuck Bank which is maintained by a village resident, supported by the Parish Council, we would like to replicate this scheme 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).

Please help us to keep our village looking its very best.

Footpaths & Litter

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.

If you see any litter, but 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.

Contact Phil Davies at: philip.davies73@btinternet.com.

HILDERSTONE WI



After retirement in 2006, I was invited to a Meeting by my cousin's mother -in -law, Elsa Wood. My mother dearly loved belonging to Wall WI near Lichfield, but I had vowed, aged 40, that it would never be for me, well...I was wrong. I attended, joined, & in 2009 I became President!

Why did I join? The ladies were, and still are, warm, welcoming & sincere. I love the talks we have (&

sometimes I give them!) I love the laughter, the tasty refreshments & the sense of belonging. I also love singing 'Jerusalem'. I was so happy to attend the WI Centenary Meeting at the Royal Albert Hall in 2015, where our late Queen Elizabeth 11 was guest of honour; 'Jerusalem' never sounded better!



Now I will retire & hand over the chain of office to a

Over the years, we have been blessed with many local characters in the WI at Hilderstone. Here are some of them.

TOP LEFT- Peggy Shelley (2019);
LEFT – Sally Mardling (2012)

talented, younger lady, Gill Slater. I hope to return to my former role in WI, washing up!

Finally, some members who are no longer with us, will always represent in my mind what WI is all about. You will recognise some of them:- Elsa Wood, Doreen Boulton, Sally Mardling, Lydia Taylor and Peggy Shelley.

I thank them all for their loyalty to Hilderstone WI.



Meetings are on the 2nd Tuesday in the month...give us a try, please!

For more information on the Hilderstone Women's Institute, please contact Pat Saul (Hilderstone President) on

Tel: 01785 812580.



THIS PAGE:-

TOP RIGHT – Doreen Boulton (2011); ABOVE – Lydia Taylor and Pat Saul (2015); RIGHT – Elsa Wood (2011).

theWI
INSPIRING WOMEN

HVH Bookings - New Booking System

When I worked in Network House, Walsall in the late 1990s, the best manager I worked for was a man named Roger Wolsey. He was always calm and usually ahead of his time. He had a couple of key phrases he used all the time: "Keep it in perspective!" and "You're only as good as your last drop-off!" With an attitude like that, he'd have made a good Village Hall Booking Secretary.

Debbie Britton has done this job in Hilderstone since 2015 and now that she's stepping down, we owe her our thanks for all she's put into this role over such a long time. Well done Debbie!

When she started, everything revolved around a paper diary. Her dad provided a phone and got an email address making life a little bit easier and then in 2020, Tim Dyer built our website and linked it to a Google bookings calendar.

Things still revolved around Debbie, though, and because she was working, she could only access everything in the evenings or at weekends. Of course, this isn't always convenient for some of the people who make booking enquiries because they expect the phone and email to be manned 24 hours a day, seven days a week. We even once had a booking enquiry on Christmas Day!

This type of 'customer' demand and its subsequent fall-out leads to a village-wide shortage of willing volunteers to take on the role. All our management committee members are volunteers who work part-or full-time alongside other volunteer activities and while they'll turn their hands to most things, many of them wouldn't touch the Booking Secretary role with an extra-long barge pole.

This gives us a problem, which we're rectifying by trialling a system called Hallmaster. You can use Hallmaster by going to our website at hilderstonevillagehall.com and the Contact and Bookings page. If that's too daunting, you can still send an email to hilderstonevhbookings@gmail.com or you can still call and leave a message on Tel: 07810 332559.

A small team of people are now involved in looking after the booking system and monitoring the email account so things should get a bit easier for our dedicated volunteers as well as our users.

Oh one last thing! Our booking prices are staying the same: £15 an hour for residents of the Civil Parish and £19 an hour for non-residents. Block and recurring bookings are usually given at the residents' rate.

Tim Handley

Village Hall Lottery

The Village Hall Lottery Draw is a valuable source of income for the Village Hall, helping us ensure we continue to invest in the fabric and facilities modern day hirers require and ensuring the hall continues to thrive as a valued village asset for the benefit of those living in, and around, Hilderstone.

We have just 21 free balls left so if you fancy buying a ball and entering our monthly lottery, please email: hilderstonevillagehall@gmail.com.

VILLAGE HALL LOTTERY DRAW WINNERS:

December:

Ball: 14 £100
64 £ 75
30 £ 50
87 £ 40
65 £ 30
58 £ 25
23 £ 20
84 £ 20
45 £ 10
56 £ 10

January 2023:

Ball: 54 £100
1 £ 50
23 £ 25
50 £ 10
24 £ 10

February:

Ball: 64 £100
16 £ 50
86 £ 25
36 £ 10
52 £ 10

From the kitchen

I love a good Burns Night, which is just as well, as I'm married to a Scotsman. Apparently, I'm not alone, as the second village hall Burns Night proved to be just as popular as the first. It was great to see newcomers amongst the revellers, along with familiar faces returning from last year.

I watch with interest, from the kitchen, the eclectic mix of dress, with everything from DJs to DMs. The Scotsmen, those with Scottish heritage or even just a mate with a spare kilt, resplendent in their different tartans and the ladies too, not to be outdone, all incorporating a nod to those north of the border in their outfits.

We didn't try to change too much this year; with the format remaining largely the same. Happily, practice makes better, if not yet perfect, and mostly everything went to plan bar a disaster with the soup, rectified by a hasty late afternoon dash to Tesco (thank you Martin!) and a second batch made.

Cooking for nearly sixty people is a bit nerve racking and I could not do this without the expert advice and support of Alison Nicoll. The rest of 'Team Kitchen' is pivotal in getting the food out quickly so that it's still piping hot. There are always committee members on hand to help, so thanks to Eleanor, Leanne and Andy, plus a big thank you to the non-committee helpers; Lisa and Sadie Norwood and Alfie Bertalan. Lastly, thanks to Rose



for washing up, a job that I hate! I also hate to miss anyone out, so our appreciation to the rest of the committee and friends who lent a hand during the run up, the evening and the morning after. Just as well, I was slightly delicate after all of the glasses of Prosecco I was generously bought.

I look forward to next year's Burns Night, that is until early January, when I start to think that cooking dinner for sixty people is far too many. However, it's such a lovely sound to hear the voices of so many people having a great time, from the kitchen.

Sam Shaw

From your Village Hall

Hilderstone Village Hall was host to a wide variety of events during the Winter months. The monthly Pop-up Pub in November attracted quite an unusual crowd when John and Wendy Hill provided a Mexican-themed evening. Our busy Youth Club also got involved, creating these fabulous masks for the event



(ABOVE). Hats off, so to speak, to our hosts, who went all out with their costumes (LEFT)!



We also played host to our excellent 'It's Christmas' Panto Show. Always popular with the locals, this year's show featured a hilarious series of sketches, music and plenty of laughter. It was well-received by young and old

alike, and certainly got everyone in the mood for Christmas. Thank you to all those who supported our event, and a special thanks to all those who took part, especially the 'new' faces in our group.

Building on the success of our monthly Craft Market and Pop-ups pubs, the regular village hall pub evenings will continue to offer themed evenings,

with outside catering – see the What's On page and our Facebook page for more information. We are also planning to hold one of Sam Hanley's Quiz Nights (9th June) and a Film Night (14th July).

Sports fans will be delighted to hear we will be showing the Six Nations closing weekend game on our large screen on Saturday 18th March, with the bar open from 12pm – 8pm. Our village hall will also be marking the King's Coronation with the ceremony being shown on our big screen on 6th May (more details to follow in due course) and will, once again, be bringing the community together for our annual Big Village Party, on 29th July.

With a busy programme planned for 2023, we are confident we have something for everyone in our community and look forward to welcoming you shortly. All our events are featured on our Hilderstone Village Hall Facebook page.

News from The Roebuck

Like the Village Hall, The Roebuck seems intent on ensuring the good people of Hilderstone are well-fed. Every fortnight, the Chippy Van makes an appearance in the pub car park, whilst the pub also hosts the Travelling Taverna and 'Untamed' steak & chips.



Emma is also committed to helping raise funds for good causes, and has raised money for the Heart Foundation, the people of Ukraine and is currently involved in the Stone Lions Raffle, which will be drawn on Easter Sunday.

Finally, thanks to Emma for doing such a sterling job selling the Hilderstone charity calendars!

LEFT: Emma and Roebuck enjoying the warmth of the pub fire with friends!

Hilderstone Village Hall Youth Club

Youth club has been really busy since Christmas. The children have made lots of plans for what they would like to do in the next couple of months. This includes taking part in upcoming events in the village and their hopes of trips to Amerton Farm again. We are very lucky to have such good relationships with the wider community.

Our Christmas party was very special and all the children had so much fun at Amerton Farm. The children were very lucky to get the chance to play in the play barn, meet the reindeer and Santa. I would personally like to thank Hannah and Holly for helping to make this all happen and a big thank you to Amy and all the staff at Amerton for making it possible.

If you would like more information about our youth club please contact me on 07989130014.

Debbie, Hannah and Holly

BELOW: Hilderstone Youth Club enjoying their Christmas Party at Amerton Farm, with Father Christmas.



Cooks Tips: Hot Cross Buns

Ingredients

500g quality strong bread flour, plus a little extra for dusting
7g sachet of dried yeast
2 tsp ground cinnamon
½ tsp salt
60g mixed peel
75g caster sugar
250ml milk

170g sultanas
zest of two small oranges

For the cross piping

75g plain flour
1 tbsp caster sugar
For the glaze
2 tbsp caster sugar

Method



- Sift the flour, caster sugar and salt together in a bowl then mix in the yeast. In a jug, mix the milk with 65ml warm water (to make 315ml total). Gradually add the liquid and mix to achieve a pliable dough. Lightly flour a work surface then tip out the dough and knead for 5-6 mins until smooth and elastic.
- Carefully mix the peel, orange zest, sultanas and ground cinnamon into the dough and make sure they are evenly distributed. Then leave to rise in the bowl for an hour.
- Lightly grease a large baking sheet and then pull off 85g pieces of the dough and make them into balls. Place the balls onto the baking sheet, evenly spaced apart and allow to prove for another hour.
- Preheat the oven to gas 8, 230°C, fan 210°C.
- Make the flour piping by combining the plain flour, tablespoon of caster sugar and 80ml of water and blend until the mixture is smooth. Transfer to a piping bag and with a small plain nozzle pipe a cross over the top of the buns when they are ready for the oven.

- Bake the buns for 15 mins at 230°C then turn the oven down to gas 6, 200°C, fan 180°C, cover with foil and bake for a further 10 mins.
 - While the buns are cooking, heat 2 tbsp of water and sugar for the glaze until all the sugar is dissolved. Brush over the buns when they are just out of the oven.
 - Allow to cool for 10-15 mins and serve warm. The buns can also be sliced in half, toasted and served with butter.
-

Kids' Corner: Dragonfly Fun



Items you need:

- Wooden clothes peg
- Coloured paper or transparency film
- Tempera or poster paint
- Paint brushes
- Wiggle eyes
- White glue
- Scissors
- Black permanent marker (optional)

1. Paint your wooden clothes pegs to make your dragonfly's body. You can paint it with a single colour or make a multi-coloured dragonfly.
2. Make a pair of wings. You can use either transparent film/plastic film or paper.



a.) See-through wings - draw two pairs of wings on transparency film or any plastic film using a permanent marker. Draw lines that branch out from the centre of the wings. Cut out your wings along the wing outline.

b.) Paper wings – fold a piece of coloured paper in the middle. Draw one top and one slightly smaller bottom wing along the folded edge of the paper. Keep the paper folded, then cut along the wing outline and unfold.

3. Decorate the wings. You can leave the see-through wings unpainted or add a splash of colour by painting it with a coloured glue mixture. Place a small amount of clear liquid glue or white glue on your palette. Add a drop of food colouring and a drop of liquid dishwash soap into the mixture. Stir well before using the mixture to paint the wings. Set aside to dry.

Decorate the paper wings by drawing colourful lines and patterns on them. You can also glue small paper shapes like I did.

4. Glue your wings onto your dragonfly peg. Pinch open the clothes peg and glue the middle section of the wings onto the top prong's inner side.



Clip the clothes peg onto something while waiting for the glue to dry. This will prevent the clothes peg from being accidentally glued shut.

5. Glue a pair of wiggle eyes onto the head of your dragonfly to complete the look.

CORONATION CELEBRATION



We invite all those within our community to join with us as we celebrate
the **Coronation of King Charles III.**

Hilderstone Village Hall

Saturday 6th May 2023, 10am – 10pm

Café, Live stream of Coronation on the big screen, singers from Beyond the Barricade, the UK's leading musical theatre concert, will deliver a musicals and proms concert, followed by our Pop-up Pub.

See Hilderstone Village Hall Facebook page for more details or posters around the village.

PICTURE PERFECT!

Following the success of the Village Calendar 2023, we are launching the photo competition for the Village Calendar 2024.

Last year had the theme of "Hilderstone and the surrounds". For the 2024 calendar we would like to invite photographic entries using the themes **"Buildings, people and events in and around Hilderstone"**.

We will also have a Junior section competition where the top 3 photographs submitted from Under 16s will be included in the calendar.

Finally, we are looking for people or local businesses to sponsor a month of the calendar for just £25. Please message us if you are interested in sponsoring a month.

Our 2023 Village Calendar raised over £570 for its two chosen charities – Christ Church Hilderstone and Hilderstone Village Hall. This was an outstanding achievement for our first Village Calendar and we hope to raise even more for charity in our 2024 calendar.

Get clicking and photos to be submitted by October 31 2023.



Contact Tim Dyer at: timie.dyer@talk21.com.

Easter Blessings



**from all of us at
Christ Church Hilderstone**

Church Matters: Readings & Prayers



We have published a list of the readings for each week, along with the visiting cleric officiating at our services. Unless stated otherwise, our services begin at 11.15am every Sunday. Our thanks to all those clerics who continue to support us during Interregnum.

Date	Service	Reading 1	Reading 2	Visiting Cleric
5 th March	Lent 2	Romans 4: 15 & 13-17	John 3: 1-17	Gerald Gardiner
12 th March	Lent 3	Romans 5: 1-11	John 4: 5-42	Roy Ball
19 th March	MOTHERING SUNDAY	John 6: 1-15		Roy Ball
26 th March	Lent 5	Romans 8: 6-11	John 1: 1-45	Linda Lucking
2 nd April	PALM SUNDAY	Liturgy of the Palms – Volunteer Participants		John Hall
6 th April 7pm	MAUNDY THURSDAY	1 Corinthians 11: 23-26	John 13: 1-17, 31b-35	John Sterling
9 th April	EASTER DAY	Acts 10: 34-43	John 20: 1-18	Archdeacon Megan
16 th April	2 nd Sunday of Easter	Acts 2: 14, 22-32	John 20: 19-31	John Sterling
23 rd April	Easter 3	Acts 2: 14, 36-41	Luke 24: 13-35	TBC
30 th April	United Benefice - Hilderstone	Acts 2: 42-47	John 10: 1-10	Roy Ball
7 th May	Easter 5	Acts 7: 55-60	John 14: 1-14	David Howard

14 th May	Easter 6	Acts 17: 22-31	John 14: 15-21	TBC
21 st May	Easter 7	Acts 1: 6-14	John 17: 1-11	TBC
28 th May	Pentecost	Acts 2: 1-21	John 20: 19-23	Gerald Gardiner
4 th June	Trinity	2 Corinthians 13: 11-13	Matthew 28: 16-20	TBC

Mothering Sunday and Easter Day are Family Services, and on Easter Day there will be Eggs for all the 'younger' members of the congregation too!

Thank-you from the PCC:

We have all experienced a very challenging time over the last couple of years and for many there remain difficult times ahead. Christ Church has not been immune to these challenges either and we would like to thank all those who have shown their support to Christ Church during this time. At the heart of everything we do, is our commitment to continue to offer a place of worship for all in our community and to reach out and work alongside the various groups within Hilderstone, including Hilderstone Village Hall, the W.I., Hilderstone Hall and various businesses in and around our village. We would like to extend a special thank you to the Hilderstone Youth Club, and their leaders, Debbie, Hannah and Sam, for all they have done over this past year and we greatly look forward to working alongside them in the year ahead. They bring a real joy to our services!

Getting a Vicar for Christ Church:

Unfortunately, we were not successful in filling our vacancy last year, however, the post is being advertised again in March and we remain hopeful that this time we will be successful. Until such time as the post is filled, the PCC will continue to administer the day-to-day business of maintaining the church and, with the kind support of visiting clergy, will continue to offer weekly services during this period.

If you have any queries or concerns, please contact Audrey Stringer, Churchwarden, on: 01889 505638 or email: a.stringer247@btinternet.com

Church Matters: Venerable Dr Megan Smith, Archdeacon of Stoke-upon-Trent

I recently heard it suggested that dancing might be a good habit to develop during Lent. Most people, whether Christian or not, are familiar with the ancient practice of deliberately choosing to follow practices in Lent which might not come naturally to us. We usually think of them in terms of things we might give up, like chocolate or alcohol, or something we can do that will help others. The purpose is to help get our lives back in perspective, focussed on others and focussed on God.

Might dancing do the same? Dancing has been shown in lots of research to be good for physical and mental health. It doesn't depend on being able-bodied, just dancing in whatever way we can. Key to these benefits is that dance helps to foster a sense of joy, even when our minds are naturally making us feel joyful.

In St Paul's letter to the Philippian church he instructs them 'Be joyful always; I will say it again, rejoice!' (Philippians 4:4). Choosing to be joyful involves celebrating what is good, however much bad might be going on. When we do that we become thankful, rather than bitter, and that thankfulness naturally leads to a heart of generosity to others. That generosity can be of heart, time and attention as well as monetary.

Dancing and being joyful isn't about ignoring life's very real challenges though. St Paul also tells us to 'rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep' (Romans 12:15). If we're going to rejoice well we need to lament well. Try reading a few of the Psalms – they're full of heartfelt and honest distress out the difficulties of life that sits right alongside thankfulness for God's goodness. It's not a choice of one or the other but needing to choose to do both.

So how about some dancing as we come into spring and summer? Do it on your own, or do it with others. If we learn to be joyful we will become the people we want to be, and to be the people the world needs us to be.

Christ Church Christmas Tree Festival



How wonderful it was to see the church once again adorned with the twinkling lights and imaginatively decorated Christmas trees. The nativity sets positioned around the church gave an extra dimension and point of interest to visitors to the church festival weekend and also to those

who were able to attend the church services over Christmas period.

Our immense gratitude and thanks goes to all those who sponsored and decorated trees and made the fundraising event possible:-

Brett and Sue Watmough, Robert Hancock, The Mardling family, Hilderstone Youth club, Hilderstone Book Club, Hilderstone WI, The Hammond family, Hammond's Garage, The Spot Gate, Quick Quick Slow Dance Studio, Safer Systems, Sue and Andy James - Heath, Marian Baldwin and Michael Dix, R D Cresswell & Co Ltd, Shirley Pattison, Ann Davies and Health IT Experts.



The PCC would also like thank Lilly Moore for lending the church her cherished nativity sets, those who helped organise the church for displaying the trees and those willing hands who cleared everything away after. Our appreciation to Margaret and Robin from Spot Nurseries for donating the church

Christmas tree as well as sourcing and supplying the festival trees.

Simon Shaw

Church Yard Tidy Up

With Spring fast approaching and with all the lovely snowdrops, crocus and daffodils beginning to appear it's time to make a start on thinking about the church yard and the tidying up after winter. The church yard is looking well-kept thanks to all the volunteers who helped through last season.

The first meeting of this new season will start on Saturday 18th March from 10 – 12 noon with, of course, time for coffee/tea at 11am when we all take time off to enjoy a hot drink and a chat.

We are a very friendly group and would welcome more help. Fortunately, there are jobs to suit everyone and, since a lot of the bushes and trees have been regularly tended over recent years, the jobs have become easier. We do have some gardening tools to share but if you can bring you own that would be very good.

Please let me know if you would like further information.

Christine Clark
(01889 505676)

Church Yard Tidy Up dates:

March 18th

April 15th

May 20th

June 17th

July 15th

August 19th

September 16th

October 21st



BEHIND THE HEDGE No. Two

Spring



Do you know what Poke Weed is? Well! neither did I until very recently when I was digging away on a new border. I spotted a most impressive flower and called Ann to enlighten me. She too struggled to identify it and so did our daughter, Julie, until she discovered it on the internet. Apparently, it is an American plant that can grow from five to eight feet in height. Its conical flower head is similar to a white lilac and,

as it fades, it turns into a multiple of blackberry-like seed heads. Birds love them and one of our feathered friends must have very kindly dropped one off in my border complete with its own supply of soil nutrition!! Ann remembered later having played amongst them in the Lyme Valley when she was a girl.

We had spent our first Winter making our small cottage into a home, a task that took us ten years to complete. As is usual for me in Winter, I had suffered from a severe dose of Cabin Fever and the sunny Spring helped me very quickly to put it to bed.

We own the small parcel of land on the opposite side of the road. It's always been known as the Well Garden. The well, which is still there, served both cottages. Unfortunately, a few years ago, the pump was stolen. Also, the increase in traffic caused us to abandon hope of using it as a garden so we just keep it as tidy as possible. During our first Spring, at the southern end of the Well Garden, I found a glorious patch of Lent Lilies which I instantly recognised. The Lent Lily, or to give it its correct name, European Wild Daffodil, is a lovely flower with a gentle fragrance. I understand that all modern daffodils are derived from it, which to us makes it extra-special, but

I want to tell you how we were first introduced to this most special of flowers.

We were married in 1960 and our first home, a chalet bungalow, was built on one of the highest points in Beech. Our first Spring together was almost indescribable, so I have included a paragraph from one of my books to share with you how these most delightful of flowers came to our notice.



“It is the first day of Spring 1961 and, while Summer has a charm of its own, our first Spring at Beau Vista is like Mother Nature unleashed. Baby rabbits play in the hall; families of weasels and stoats have built dens in the bank outside our lounge window; herds of deer brave the outer edges of the woods to feed on the fresh, lush grass; birds we have never heard of are busy making their homes in the hedges around our garden; inquisitive newborn lambs and young heifers stare through our windows at their new neighbours. Although many of the trees in Hanchurch forest are coniferous, we are able to see from above the ever-increasing green canopy of the old Oaks, Beeches, Horse Chestnuts and Elms developing before our eyes. The hedgerows for miles around are overflowing with Primroses and Lent Lilies. Ann loves them and I gather bunches of these wild Daffodils for her on my way home from work”.

Each Spring, I never fail to cut a bunch from the Well Garden for Ann and Julie. Spring is my favourite season. When I see the Snowdrops forcing their way up through the frozen earth, the Willows showing green when they have hardly had enough time to shed last year’s leaves, Catkins ‘like little lambs’ tails hanging out to dry’, shaking off the yellow pollen in harsh March winds and the Crocuses with their bright colours heralding the new season, I am re-energised.

Although the Well Garden was overrun with weeds, as was everywhere, we discovered a number of fruit trees that had survived the neglect; a Victoria Plum, we found out later had remarkably luscious fruits, an Egg Plum and a Yellow Plum; the latter, a small, juicy fruit, much loved by wasps. Former

owners of the property had kept chickens. We gave the chicken coop to the boys at Warren Farm and then spent a couple of weeks clearing all unwanted chicken wire and general rubbish leaving the rest at the bottom of our priority list. However, I have always been fascinated by wildflowers of which there were an abundance in our new garden, and have been very lucky to have a very knowledgeable wife on the subject.

The blossom on the fruit trees in the Well Garden competed with those in the other five gardens. Apples, Greengages, Damsons and Cherry all providing adequate proof that moving to Hilderstone had been the right decision.



When I was ten years old, I had a friend whose father was a Naturalist. We were also fortunate in having a teacher who developed a strong interest of Nature Study into her pupils. One late Spring day, my friend, myself and half a dozen boys and girls from our class gathered together at the Market Drayton bus stop in Newcastle and embarked on a day I have never forgotten. The bus dropped us off at One Mile Lane and we took the public footpath that leads to Butterton. The fields and verges were amass with every kind of wild flower imaginable. We each chose our favourites and pressed them into our notebooks, but the Hawthorn blossom proved the most popular. The boundaries of each field were covered in white and its scent was overwhelming.

This special day, planned by young children and attended by them with no adults involved, taught me so much about myself and a great deal about nature and particularly about wildflowers.

This special day, planned by young children and attended by them with no adults involved, taught me so much about myself and a great deal about nature and particularly about wildflowers.

To plant a garden is to believe in tomorrow - Audrey Hepburn

To plant a tree is to believe in the future – Ann Tittley



*I would welcome any comments you may have. Email
address:- annandharrytittley@hotmail.co.uk
Telephone:- 01889 505516 or 07484 177016*

Hilderstone Heritage, Part Forty

To celebrate the 40th article on Hilderstone's heritage, we revisit the history of the village school. This was prompted by my posting of this photograph on the 'Hilderstone Heritage' Facebook page:



*Eileen Mellor, Margaret Jones, and Julia Philips.
Juniors Classroom, Hilderstone School circa 1966.*

To the best of my knowledge, this is the only photograph ever taken in the school that actually relates to education. However, there are some photographs of plays and receptions held in the school (my own parents' wedding reception was held there in 1951) which illustrates the many uses of the school over the years.

A Sunday School was held in the school between 1819 and 1833, and in 1827 a licence was granted to allow the celebration of divine services in the school whilst the church was under construction.

Prior to the opening of the village hall in 1955, the school was used for most village functions: whist drives; dances; the Vicar's party; the tennis club

party; WI and Mother's Union meetings and parties; 'Hilderstone Church Amateur Dramatic Society' performances; and, during the Second World War, the Home Guard paraded there, and the ARP were housed in the old cricket pavilion, then sited in the school yard.

Hilderstone School was provided by Ralph Bourne of Hilderstone Hall, at a cost of £300, and opened its doors in 1819. The catchment area covered Hollywood, part of Hardiwick, Smallrice, Dayhills, Sharpley Heath, Stone Heath, Marley Hollows and the village itself. The school was open to both boys and girls - this was not a given at the time. When Ralph Bourne died in 1835, he left an annuity for the schoolmaster.

Pupils originally attended the school until the age of 14. However, in 1934 the Secondary Modern School was opened in Stone (Granville, in Old Road) and pupils moved there at the age of 11.

In 1878 a new infant schoolroom was added to the building by John Bourne Esq. This was necessary as the number of pupils was about to peak at 150. At the same time, the windows were replaced in the original school building and a porch was added.



ABOVE: This photograph was taken in 1936. No doubt there are several villagers whose parents or grandparents appear on this photograph.



ABOVE: This school photograph was taken around 1908. The old toilets are in the background.

The earliest recorded schoolmaster was Nathan Smith in 1834. He was also the landlord of the Roebuck! Subsequent schoolmasters and teachers are recorded as: Thomas and Miss Wibberley (1851); Henry and Martha Panks (1872); Henry and Annie Baugust (1892); and from 1899 – 1928 George and Emma Hope; 1928 – 1946 Mrs A Harrison, Headmistress, John Hobson, Headmaster, and Muriel Hobson, assistant - then acting headmistress 1946 - 1952; and finally, 1952 -1980 Miss Beatrix Blant, Headmistress. We must also add Miss Lawley, assistant from 1946 to 1973, and Mrs Jenkinson, assistant teacher from 1973 until the school closed in 1981. At that time the school featured in the national headlines, as it only had one pupil! The building subsequently became an attractive dwelling.

From 1956 until the late 1960s, the pupils of Hilderstone School continued their education at Hixon Secondary Modern School. For a short while, parents had the choice of Hixon, Alleyne's Grammar School or Granville Secondary Modern School. In 1969 the latter two merged to become Alleyne's Comprehensive School and Hilderstone School became a feeder school for it. Middle Schools were introduced in 1974, covering the ages 9

- 13, so Hilderstone School lost two school years to Christ Church Middle School.

Treasured memories of the village school include the annual sports days which took place on the Vicarage lawn - then much bigger than it is now; the regular nature walks; the school garden sited next to Highfields Farm (loaned by Mrs Bridgewood in the 1930s); and the outdoor toilets that were ultimately condemned and replaced by portable toilets in 1972. The school well fared little better, becoming redundant in 1932, the water deemed unfit to drink.

Mr Hobson first introduced 'houses' to the school with Red, Yellow, Green and Blue; and Miss Blant later replaced these with Fuchs, Scott and Hilary.

There were so few boys at the school in the early 1970s that Hilderstone had to join with Fulford School to put out a full eleven a side football team.

The school had three School Managers - the last being Mrs Cresswell, Ken Boulton and Bob Philips.

Volunteers Welcome at Hilderstone Hall

Hi everyone, my name is Jean Faulkner and I am the Activities Co-ordinator at Hilderstone Hall Care Home on Hall Lane.

The staff and residents would like to be more involved in the community and I am currently trying to encourage volunteers to come along and befriend residents - in particular, those who may be bedbound.

I would like to invite anyone who has a couple of hours a week spare to come and meet us and see if that may be something you would like to do.

Hilderstone Hall is part of The Barchester Group. At the present time we have 41 residents of varying ages. This month we have a special celebration for our eldest resident, Daisy, who will be 106 on 17th February.

Happy Birthday Daisy xx

Thank you for your Support

It was wonderful to see so many from our village support our Christmas Show at the Village Hall and attend both the Crib Service and Midnight Mass at Christ Church. Please continue to 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 Summer Edition in early June. And remember, any pictures, comments, stories etc, would be most gratefully received!

Email: Eleanor.bane@safersystems.co.uk.

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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

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- butterfly
- chick
- Daffodils
- Snowdrops
- Blossom
- Easter
- eggs
- green
- hatch
- June
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