

Christ Church Hilderstone
PARISH MAGAZINE



A celebration of village life
Summer Edition 2024

WHAT'S ON:

JUNE:

Saturday 8 th	Churchyard Tidy-Up	10am – 12 midday	Christ Church
Tuesday 11 th	W.I.	12.30pm – 3pm	Village Hall
Saturday 15 th	Scarecrow Café & Market	1.30pm – 4.30pm	Village Hall
	Scarecrow Village Trail	ALL DAY THROUGHOUT VILLAGE	
	Barn Dance with live music From The Weasel's Revenge & Dancing from	6pm – 10.30pm 7pm – 9pm	Village Hall
Sunday 16 th	Scarecrow Family Service	11.15am – 12.15pm	Christ Church
	Scarecrow Café	1.30pm – 4.30pm	Christ Church
	Scarecrow Village Trail	ALL DAY THROUGHOUT VILLAGE	
Saturday 29 th	Community Hub Café	10am – 1pm	Village Hall
	Pop-Up Pub With food by The Curry Den	5pm – 10.30pm	Village Hall

JULY:

Tuesday 9 th	W.I.	12.30pm – 3pm	Village Hall
Saturday 20 th	Churchyard Tidy-Up	10am – Midday	Christ Church
Saturday 27 th	Big Village Party	10am – 10pm	Village Hall
	DETAILS TO FOLLOW. Food by The Travelling Taverna	at Pop-Up Pub in the evening.	
Sunday 28 th	Community Celebration Service	11.15am – 12.15pm	Christ Church

AUGUST:

Tuesday 13 th	W.I.	12.30pm – 3pm	Village Hall
Saturday 17 th	Churchyard Tidy-Up	10am – Midday	Christ Church

There is no Community Hub Café or Pop-up Pub during August. Back in September.

SEPTEMBER:

Tuesday 10 th	W.I.	12.30pm – 3pm	Village Hall
Saturday 21 st	Churchyard Tidy-Up	10am – Midday	Christ Church
Sunday 22 nd	Harvest Festival	11.15am – 12.15pm	Christ Church
Monday 23 rd	Harvest Supper	7pm – 10pm	Village Hall

Dates & Times may change. Please check in advance of an event.

Helping you Keep in Touch with Events:

Christ Church, Hilderstone:

Vicar	Rev'd Lucinda Wray-Wear	Tel: 01782 397073
Churchwarden	Audrey Stringer	Tel: 01889 505638

Parish Council:	<i>7.30pm on 4th Tuesday of the month, Village Hall</i>	
Parish Clerk	Nikola Evans.	Tel: 07971 226170
	Email: clerk@hilderstone.staffslc.gov.uk	
	Website: www.hilderstone.org.uk	

Hilderstone W. I.:	<i>12.30pm- 3pm 2nd Tuesday of the month, Village Hall.</i>	
President	Mrs Gill Slater	Tel: 07935 999424
	Email: hilderstonewipresident@gmail.com	

Hilderstone Village Hall:

Bookings:	Hallmaster booking service (on web site)	
	Tel: 07810 332559	
	Email: hilderstonevhbookings@gmail.com	

*Facebook @HVH60, Twitter @hvh50,
Instagram hilderstone_village_hall
Web Site www.hilderstonevillagehall.com*

Staffs. County Councillor:

Ian Parry

Tel: 07831 510381 Email: ian.parry@staffordshire.gov.uk

Stafford Borough Councillor:

Karine Aspin

Tel: 07498 325374 Email: Kaspin@staffordbc.gov.uk

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.

Letter from the Editor. Not even the considerable amount of rain it seems can dampen our spirits as summer stretches ahead of us, with its heady perfume, splashes of wonderfully cheerful blooms and, of course, the promise of Summer Holidays.

And it is not just Mother Nature who busts into a frenzy of activity: life in Hilderstone village seems to shift up a gear too; we have our superb Scarecrow Weekend looming on 15-16th June and the Big Village Party (27th July), alongside our working parties at Christ Church and the Village Hall, and all our usual meetings, pop-up pubs and our community hub café.

We are so grateful to our contributors for this Summer Edition of the Parish Magazine and we hope you enjoy reading it. Thank-you also to all those who continue to work so hard to stage our various events in our village throughout the year; please do come along and support them all.

Eleanor Bane





Harvest Supper

Monday 23rd September 2024

7pm for 7.30pm at Hilderstone Village Hall
with the auction of produce afterwards

Cost of tickets Adults £10.00 Children £5.00
Tickets available from Phil Davies on
Tel: 01785 747836.



Church Yard Tidy Up

GOOD NEWS - we begin tidying up the church yard again in May. We were desperate for the church yard to have its first cut of the season as our usual couple, who do such an amazing job, were unable to mow the grass, but luckily, we had a very generous offer from James and Frank at Green Farm, who kindly did the first, difficult cut for us. The church yard looked amazing and we at Christ Church are so very grateful for their hard work.

Now the weather has improved, there is plenty to do and we look forward to seeing our usual Church Yard Tidy Up Team and would very much welcome any others who would be willing to spend two hours with us.

It's very satisfying to be able to make a difference in the appearance of the grounds. Do come and join us. Please bring your own tools and we always stop for coffee and a catch up at 11am.

Christine Clark (01889 505656)

Churchyard Tidy Up will be held at 10am to 12 noon on:

18th May

8th June (Scarecrow W/end 15th)

20th July

17th August

21st September

19th October

From Your Parish Council

What is a Parish Council, what does it do and who are our Councillors?

Parish Councils are a civil local authority found in England and are the lowest tier of local government. They are elected corporate bodies, with variable tax raising powers, they carry out beneficial public activities in geographical areas known as civil parishes. They are funded, either by direct tax raising powers, or access to local development funding under the Community Infrastructure Levy.

Decisions are taken by the Council as a whole (either unanimously or by a majority decision) not individual councillors. The Parish Council is accountable to the community - it represents you.

Hilderstone Parish Council has statutory powers to provide improvements in the area and support genuine community groups, with grant funding from their precept. It also has the right to comment on planning applications within its parish. Furthermore, Parish Councils are not statutory consultees, but their views must be considered by the District Council, alongside statutory consultees and District Council Planning Officers.

Meet Your Hilderstone Council

Jim Davies – Chairman. "I have served as a Parish Councillor for over five years and been the Chairman for the last three years. I have also been Stone Mayor and I strive to make a difference for our community".

Audrey Stringer – Vice Chairman. "I have been a Parish Councillor for 15 years and lived in Hilderstone for 28 years. I joined Hilderstone Parish Council hoping I could lend my support to improve the quality of life in the Parish. Seeing the community change for the better, as a result of decisions I have helped make, is something I view with a sense of achievement and fulfilment of purpose".

Jenny Crump. "I have been a parish councillor for over 20 years. We moved to Hilderstone in 1996, having decided to move to the Staffordshire countryside after our daughters left home. We had intended to buy an old house on some land, but moved into our present house and haven't moved as planned. I became a Parish Councillor because I think it is important to get involved with life where you live. I have been a member of other village organisations and was Church Warden at Christ Church Hilderstone for a time and was instrumental in obtaining a grant from English Heritage for essential building work. I like to keep myself busy and am interested in the history of the village and surrounding area".

Peter Higgins. "I have been a Councillor for nearly a year, and I have lived in the Village for three and a half years. I joined with a view to helping the village. I am a wine merchant, and conduct wine tastings at home or the office, I try to find wines that you won't find in supermarkets etc".

Michael O'Donoghue. "I have been a parish councillor since October 2023. I moved to Hilderstone from Texas in July 2019, having never seen the village or the house I was about to rent and eventually purchased a few months later. It was my 5th house move in six years and is now the longest I have stayed in any one place in 12 years. I will have lived in the village for five years in July 2024. I joined the Parish Council because I wanted to make a positive difference to life within the village".

Michael Shelley. "I have been a Parish Councillor for over 15 years, and always lived in the village. I am also the Staffordshire County Chairman for the Royal Agricultural Benevolent Institute and on the Hilderstone Village Hall Committee. I am following in my father's footsteps, who was also a Parish Councillor, Stafford Borough Councillor and Staffordshire County Councillor, at one time or another. I believe you cannot sit on the fence; I want to make a difference in our community".

Hazel Woodward. "I have served on the Parish Council for over 26 years and have always lived within the village. Like Michael, I am also on the Hilderstone Village Hall Committee. I care for the wellbeing of our community and will do what I can to make a change".

Hilderstone Scarecrow Weekend

Saturday 15th & Sunday 16th June 2024 1.30pm – 4.30pm



From the sublime to the ridiculous – our Scarecrow weekends have seen it all. Who could forget Hilderstone Garage's hilarious broken-down car scarecrow? Or Harry Potter and Hogwarts coming to Hilderstone?

Yes, now it's time to get your creative juices flowing and start work on your fabulous 2024 scarecrows, and participate in this year's Scarecrow Competition, on Saturday 15th and Sunday 16th June 2024.

There are 3 categories for the competition:

- Most Traditional (which must contain an element of straw in some form or another)
- Most Humorous
- Most Original – (neither (b) or (c) have to contain straw, it's entirely up to you).

You are welcome use the Church, Church yard or Village green to display your scarecrows – just register with us beforehand.



Saturday 15th:

- Scarecrow Café in the Village Hall, 1.30-4.30pm.
- Locally run stalls in the Village Hall, offering something for everyone.
- Music and dancing finish off our Saturday celebrations with a Barn Dance and Pop-Up Pub in the Village Hall – with live music by The Weasel's Revenge and caller Geoff Payne. Dancing shoes at the ready as we take to the floor from 7pm – 9pm.



Barn Dance: 6pm – 10.30pm. Tickets £2.50 from 07758 242642 or email hilderstonevillagehall@gmail.com. *There is no food at this event.*



Sunday 16th:

- Scarecrow-themed family service at 11:15am at Christ Church. Scarecrows welcome!
- Scarecrow Café in CHRIST CHURCH, 1.30pm – 4.30pm.
- Prize presentation in the church at 4:30pm, where a slide show of all the scarecrows displayed in the village will be shown.

To register your scarecrow for competition judging purposes, or for further information, please contact Eleanor. Eleanor.bane@safersystems.co.uk. Mobile: 07767 763938.

Hilderstone W.I.

We continue to have good speakers at our monthly meetings, including one talk on growing up in the 1960s: We all had fun guessing who was who in the childhood pictures of members!

Two of our members from Hilderstone WI will be travelling in June to represent us at the Royal Albert Hall for the National Annual Meeting of Women's Institute and we look forward to hearing how it all went at our July meeting.

Several members are putting the final touches to their entries for this year's Staffordshire County Show competition – this year's theme being 'Alice in wonderland'. We do hope you are able to come down to the show and see our creations. We will also be at the Big Village Party on 27th July with a cake and handicraft stall and hope to see you there.

Visitors and new members always welcome. *We meet on the 2nd Tuesday of the month, 12.30pm at Hilderstone Village Hall.*

For more information, contact Gill Slater on Tel: 07935 999424.

VILLAGE HALL LOTTERY DRAW WINNERS:

February:

Ball:	85	£100
	57	£ 50
	44	£ 25
	50	£ 10
	37	£ 10

March:

Ball:	58	£100
	87	£ 75
	25	£ 50
	57	£ 40
	36	£ 30

April:

Ball:	64	£100
	42	£ 50
	55	£ 25
	39	£ 10
	54	£ 10

Get your winnings quicker by giving us account details for where you would like them transferred. Email: hilderstonevillagehall@gmail.com.

Confidentiality assured!

From your Village Hall

Chairman's Remarks from the April Annual General Meeting of Hilderstone Village Hall 2023:

I'd like to start by thanking the members of the committee for their years' service. I'd especially like to thank those members who are leaving us: Leanne Evans, Sam Handley, and Wendy Pugh-Hill. Thanks also to those who are staying - the rest of the committee.

Special thanks must go to:

- Debbie Britton, Sam Handley, and all their helpers for the work they've put into the Youth Club, which has been running since 2020 and recently ended during the Easter holidays.
- Sam Shaw who took over as Treasurer from Iain Britton during the past year. It was a difficult transition made all the harder by our bank!



- Eleanor Bane for taking over as Secretary when Iain's work meant he had to miss meetings.
- Hannah Heath for her work as Booking Secretary.
- John Hill for taking over as Promotor for the Hilderstone 100 Club.
- Iain Britton for his 15+ years as Treasurer, for making sure the 100 Club was properly licensed, and for staying on the committee!! When Iain took

LEFT: The hall set up for the Doug Parker Comedy Night, with its plush new curtains and lighting.

over as Treasurer, it was a pen and paper outfit. We now use online banking and an electronic accounting system called Quickbooks that makes it all easier to audit.

- I'd like to thank Margery Warham, our caretaker, and her husband John, who helps her.

During the last year, we made some improvements to the hall. We've improved the paving outside the committee Room, we've added curtains in the main hall, and we've added the dimmers and floodlights. We are continually improving the hall to the benefit of its users.



This year, we conducted a survey about the hall. There are some things to note. Naysayers will always be with us. In this age of social media, they become keyboard warriors. Feedback is a gift. But like many birthday and Christmas gifts, some of them are destined for the charity shop.

We've received some useful feedback and we'll work with it.



We are already in the process of smartening up the kitchen by replacing the cupboard doors, end panels, and countertops so that everything is new and matches. We will look at how we publicise the hall and our events.

HVH Trading Ltd has been successful raising £3,000 from the bars and cafes. We will use some of that money to improve the bar

ABOVE: Coru and Sam manning the new-look bar area in the Villag Hall. LEFT: Tim 'modelling' beside the new bar storage area.

facilities in the Committee Room so that it makes life easier for our bar volunteers. That's the right thing to do.

While our events have been successful, it's been suggested that we move to one event a month with the Pop-Up Pubs being the default. So on the last Saturday of each month there's an event. It could be anything, but we can guarantee that there will be at least a Pop-Up Pub on that evening.

As far as the Community Hub goes, well, that's up to the community. If you want it - use it. If you don't, you'll lose it. We are nine months away from making a decision on its future.

We can't make people read the Parish Magazine, Facebook, our emails, our posters. We've even received a suggestion that we deliver leaflets, which we know don't work, or knock on doors to publicise our events like Jehovah's Witnesses or Mormons. But the real publicity that works and that we need to work is done by people, by word of mouth, by the relationships we have in the village. We will stand or fall by our community relationships. We have encouraged relationships with the Parish Council, Christ Church, and the Women's Institute, all of which have a seat at our table through their representation on this committee.

Next year is this hall's 70th anniversary in December 2025. We must start thinking about how we celebrate that now so that we can celebrate it fully

while we make sure that Hilderstone Village Hall is still here for its 80th anniversary.

Tim Handley, Chairman – Hilderstone Village Hall



Doug Parker Comedy Night:
Hazel Woodward proved to be Queen of the Kitchen at our Doug Parker Comedy Night on Friday 17th May (LEFT). Having

filled the hall to capacity, with over 90 tickets sold to the sit-down dinner and comedy night, Hazel faced what for many would be the daunting task of having to feed them all. As you can see, however, Hazel rose to the occasion and got cracking on serving a delicious pie supper, followed by a lovely array of deserts.

The Doug Parker evening was a huge success and great fun was had by all who attended. We would like to thank all those who helped make the event so successful including, of course, Hazel and Clive Woodward, Sam, Caru and Tim for running the bar, and the team serving and in the kitchen. Hazel raised in excess of £1,300 for the Village Hall curtains.

Village Hall Barn Dance: In support of Christ Church's Scarecrow Weekend, the Village Hall is holding a Barn Dance on Saturday 15th June. Featuring live music from Tim Handley and his fellow musicians in The Weasel's Revenge, and dancing overseen by caller Geoff Payne between 7-9pm, it is one not to miss. We do hope you will come along to the Scarecrow Café in the Village Hall between 1.30pm - 4.30pm too.

Big Village Party:

Whilst final details for this annual celebration of village life have yet to be finalised, we are busy planning a great event. Please save the date in your diary and be sure to follow us on Facebook, Twitter etc (*see Contact Details at the front of this magazine*).



Returning to Down End

Wrack slithers over flotsam on sea-sucked sand,
Waves slide into crevices
Spinning and swirling in sudden splashings.

This is the Cove as I remember it,
Where childhood fantasies were played
And 'Man Friday's' prints were lost in foaming tides.

Here my children's children
Climb the precipice to Neptune's throne,
Ride the same limpeted leviathans.
Dive with Mowgli into fathomless pools.

I have lost count of holidays spent here,
But rekindle now with laughing pirates,
Those blissful days of fifty years ago.



Cook's Tips:

Chocolate Cupcakes Recipe

(makes 12 cupcakes)

Ingredients:

- 5 oz softened butter
- 5 oz superfine caster sugar
- 2 tablespoons cocoa powder
- 6 oz self-raising flour
- 3 eggs
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract



Method:

Pre-heat your oven to gas mark 4.

Line a 12 cup cake pan with cupcake papers.

Crack the eggs into a cup and beat lightly with a fork.

Place all the ingredients in a large bowl and mix until light and creamy.

Divide the mixture evenly between the cake cases and bake in the oven for around 15 – 20 minutes until the cupcakes have risen and are firm to touch.

Transfer the cupcakes to a wire rack, allow to cool before icing and decorating.

Enjoy!



Children's Summer WORD SEARCH



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



Hat	Camping	Summer
Bucket	Spade	Sun
Beach	Tent	Bees
Sand	Swim	Butterfly
BBQ	Adventure	Bug

Changing Times at Mr Ed's Shed

We set up this green care farm in 2017, as a five-year project to help models within the fashion industry to gain coping and resiliency, whilst still staying in work. Mr Ed's Shed was realised whilst one of its founders was working as a Creative Director for a fashion and events company in Chelsea, and its programme first formulated whilst researching eating disorders within his PhD at a Russell Group University.

What was unique was the focus on green care, a radical contrast to the built-up city landscapes our future clients were used to working in and our use of horses within our care programmes. Horses are wonderful creatures; a large part of eating disorders is the time spent looking within the mirror, the mirror is the tool used by sufferers to keep them within their maladaptive cycles of control. We intended to use the horse as mirror, or more specifically, their millions of mirror neurons, to help sufferers learn to take control of their maladaptive behaviours.

To be sustainable throughout the project, we decided to use rescue horses, knowing it would take longer to prepare them, as horses really need to get to know and understand us and us them to facilitate the work, and had personally invested heavily into the project to afford us this ethical path.

This meant that we would not be fully operational until mid-2018. To make



ABOVE: StablesDaze, helping support children to create mental health resiliency.

ourselves entirely ethical, we also set up a dedicated CIC to service the local community (which this year is part of the Co-op's Social Community Fund). We did not want affluence to be the deciding factor in the provision of care and therefore set it up so the private business would sustain the CIC, which

would be run at considerably reduced cost for local community and NHS patients.

Little did we know that in January 2020 Covid-19 would hit. With COVID, all international travel closed and many fashion shows were conducted online only and only used domestic models: it decimated the industry and the further restrictions on domestic travel decimated our business model.

To add further stress, the NHS asked us to take on more complex needs because all face-to-face service provision had stopped and many users were heavily impacted by avoidance behaviours, meaning that many were not accessing any state service at a time when the current environment was the most challenging to many disorders. Our company, although qualifying for COVID bail out loans, had no profit because we had only just recently finished prepping our herd. I had to make a choice: either refuse to help support the community and NHS, or go back into paid employment.

Since COVID-19 both co-founders have gone back into low level roles, donating huge parts of salary to sustain Community and NHS clients, and thus far have managed to sustain operating costs of our CIC, but understand this is not sustainable long term.

Mr Ed's Shed is currently undergoing a rebrand with hope to eventually restore its private business arm and principal revenue strand; our parish community will gradually start to see these changes coming over the next few months but, in the meantime, we would really appreciate if you could help support us as your chosen community project under the Co-op's scheme. If members then just sign on **membership.coop.co.uk/causes/86042** and make us your dedicated fund, it won't cost you anything but will make a real difference for our CIC.

We understand that times are tough for everyone, which is why we are not asking for public donations, but your support means everything to us so please share our work, like our Facebook page, and visit our activities at **STABLEDAZE.COM** where, in the short term, we will continue to help shape our future generations in supporting their mental health resiliency because without them there will be no future business for anyone.

The Yellow-Legged Asian Hornet: why the concern?

A destructive, and potentially dangerous, invasive insect has made its way to the UK. There's a huge effort underway to make as many people as possible aware of the threat posed by the yellow-legged Asian hornet, and to encourage any sightings to be reported via an official app.

First discovered in the UK in 2016, the insect has travelled to our shores from western Europe, where there are now over half a million nests annually in France alone. By 2022, just 16 Asian Hornet nests had been discovered in this country. But in 2023, this increased dramatically to 72 nests in 56 different locations – more than in the previous six years combined. Kent and other counties along the south coast took the brunt of the incursion, but there have been sightings in locations across the country, including as far north as Scotland. There have already been confirmed sightings in March this year, a month earlier than in previous years, raising fears that they could become established here without an effort on an unprecedented scale to track, locate and destroy nests.

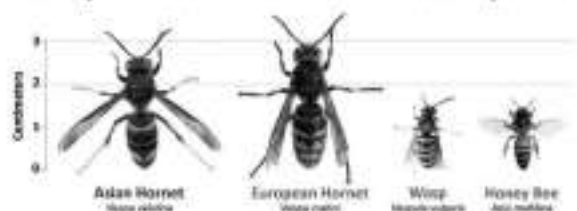
So why the concern? What is it about the yellow-legged Asian hornet that has created such a worry about what 2024 might bring? Put simply, they have the capacity to wreak havoc on our wildlife in the UK, through their destruction of honey bee colonies, and their predation on a number of other insect species. Their habit of hovering outside bee hives stops the bees from going out to collect nectar and pollen to feed themselves. Just one nest of hornets can consume up to around 11kg of insects in a year.

By now, most people are aware of just how important pollinators are to our own health and wellbeing and the security of our food chain. This could have huge consequences on our wider ecology with many beekeepers calling it the greatest threat to our native pollinators in a generation.

And there's concern that the increasing numbers of yellow-legged Asian hornets could pose a significant risk to public health too. While one hornet alone is unlikely to cause a problem, they can be aggressively defensive of

their nests. These nests can be built low to the ground and in hedgerows and brambles, meaning disturbances by unsuspecting individuals could have dangerous consequences.

Think you've seen an Asian Hornet? Report it!



Report through the Asian Hornet Watch app or www.bit.ly/asianhornetreport



Animal & Plant Health Agency

So how do you know what to look for? Well, they can be identified by their very distinct markings: they're slightly smaller than our native European hornet, which is two or three times the size of a common

wasp, and are black with an orange face, a thin yellow band near the middle and a broader orange/yellow band around their abdomen, near the tail. The most distinguishing characteristic is their bright yellow legs, like they've been dipped in a pot of yellow paint – hence the name.

So, keep your eyes open this summer and if you think you see a yellow-legged Asian hornet, be sure to report it! Download the official Asian Hornet Watch app from your app store and log any sightings, along with a photo if possible. Experts from the Government's National Bee Unit (NBU) will then be able to identify if there's a nest nearby, and if so, destroy it. If you think you see these insects coming and going from a nest – keep your distance! Stay at least 10 metres away to keep yourself safe.

And spread the word. Tell your neighbours, your friends, your colleagues...share the app on social media, ask for posters to be put up in nearby shops, raise the issue with your local council, your local MP, and in your schools. Communication is key: the more people who know about this insect, the more chance we have of limiting its impact.

For more information, including the latest updates and ways in which you can help share awareness, take a look at the British Beekeeper's Association website at www.bbka.org.uk.

Church Matters: Readings for Trinity

Date	Old Testament	Epistle	Gospel
2 nd June	Deuteronomy 5:12-15	2 Corinthians 4: 5-12	Mark 2:23-3:6
9 th June	Genesis 3:8-15	2 Corinthians 4:13 – 5:1	Mark 3:20-35
16 th June	Ezekiel 17:22-end	2 Corinthians 5:6-10 [11-13] 14-17	Mark 4:26-34
23 rd June	Job 38:1-11	2 Corinthians 6:1-13	Mark 4:35-41
30 th June Fulford	Wisdom of Solomon 1:13-15; 2:23-24	2 Corinthians 8:7-15	Mark 5:21-43
7 th July	Ezekiel 2: 1-5	2 Corinthians 12:2-10	Mark 6:1-13
14 th July	Amos 7:7-15	Ephesians 1:3-14	Mark 6:14-29
21 st July	Jeremiah 23:1-6	Ephesians 2:11-22	Mark 6:30-34,53-end
28 th July	2 Kings 4:42-end	Ephesians 3:14-end	John 6:1-21
4 th August	Exodus 16:2-4, 9-15	Ephesians 4:1-16	John 6:24-35
11 th August	1 Kings 19:4-8	Ephesians 4: 25-5:2	John 6:35, 41-51
18 th August	Proverbs 9:1-6	Ephesians 5:15-20	John 6:51-58
25 th August	Joshua 24:1-2a, 14-18	Ephesians 6:10-20	John 6:56-69

Church Matters: Reflections from the Vicar

Just when we thought Spring had sprung and Summer lies just around the corner, rain seems never to be far away. We hope, however, that by the time we reach St Swithin's Day on the 15th July, the sun may have got the better of it so we can look forward to some 40 days and 40 nights of fine weather! For, as the poem goes:

*"St Swithin's day if thou dost rain
For forty days it will remain
St Swithin's day if thou be fair
For forty days will rain no mair"*

Few, however, take this folklore seriously for it has never been proved that rain, or indeed fair weather, has persisted for such a length of time afterwards. Legend, however, does have it that, having asked to be buried 'humbly' outside the Cathedral, St Swithin, an Anglo-Saxon Bishop of Winchester and patron of the Cathedral, was subsequently moved to inside after which a storm blew up caused by his anger at his wishes being overturned!

Whilst St Swithin is best known for this meteorological superstition, he was also the trusted adviser of King Egbert of Wessex. He is said to have had a very charismatic and generous personality, impacting those who served him and who he served as well, so much so that his grave became an important place of pilgrimage. He was also famous for building churches, and he even had a bridge built over the River Itchen to help the poor cross the river so they could sell their wares in the city. On one occasion, some workmen maliciously broke a woman's basket of eggs and St Swithin apparently mended them!

Whatever the truth behind these stories, the fact remains that St Swithin was clearly a humble, kind and thoughtful person and the fact that he wished to be buried outside the cathedral – where he could be walked and rained on - rather than within the interior of it, speaks volumes. We could do no better, therefore, than to follow his example in our everyday interaction with all whom we meet.

So, as we look forward to St Swithin's Day, may we not only hope that the day dawns fair and bright, but that we also remember the Christian simplicity and holiness with which our Patron Saint of Rain lived his life.

*Almighty God,
by whose grace we celebrate the feast of your servant Swithun;
grant that, as he governed with gentleness
the people committed to his care,
so we, rejoicing in our Christian inheritance,
may always seek to build up your Church in unity and love.
Amen.*



Services & Events: With Spring came the sad news that our beautiful Georgian church had been the victim of thieves; in their bid to steal the lead off the church roof, they caused considerable damage, resulting in severe water ingress and damage to the church building. They also stole two of the lead hoppers.

Unfortunately, no-one appears to have witnessed the theft, which took place between 10th – 16th March. We have now repaired much of the damage, but obviously, even with insurance, this comes at a cost to the church. It is also very sad to think that buildings, such as much-loved rural churches, are considered 'fair game' to such thieves.

MOTHERING SUNDAY: For many, this is one of the loveliest celebrations in the Christian calendar, giving thanks to mothers around the world and all the love they represent. The Hilderstone Youth Club, assisted by Debbie Britton, provided hand-painted wooden hearts to accompany small posies of flowers for all the mothers and grandmothers at the service: It was a very kind gesture and meant a great deal to the recipients of those tokens of love. We are most grateful to the children who helped with this.

LENT: We marked Lent with a series of thought-provoking Lent Discussions, held at the Vicarage in Fulford, which were very well-attended. Based on the book 'Les Miserables', the discussions were held over five evenings during the period of Lent. We would like to thank Rev'd Lucinda Wray-Wear for hosting these evenings, and Lundy, her very patient dog, for giving up her sofa for us.



ABOVE: The blessing of the Tomb at the Easter Sunday service by Rev'd Lucinda Wray-Wear.

Lent closes with Palm Sunday, where we remember Jesus's arrival at Jerusalem in the final week of his life. It is a week of quiet contemplation with poignant services on Maundy Thursday and Good Friday. The Thursday service draws to a close with the lights turned off and a period of silence as the Altar is cleared. This poignancy was carried through to the Good Friday service which was held at St Nicholas in Fulford. Bearing the cross down the Aisle, Rev'd Lucinda Wray-Wear lead a very moving service of readings and prayers, with members of the congregation being invited to place nails by the cross, which was laid upon the Altar steps.

EASTER: Easter remains an ever-popular and joyful event in the Christian calendar, marking when Jesus was resurrected on Easter Sunday, giving Christians hope. As is customary, Easter eggs were provided for all those who attended, as they are a symbol for the resurrection of Jesus.

ROGATION SUNDAY: Our news headlines are constantly filled with stories of global warming, food shortages, foul water etc, and Rogation Sunday is a celebration, and acknowledgment, of the value of our land and sea, and the life they support. From the management of our rubbish to preserving our precious water, we give thanks for the beauty of our village and the farmers who sustain us with our food.

Now, as our days draw out and the earth warms up, our land springs into life all around us. For Christ Church, it also heralds the arrival of our bi-annual **SCARECROW WEEKEND** on 15th – 16th June.

As is customary, our very own Clerical Scarecrow will make an appearance at the church gates to welcome visitors who follow the Scarecrow Trail around the village. It is a time of great fun and more than a little competitive spirit on the part of the locals, with scarecrows and barn dancing, culminating in the prize-giving on the Sunday afternoon. We hope

you can join in the fun, be it by making your own scarecrow, or joining in our celebrations throughout the weekend: your involvement helps ensure these events keep going.



ABOVE: The blessing of our water in the churchyard, overlooking the fields.

And, of course, we also have the annual **BIG VILLAGE PARTY** which takes place on 27th – 28th July. At Christ Church, we will be hosting an Exhibition, looking at Hilderstone over the years. Any volunteers to help us stage this exhibition, or any contributions by way of photographs or items of interest, would be most gratefully received. Please contact Eleanor Bane on: Eleanor.bane@safersystems.co.uk or mobile: 07767763938.

Baptism: 5th May 2024. We warmly welcomed Michael Alexander Hammond into God's family.

We also remember Sue Stubbs in our prayers and hope she recovers quickly from her recent illness.

Photographs



I can recall a very precious possession belonging to my father; it was a Box Camera and looked something like this.

A camera was considered to be a luxury item on a 'wish list'.

Nowadays, I have accustomed myself to even the youngest of my grandsons (12-year-old Laurence) having a mobile phone that takes great pictures.

When I wake in the morning, I am greeted by photographs of my family and friends. I smile as I recall the moments and occasions that created those photos. Joe and Sophie, now in their mid-twenties but then, aged six and eight, walking out the woodland path from Watersmeet Bay, holding hands after a day of play and argument on the beach. My dear friend Jeanne and I, with friends for lunch in her conservatory, and the grapes (waiting for the cheese course) hanging from the vine across the roof. Oh, and so many more!

I admire the art (and it is indeed an art form) of the photographer. How much we marvel at the artistry of book-cover design! The photos in some magazines reveal skill and artistry involved in presenting the images...here I take the opportunity to mention the covers of our own Church Magazine.

We are often affected, and even influenced by, huge enlargements of photos on billboards and our understanding of a newspaper article is often clarified by a photographic image. The consummate skill and bravery of many wild-life photographers brings amazing images into our lives.

Those often-mocked experiments in photography in the village of Laycock over a hundred and fifty years ago have led to our acceptance of the value of a photographer's art, politically, commercially, socially, and artistically and has given the 'family amateur' a source of pleasure for over a century.

We should never disregard the family photos and scenes we take with our mobile phones on holiday, and especially their value as a contribution to our social history.

A few years ago, I gathered together all of my family photographs plus recently printed copies of more 'up-to-date' ones. On the occasion of a family gathering, I presented each of my three daughters with a photo album of their life history up to their first child's birth. In one case to her first child's Graduation. I continue to give them pictures of Graduations and important events. The pleasure that those albums have given my daughters and equally my grandchildren is so rewarding. Those albums will be handed on in the future: a valuable contribution to their family history.

I hope that these reflections will persuade you that one day your efforts with your camera/phone will become a family record. So get out while the sun shines and capture those memories for ever.'

Marian Baldwin

Village Life in Pictures

As part of our **Village Big Village Party on 27th – 28th July**, Christ Church will be hosting an exhibition looking at life in our rural village over the years. Hilderstone has a rich history, and we would love to hear your stories, see your pictures and display items from times past.

This will be a real celebration of our village and all it has been over the generations. With your help, we can put on a fabulous display in our beautiful church that will do our village proud.

If you can help set up the displays or have anything which you could contribute to the exhibition, we would love to hear from you. Please contact Eleanor Bane: eleanor.bane@safersystems.co.uk or mobile: 0767763938.

Thank-you

Hilderstone Heritage: Part 45

The availability of census returns, together with the help of Tim Handley and Joanne Austin, has meant that I can revisit the history of the village Post Office.



The last Post Office in Hilderstone was at Bank Farm, between 1989 and 1992 when the Sub-postmistress was Doreen Smith. Prior to this, the Post Office had been located at the village stores and was run by Pat Thornley.

Between 1964 and 1985 Joy Philips (*pictured LEFT in an article in the Weekly Sentinel 1973*) was Sub-postmistress at her home, Hillrise.

The earliest reference to a post office in Hilderstone is from the 1861 census, when Henry Tams is recorded as the Postmaster (as well as being a tailor). He was from Sandon and his in-laws, Mr and Mrs Bowers, lived with him at what is now 'The Old Post Office'. I presume he married a village girl who must have been deceased prior to the census. The 1864 Trade Directory also records Henry Tams as Postmaster.

In the 1871 census, Mary Harper is recorded as a "Petty Shop Keeper" and in the 1874 Trade Directory as Postmistress. Her niece, who lived with her, was Ellen Tams, so Mary was likely to have been Henry Tams' sister.



ABOVE: this postcard from c1909 shows the Post Office – the second cottage on the right. The Post Office sign can just be made out above the front door.

By 1881 the Meddings family had begun a long association with the Post Office. Still at the same site, the Post Office was occupied by George Meddings, Seed and Provision Dealer, and his wife Mary, "Employed at Home" (in other words, Postmistress). The Post Office was subsequently taken over (prior to 1891) by two of their children, William (recorded as a grocer and provision dealer) and Mary.

The Post Office temporarily moved to 'West View' (now 'Mill House') and in 1891 was again run by George Meddings, 'Grocer, seedman and Postmaster'. Then to confuse matters, by 1911 the Post Office was back at its original site, this time run by Mary Waldron (daughter of George and Mary Meddings) and her husband, George. They are listed as Postmistress and Post Office Assistant respectively.



"Number, please." Mrs. C. Meddings, the village postmistress, plugs in for a call on the telephone switchboard, which is housed in her living-room.

In 1927 the Post Office moved to West View again, this time the Sub-postmaster was George Meddings (Mary's brother), who was also a seedman and market gardener. His second wife, Connie, was the telephonist and Post Office assistant.

Later on, George concentrated on his market gardening business and Connie was assisted by her sister, Miss Robinson. George died in 1950 and Connie retired in 1963.

One mystery Remains: a Mrs Hulme ran the Post Office prior to its moving to West View in 1927. But when did she take over as Postmistress? I hope to answer this one day.

ABOVE: this photograph is taken from a 1954 article in the Weekly Sentinel.

RIGHT: George Meddings outside the Post Office, West View, in the 1940s. Note the Post Office sign above the door.



The Last Geranium

"Give 'em a good feed of sok," my dad, Tom Titley, used to say to me. I'd never heard the word before, nor since, but like the liquid fertiliser it described, I guess it was his own invention.

My dad was never so at peace as he was in the garden. He was as good a gardener as he was a grocer, and he was a very good grocer. Everyone who knew him agreed that his undoubted skills in the shop matched those he had in the garden. When he was in the shop, he looked like one imagined a grocer to look like and somehow managed to transform himself to look like a gardener when he was in the garden.

He was shaped like a Spanish onion. His face was as round as an apple and his cheeks were as rosy as two peaches. He had large, twinkling eyes as blue as Lavender. Indeed, he was a very good advertisement for the two main interests in his life.

Thursday afternoon was his half-day off. After dinner he'd have an hour with the Daily Herald. That is, he would read it for half an hour and sleep under it for the rest to emerge damp and pink and ready for the day. Regardless of the weather, he'd put on his well-worn wellies, his old tweed jacket and his sad-looking, velour trilby hat. Then he'd light up his old pipe selected from a rack at the back of the kitchen door, pack it with his best Wills tobacco and, swathed in clouds of blue smoke, he'd toddle up the uneven, red-brick path to the old shed at the top of the garden.

My dad always knew exactly what he was going to do. He'd had a week to think about it. His steady pace belied his work output. Paradoxically, he could shift more work than someone working twice as hard.

I was banned from his shed unless he was with me. However, it didn't stop me from sneaking in occasionally to filch the odd screw, or nail, for my trolley. The shed was an Aladdin's cave of homemade garden aids and hand-me-down tools, each having its own unique place and my dad knew them all. There were dabbers made from the stail of an old rake; an ancient riddle; balls of string; skeins of raffia; piles of hessian sacks; an old brass hand-

pump fly spray gun that squirted his special brew of soapy water; old tins as rusty as the nails and screws they housed; fruit boxes of the type that had pegs in the corners to support the boxes above and ideal to rest sheets of glass on to 'bring-on' early seeds and plants. The shed had a not unpleasant, earthy smell that always reminded me of seed potatoes and autumns long past.

A misshapen whetstone balanced on top of a pile of house bricks was hidden at the back of the shed. My dad's first job was to sharpen his penknife. He'd dribble a spot of water from the rain tub onto the stone and, with a technique developed over many years, he'd put a fine edge to the blade. Finally, he'd strop it on the palm of his hand for a minute or two.

Predominately, he grew flowers, but he always kept a small corner for the odd vegetable. He also had a patch for cut flowers such as Sweet Williams, Asters, and Carnations, but his main interest was Geraniums. What my dad didn't know about the cultivation of Geraniums wasn't worth knowing. There seemed to be an indefinable affinity between him and his Geraniums. From just a packet of seeds his Summer borders were always ablaze with the glorious red double blooms of his favourite plant nurtured with ample helpings of his homemade 'Sok'.



Passing folk would stop and lean on the fence to admire the results of his industry. On Sunday mornings some would call in on their way to the cemetery to buy a bunch of cut flowers. My dad was a man of few words, but he'd share his reflections on the weather, the condition of the soil, or current problems of garden pests.

My dad was a great believer in 'all things natural' and especially in putting back

ABOVE: the old house at Cross Heath showing my Mum and two sisters in 1934 just as they had moved in. I was born there two years later)

into the earth what his plants were constantly taking out of it. He kept a yellowish, dog-eared copy of his 'gardening bible', the *Gardeners Chronicle* tucked under his armchair and it was woe betide any of us who moved it! He'd gather barrows full of manure from the four fields in front of our house and stack it at the back of the shed until it was well rotted down. He saved the soot from the chimney in the same place. As far as I can remember, 'Sok' was a mixture of the old manure, rainwater and one or two undisclosed organic additives all put together in a rusty oil drum at the top of the garden. He never passed it without giving it a couple of good stirs and a few whispered words of encouragement. I tried it myself once, but the smell was overwhelming.

My dad spent hours nurturing his Geraniums. In August, he'd break off the tender green side shoots and bob them into the ground under shelter of the mother plants. He told me that August was the best month for Geranium cuttings. Then, towards the end of September, before the first frost, he'd dust down his assorted collection of clay pots and transplant the young plants ready for moving indoors for the winter.

My dad couldn't afford a greenhouse, so he made use of all our windowsills. Each sill was filled with a potted Geranium placed on an assortment of old saucers and tin lids he'd gathered over the years from here and there. My mum, Dolly, accepted the situation philosophically. After all, my dad cleaned the windows and kept the sills tidy, and more. Religiously, every Sunday morning he checked the health of each plant, the moisture content of the soil and pinch out any young buds and dead leaves.

As the days grew warmer my he would take the Geraniums out into the yard for a bit of an airing and to harden them off. He'd bring them all in again before the evenings grew too cool. After the last frost, when late spring merged with early summer, he filled the borders with his precious plants.

This was the pattern of my dad's life, and it remained unchanged after his retirement. Of course, unknowingly, he slipped into a slower pace and spent more time sitting in the garden admiring it as well as planning it. Then sadly, he became seriously ill and died and my mum was left alone. My wife Ann



ABOVE: My Mum and Dad

and I tried to keep on top of it, which was not easy. My mum was also ailing and within 12 months left and went to live with my eldest sister.

We cleared mum's few remaining belongings from the old house. There was one weak and leggy Geranium left in the bathroom window. We just couldn't put this last Geranium in the rubbish bag, so we took it home and cared for it. Remarkably, just a week

before mum died, the last Geranium threw out a most vivid red double bloom, as if to signal the reuniting of my mum and my dad. Perhaps my dad had sent a squirt of the old 'Sok' somehow.

Later, we took the last Geranium to the Garden of Remembrance and put it where my parents' ashes had been scattered. It seemed right somehow that the last of my dad's Geraniums should be laid to rest in the same place as the person who had given them life. We like to think of them sitting in the 'Garden of Eden' smiling and admiring their favourite plant.

Harry Titley

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It seems it is not just the locals of Hilderstone who appreciate Tim Dyer's great efforts with the litter picking! His bovine friends were out in force in May to cheer him along! Thanks for your sterling work litter picking Tim.

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