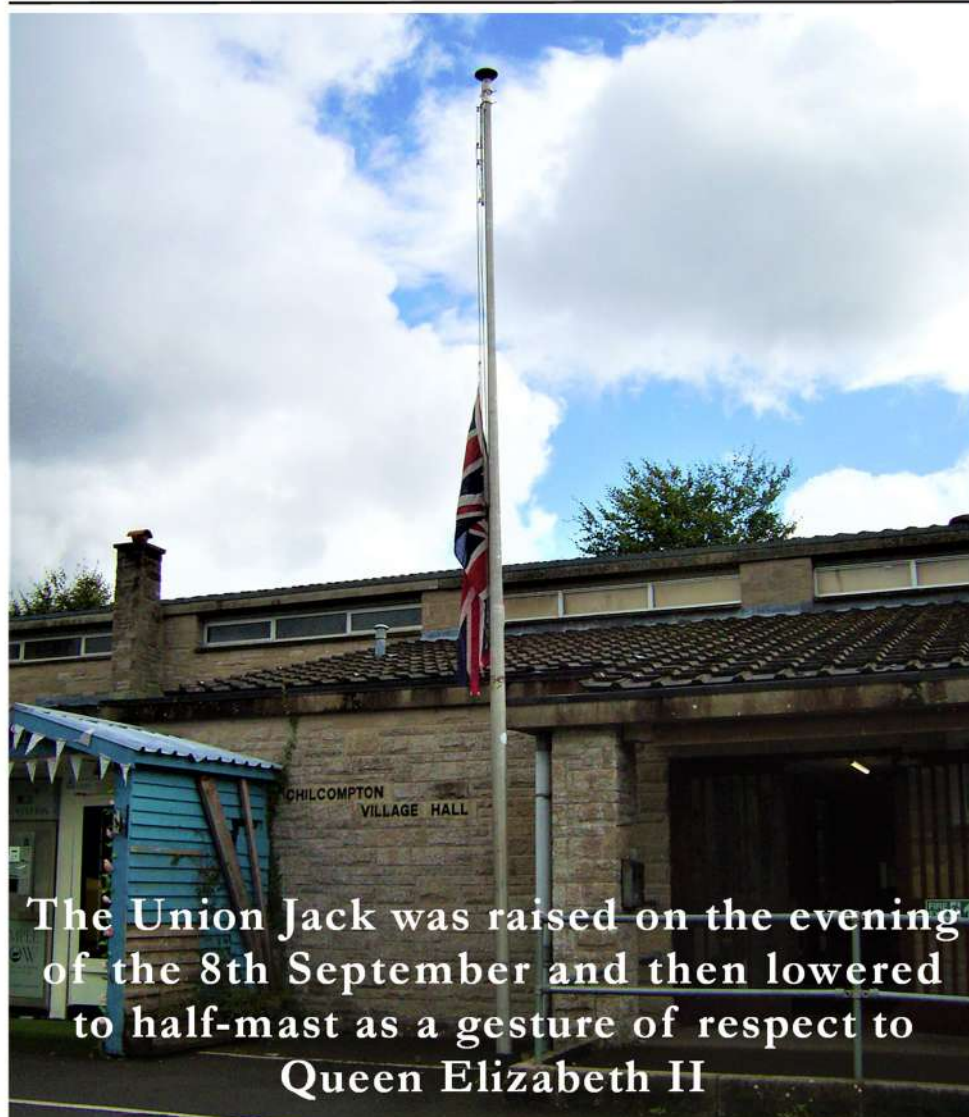




Welcome...

...to the 2022 Autumn edition of Chilcompton Matters.

We had hardly raised our glasses to the demise of Gladman when another developer comes knocking on our door. Why won't they leave us alone? Time to reach for the pitchfork again (see p4). Then there was the uncertainty and confusion about the 173 bus service (see p6).

On the plus side there was a successful 'Opening Up' event back in March at the Village Hall, a musical Jubilee party at the Sports Ground in June and a sunny August.

There's an exciting new innovative project being pioneered in Chilcompton in the form of the Chat-e-Cycle, check it out (p8).

This is the 15th magazine that I have produced. Certainly, more than enough. Time for a fresh voice methinks. So, if anyone wants to take over the editorship, come on down. I'm offering an olive branch here...or is it a poisoned chalice?

There is now a good solid band of contributors, so thank you to them for their articles over the years.

The vital role of Mike Hughes beavering away at his computer can never be overstated.

Then there are the advertisers, the distributors and the proof readers - all important cogs in the procedure of making the magazine. And, most importantly, thank you for reading.

Bendice tu corazon (bless your heart)

Malcolm Rigby

Parish Clerk. **E-mail:** parishclerk@chilcompton.org

Contents

Page	Article	Page	Article
4-5	CARO Update	40	Mendip Brass Band
5	Sweltering August	42	Home Library Service
6-7	Rumours !	45	Council Matters
7	Feedback	46	Preparing for Winter
8-9	Chat-e-Cycle	46	The Railway Line Poem
11	Chilcompton Wives	48	Play Group
11	New Village Agent	49	Drugs in Church
11	LOCAL INFORMATION	51	Art Club
12	Obituaries	52	Embroidery
12-13	News from St John's	52	Stone Me
14-15	Opening Up Day	52	Gateway
14-15	Jubilee Celebrations	53	Miners Silhouette
16-17	What a Cutey !	53	Community Transport
18	Golden Hour Club	53	4 Vacant Posts
18	Congratulations	54	New Business Support Service
19	Emergencies	55	Monday Café
21	Paul The Postie Retires	56-57	Garden Club
21	Then & Now	56	Clean Well
22-23	The <i>Real</i> Unsung Hero	57	Who Cares for Carers ?
25	Somerset Wagon Reopens	57	Somerset Prepared Team
26-27	Chilcompton Lives	57	Somerset Wildlife Trust
28-29	An Unusual Year	58	Coronations & Jubilees
28	New County Councillors		(cont'd from P37)
29	Messy Church	59	Advertising Matters
30	Wednesday Walkers	61	Friends of The Surgeries
30	Short Mat Bowls	62-63	How to be an...
31	Speedwatch	63	At Long Last
31	Friday Club	64-65	Football Club
32	History Corner	65	Skating on Thin Ice
32	Community Work	65	Tea & Toast
34-35	Flower Show	66-67	Cricket Club
37	Coronations & Jubilees	67	Sports Club Update
38-39	Photos from My Garden	68	Local Wildlife

Here We Go Again...

CARO Update from Rich Morgan

After the wonderful news in January that the proposed Gladman development of 95 houses at Hoecroft would not be happening, many Chilcompton residents received an unpleasant surprise through their letterboxes a couple of months later. Another national housebuilding company, Redrow, posted glossy leaflets offering a public consultation on a proposal to build 49 houses on green fields south of Broadway.

It is of course entirely up to individual residents whether they respond to the invitation to submit comments, or whether they are in favour of the proposal. Using the experience gained from a similar exercise used by Gladman, we can say that comments from members of the public may well be used selectively to assist the developer, rather than to reflect the views of the public.

We were first alerted to this scheme back in November last year, when Conor Flanagan, a director of Black Box Planning Ltd., took part in a Zoom meeting with the Parish Council. Black Box are the planning consultants for Redrow, and significantly, Mr. Flanagan disclosed that the ultimate aim for the proposed development south of Broadway is not just 49 houses, but a total of 150. All the fields, from those behind the homes opposite Veales Garage, all the way to the field opposite Parsonage Lane, would be filled with housing.

The scale of the full proposal is breathtaking, nearly twice the volume of building as the Gladman development, which itself would have been the largest single housing project in Chilcompton's history.

The initial plan for 49 houses, therefore, has to be considered as an enabling step, using the easiest access point from the B3139. Let none of us be under any illusion that if the village development limits are breached, and the first tranche of 49 houses are built, that would be the end of the story. Redrow have given the game away, we know the full extent of the damage they wish to inflict upon our village.

How, then, should we deal with this latest threat to the rural nature of Chilcompton? Let's look back at the Decision Notice on the Gladman application, from Planning Inspector David Reed in January this year. One of the key paragraphs begins thus: *"The proposal would significantly harm the character and appearance of the area, adversely affecting the form of the village and surrounding landscape. It would not comprise a logical extension to the village, being an unduly large, individual estate, detached from its main built-up core. It would be incongruously located, encroaching into the countryside which extends into the heart of the village, eroding its character."* These words about encroachment into our green fields at Hoecroft apply just as forcefully to the west of the village.

Other reasons cited by Mr Reed include the difficulties involved with the expansion of the village school, as well as road safety concerns. The issues with the school remain, and no-one in Chilcompton needs reminding of the recent, tragic, fatal accident just a few yards from what would be the entrance to the >>

>> proposed site. A development of 49 houses would mean at least another 100 cars emerging on to the B3139 near what must now be seen as an accident black spot.

The uncertainty over the future of the 173 bus route is also a factor. The existence of what is rather laughably described as a “bus to work” service is a key part of Chilcompton being designated as a sustainable Primary Village. That status would surely cease to apply were we to lose our last remaining bus. Other concerns, such as the oversubscribed doctors surgery, the increased flood risk due to building on green fields, not to mention the global environmental catastrophe of climate change, are also significant.

CARO (Chilcompton Against Rural Overdevelopment), as well of course as your Parish Council, are gearing up for another battle. There isn’t much we can do until a formal planning application has been submitted, but if you would like to join in with the campaign to preserve the rural character of our beautiful village, please get in touch.

Email CARO at caro.enoughisenough@gmail.com

Email the Parish Council via parishclerk@chilcompton.org

Watch for news on the village website www.chilcompton.org and on the Chilcompton Facebook page.

Rich Morgan

Sweltering August:

Parched lawns and bloomin’ flowers

A very hot August in Chilcompton saw temperatures soar into the mid thirties and grass everywhere was turning brown.

Keen gardener, Sue Rankine, said: “If these kinds of temperature are going to increase in the future, my advice is to water thoroughly if not very often.”



See her full article on page 28

Rumours!

No doubt you have come across the waft of speculation and rumours that have been floating through our community about the future of the 173 bus service because of lack of usage and/or shortage of bus drivers.

Be prepared, I am about to give you three quotes that will make you even more confused.

It is, of course, ludicrous that a village our size, what the developers call a 'Primary Village', might lose it's last remaining bus service, particularly in an age of climate change and rising fuel prices.

Doug Claringbold, Managing Director, First Bus, West of England said:

"I fully understand your concerns and we continue to pursue all options to preserve services – we have yet to register the services for October ***“use it or lose it”*** but we will need to do so shortly but no final decision has been made, contrary to what has been reported. However, the situation is very difficult – we have been supported by government funding to run uncommercial services during and since Covid but unfortunately this funding ends in October. Patronage on the 173 remains far below pre-Covid levels and we are having to take some very difficult decisions. We are also having to take into account the national shortage of bus drivers which is also meaning we are unable to run all the services we would wish to – we are working extremely hard to address this but there is no quick fix here.

"We will confirm our final changes over the coming weeks. What I would say is that none of the options we have been exploring removes bus services from Chilcompton. I share many of the views you express and yet, as a commercial operator, we have to take decisions within that context and where services are not commercial we rely upon financial support from Local Authorities. >>



>> “As I said, we will continue to service Chilcompton from the next service change in October but for the long term viability of services it is important that patronage grows. Clearly we have significant responsibility here in terms of running high quality, reliable services but I would ask that local stakeholders, such as Parish Councils, can also have a role to play through local advocacy of bus services. We are very keen to work with all interested parties – whilst it is a tough message, ‘use it or lose it’ is a true message.”

Dan Norris, Metro Mayor for the West of England, said: “I have been discussing the possible changes First Bus could make to their network operations in the West of England region with them, ahead of any changes

that would be introduced in October. Withdrawal of the 173 bus service was an option they considered, and in the West of England Combined Authority area, this route is entirely duplicated by the 174 service. Service reductions were being considered, because First Bus, like all bus operators, are suffering from the nationwide shortage of bus drivers.

“I am pleased that First have not decided to go ahead with the withdrawal of this service. In addition, from the 9th of October, the 174 will divert through Chilcompton on Sundays, improving bus connections in the area.”

Whilst James Heappey, our MP, said: “Contrary to what some local councillors have claimed, there has been no “victory” on the 173. Indeed it’s not absolutely clear what engagement councillors have had with First Bus as neither the local nor regional management have been engaged by them. I don’t tell you this to make a political point but because there is a danger that thinking the service has survived for the wrong reason might lead to a complacency that does eventually see it axed.

“The truth is that the 173 was never seriously lined up for deletion as the recovery of that route from the pandemic was on a trajectory that suggested it would be financially viable in a reasonable timeframe. First Bus have also been able to more successfully recruit drivers in Wells which means services that operate from the Wells depot are attractive. The 173 is one of these.

“However the 173 needs to continue to recover from the pandemic so it can achieve commercial viability. The City Council (Wells) will want, therefore, to make sure residents aren’t misled by stories of a great political victory and instead make sure they use the service regularly to prove its viability. First Bus have said the route is running on a “use it or lose it” basis - we’ve been warned!”

Clear? Use it or lose it? Is that a threat?

Malcolm Rigby.

Feedback

What are your views on the magazine? The team that put it together is always looking for your comments, be they good or bad. Is there something missing? What could be done better? Please let us know. Contact the parish clerk: Malcolm Rigby, email: parishclerk@chilcompton.org

Next Deadline: 10th January 2023

Chat-e-Cycle

Malcolm Rigby talked to a woman who is pioneering a new way to combat rural social isolation and inaccessibility

Don't be surprised if in future months you see a strange three-wheeled bicycle roaming our streets. It is simply a means of allowing older people and disabled people to get out and about whilst having a nice chat. Hence the name Chat-e-Cycle.

The scheme is the brainchild of Kate Mattick who has been a physiotherapist for the past nine years, spending the majority of her career working with older people. In 2019 Kate went to London to do a Masters in Disability, Design and Innovation.

Kate reflected on where Chat-e-Cycle originated from: "One of our Masters' projects was focused on how to make active transport accessible to the ageing population, encouraging people to get out and at the same time try and combat some of the challenges around social isolation .

"It's really thinking about how we need better transport, we need better green transport and having a disability, or your age, shouldn't mean that you're not part of that thinking."

Kate designed a vehicle for her Masters project but then when deciding to try and turn Chat-e-Cycle into a reality - she realised there was a skeleton model already on the market that might just work for this pilot project. After a few bespoke additions to the cycle, Kate came to the conclusion: "I'm not a bike engineer, I'm not the first person to come up with the concept of an accessible bike, Chat-e-Cycle is now about taking an accessible cycle and thinking about how it can be implemented within a rural community. It's in the service delivery design that it is original.

"Rather than raising the funds to develop something from scratch, these bikes do exist and they are pretty much what I had in mind in the original stages."

The electric bike is a seriously mean machine with several gears, three levels of assistance and can also reverse. The main pilot does the steering, braking and the brunt of the pedalling whilst the secondary rider can do as little or as much pedalling as they want. The focus isn't on exercise – but it can be if you want.

This particular purple number is made by a company called Van-Raam based in the Netherlands, but they don't come cheap, costing about £12,000. Kate spent the first six months of the year in an intensive crowd funding campaign and was delighted to achieve her goal.

Clearly, she is not in it for cash and decided against forming a charity. "I don't want the business model to necessarily be a charitable model that is >>

>> completely forever reliant on donations. I'm not doing this to make money but I'm doing it to develop a social enterprise business model that is sustainable and replicable in other locations."

Kate, herself, lives in Bath so why Chilcompton as the location of her prototype? "It makes sense. It's rural, I grew up here, spending my childhood enjoying playing in the local area. I know Chilcompton, my grandfather, dad and

now brother are farmers on Manor Farm – so it's the perfect place to launch from."



Kate plans on starting Chat-e-Cycle up with a pilot project – she wants to learn as much as possible from local residents about how this scheme could work for them, and the community.

In its current plan, you could rent Chat-e-Cycle for an hour or 2 with a friend or family member who you think might like to have a go. But, also, if you as an individual wanted to go out for a cycle as a secondary rider, then you could contact Kate and either she or her partner would take you out for a ride.

So long as you are capable of sitting independently then you are good to go – there is a foot-rest just in case you didn't fancy the pedalling.

In the longer term Kate would like to build up a team of volunteer main pilots who would be willing to take folk out for a ride and a chat.

Kate gives her father a cycle ride

to try at the moment is figuring out how this service model could work here. Because you will then be able to take that service model and see if it could be replicated in other places. Could a residential home do this? In a larger town or in a more rural place? I want to learn from how it goes in Chilcompton to see how that could be replicated. Contribute that learning back to the accessible cycling worlds."

She is definitely looking for feedback.

Kate said: "I have sat and thought about Chat-e-Cycle for a long time. Sometimes you've got to just do it to learn. This isn't the final product. I'm just really keen to make sure that rural places and older people aren't left out of the cycling future. It's the start of something I hope."

Want to find out more information or fancy a cycle then get in touch.
Contact Kate on 07934 507183 or chatecycle@gmail.com

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Chilcompton Wives

We are continuing to meet at the Sports Ground venue at Bennell at 2.15p.m. on the first Wednesday of the month.

We have met for 'Tea and Chat' but also have had speakers ranging from a Storyteller and a guided walk through the canal at Bath to the S.S. Great Britain.

We all enjoyed our Queen's Platinum celebration with an afternoon of Red, White and Blue, a Right Royal Quiz and memories of earlier Jubilees and of course light refreshments.

If you would like to join us just come along and you will be met with a warm welcome. For further information contact Bridget Brookbank on 01761 232039 or Maureen Evans on 01761 233266

New Village Agent

Hello, I'm Tina the new Village Agent for the CCS (Community Council for Somerset). Covering East Mendip, I have been in position for 4 months now. I have lived in the area all my life and have raised my children in a local village for 12 years.

I'm Working for CCS as I have a passion for helping people. Living in rural Mendip we are trying to build smarter communities. Helping others around us, Village Agents can offer free confidential, practical support for you and the community. Supporting unpaid carers, loneliness/isolation, benefit checks etc. We can signpost you to people and services that you didn't know to contact. We will help in any way we can. If you would like a referral, please call 01823 331222 or email:

www.somersetagents.org/agent-call-back

Tina Hazelhurst

Local Information

All villagers are invited to attend the Parish Council meetings, to make an observation or just to view the machinery of the most local tier of government.

Meetings are held on the second Wednesday of every month, 7.30pm at the Village Hall.

If you have any ideas for the twice yearly village newsletter or would like to put some information up on the village website, contact the Parish Clerk by email: parishclerk@chilcompton.org or ring 01761 232974.

Website: www.chilcompton.org

PC noticeboards are by the Coop (temporarily out of use), by the Village Hall, on Bowden Hill and at the bus stop by Church House.

County Councillors:

Tony.robbs@somerset.gov.uk

Cllr.hobbs@mendip.gov.uk

District Council: 0300 303 8588

County Council: 0300 123 2224

Obituaries

The following villagers have died since the last newsletter:

Don Gumbleton, John Ernest William Gumbleton,
Eric Bridges, Rosemary Maud Davies,
Raymond Pearce, Tony Ford,
Jean Winifred Green, Billy Shepherd,
Liam Shepherd, Julian Reakes, Sue Coombes

We send sincere condolences to their families and friends.

Apologies if anyone has been inadvertently omitted. Please let me know of any others and they will be included in the next newsletter.

Marlene Pickford 01761 232774 email: marlenep@mypostoffice.co.uk

News from St. John's

In the heat of this scorching summer, it is always pleasant to step into the cool of our lovely church and sit for a moment in the peace. The doors are open daily during the hours of daylight and we warmly invite you to make the most of the shade! We have a gentle stream of visitors during the week, many of whom pop in whilst walking the dog or after visiting our neighbours The Holy Cow, and all are welcome.

We are aware that the path is steep for those with mobility issues and the congregation responded generously in the Spring to an appeal to fund making the church more accessible to all, as well as improving the audio visual system within. To find out more or to give in support of this project, visit our website:

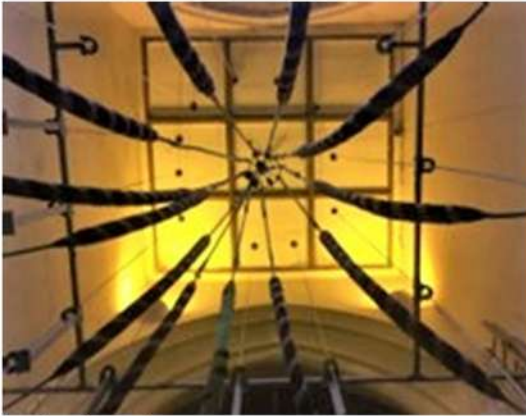
<https://www.stvigorstjohn.church/about/about-us/st-johns-improving-the-visitor-experience/>

We have had a busy summer with Baptisms in the parish and extend our congratulations to the families of Ellie Massey, Tabitha Farrell, Edward Drew, Joseph Leaver and Emily Goode. It is always a delight to welcome new members into the family of the Church. Congratulations also go to Benji Cload and Michelle Blissett who married on a beautiful day at the end of July.

Our condolences go to the families of Elizabeth Bate, Margaret Beecham, Ronald Beecroft, Vic Churchy, Donald Gumbleton, Michael Holder, John Gumbleton and Trevor Whitcombe, all of whom have been buried in the Parish recently. It is a privilege to walk with you at these moments of significance in life and if we can be of help either in a time of sadness or of celebration, please contact us via the website: www.stvigorstjohn.church We would be happy to help.

Midweek activities took a break over the summer holidays to allow helpers to rest, but return with enthusiasm for the new term. Tea & Toast, our Thursday Morning Toddler Group meet weekly in Term-Time (8.30-10.30am) and always >>

>> enjoy making new friends. Also meeting weekly are our Bell Ringers who welcome anyone with an interest to drop in on a Monday Evening. No experience necessary! Contact Adrian Beck (01761 415950) for more info.



Monday Café meets on the first Monday of each month, hosted by Sarah our Parish Nurse and welcomes anyone who is free for a chat and a cup of tea. Our long-standing Lunch Club returns for the Autumn on the third Thursday of October. Contact Margaret Holcombe on 01761 415085

to book a place.

Our regular pattern of services for both churches:

Tuesdays 9am, St Vigor's Stratton on the Fosse, Morning Prayer (Traditional)

Wednesdays 9am St John's, Morning Prayer

Thursdays 11am St John's, Holy Communion (Traditional language)

Sundays, 9am. St Vigor's Stratton on the Fosse

10.30am St John's Chilcompton (also on Zoom)

6.30pm St John's: Celtic Evening Prayer (4th Sunday only)

Sunday morning services at each church alternate between Holy Communion and Morning Prayer. During the Autumn, we will be looking at the question: Who is God, and how can we get to know him better? Children and families are welcome at all services. For full details of services and activities visit: www.stvigorstjohn.church



Dates for your diary:

Harvest Celebration	2 nd October 2022
Dressing of the Graves	12 th November 2022
Remembrance Day	13 th November 2022
Carol Service	11 th December 2022
Messy Nativity	18 th December 2022





Opening-Up Day

>>



Jubilee Celebrations

Chilcompton Sports Ground was the place to be on Friday 3rd June, as the Queen's Platinum Jubilee was celebrated in style. The Parish Council and the Sports Club worked together to put on an event which catered for villagers of all ages. Food and drink flowed in plenty from the Social Club kitchen and bar, and there was entertainment for all.

>>



>>

Back in late March the village held an opening up event to promote local clubs, organisations, groups and hospitality businesses that might have been suffering from the COVID lockdowns.

The afternoon at the Village Hall was considered to be a great success with the children really enjoying the free mobile caving experience.

>> Despite a heavy shower just as the festivities were beginning, everyone enjoyed the world-famous local magician Peter Clifford who played tricks on a succession of baffled customers.

Following Peter, it was time for the music to begin. Some of the finest performers from Chilcompton and the immediate area gave their all to delight the audience. First up was singer-songwriter Paul Rogers and his wonderful guitar playing, followed by local bluegrass maestros The Original Barn Finds

Chilcompton's very own Helena Softley then gave us a lovely set of her own work and a couple of covers, and then we had the blues merchants Peas in a Pub.

There could only be one band to wrap the evening up by getting everyone dancing, the one and only local legends, the Honky Tonks!

We would like to thank all the performers, the inflatable slide crew, the volunteers and staff from the Sports Club, and of course all the wonderful residents of Chilcompton who made this such a memorable event.

Rich Morgan

What a cutey!

Malcolm Rigby talked to a baby photographer who has set up her studio down on Manor Farm

It was corporate law that brought Marina Feldman to Britain in 2002, twenty years later she is still here but doing something completely different – taking pictures of new-borns. The native Frenchwoman came to Swansea University for a legal qualification, met her husband and now has two daughters.

But, despite her legal qualifications, ever since she was a kid her real passion has always been photography. She said: “It was always a hobby of mine from very young, I always had a camera in my hand – I loved it.

“I qualified as a solicitor and was until my second daughter was born. Because I was always doing shoots on the side people started asking me to do shoots here and there. And then one thing led to another. And when I finished my second maternity leave in 2014, I decided to give this a go full time so I left the law.”

Does she miss it? “I do a little bit every now and then... the intellectual challenge... but I love people, I love meeting people, love people’s stories. This is just a different way of helping people.”

About 70% of her business is the new-borns (2-3 weeks), and the rest is older babies, families and the occasional wedding.

Marina said: “The new-borns is a specific genre and needs specific training on how to handle new-borns.”

The practice of professionally photographing young babies is relatively new to the UK, a tradition coming over from the States. Marina, herself, getting training from one of the more well-known American new-born photographers.

She said: “It’s part of our culture now and it’s here to stay, people love it and they come back for their second or their third baby.

“Babies are babies for such a short period of time. They love to capture those details because the days are young and the nights are short, it all goes in a blur and they just love having something to remember.”

So what’s the secret of successful new-borns photography? “Patience. A new-born session can take about three hours. Mainly because I follow baby’s needs, if baby needs a feed then we will stop and baby will feed. If they need a cuddle we’ll stop and do that. Then it’s a combination of keeping him warm, fed and a little bit of white noise. It’s a case of having the right environment. The attraction of the studio is that they can take their time. That’s the secret.

“You have to be patient and having been a corporate lawyer that’s helpful. Not worry about getting on the floor to get a shot, to get to their level. To engage with them, to make a fuss of them, make them feel the centre of attention. Do silly faces, silly noises. Just being relaxed really.”

For props she uses furs, blankets and hats. An average session will produce about 30 images.

She said: “With new-born photography there is an awful lot of photoshop. >>

>> intervention to make babies safe in positions, digital has made all that easier to do. Any blemishes or little rashes can be touched up. Some people will ask for no photoshopping, I will always say that I will only remove what you are happy to remove. For example, if mum had a forceps delivery, baby might have bruising on the head and they might decide that that is part of baby's story. They may want that documented and I will leave it. That's always up to the parents."



Marina has become yet another of the female entrepreneurs down in the out-buildings of Manor Farm and she is enjoying the location of her studio. And of Chilcompton, she said: "Oh I love it. A lovely village. I remember the first time I drove down Church lane – it's just magical isn't it. I discovered the sense of community and the people are so friendly."

Marina Feldman can be contacted on 07906 952440.

Golden Hour Club



Some members spent a lovely afternoon in July enjoying tea and cakes in the garden of Eve and Ernie, both former committee members, Ernie being the vice-president for some years. Meetings are every second Tuesday of the month at the village hall at 7.30pm., when a bring-and-buy sale, raffle, refreshments and choirs, talks or music are on offer. Come along, meet friends and enjoy.

Sylvia Rogers. 01761 233142

Congratulations

Daphne Trippick celebrated her 100th birthday in August with her three sons, 9 grandchildren and 17 great grandchildren. Daphne has lived in the village for more than 50 years, was a teacher at Clutton Primary school and became very much involved in Chilcompton village life. She joined Chilcompton Ladies' Choir, was President of the WI and a member of the village hall committee. She also supported the Methodist church and Paulton Hospital League of Friends.

We send her love and best wishes from her friends in Chilcompton.



Emergencies

Pandemics, flooding, wildfires, power cuts... The events of the last couple of years have shown just how important emergency preparedness is. Parish and Town councils are uniquely placed to help their communities, but for this they need to be prepared.

Somerset Prepared is a partnership of the emergency services, voluntary sector, local authorities, and organisations who might be involved in an emergency response. The partnership provides training, grants and advice to help communities be prepared for emergencies, and also holds an annual event – this year we are hosting the **Somerset Prepared Community Resilience Day at West Monkton Village Hall, October 13th, 10am – 4pm.**

There are presentations and workshops on a variety of subjects, including Somerset's Flood Action Plan, Somerset Wildlife Trust's new Climate Adaptation Toolkit for Parish and Town Councils, introductions to new community groups like the Somerset Water Action Network and presentations from local communities, as well as interactive equipment demos from the emergency services and the Environment Agency.

The event is free to attend, with buffet lunch provided.

Emma Giffard – Civil Contingencies Unit - 01823359738

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Paul the Postie Retires



On the last day of March residents of lower Chilcompton and Wells Road said a sad farewell to their much-loved postman.

Paul Emm, or Paul the Postie as he was affectionately known, had been doing his round in the village for the last 17 years.

He said: "I won't miss early mornings or being out in rain, wind and snow."

On work days Paul, who lives in Paulton, used to be up at half five, and at four o'clock in the early days. From March to November, even on bad days, he was very much a 'shorts' man.

When asked if he had grand plans for retirement? "I haven't really, obviously there are jobs to do that you don't do when you're at work. But after that I think I'll just take every day as it comes, and enjoy it. I'll see what happens."

And on his days in Chilcompton? "It's been really good. The people on the round are all nice and they're friendly. I've built good relationships with a lot of them. I've seen a lot of people come, lot of people go, seen children grow up. It's been lovely like that."

The secret of a good postie is being helpful and Paul was certainly that. He left parcels when he could, he helped me out when I posted letters without stamps (doh), and he alerted a couple of residents to potential identity theft scams.

Paul said: "I would like to thank everyone for their good wishes, cards and gifts, which I very much appreciate. I was totally overwhelmed by the generosity and genuine affection shown to me by my customers."

He'll be missed.

Malcolm Rigby



Then & Now



Stockhill Road

The *Real* Unsung Hero

Malcolm Rigby talked to Marlene Pickford who recently retired from the Parish Council after 43 years of public service



It's a record! And one, in her own humble way, she should be justifiably very proud of. The previous longest standing Chilcompton councillor was William Carpenter with 39 years.

In addition to her long stint she was also vice-chair from 2005-10 and chair between 2010-2013.

At her very first meeting, back in May 1979, an elderly male councillor, said to her: "I would never let my wife be on the parish council, it's no place for a woman."

Marlene said, all these years later: "I couldn't believe it. I was so shocked. It wasn't a very good welcome really.

"Quite often I used to make suggestions which weren't taken up but if somebody else made that suggestion at a later date then..."

She concedes that that might still happen today and there is still only one woman on the council.

Possibly the greatest change she has seen in her time is the development of technological communication. Originally the minutes were read out prior to the next meeting. Everything was handwritten, the minutes and the letters. A typewriter was bought for the clerk in the eighties but then there was still the problem of duplication and then of course distribution – the clerk would wander the streets posting the minutes in councillors' houses.

Marlene said: "I think it was the technology that really finished me off. People were saying let's do WhatsApp and other things and my heart would sink because I knew I couldn't do it. And with Covid I couldn't get people in to help me. It was hard."

The greatest achievements she has seen on her watch have probably been architectural, in the form of the new village hall in 1981 and the extension in '91 and the sports pavilion in 1997 which the Parish Council is still paying for.

But there have also been important groups that have emerged from the council: The twinning committee, speedwatch, the volunteer litterpicking organisation and indirectly The Chilcompton Society (in which she always felt in two camps). >>



Marlene in 1979

>> There has been the acquisition of three green spaces from Mendip District Council (for a pound), the purchase of telephone boxes (also for a pound), the steps from the Millennium path on the railway line, several struggles against unwanted developments, the support for various social housing projects and the new iron finger post in the centre of the village.

Controversies have occurred, but not too frequently, resulting in public meetings: Traffic calming, the railway line (twice), construction of the Mulberry factory and the demolition of the Britannia Inn.

Then there's the meat and drink of standard Chilcompton Parish Council life: Maintaining The Street Ponds, lorries getting stuck on Bowden Hill, street lights and the creation and looking after bus shelters.

She said that the lack of power of the council was frustrating. "But also, it's so slow, always so slow and it's still slow. If you have a letter in after a meeting it doesn't come up for a month later and someone says put it on the next agenda and if you've got to inform highways or something, it can be three months and nothing's been done. I still find that very difficult, always have done."

Over the years, obviously, she has seen changes in procedure: "Back then we followed protocol strictly. I learnt a lot from those old men who would say, 'point of order Mr Chairman', that would come up four or five times a meeting. They would say things like I propose we take steps on this issue. And then there would be a seconder and then there would be another proposal for what steps we should take. It was a bit pedantic I suppose but that's the way they did it then. It meant that everything was done right but it was slow. It has got more lax, very much more lax."

As the parish clerk, for a mere ten years, I can safely say that Marlene's knowledge on protocol and, indeed, on the history and geography of the village will surely be missed.

Her major concern for the future of Chilcompton is the lack of volunteers coming forward, groups she has been involved in are getting older and the younger folk are too busy working to step up. Also, jobs that in the past would have been done by the councillors themselves are now being done by the handyperson.

She said that it had been an enjoyable experience in terms of involvement with the village and other councillors but added: "The thing I miss now is not knowing what's going on. People are still asking me questions because they don't know I've left. And I don't know the answers, I do miss knowing what's going on in the village."

Of course, Marlene continues to contribute to the village like organising The Wednesday Walkers, and, I hope, contributing to Chilcompton Matters. For the last few years, she has produced, amongst a lot of other things, a column called "Unsung Heroes" about residents who volunteer. It's kind of ironic because she is the real unsung hero. The Parish Council is definitely going to miss her depth of knowledge about the village...and also protocol.

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Wagon Re-Opens To Re-Kindle the Past

On Friday June 24th, amidst a buzz of excitement and anticipation, the Somerset Wagon re-opened its doors after a closure of several months.

The new tenants, Daniel and James Jesson-Keer, were pleased with the response. Daniel said: It's going very very well, absolutely fantastic, better than we had expected, to tell you the truth. We got busy very quickly.

"We painted the outside and have given the inside a complete lick of paint as well, trying to get it back to the days when it was a great pub. Back in the days when Adrian was here. I remember it very well then because I was brought up in the area until I moved away. Trying to put it back to the colours that I remember it was."

"Yes, warm and welcoming," James added.

Daniel, Midsomer Norton raised, continued: "I came here for family meals before I was 18 and then when I was 18 I used to come up with friends and have a nice pint in the garden. Just remember it being a really great pub, a really busy pub."

Previously they've run two pubs in the Bournemouth/Poole area and were looking for a fresh challenge.



Until they can recruit a new chef James is in charge of the cooking. He said that the menu is tried and tested. "We just carried it from pub to pub and it works, there's something for everybody on the menu. And we have a specials board as well. Then on Sundays we do our six meat roast dinner. You can have all six on your plate if you want. Beef, chicken, lamb, turkey, gammon and pork. You can mix and match. At our last pub it used

to be bookings only for Sunday and we hope to get it that way here as well."

Favourites on the midweek main menu include Ocean Pie and fish 'n' chips. Good reviews on Tripadvisor and Google are making their jobs a little easier if busier.

The beer, three different ales from Wadworths, are Daniel's domain, who prides himself on 'serving a very good pint'.

Nothing definite is planned as yet but the pair are thinking of possibly live music and maybe a quiz night for the future.

Word of mouth has gone around the village and the surrounding area – the team say the response has been fantastic.

Daniel said: "We just want to run a nice, comfortable, relaxed-atmosphere pub serving good quality home-cooked food."

Malcolm Rigby.



Chilcompton Lives - Jean Barnett



Jean was born in 1926 in Sheffield. Because her mother was so ill and Jean was premature (she weighed only 2 lbs), she was put in a bed in the hospital by an open window. Her father was told not to expect her to survive. It was a severe winter and when he went to see her the cot was full of snow. He immediately took her home and fed her malted porridge oats every 2 hours and she survived.

Jean's Mum was a keen amateur singer and all the children (five of them) had singing lessons. Three of them sang semi-professionally in Sheffield and Jean had paid lead roles in light operatic shows, concerts at various venues, and as the solo soprano for local choral societies. During the war, between the ages of 13 and 19, she sang in concerts for civilians as part of the war effort.

At one point, Jean and her siblings were evacuated by their mother to the seaside and got shot at on the beach by a German aircraft returning from a bombing run. Her mother took them back to Sheffield! Jean also remembers one of the Zeppelins over Sheffield coming loose from its moorings and dragging its cable over the houses removing all the tiles. All the children watching had to run inside as heavy tiles rained down on them. She also recalls a school friend turning up late for a concert rehearsal covered in dust, as he had just been dug out of his bombed house.



After school, Jean worked first in a school peripatetic dental clinic and then studied to be a teacher at Sheffield College. Here she met her future husband Eric Barnett. They were married on 1st August 1953 in Hillsborough Trinity Methodist Church. Jean taught at Sunday School at the church and most of the family were christened there. She began her teaching career in 1946 in Sheffield schools and was part of the Sheffield teachers' operatic Society often taking lead roles. Jean also used her musical training to direct school musical productions. She had been good at netball and cricket and was in college teams, and this continued into taking part in teachers' teams at schools.

Jean and Eric had a lifelong love of travel which started with a trip in Europe in a motorbike and sidecar in the 1950s.

Eric was offered the post of Deputy Head of Timsbury Secondary School in 1963 and they moved to Peasedown St John with their daughter Erica (then aged nearly 3).

Jean then worked in a variety of schools in Somerset while Eric became Head of Timsbury school in 1967. The family (and dog Paddy) moved to Chilcompton in 1968 into a new bungalow which was still being built when they bought it. >>

>> When Midsomer Norton grammar school and Timsbury Secondary modern merged in 1970 to become Norton Hill, Eric took up the post of Deputy Head. Jean worked for many years at Somervale School and then later moved to Norton Hill in 1976 where she was responsible for Upper School Remedial Education. She retired from Norton Hill in 1984.

When Eric retired they both spent many happy years doing craft fairs (selling Eric's woodworking products), travelling with their caravan and later motorhome, and also flying off round the world. They also enjoyed the arrival of three grandchildren Martha, Hannah and Nathan.



After Eric died in 2004 Jean stayed in their Chilcompton bungalow and continued to travel, taking cruises with her Chilcompton friends or holidaying with family. Her love of Harry Potter led to her first visit to the Warner Brother's studio tour in her 90s and there have been several subsequent visits, the latest when she was 95.

Due to several falls and injuries, Jean's increasing mobility issues led her recently to take the decision to move to a residential home, near to her daughter, at the age of 96.



Jean's time in Chilcompton was very happy. She made many friends in the village and enjoyed meeting in later years for very competitive games of scrabble. She loved to go out and was very fortunate to have local friends who could drive her to their many pub dinners (she gave up driving after being injured in a nasty car accident in France in her late 50s). Jean also liked going out with family to local pubs for meals and many happy times were spent at the Somerset Wagon, the Court Hotel and Old Down Inn. She liked the local garden centres and was proud of her garden. After retirement, Jean still did a little tutoring for local children to help with their education.

Jean made good use of all that Chilcompton had to offer. She enjoyed line dancing sessions, took part in village events, often used the transport provided for the elderly which she called the "winkly bus" to get to Wells.

As Jean's mobility became more of an issue she had very good local friends and neighbours who would take her shopping, get things she needed or just drop in to see her. She would not have been able to remain so independent in her own home and so active socially, without the support of local Chilcompton neighbours and friends.

Words and photos kindly provided by Jean's daughter Erica.

If you have enjoyed reading this article and would like to share your memories or know someone who may, please contact Mike Newman on 01761 233838 or contact the editor.

An Unusual Year

Living in the Mendips, I thought that we would always have plenty of rain, and indeed we often have too much rain. I'd read articles about gardening for drought and assume that they were only relevant to the east of the country, not here in the hilly West Country. This summer has proved me wrong, and although it may have been a one off for now, with climate change nothing can be guaranteed and we need to prepare for all eventualities.

Three main things will dictate how a garden fares during a drought: the plants themselves, watering and most importantly the soil conditions.

We all now know which of our plants thrived in the hot dry conditions and those which struggled. Our phomium in the driest spot in the garden has thrived, but the oak leaved hydrangea and Siberian dogwood close to it showed signs of drought stress. As a general rule however most well established shrubs and perennials will survive one summer of drought, so with some promised autumn rain they should revive and be back to normal next year, although some, for example camellias, may have fewer flowers than usual.

There are of course plants that you can grow which are particularly good for dry conditions, but before you rush out and buy a trolley full of silver leaved or succulent plants consider the winter conditions in your garden – plants which like a dry hot summer generally won't like a wet Mendip winter unless the soil is particularly free draining.

With the water shortage so acute watering needs to be done selectively and effectively. Most well established plants don't need watering at all and none need watering every day – a really good soak for those showing signs of stress once or twice a week is plenty and they are not fussy about the source of the water either, 'grey' water from washing up (left to cool first) is fine for non edible plants, keep a bucket outside the kitchen door to empty it into and use that. Early morning or the evening are best to do the watering to minimise evaporation and it's a lovely time to be out in the garden – honeysuckles in particular are at their fragrant best then. Lawns, it goes without saying, don't need watering! Yes they will stop growing and turn brown but in the context of a national shortage of water how important is a >>

Two New County Councillors

Following the demise of Mendip District Council and the introduction of the new unitary Somerset County Council, instead of there being two District Councillors and one County Councillor, there are now just two County Councillors.

"My name is Tony Robbins and I am one of your new Somerset Councillors I will be putting together a more detailed bio in the next magazine but in the meantime please don't hesitate to contact me should you need to on 07912747105."

"I'm Edric Hobbs one of your two County Councillors. I grew up on the Mendips in Priddy and now live in Shepton Mallet. I'm a keen cyclist and runner and I helped start Shepton Mallet parkrun five years ago. I run my own business which means I have the flexibility to meet people during the day should they need to speak to me about any issues."

More of them in the next edition.

>> green lawn? They will green up again anyway once it starts to rain again.

Apart from buckets of grey water on selected shrubs, the only watering we have done in our garden this year is the pots, some of the vegetables and of course the greenhouse. Annuals in pots probably do need watering every day so to save water (and time), consider planting more drought resistant plants in your containers – agapanthus seem to survive on next to no water and our bay tree has coped with only an occasional bucket of grey water. Some of the vegetables have had a good, but occasional soaking by hose, but in our garden the potatoes and brassicas have coped without any additional watering and it is really only the beans that would have failed completely with no additional irrigation.

We are lucky in this area that we haven't had a hose pipe ban, but now would be a good time to get some water butts in place if you haven't got some already. It's surprising how quickly they fill up even just from a shed roof and rain water is better for most plants than tap water.

Long term, the most important consideration for coping with dry weather is the condition of the soil. I have extolled the virtues of 'no-dig' gardening here before and in times of drought it really comes into its own. Any digging, by exposing more of the soil to the air will increase evaporation of water and speed up desiccation, and conversely any mulching will help to retain moisture. Autumn is a good time to apply mulch, any organic mulch will help; home-made compost, bark chippings, farmyard manure or composted green waste in a thick layer (5-7cm) over the soil – and no need to dig it in - the worms will do that for you. Make mulching a habit at least once per year, more if you have the time and energy. Not only will this help in times of drought but will also help to avoid loss of soil through run off during times of flood (which I can't help thinking may be more frequent than drought...)

Healthy soil, rich in organic matter is the key to the future of this planet, for without healthy soil we cannot feed ourselves, we all need to do our bit in our gardens however large or small they may be. **Sue Rankine**



Messy Church

Great Fun at St Johns Church Chilcompton!



Messy Church at St John's Church Chilcompton continues to run monthly at 3pm on Sunday afternoons. If you've never tried it, then come along and be prepared to be amazed!

Messy Church is for families, there is always laughter, it is often messy and can be organised chaos but it's church even, if it's not as you would expect it to be!

Each month you will receive a personal welcome then we explore how much God loves us through relaxed activities both indoors and outdoors. There are stories, crafts, games, and fun followed by family friendly worship and a sit-down tea.

For details of all future events please visit our website. www.stvigorstjohn.church

We look forward to seeing you



Wednesday Walkers

The walking group continues with an average of 12 people meeting and walking twice a month enjoying the countryside, our great footpaths and chatting with fellow ramblers. During the summer we have encountered overgrown paths and stiles, fields of crops causing diversions around the edges and invariably struggling through undergrowth; this is tempered by the thought of refreshments at the end of the walk, which we have occasionally.

Marlene Pickford 01761 232774



Short Mat Bowls

A friendly group playing for enjoyment and exercise meeting every Thursday afternoon at the village hall at 2pm. David Rogers 01761 233142

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Chilcompton Speedwatch

Community engagement in speeding issues is a different way of changing driver behaviour.

Speed Watch is a scheme which allows volunteers to monitor the speed of passing vehicles using a hand-held speed detection device. It is clear to vehicle drivers their speed is being monitored; this may be enough of a deterrent for many motorists to slow down.

Our volunteers record details of vehicles exceeding the speed limit by 10% of the limit plus 3, which is 25mph in a 20mph area, 36 in a 30mph area and 47 in a 40mph area. In Chilcompton we carry out checks at all our risk assessed sites in rotation. We have one site in the 40mph area leading from White Post into the village and 10 other sites spread around the village all within the 30mph area.

The recorded details of any vehicle exceeding the limit are passed to the Police who issue a letter to the vehicle owner advising them of the dangers of speeding and reminding them of the law. If three letters are issued to the same vehicle owner the Police carry out further investigations. Speeding records are stored on a national database giving police access to all speeding offences of drivers across the country.

We work in pairs at times with three, occasionally, other crime permitting, with the presence of our village police team. We are visible, wearing hi viz jackets, standing in view of vehicle drivers at all times. Community Speed Watch may only reduce vehicle speeds when the volunteers are present at the road side. However, there should be a significant effect on vehicle drivers who receive a letter as a result of them having exceeded the speed limit. Other drivers may continue to reduce their speeds at all times as they could encounter Speed Watch at the same place, or in another area of the village.

"advising them of the dangers of speeding and reminding them of the law"

Despite COVID and the heat wave our committed volunteers have carried out a total of 81 sessions for the rolling year, 4 of which were in July. The figures for the month of July are 1,382 vehicles checked, 37 over the speed threshold, bringing the annual percentage of vehicles over the threshold to 1.5%. The total vehicles checked from 01/08/2021 to 01/07/2022 is 9,226.

We are often approached on a Speed Watch session, with complaints of driving situations. We do not deal with these or anything driver/vehicle related. Please ring 101.

Prospective volunteers are welcome to enquire about joining us to help make drivers through our village aware of the speed limits. For more information, please email: CSWChilcompton@hotmail.com;

For more details please email: CSWchilcompton@hotmail.com

Judith Stanford CSW Co-ordinator

Friday Club

Come along to the village hall every Friday for coffee and cake 10.30am.-11.30am. or drop in occasionally for refreshments when passing by. A welcome awaits.

Madene Pickford 01761 232774

History Corner

Do you remember.....?



when parish councillors planted a cherry tree on Bowden Hill in 1974 to commemorate 15 years of service by Fred Clarke as a parish councillor and district councillor on Clutton Rural District council?

Doug Chivers, Bert Webber, John Lewis, Joan Strawbridge, Wally Moon, Fred Clarke, Bert Monckton, Alban Seymour, Cliff Perkins, Grahame Pickford, Jim Painting.

Community Work

Farquhar Ogilvie, who lives on The Street clearing weeds from The Street ponds.

The railings just above the bridge from here have been repaired and will be painted in the next few weeks.



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"Miles and team took on our garden, which was in a very poor state when we moved in. He visited multiple times to discuss ideas and recommended solutions to work within our budget. When work began, I think even some of the team were surprised by the task in hand: removal of rubbish, total clearance of overgrown vegetation, collapsed walls, you name it, but they were always prompt, cheerful and a joy to have around. After clearing the space, they proceeded to complete the rest of the work to a high standard, including overcoming complicated logistics, due to the sloping nature of the garden and often solving problems that arose as they went along, consulting us with various options. What they achieved over the month that they were with us is astonishing! We now have a beautiful garden which we can enjoy for years to come. I wouldn't hesitate to recommend Miles & the team."

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Flower Show



It was disappointing to find fewer entries arriving at the Chilcompton Society Flower show earlier this month. Several long-standing supporters were unable to participate this year and children's entries were down to only 4 children from 2 families, so well done to them for their efforts and lovely creations. >>



>> Despite the summer drought, the vegetables and flowers were surprising good and all in all it was a typical village show, the rain held off and visitors enjoyed a pleasant afternoon.

Credit must be given to committee members, who apart from planning and preparing throughout the year, put in an exhausting twelve hours on flower show day. A big thank you to them and all those who took part.

Marlene Pickford





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Coronations and Jubilees in Chilcompton

1897 Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee was not mentioned in the parish council minutes the council having been formed only 3 years before.

1902 Again no mention of the coronation of **King Edward VII**.

1911 There was a Coronation committee, but no details in the parish council minutes about the celebration when **George V** was crowned. The council recorded the gift of a field to the village from Captain Streeten (half of the old rec. the other half was rented from Mrs. Streeten from 1926 and bought by the parish council in 1965 from Capt. Streeten's nephew) to mark the Coronation of King George V, 'so that the children would not have to play on the road'.

1935 King George V's Silver Jubilee. A parade from the Co-op by the British Legion, Scouts, Guides, Brownies, Rangers and Chilcompton Band marched to the church for a service to start proceedings. The celebrations took place on Farmer Hodges' Front Ground (opposite Street Ponds) with sports and amusements. Prizes were given for the best decorated houses in the village.

There were teas for 200 children, 100 at Church House and 100 at the Methodist schoolroom. Councillors agreed that the parade and the scarecrow competition were the crowning glory of the day. The Band, which was on duty from 1.30pm. – 9pm. charged £5 and returned £1 towards the Jubilee Fund. The vicar said, 'We all went home after the band played, 'God Save the King,' happy, but tired after such a splendid day'. A seat with an inscription was placed on Bowden Hill to commemorate the event

1936 No mention in the minutes of **Edward VIII's** abdication.

1937 King George VI's Coronation. The celebrations followed the pattern of the previous Jubilee. A public collection was made to fund the event. Front Ground was used for sports, music and dancing, there were teas for children and free refreshments for pensioners, prizes for the best decorated house, Band services were again retained and a bonfire was lit. After the teas, 300 commemorative mugs were handed out to the children.

1953 Coronation of Queen Elizabeth II. The parish council called a public meeting and a Coronation Committee was elected. A joint celebration with Stratton on the Fosse was mooted, but this did not happen. There was a fancy dress competition for the children, teas at the Miner's Welfare Hall and games on the adjacent field (now Montsûrs Close). The council built two bus shelters at this time, by the Co-op and by Church House, but it is not clear whether this was a Coronation project.

1977 Silver Jubilee of Queen Elizabeth. The parish council called a special meeting, attended by 40 residents and a Jubilee committee was formed to organise the event and raise funds to cover it. The festivities were held over two days at the village hall, with competitions for flower arrangements and for children's greetings cards for the Queen. The best cards were sent to the Palace and the Queen's Lady in Waiting replied with thanks to the villagers for their good wishes and loyal greetings on the occasion of HM Silver Jubilee. The Queen also expressed great pleasure at receiving the beautifully designed cards from the children. There was also a meal in the evening and musical entertainment for Senior Citizens. The second day commenced with an Interdenominational >> Continued on page 58

Photos from My Garden

- Less Common Birds - Part 2

Having the River Somer gushing through the village it is unsurprising that we see egret and kingfisher, rarely a dipper in the shallows, and, every now and then, the **Grey Heron**. Such an imposing bird, and happy to view the world from our rooftops.

Also on the roof was this **Grey Wagtail**. Another bird that loves nothing better than picking at small midges and the like near running water. I was actually up on the roof clearing twigs and leaves when this one turned up. He knew I was effectively immobilised as he came right up close to get the odd woodlouse, etc. A bit of careful manipulation was needed to extract my phone from my pocket to get this snap.

Despite their noisy bravado, gulls tend to be very timid around private gardens. However, when a few food scraps have been left outside and the coast seems clear they will skulk in to pilfer a free lunch. Just as this **Lesser Black Backed Gull** did, astonishingly a species now on the danger list due to diminishing numbers.

Ivy can be the bane of the gardener's life! However, a range of species including thrushes, blackcaps, woodpigeons, starlings and blackbirds will quickly seize upon the berries from a clump left to mature. From May onwards, you might even be rewarded by berry raiding birds feeding their fledglings, as in this photo of a **Mistle Thrush**. Any berries that make it through to the colder months are likely to bring in redwing and fieldfare too. What a bonus! Thrushes, particularly the mistle thrush, can become very defensive of a berry cache. You will sometimes see them brutally attacking other birds of any species in an attempt to drive them away. The high fat content of ivy berries is a nutritious food resource for birds. Additionally, the berries are particularly important to many insects before they hibernate for the winter.

In the previous article, Less Common Birds Part 1, I mentioned that it is worth looking up when unusual bird noises are heard overhead. Well what a phenomenon it was on the day of the summer equinox this year. As the hay meadow on Old Norton Farm off The Street was being cut, a small number of red Kite and buzzards started circling around overhead. Within a short period, this number increased to more than 20 birds of roughly equal proportions. The screeching and busy circling became quite a spectacle. There is only one reason why these birds of prey would show such an interest, and that's – food! Quite what was being disturbed goodness only knows. It does make one wonder just how many kite are in the locality now when so many turn up almost instantly. Incidentally, the environmental survey carried out on a field not far from this one for a proposed housing development, claimed the land to be low quality grassland with no significant environmental benefit. The inspector should have been at the top of The Street in Chilcompton on the day of the summer solstice.

A while before this gathering when I heard a mewing overhead, what a surprise when I looked up and saw the **Red Kite** in this photo speeding in and around the garden lime tree. Hotly in pursuit were three herring gulls who were not so >>

>> delighted to see a kite. The gulls retreated when the kite came in quite close to me. I have seen this behaviour before; when small birds are fleeing from kestrels or sparrow hawks, they have flown in very close. I think they feel the pursuant will not want to risk getting close to humans. However, these birds of prey are so quick they sometimes fly around your legs and disappear with their quarry before you can blink.



This female **Sparrow Hawk** failed to catch its prey and subsequently rested for a while in the sleeting weather on the handrail to the steps up to the patio. Subsequently however, she has been very successful in picking off a variety of the numerous fledgling birds from the patio. Well, it's sad, but that's nature.

Jon Crouch

Mendip Brass Band

Now back to normal and making music again, Mendip Brass Band, like many other groups found itself short of players when returning after the Covid lockdown.

A few members left through illness, but new players have been recruited and some existing members have changed instruments to fill spaces.

The band has been out and about during the fine summer weather playing at fetes and flower shows as well as the annual 'Rock of Ages' service at Burrington Combe.



Photo courtesy of John Newport, Photographer.

Now thoughts turn to Christmas carols and concerts. The band is 29 strong at present, but there is always room for more to join us, experienced musicians or anyone who would like to learn to play. Contact: mendipbrassband@hotmail.co.uk Jenny Gould 01761 232551

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100 reasons to make the most of Somerset's Home Library Service

From Hogwarts to Westeros, reading has the ability to transport us to completely different places from within the comfort of our own homes – something that is even more valuable for people who find themselves housebound.

Somerset's Home Library Service (HLS) is run by Somerset County Council with the support of amazing volunteers. It enables people like Claire Harbour from Frome, who recently celebrated her 100th birthday, to continue enjoying books for free even though she can no longer visit her local library in person.

In a new short video with former BBC correspondent Clinton Rogers, Claire explains how the service helps her to access new books, allowing her to keep her mind active.

Claire says: "It means that I can be a member of the library, sit at home, do nothing and everything comes to me. It is an absolute boon and I don't know what I would do without it."

The Home Library Service delivers books to people who are unable to get to their local library, such as those who are housebound, living in long term care, carers, or people who are vulnerable due to long term conditions or disabilities. The service is open to people of all ages.

Cllr Adam Dance, Lead Executive Member for Public Health, Equalities and Diversity said: "This is a brilliant service. Reading books can help keep your mind engaged as you grow old and help prevent cognitive decline – improving memory and helping to reduce the likelihood of dementia. But it can also help people of any age to reduce stress by lowering blood pressure and heart rate."

Cllr Federica Smith-Roberts, Somerset County Council Lead Executive Member for Communities added: "The Home Library Service played a really valuable role in the pandemic, especially for people who were shielding during the lockdown periods.

"But none of this would work without the brilliant team of friendly volunteers who make the service possible. If you have some spare time and a passion for reading, you may want to consider taking up a rewarding role as a HLS volunteer.

"Somerset Libraries offer a wide range of brilliant services – as well as an extensive collection of books, films, and digital products available to loan, there are health and wellbeing services, children's activities and supported digital learning.

"Please visit Volunteering Opportunities | Somerset County Council Volunteering to take a look at the volunteering opportunities available with the Home Library Service."

Volunteers can also support in accessing free e-Books, Audiobooks, and e-Magazines, as well as provide DVDs and other items. There is normally a charge for these items, though exemptions do apply for audio books if you are blind, partially sighted or have a condition that makes reading printed books difficult.

If you or anyone you know would like to receive the service, please contact Home Library Service manager Kirsty Jenssen by emailing kjenssen@somerset.gov.uk, or calling 07814 079831.

For more information, visit: Home Library Service (somerset.gov.uk).

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Council Matters

Welcome to the Parish Council section of the latest village magazine.

I hope that you all enjoyed the summer; certainly the weather has been good, although perhaps a little too hot and possibly a portent for summers in the future.

One thing that has been noticeable was that a number of councillors have left the council since we last met physically, deciding not to stand at the elections in May. I should like to record my thanks to Marlene Pickford, Kul Gill, Matt Escott and Owen Williams for their service on the council. While I would not normally single out individuals it would be wrong not to mention the exemplary service of Marlene Pickford. She will be known to many of you around the village due to her remarkable service to numerous village bodies, not just the Parish Council. She chose not to stand for re-election this year after 43 years' service. None of the council will know life on the PC with Marlene not being there; she seemed to remember everything that had come to council during her time and was able to tell us what had been done in the past in a similar situation. This knowledge will be a great loss. In spite of her service, she is incredibly modest and wanted no recognition of this service. So I would simply like to say here, thank you for everything you did for our village.

As part of the return to normality following Covid, we held a village day at the Village Hall in March where village organisations were able to display what they were about and could offer; we had a great turn out from villagers, with feedback being very positive. We also managed to raise over £200 to send to Ukraine so we classified this day as a success all round.

We marked the Platinum Jubilee with a celebration at the Sports Field on the Friday of the Bank Holiday weekend, this comprised of a number of live music performances. We were blessed with dry weather and the event was well attended. We hope everyone who was there enjoyed the event. My thanks to everyone who helped to organise the event, not least, Richard Morgan.

I have mentioned the Parish Council elections in May, and that four members of council elected not to stand again. With no new applications for council this has resulted in a membership of the Parish Council of only eight, some four short of our maximum number. We can co-opt members onto the council and are looking to recruit members, so if you would like to help your village by being part of your council, please contact our parish clerk, Malcolm Rigby.

Sadly, since the last issue we have seen a fatal accident on the roads of the village. From feedback to the council I know that traffic issues in the village is one of the biggest concerns for many of you. We are re-launching the traffic subcommittee of the parish council. This subcommittee is tasked with looking at issues regarding traffic and coming up with possible solutions. Although we cannot implement them, we can pass them onto the local highways authority and lobby them to be put into action. While this is a parish council subcommittee, membership. It is not limited to parish councillors. We have already had several applications from villagers who would like to contribute and if you too would like to be part of this body, please contact the parish clerk.

Going forward, November will see us hold our traditional Remembrance Day commemoration. This will again be at 15.00 on Remembrance Sunday, 13th November, so please put it in your diaries and I hope we will see many of you at the cenotaph. This year we will again have dressing of the graves of those killed in the wars. This will take place in the morning of the Saturday preceding Remembrance Sunday. We will publicise the details on our website nearer the event.

Hopefully the coming winter will be more "normal" than the last two with Covid being limited. Stay safe.

Jonathan Pike



Preparing for Winter

What are we preparing for?

This Autumn and Winter we expect to see both flu and Covid viruses circulating. With the UK experiencing its first flu season since 2019, the population will have less immunity than previous flu seasons. Preparations for the potential impact of this on our population's health and well-being, centre on vaccination for both flu and Covid-19, targeted to at risk groups.

The best way to protect ourselves our friends and our families, is by taking up all the vaccinations that we are eligible for.

What will the flu vaccination programme look like for Autumn / Winter?

The Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) have widened the offer of the free flu vaccine to more eligible groups.

These additional groups will only be eligible once the most vulnerable, including previously announced pre-school and primary school children, those aged 65 years and over and those in clinical risk groups, have been offered the jab.

The additional groups set to be offered the free flu vaccine in England will be:

- all adults aged 50 to 64 years (including those who turn 50 by 31 March 2023)
- secondary school children in years 7, 8 and 9, who will be offered the vaccine in order of school year (starting with the youngest first)

If you're eligible for a free flu vaccine, you can book an appointment at your GP surgery or a pharmacy that offers it on the NHS. You may also get an invitation to get the vaccine, but you do not have to wait for this before booking an appointment.

Everyone who is eligible for the free flu vaccine will be able to get it. If you have an appointment for a Covid-19 booster vaccine at a GP surgery or pharmacy, you may also be offered a flu vaccine at the same time.

Do not delay booking your flu vaccine appointment so that you can get both vaccines together. Only some people will be offered both vaccines at the same time.

The Railway Line

The age of iron and steam
gone to swathes of green.
Only the stones remain,
beached at high tide
searching for the sea.

Hours and minutes fled
freed by the iron machines.
Horizons came and went,
as the land shrank away
under the gaze of watery eyes.

Amongst these memories
that haunt the ruins.
We walk. Mostly with dogs,
under the white steam
of the darkening clouds.

And peace is our pace
as slowly our race is run.
And the children walk
through the slow grass
with all their days remaining.

By Andrew Morris



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Chilcompton Playgroup

Huge thanks to all who support and attend Chilcompton Playgroup held at Chilcompton Village Hall on Tuesday mornings, we have had huge increases in numbers attending, many regularly, all ensuring the future of the group.

As a result we have been able to recruit a brand new committee! Welcome Tina, Cassie, Leanna and Beth all of whom have already been making waves by holding a regular Makers Market, themed weekly craft sessions and some infamous baking! All of which are attracting many families to our group.

I'd like to thank our outgoing committee Kate, Gemma, Kate and Wenna for all their hard work over the last 4 years particularly in helping to bring it back after lockdown and persisting when numbers were low and despite many of their children now at school and themselves working on Tuesdays.



I am sad to be leaving and have fond memories of bringing my children to the group, helping and being Chair, but so pleased that it remains an important asset in our community.

Please get in touch if you think you would be able to help or need any more information by messaging us on our Facebook page or by sending an email to: chilcomptonplaygroup@hotmail.com



Everyone welcome, no need to book, just turn up on a Tuesday morning during term time 10-11:45 at Chilcompton Village Hall. £2 per family which includes tea/coffee for adults and a healthy snack for the children. We look forward to seeing you there. Sophie Handover Outgoing Chair of Chilcompton Playgroup

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"He did wonders for my son" – Ann-Marie Davis.

Drugs in church? It's all in a day's work!

It was a dark evening in March, just before the clocks went forward that it happened – a strange encounter in St John's Church which confirmed my beliefs that:

- ♦ **Chilcompton is a fabulous community**
- ♦ **Our NHS has some amazing people working for it**

I had just arrived for our normal Wednesday evening choir practice. I say normal but, Sing Your Heart Out is still getting back to 'normal' post-pandemic, and we were rehearsing in the church because of the Lent course in the Church Hall. Having been singing via Zoom for the best part of a year, it has been so good to be back together again, although we are still aware of the need for caution – and we take care to keep everyone as safe as possible.

I was about to take my usual pew amongst the altos when Ann, one of the sopranos, thrust a tatty piece of lined paper (torn out of one of those A5 ring-bound notebooks) into my hand. On this dog-eared scrap was written a name, a phone number and “OVER 75 YEARS.” Now, I may not look a bit older than my 50-something years, but I don't think I can be mistaken for someone 20 years older, so I looked somewhat quizzically at Ann, not knowing what to make of this information. She explained that she had received her spring Covid booster that afternoon. Debbie Rigby, the name on the paper, had 3 spare doses that would expire that day and would have to be binned, so she had wondered if Ann knew anyone who might be eligible.

Ten minutes later, having checked out all the relevant details on the phone (involving various choir members' dates of birth being shouted down the aisle) Debbie confirmed that 3 of us would be able to have the jab. Not only that, but within minutes she came down to the church to administer them herself and complete all the relevant paperwork.... and I'm sure that this will have been at the end of a busy day when most people would have been feet up in front of the telly with a glass of wine. This was all done with professionalism and warmth, making the three of us all feel at ease and well-cared for.

In my book, this is service above and beyond the call of duty. Debbie has ensured that the precious vaccines are not wasted and that those who need them get the jabs in a timely fashion. As a teacher who caught Covid at school just before my autumn booster was due and is in the clinically extremely vulnerable group, I couldn't be more grateful... so to the NHS, Chilcompton community and specifically Ann and Debbie... THANK YOU! Kathy Pinches

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Chilcompton Art Club



www.chilcomptonartclub.uk

The Chilcompton Art Club moves from strength to strength, having taken up the kind offer to have use the Chilcompton Sports Club last year, membership numbers have recovered to their pre-pandemic levels. The club meets every Wednesday and Friday mornings between 10:00am and 1:00pm. New members are always welcome no matter what their artistic ability is, and there is always someone on hand to offer advice if needed. This year the club will be arranging at least two exhibitions, the first at Downside Abbey over the course of the weekend of the Queen's Jubilee, and the second probably over the course of seven days in November, in the cloisters of Wells Cathedral. There will also be a few workshops and demonstrations held, covering various artistic topics from 'still life' to 'life drawing', and also covering an assortment of media types. Regular updates of the club activities are posted on the club's Facebook page and website at www.chilcomptonartclub.uk.



Each February the club holds its AGM, and at the end of the meeting, the committee present a splendid trophy to a valued member of the club. The trophy was presented to the club by the founding members Harold and Joan Turner, and it is awarded each year to a person who the committee think deserves recognition for their long service and dedication to the art club. This year it was awarded to Pam Patch (pictured receiving the trophy from Chairman John Sibley). Pam is not only a founding member of the club, but has also, over the years actively contributed to the running of the club, having joined the committee in the year 2000 when Jean Fairbairn stood down. She has undertaken several roles on the committee, including the role of chairperson in the early 2000s, then later as an active committee member right up until 2016. Pam has provided help and support at exhibitions, contributing excellent floral arrangements, and of course over a number of years acted as the club's local milk delivery person.

Nigel Punchard, Club Secretary



Embroidery Experiences



Classes are held at Chilcompton Sports Hall, BA3 4EZ, on Tuesday and Thursday mornings. There is ample parking.

Contact Patricia Ardron
01761 232466

Stone Me

A large boulder has been placed on the corner of Naishes Cross green in order to prevent lorries driving over and digging up the turf.



Gateway

The Parish Council has been waiting more than a decade for a pavement up Lynch Hill. Phase One – a gateway.



Miner's Silhouette

To commemorate the mining past of Chilcompton an image will be appearing soon on the village landscape.

A silhouette of a miner, made of steel, is being donated by the Somerset District Miner's Trust. The Parish Council has already decided that a good location would be the green on Carter's Way.

Next year will be the 50th anniversary of the Somerset Mines closing.

Mendip Community Transport

For information about current services and restrictions call:

01749 880613 or visit website: mendipcommunitytransport.co.uk

4 Vacant Posts

Following retirements at the May election this year there are currently four vacant posts for parish councillors.

A full council has 12 members and there are now only eight.

If you would like to assist in maintaining your community but are concerned about how much, and what sort of, work such a role may involve, Cllr Pete Sinclair has put together a list of dos and don'ts

What a Parish Councillor does

- Joins a very diverse group of local residents
- Contributes their thoughts on how local matters should be run
- Contributes new ideas for the village and influences discussions as to what matters to village residents of all age groups
- Attends perhaps 2-3 hours of meetings per month, without getting any mandatory "homework"
- Helps council to prioritise what's most important to the village
- May get community activities to add to their CV or Resume - popular with employers
- Gets opportunities to gain experience in areas such as community support, environment, IT and local finances

What a Parish Councillor does *not* do

- Does not have to make any major prepared speeches to groups of people, although participation in discussions is encouraged if and when comfortable for the individual to do so
- Get involved in political discussions in any way while on council business
- Be required to perform volunteer activities, unless they choose to
- Get involved in arguments!

Still interested? Get in touch with the parish clerk, Malcolm Rigby 01761 232974.

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Business Information Point are delivering this support which includes a free one-to-one business review with an expert advisor and access to a range of online workshops on topics such as social media, finance, and business planning. This equates to a day and a half of free business support and provides a fantastic opportunity to learn new skills and get an outside view of your business.

The Heart of the South West Growth Hub Service for All is receiving up to £781,965 of funding from the England European Regional Development Fund (ERDF). The accountable body for this programme is Devon County Council



European Union
European Regional
Development Fund

Full details can be found on the Business Information Point website:
businessinfopoint.co.uk/thrive or by calling 0800 592 872.

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From

2.00 pm



Till

3.30 pm

Welcome to Monday Café !

First Monday of the Month At St John's Church Hall Chilcompton

Guest speakers and Activities for 2022 from September

East Somerset Railway (Sept 5th), Friends of St Chads (Oct 3rd),
Preparing for your Hospital Stay (Nov 7th) & 'Eat your heart out' (Dec 5th)

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Chilcompton Gardening Club

We are pleased to see our Club thriving again, with 77 members currently on our books. Members have enjoyed a full and varied programme of speakers so far this year, including talks on wildlife gardening, fuchsias, how I came to run a vineyard and companion planting. We also enjoyed an evening visit to a garden in Wells with glorious views towards Glastonbury Tor, and a full day visit to The Newt Gardens near Bruton which was a huge success, with everyone enjoying a wonderful day out.



Our Plant Sale in May was very successful. Members contributed a large assortment of flower and vegetable plants, together with lovely homemade cakes, the proceeds from which will help towards the cost of speakers for next year.

Looking forward, we have talks on funghi, remarkable trees of Stourhead and Christmas cracker fun with flowers before our AGM in January 2023. During our September meeting we will also be judging the fuchsias we have all been carefully nurturing since March. >>

Clean Well

The three neighbours opposite Fry's Well, cleared all the foliage above and around the well, some hanging over the road, and also cleaned out the well itself which was very low and muddy with a lot of foliage in it. The next day it rained so the water was replaced! I'm sure the resident frog was very happy to have his home spring (autumn) cleaned and refreshed. Normally it is done on an annual basis but it hadn't been done throughout the COVID lockdown.

Christine Foster.

Picture: Alberto Galesso, Simon Smedley and Christine Foster. The dog belongs to William Weller who took the photo.



>> The committee is now busy researching and booking more speakers and outings for next year. There will also be a spring bulb competition and the Plant Sale of course in May again.

Meetings are held on the 4th Tuesday of the month, 7.30pm at the Village Hall. Family membership is just £10 and single membership £7 for the whole year. Guests are always welcome at just £2, why not come along with a friend or two and see what you are missing!

Judy Youngs

Who cares for the Carers? We do.

You can refer yourself or another person to **Somerset Carers**, just contact our friendly team.

If you regularly look after someone in an unpaid caring capacity, this may be a family member or friend, Somerset Carers can support you with advice and guidance.

Caring for another person is very rewarding, but can be overwhelming and lonely at times.

Somerset Carers can help with:

- Linking you to groups and events in your area
- Finding information that will help you and the person you are caring for, tailored to you
- Guiding you through financial support you may be eligible for and assisting you with applications

0800 31 68 600 carers@somersetccc.org.uk www.somersetcarers.org

Somerset Prepared team

Autumn will soon be here and the days are getting shorter. This is a great opportunity to brush off those winter weather plans and check that they're up to date. As September is preparedness month it is also a great opportunity to check on your neighbours, check those tins in your cupboard and make sure you have batteries in your torch. Why not also do some training to improve your winter preparedness? Visit the Somerset Prepared website for guidance on how to be best prepared for bad weather.

Somerset Wildlife Trust News

Grab those cosy jumpers and hot chocolates ☕ as we are now officially in autumn! Have you noticed anything happening a little early this year? Such as the leaves falling from some trees earlier? We know we have! 🍂

This is called a **false autumn** and it happens when trees shed their leaves early to conserve water. We are seeing this because of the extreme heat we had over the summer; that's why it's even more important to help out wildlife this September!

Coronations and Jubilees in Chilcompton

Continued from page 37 >> Open Air Service, a fancy dress parade, best decorated bicycle or pram competition, children's sports, tea party and conjuror followed by a presentation of commemorative mugs donated by Mrs. Kerton of the Sword and Castle (now the Somerset Wagon). The event culminated in adult novelty sports, barbecue, music, bar and bonfire.

Jubilee projects were a seat at Naishes Cross Green, with concrete donated by Terrazzo Tiles and installed by John Lewis, Bert Webber and Wally Moon, a bus shelter opposite the Frys Well junction, near Downside Close, land donated by Graham Thorner and a Merry go Round at the old rec. The latter never materialised because of recent vandalism there.

The celebrations had been financially self-supporting with no assistance from the council. (£1779 had been raised). It was agreed that contingency monies set aside by the council and those not spent on the Merry go Round (£714.43) would be used to pay off the village hall loan and any remaining (£404) to be given to the village hall committee to start a new building fund for a new hall.

1992 40th Jubilee. No mention was made of this 40 year milestone in the parish council minutes, but the Chilcompton Society put on an exhibition at the village hall depicting the four decades of the Queen's reign highlighting world, British and local news during that time; choreography on stage reflected various dance styles and costume; there were quizzes and videos and a poetry competition, which was won by Ted Bennett.

2002 Golden Jubilee The Chilcompton Society created a garden and planted a golden ash tree at the rec. There were thanksgiving prayers for the Queen's reign, followed by a barbecue. Villagers who were born in 1952 cut the ribbon on the tree and unveiled the plaque. Norton Radstock Silver Band played throughout the evening.

Three days later, the parish council, with Philip Blatchford leading the sub-committee, celebrated at the village hall with teas for Senior Citizens, Fancy dress competition, bouncy castle and ball pool. The Redan ran the bar, skate park committee organised the barbecue and the WI took charge of the teas. There were sports and games at the school playing field. Mugs were handed out to children and any remaining were sold.

2012 Diamond Jubilee. Five parish councillors insisted that this event be celebrated, although there were 3 against the proposal. It was held on Bennell recreation field. A hog roast, and a musical evening with local talent was provided. Charnain, Sing you Heart Out, Mandy, Brice, Brice and Farmer, Mendip Brass Band and Parfanon entertained. Martin Stanford took on the planning and implementation of the day, Massey Wilcox transported the stage to the site and village groups ran stalls to raise funds for their clubs. As a lasting commemoration, the parish council acquired an old stone cattle trough as a flower planter, added a brass inscription and sited it near the village hall.

2022 Platinum Jubilee. The recent celebration was also held at the Bennell sports site with a conjuror and an evening of music. The parish council's permanent commemoration for the Queen's unique 70 year reign is a hornbeam tree planted at the old rec. Marlene Pickford



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Chilcompton Matters - Advertising - *Can Now Be In Colour*

The Chilcompton Matters magazine is produced in the form of an A5 size booklet twice a year, in Spring (deadline mid-February) and Autumn (deadline mid-August). For each edition 1,050 copies are printed and distributed throughout Chilcompton.

Advertisements can be accepted in the following formats. Costs are per issue.

Full page - 'portrait' - in B&W / Greyscale £60 or including Colour £120.

Half page - 'landscape' - in B&W / Greyscale £30 or including Colour £60.

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Thanks go to all who advertise in the magazine, their continued support enables us to produce Chilcompton Matters for the benefit of everyone in the village.

Kathy and Mike Hughes

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NFU Mutual Financial Advisers advise on NFU Mutual products and selected products from specialist providers. When you contact us we'll explain the advice services offered and the charges. Financial advice is provided by NFU Mutual Select Investments Limited.



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Friends of St Chad's and Chilcompton Surgeries

It has been a long hot summer for everyone, but especially for those who work in the NHS, with reports of long waits outside A&E, lack of hospital beds and social care spaces. So, what happens to all those people waiting for outpatients' appointments, prior to surgery etc? The pressure inevitably falls back on their GP Surgeries. Whilst GP Surgeries don't make as many news headlines as ambulance waits, they are doing their best to keep all those 'plates in the air' against enormous odds. Thanks to each and every one of them.

I am happy to report that the new Doppler machine, costing over £3,000, has been installed at St Chads. This will be used to test for vascular disease prior to starting compression bandaging on patient's legs or starting compression hosiery. If the Surgery didn't provide this service, patients would need to visit the RUH, which may be difficult for some and could also cause delays in commencing treatment. The original machine we bought in 2013 was past its sell by date. Staff perform about 3 or 4 tests weekly. These took two nurses 40 minutes, whereas the new machine takes about ten minutes with one nurse - a real saving in staff time.

YOU DID THIS – all you raffle ticket buyers and 100 Club participants. Thank you from us all. The first machine was credited with saving the leg of one patient in its first 6 months. Let's hope this kit will go on to help many more people.

Our Mental Health talk from Dr Kendrick was very well received in May. If you missed it, her presentation is still on the surgery website, and has much useful information. Please take a look:

<https://stchadsandchilcompton.co.uk/wellbeing-and-health-directory/>

On **Tuesday 4th October at 6 p.m.** we have Mr James Berstock, Orthopaedic Surgeon, coming to give a talk about New Techniques in Knee and Hip Surgery. Joint replacement surgery is the most successful operation in modern medicine for improving a patient's quality of life. Living with constant joint pains can be distressing, disabling, and depressing. Immobility can have a negative impact on close family members too. Hips and knees are commonly affected by arthritis and are therefore the most commonly replaced joints. James will explain the process, when to seek help and what to expect, as well as updating us about modern implants, how long they should last, and the latest advances such as robotic assisted hip and knee replacement surgery. The talk will be at Midsomer Norton Methodist Church Hall.

If you visited the Stratton on the Fosse Village Day on Sunday 11th September, I hope you came to our stall to say hello. Please feel free to contact me by email:

jsattlerevans@btinternet.com

Stay safe and well everyone. Jenny Evans, Chair. FSC&CS



How to be...an ex-Catholic

We all love our mums. Well, I hope you do. And the thing about mums is that they give you rules. They give you the parameters of life. My mum told me that you shouldn't tuck your vest into your underpants (apparently only miners do that and for very good dust reasons), she told me that you should only use two pieces of toilet paper when you wiped your bum (even at five I felt that was unrealistic unless things were going very well) but she had just gone through rationing, I was told that on Fridays I should eat fish rather than meat.

My mate's mum, when I was five, told me that you should never eat a banana too quickly or they will have to do an operation on your bottom. She wasn't my mum but she was a mum and I still eat bananas very slowly. No idea whether she was Catholic. But it sounded a very Catholic thing to say.

I am an ex-Catholic with a large 'C', a very large 'C', but really trying to make it smaller. You know what, I'm pretty good at being catholic with a small 'c', I have broad ideas but I am definitely an ex-Catholic with a large 'C'. In actual fact, I am an atheist with an extremely large 'A'. I haven't been to mass for fifty years. "Bless me father for I have sinned, it is fifty years since my last confession." But I am still an ex-Catholic with a very large 'C'.

You can't escape it. I was caned by nuns at the age of five (even in hindsight that was kind of weird). At the age of seven I was woken at six o'clock to serve mass as an altar boy. In Religious Studies at 14 I was told to never look at a woman's ankle if I was on a bus. To be honest it had never occurred to me to look at a woman's ankle, I was a teenage boy too busy looking at women's breasts on the bus. You cannot escape it. You cannot escape Catholicism. The guilt, original sin, babies in limbo, "God said to Abraham, kill me a son" etc. You have to read 'Brideshead Revisited' and several Graham Greene novels.

I was fed a lot of weird stuff at an impressionable age. And we haven't mentioned the 'M' word yet, and we won't. Don't even touch it.

My wife is an ex-Protestant of some sorts. My father, obviously a Catholic, said to her on their first meeting, I hear you are one of those 'henry-the-eighthers'. She is not against my failed Catholicism. I don't think she is against my failed Catholicism. She never says, you're a complete failure, you couldn't even be a Catholic.

But the main thing about Catholicism is the guilt. You have to be ex-Catholic to really understand guilt. I remember being gathered together at school and the priest announced that something had been stolen, or something had been broken, please could the responsible person put their hand up. I can't remember what it was but I can remember feeling the guilt, though I didn't do it, but I wanted to put my hand up. Probably loads of people in that room wanted to put their hands up. Even now I watch the news and there is a story about a volcano in Peru and I'll be thinking, oh dear that will be my fault. >>

>> Sometimes I think that just because you have misplaced ideas about guilt, faults and badness that doesn't mean actually you really are bad. I read a lot of Friedrich Nietzsche philosophy books as a teenager, that helps.

About 20 years ago the Church of England gave up on the concept of hell, a very astute marketing move. I was writing an article on it for the Bath Chronicle so I rang Downside Abbey to see if the Catholics were thinking of doing the same. The monk who answered said 'no' but refused to give his name.

Another thing about ex-Catholics is that they don't fart. I have a good friend in the village who is also an ex-Catholic and she says she doesn't fart either. Truth is I know quite a lot of ex-Catholics and never heard any of them fart. It's like the 13th Commandment that has escaped C of E Bibles. My Protestant wife, though, she won't mind me saying this, farts in my presence all the time, almost unapologetically. She'll unashamedly fart against my thigh when we are in bed.

If you're single and looking for a partner then maybe keep an eye out for ex-Catholics. They're easy meat. If you say to them, have you cut the grass? They will beat their breast, burst into tears, stick a knife into their hand (also an ex-existentialist) and then go out and do it.

My wife has only lived with one person, that will be me, she has no idea how easy she has had it. I keep meaning to say to her, you're lucky, I'm a neurotic mess, I'm ridden with guilt, I'm an ex-Catholic. But I don't and then I pine for the comfort of the confessional.

Tbh, as they say, I have no answer about how to be an ex-Catholic. You're basically doomed. That earthquake, for instance, really my fault. I am so sorry. Really, really sorry. For the earthquake, that lost sock of yours, the scratch on your car and everything else in the world. Mea culpa. Mea culpa.

Malcolm Rigby

Next time: "How to be...a philosopher."

At long last...

Eventually, reduced speed limits have been put up around the school. Something to be crossed off the minutes.

Although, of course, many people would like to see 20mph speed limits elsewhere around the village.

The value is doubtful. Studies by BANES showed that when Paulton introduced 20mph limits there were more accidents because pedestrians got more casual.

Something for the new Traffic sub-committee, with lay members, to discuss when they meet later this month.



Chilcompton Sports Football

Chilcompton Sports U11s move up to U12s.

Chilcompton u11s had a great season for 21/22 so much so that they have been promoted into league one of the Midsomer Norton Youth Football League for 22/23 season.

During the summer months they took part in a couple of tournaments, one of which was at short notice and extreme heat weather conditions. We took 6 players and no subs, the team topped their group and made it through to the knockout stages, unfortunately they went out on penalties but... boy were we proud of them.

We would also like to thank our continuing sponsors for 22/23 season Bristol Business Forms who have supplied a full new match day kit and Dan's Ice Creams who also continues to offer our team support and sponsorship.



We look forward to what this season brings. Image of our tournament players:



U7 MANAGER OPPORTUNITY – CHILCOMPTON SPORTS CLUB

Chilcompton Sports FC are looking to recruit a new under 7s manager & coach for the 23/24 season.

The u7s team will be formed from players already enrolled in our Soccertots programme as well as new players wanting to join our club. The team will have the opportunity to play in the local Midsomer Norton league.

In the Foundation Stage, we are dedicated as a Club to the development of our players through Ball Mastery and the Coerver range of skills. The successful applicant will need to be willing to adopt our philosophies. >>

>> FA Coaching Level One or above qualification is required, or someone willing and able to undertake the FA coaching course as part of the position. Further coach development and support will also be provided by the Club.

The role is voluntary, however the cost of the course is fully covered by the Club.

The applicant should be focused on developing our wide pool of young talented players, providing the structure and understanding to enable an enjoyable fun experience.

INTERESTED? To register interest in this role please email Tim Curtis on football@chilcomptonssports.com

SOCCERTOTS – CHILCOMPTON SPORTS CLUB

Soccertots is an introductory programme for year 1 children and below. Concentrating on Agility, Balance and Co-ordination (the ABC's), this session is an introduction into Ball Mastery and the Coerver range of skills.

Sessions are run every Saturday morning at Chilcompton Sports Club Wells Road, Chilcompton BA3 4EY 9am-10am only £3 per week.

If you have a mini footballer who would like to join our programme please just pop along or contact: hayley@chilcomptonssports.com

Skating on thin ice

After many years of looking after the skateboard park at the sports ground, Margaret Pugh has decided that she no longer has the time to look after it and is handing it over to the Parish Council.

First of all the Council would like to thank Margaret for all her efforts over the years.

But the second point is that the Council does not feel it has the resources to look after the park so unless someone comes forward to look after it then the park will have to be closed.

Anyone interested please contact the parish clerk on 01761 232974.



- Welcome to 'Tea and Toast', our Toddler Group for parents and carers with pre-school children
- Drop in for a play, a cuppa and a chat on Thursdays, 8.45am-10.45am (Term Time only)
- Find us at St John's Church Hall, Chilcompton, BA3 4HP



 [Facebook.com/StJohnTheBaptistChurchChilcompton](https://www.facebook.com/StJohnTheBaptistChurchChilcompton)

Chilcompton Cricket Club

Cricket Club – Senior Section

This has been our 8th Season at Chilcompton Sports Club and the membership continues to grow for the seniors with lots of local Chilcompton villagers now playing for the Club.

One such villager Sam Gibbs scored his maiden century in a record-breaking total of 330-5 for the Second XI at Chilcompton Sports Ground on the hottest day of the year in August

It has been a mixed Season for all 3 Senior sides with inconsistent results, but the spirit of the Club has been good, and we have always been able to field 3 Senior Sides each weekend.

Senior Saturday 1st XI finished 8th place in their first Season in Bristol & District League Division 4 – Four wins in the final four games secured the 1st place in Division 4 for the 2023 Season.

Senior Saturday 2nd XI finished an excellent 3rd place in Bristol & District League Division 11 – Winning the final 2 away games and finishing in 3rd place will hopefully be enough to secure promotion to Division 10 for the 2023 Season.

Senior Sunday 1st XI had a good first season in Division 4 and introduced an amazing 12 players from our excellent youth section to senior cricket.

The weather has been great and the playing square at Chilcompton Sports Ground even better which is a tribute to our Groundsman Mark Colbourne. Mark has been a player for our Club for well over 40 years and puts many hours into the ground on a volunteer basis.

Cricket Club – Junior Section

This season has been a great success for the juniors and the numbers have grown week by week with our Wednesday Junior sessions a real success.

We averaged between 30 and 40 juniors every Wednesday ranging from 5 to 13-year-olds.

Kyle Gloudemans and his team of coaches have really improved the quality of coaching

Our U13s entered the Bath & District Youth League and after a slow start improved week by week finally finishing in mid table.

The side has been managed impressively by 1st XI Player Tom Hancock.

Next Season we plan to run some U11 matches hopefully in the Bath & District League.

We regularly have five or six Juniors in our Sunday Senior Development XI which is now seen as our Pathway for the Juniors into senior cricket.

We have had a number of players progressing through the Somerset Cricket Junior Sides.

Youth Team Player of the Year and local Chilcomptoner Malachy Love

Finally, a big mention for Debbie Hancock who runs the “Safe Hands Management System” for the Cricket Club.

End of Season Awards

Club Player of the Year – James Purchase

Senior Saturday 1st XI Player of the Year – Jon Burgess

>>

>> Senior Saturday 2nd XI Player of the Year – Bradley Hancock (14 Years of age and a great player for the future!)

Senior Sunday Player of the Year – Andy Baker

Youth Team Player of the Year – Malachy Love

Spirit of Stratton Clubman of the Year – Mark Colbourne



< Sam Gibbs

Social Media

Our Committee Member Florence Thick has continued to improve our Social Media profile (please see all the links below)

Malachy Love >

Club Facebook:

<https://en-gb.facebook.com/chilcomptoncc/>

Club Twitter:

<https://twitter.com/Chilcomptoncc>

Club Instagram:

<https://www.instagram.com/chilcomptonssportscricket/?hl=en>

Club Website - <https://www.chilcomptonssports.com/cricket>

Our Cricket Club are so lucky to have fantastic sponsors in these difficult times - "Parker Transport (SW) Ltd", "Spectrum Form Design Ltd" & "PG Owen Ltd".

Our Cricket Club are keen to recruit more Senior & Junior players for the new season. For further details contact Dave Travis 07725 458404 or email: dave.travis@hotmail.co.uk



Chilcompton Sports Club Update

This has been a very successful year for the Sports Club as we continue to provide a good meeting place for all of our sports sides, supporters and villagers.

The Sports Club has also hosted many functions in the past 6 months including a really successful Jubilee event in June.

The Club continues to welcome participation in tennis, netball and athletics alongside the cricket and football.

The Club will be open through the next 6 months for all major sporting events on Sky, BT and Terrestrial TV in comfortable surroundings with no membership needed.

The Sports Club would like to thank the trustees, coaches and volunteers who all contribute to making Chilcompton Sports Club a venue to make the village proud.

Local Wildlife



Once again, invasive American Crayfish take over the river, killing native species

Moorhen - The river has again been hosting moorhens. This one was resting in the sun



Red Kite - This photo, although distant, shows the distinctive tail and wing feathers



DragonFly - Enjoying the sun during its inevitably short life



Goldfinch in flight

Pete Sinclair