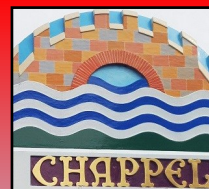


The Chappel & Wakes Colne

# Village Reporter

December 2022 to February 2023 Issue no. 115

Your free magazine for local news, information and forthcoming events in the Parishes of Wakes Colne & Chappel



Dates for your diary!

Christmas Services page 3 & 4

WI events page 7

Open Gardens 25th June 2023

## OUR LOCAL TREASURE SET TO RETIRE

For details on a 'knees up' to celebrate and thank  
Chris see page 7

Village Hall gets a  
facelift! See page 7

Chris Eaton at Wakes Colne Post Office and Shop

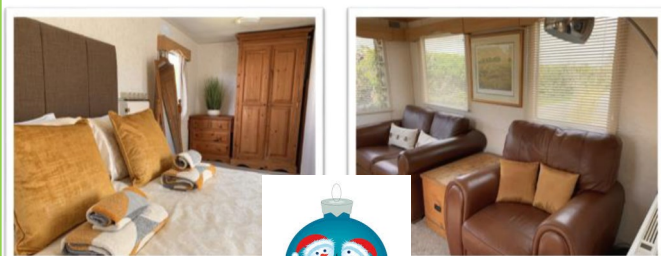
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Press date for the March to May 2023 issue - Friday 17th February 2023



#### LOCAL INFORMATION

Earls Colne Surgery: Appointments 01787 222022  
Bures Surgery: Appointments 01787 227529  
County Councillor: Lewis Barber 0787 6237137  
Police Colchester Station: 01245 491491 (non emerg. 101 emerg. 999)  
Chappel C of E School: Head Teacher Julie Ingram 01787 222296  
Churches: COE: Richard Bareham Tel. 01206 210799  
Chappel URC: Rev. Kenneth N Forbes 01206 547920  
Wakes Colne Post Office: 01787 222449  
National Rail Enquiries: 03457 4849 50  
Citizens Advice Bureau: 0800 144 8848  
Childline: 0800 1111  
Samaritans: 116 123  
Chappel Parish Council: Clerk: Ms. Helen Cook 01206 589095  
Chappel Website: www.chappel.org  
Chappel Chairperson: Cllr. Sue Chamley sue.chamley@chappel.org  
Wakes Colne Parish Council: Clerk: Ms. Diane Jacob 07508787869  
Wakes Colne Chairperson: Cllr. Monica Taylor  
Wakes Colne Website: www.wakescolne.org  
East Anglian Railway Museum: Peter Martin 01206 242524  
Royal British Legion (Ladies): Val Sayer 01206 240328  
Women's Institute: Neris Roberts 01787 223855  
Village Hall: Francesca Mead francescamead@live.com  
Village Hall Bookings Clerk: Christine Underwood 0794 9510523

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"Beautiful place to stay in quiet countryside not far from Colchester. Super clean and peaceful with super comfortable crispy bed and plenty of space in the caravan. Friendly and helpful hosts. Thank you!" Review 18.06.22

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#### VILLAGE REPORTER NEWS

If you are interested in being added to the Village Reporter mailing list, please sign up on the website, where you can also view past issues of the magazine, find local information and forthcoming events, view the gallery of photographs taken by villagers and have an opportunity to send in your stories and questions to share.

<https://www.chappelandwakescolnevillagereporter.com/> The website has been kindly produced and will be regularly updated by Charlie Sexton

#### Twelve tips for Christmas...and after



With Christmas rapidly approaching here are a few seasonal tips to help keep you safe at home, shopping, visiting, and after Christmas too:

1. If you need to store Christmas food and drink, presents and other goodies within garages and outbuildings, ensure what you are storing is out of sight and that the building is securely locked with good quality well fitted locks. Treat your shed to a shed alarm.
2. Avoid tempting window shopping burglars; don't leave presents and valuables on full view in front of a window. Having parcels delivered, may be out, make sure that you make suitable secure delivery arrangements to reduce the risk of theft.
3. Whenever leaving the house always ensure that your windows and doors are closed and locked. Don't attract burglars to your home by leaving it in darkness; leave lights on timers, perhaps treat yourself to a TV simulator too.
4. Lock gates to keep unwanted visitors from getting to the rear of your home.
5. When you go to leave the house and find that your car is all iced up, don't leave it unattended with the engine running to de-ice it. It only takes a second to steal your car and it would invalidate any insurance claim.
6. Park safely; look for a 'Park Mark' accredited car park [www.parkmark.co.uk/car-park-finder](http://www.parkmark.co.uk/car-park-finder) Check that your car is locked before you leave it and don't leave valuables and gifts on display in your car.
7. Whether an evening out or Christmas shopping keep your bags, handbags, wallets and mobile safe. Busy places make it easier for the sneak thief, so be alert at all times.
8. A Christmas get together – make sure that you have considered how you are getting home in advance and avoid using unlicensed taxis. Ensure you drink responsibly, social distance and are aware of your surroundings, whilst keeping your drink and belongings safe. [www.suzylamplugh.org/Pages/FAQs/Category/personal-safety](http://www.suzylamplugh.org/Pages/FAQs/Category/personal-safety)
9. Watch what you put on social media; check your settings to ensure that you are not broadcasting when you are not at home and the lovely gifts you may have received.
10. After Christmas don't advertise your nice gifts to the thieves by putting the empty boxes out for collection, disguise them, fold them up inside out or put them inside another non-descript box.
12. Record your new property free on [www.immobilise.com](http://www.immobilise.com), install tracking and security apps on relevant electrical and computer products. Consider a property marking product.
12. **Have a Great Christmas and New Year!!**

For further crime prevention advice see: [www.essex.police.uk/cp/crime-prevention/](http://www.essex.police.uk/cp/crime-prevention/) or <https://www.securedbydesign.com/guidance/crime-prevention-advice>

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St. Barnabas Church, Chappel



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All Saints Church, Wakes Colne

**Treasurer: Richard Bareham Tel. 01206 210799 Email: richdeb@aol.com**  
**PCC Member – Christine Maskell Tel: 01206 241261 Email: lbriar@aol.com**

Dear Readers

With Autumn almost over and Winter looming the first Sunday of Advent will be celebrated on November 27th, this year has positively flown by. The last two months in our churches have been wonderfully busy with our Harvest Festival on the 2nd October, the church looked fantastic with fruits, vegetables, flowers, greenery, hops, wheat sheafs adorning every inch of Chappel church, it was even better that the school celebrated harvest a few days later in the church and most of the decorations had survived. The children were amazing singing songs, reading prayers and poetry, displaying harvest paintings, it was a fantastic morning.

On September 25th Chappel Church had a special commemorative service marking the death of her late Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. Some of her favourite pieces of music were played and we were very lucky to have a bagpiper come and perform for us during the service, a special touch. There was a crown of flowers and even 'Susie' the Corgi present!! This was followed shortly afterwards by a school candle lighting service, every child in the school lit a candle in her memory, a very touching sight and one we hope they hold in their memories into adulthood. Talking of remembering our latest service on November 13th, as I write this now, our Remembrance service at Wakes Colne church took place where all the names of those who had died serving our country from Wakes Colne and Chappel were read out with a two minute silence, there was a poignant moment when we all sang God Save the King for the first time. This was followed by a short service at the crossroads by Chris' shop where two wreaths were laid. Last night November 18th, the ashes of Noel Graham were interred next to Elizabeth his wife who passed away many years ago, both were known to many of us when they lived in Chappel, Liz a school governor and Noel heavily involved with the Village Reporter. As I mentioned at the beginning of this missive a great deal has happened with celebration commemoration, remembrance, but now we enter into the time of preparation in the church's year where we prepare ourselves for the birthday of Jesus Christ our Lord, a wonderfully happy time for young and old alike. Wakes Colne and Chappel churches would like to wish you all a wonderfully HAPPY CHRISTMAS and a happy and healthy NEW YEAR.

With all God's blessings to you all Christine (Maskell)



#### December services

December 4th Morning Service Chappel  
 December 13th School Carol service at 7pm Chappel  
 December 18th Readings and Carols 10am Chappel  
 December 25th is a Benefice communion service on CHRISTMAS DAY at Great Tey church 10am

#### January services

January 1st Morning worship Chappel church 10 am  
 January 22nd Benefice communion at Chappel 10 am

#### February services

February 5th Morning worship Chappel 10 am  
 February 26th Benefice Holy Communion Chappel 10am

#### March services

March 5th Morning Worship WAKES COLNE 10 am  
 March 19th Mothering Sunday CHAPPEL 10 am  
 March 26th Benefice Communion 10am  
 March 31st Easter School Service Chappel 9.30am

Every Wednesday evening at 7.30pm a lent compliance service will takes place at LITTLE TEY church on the 1st, 8th, 15th, 22nd and 29th March.

We would love to welcome you ALL to any of the services







## The Minister writes ...

One of my favourite hymns ends with the line, 'Glory to God, who bids us fight for heaven here in the dust and joy of human life!'

It portrays an understanding of Christianity that is firmly grounded in the real world. Here there is no hint of a faith that aspires to take us away from the daily business of living or ignores the harsh realities of human existence. Too often in the past, religious faith has been portrayed as a means of escape from the hardships of the world. But these words remind us

that our lives are tied, for good or ill, to the 'dust and joy' of the everyday world, and it is here that we must express our faith, offer our worship, and seek to catch glimpses of the Kingdom of God.

For many, of course, there is more dust than joy, and it is amid that mix of suffering and hope – the real world – that God's call to follow and serve comes. Life is becoming increasingly difficult for so many people in the world today; from those enduring the catastrophic consequences of climate change, to the people of

Ukraine suffering under the aggression of their neighbour, to millions of people displaced and seeking refuge, to the many in our own nation for whom an inflated cost of living has rendered normal life impossible. Yet it is in these very struggles that we are called to seek God's kingdom. The same hymn suggests that this call is among the best of God's gifts – the call to share God's strife.

And of course we *do* catch glimpses of God's kingdom, for it is not just in the dust, but also in the joy that we are bound to live.

We are blessed that in our society there are plenty of opportunities to experience the joy as well as the dust: the love and support of family and friends; the provision of education and healthcare that enrich our lives so much; the opportunity through our work, paid or voluntary, to be of service to those around us; the simple beauty of the natural world that we can enjoy every day.

Maybe expressions like 'fight for heaven' or 'share his strife' sound a bit dramatic or exaggerated, but they simply serve to remind us that the call of the Christian is to seek the Kingdom of God here and now in the reality of our everyday lives.

*Ken*

## News in Brief ...

**The October Social event** held at the Village Hall took the form of a Quiz, Cheese & Wine Evening. Great fun was had by all and £130 was raised for our Church funds.

**The new URC Denominational Calendar for 2023** has a photograph of the interior of our Church here in Chappel on the page for May ... national recognition indeed !.

**The next Social Event will be a Tea & Scrabble Afternoon on Saturday the 28<sup>th</sup> January at 2.30pm at the United Reformed Church.** Please let us know in advance if you would like to come along – helps for catering purposes. Tony at 01206 240442 or [arpchapel@btinternet.com](mailto:arpchapel@btinternet.com)

## Prayers ...

*Lord God, we pray for that love which holds together peace and justice and will alone remain when all the nations are no more and all our arguments have ceased, and you, O God, are all in all.*

James Ashdown

*For now is the time to be makers of peace. Today is the day to seek the wellbeing of all.*

D Jonathan

### Monthly mid-week activities at the Chapel

*All are welcome to join  
with us*

**First Wednesday 10.30am**

**Coffee and Chat** informal, no charge

**Second Thursday 10.30am**

**Study and Discussion Group**

## Candlelit Advent & Christmas Carol Service

6.30pm Sunday, 11 December

led by our Minister the Rev'd Ken Forbes

Soloists: Carolyn Davies  
(formerly with English National Opera),

Judith Douglas and Andrew Carpenter

**All Welcome**



## Preachers in December, January and February

**on Sundays at 6.30pm**

URC unless indicated

### DECEMBER

4 Brian Clow

11 CAROL SERVICE

18 NO SERVICE

24 Christmas Eve

The Minister

### JANUARY 2023

1 Brian Clow

8 The Minister

15 William Glasse

22 Rev'd Anthony Bushell *Anglican*

29 Eddie Morley

### FEBRUARY

5 To be announced

12 The Minister

19 Rev'd Mark Payne *Anglican*

26 William Glasse



## WAKES COLNE PARISHCOUNCIL Chairwoman's Report

The last few months have been busy for some of us on WCPC as we try to progress our usual tasks and responsibilities day to day by email and meetings online and in person, and have taken on two new, exciting projects.

We continue to carefully consider the planning applications on which we are consulted by Colchester Borough Council; some are of increasing complexity and require professional knowledge and experience. The Council is open to representation in writing or by attendance at its monthly meeting, usually the first Wednesday in each month at the Village Hall (see <https://e-voice.org.uk/wakescolne/>). In early autumn we undertook a survey of all Highways issues, amounting to 25 road defects including potholes, signage and pavement defects and reported these to our County Councillor, whom we constantly press for action and updates. These continue to be the most frustrating issues for the Council and residents alike and, given the limits on government spending and Essex County Council (ECC) funding, are in future likely to be even slower in getting resolved. We are also awaiting funding for repair of solar lights (about 10 are out on Station Approach), for signage associated with flooding at Chappel Corner, and for a new restricted road sign at Lane Rd, all of which have been approved. Every time we are told there may be some work in progress on design for Station Rd traffic calming we get up our hopes, only to find, yet again (how many times over 25 years?!), they are dashed and nothing materialises. Meanwhile this road and Chappel Corner become more and more unsafe for pedestrians and motorists alike given the volume and speed of traffic, with some inappropriate huge lorries. This is a downside of modern village life. For this reason, over the last year the Council has agreed in principle to purchase a VAS it has sourced, and has been actively seeking to install it near the Village Hall; this is another ongoing saga of delays, getting permission from ECC for its location, sourcing a separate pole, obtaining stats about the underground facilities. We hope that we will see some movement towards its installation in the winter months. Watch Out!



We make much more progress at a faster rate on the contributions which we can make independently as a Council. We trust that during the summer you enjoyed the four large colourful planters installed on either side of the bus shelters. The plants were challenging to keep watered during the drought, as, despite having installed water butts, they remained empty and we had to take water to the planters. They have recently been winterised with some new plants and bulbs by the small team who look after them.

WCPC has also donated two new small planters to be located near a listening bench to be installed opposite the station building and to be looked after by the station adopters group. We could do with some new volunteers to support these projects.

This autumn WCPC at last acquired a new footpath right of way, kindly permitted by Nicholas Percival as a community contribution from the development of Wakes Hall Park. This footpath links with the existing Footpath 25 which emerges at the bottom of Tyburn Hill, near Cammacks, and enables walkers to negotiate the hill in safety on the inside of the hedge secure from the traffic. To recognise the availability of the footpath, which can then easily be linked up with Footpath 26, going down to Old Hall Farm, we have put together a new walk of approximately 4mls. A public walk was organised by the Council on 23<sup>rd</sup> October to celebrate the opening of the footpath, and although the weather was inclement, 13 walkers turned out and enjoyed the exercise and views, accompanied by five dogs on leads. We are hosting another walk, the Fishing Lake Walk, about 3mls, on Sunday December 18<sup>th</sup>. Please join us at 10.30am at Station Approach. Both these walks will be included in the revised and updated version of the local walks booklet which is actively underway, and which we intend to publish in the spring, when the remaining two walks will be organised.

The Council is supporting an exciting oral history project, Memories of Living in Wakes Colne and Chappel, for which we have secured significant funding from Ward Cllr. Sunnucks', Locality Budget. To launch the project, we issued a public invitation and delivered some notices to long-standing residents for a social gathering at which we explained the project, which is also being supported by Colchester Recalled. Over 35 residents turned out and over tea and cake



shared some fascinating and amusing memories of living here over the decades, which were recorded. Some people brought photos, newspaper cuttings, programmes and scrapbooks and enjoyed looking through these memorabilia. As a result, over 30 households in Wakes Colne and Chappel wish to participate in this project, which involves recording memories, some going back to WW2, usually for about an hour, and collating memorabilia to be stored digitally, and ultimately archived at the Essex Record Office in Chelmsford and at the University of Essex. A small team of four or five are working to record residents' memories, and, given the numbers who wish to be involved, we expect the project to proceed throughout 2023. We hope you will understand that we need to prioritise our contacts and will get to you in due course. Eventually we intend to produce a small booklet drawing on these memories and memorabilia.

If you wish to be involved in any of our projects, to report any local problem, or have any comments or questions please contact the Parish Clerk ([parishclerk@wakescolne.org](mailto:parishclerk@wakescolne.org)). We should be especially pleased if anyone would like to join the council for which we currently have a vacancy.

**Cllr. Monica J. Taylor (Dr), Chairwoman, WCPC**

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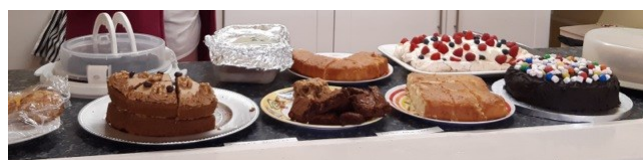
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## The Chappel & Wakes Colne Station adopters group

The Chappel & Wakes Colne Station adopters group have managed to keep really decent floral display going despite the difficult weather conditions, which necessitated having to water numerous times a week. The late Queens Platinum Jubilee was acknowledged with a red white and blue display along with supporting bunting and the installation of a new three tier display planter. In addition we were able to plant a native Beech Tree which is currently displaying a galaxy of beautiful gold and copper leaves, whilst a Rowan tree has also been planted to enhance the display. To ensure each tree survives a watering bags have been attached and will be filled for another six months to ensure the trees settle in. The adopters group have added a water feature to display pond side plants and to ultimately attract some wild life. The unit was envisaged by enthusiastic Adopter Katherine Beck who managed to secure some pallets from East Anglia Railway Museum and thus we produced a 95% recycled planter which we top up with rain water. The feature managed to gain the group a commendation for innovation at the recent Eastern Region Adopters awards. The station now has two Community Display boards where we enable local groups to display their club, group or organisation special events without any cost. At present it is being under used, if you have an event requiring some local publicity then contact Stephen Scrase by emailing [sfscrase@hotmail.com](mailto:sfscrase@hotmail.com). We either use them or lose them if not utilised. Not resting on our laurels our current project is to install a 'talking bench', this is planned to be located opposite the Station main building and will provide a welcome relaxed sitting area for visitors and passengers alike. The bench has a built in recorded information dialogue on various subject in relation to the area and historic background. A local family have kindly volunteered to look after this area for the group. Finally, 2022 has been an eventful year where I believe the Adopters Group have helped to enhance the station to the benefit of passengers and Museum visitors, we are now seeking a couple of additional active volunteers to help shoulder the load, if you are interested then please contact me at my email address. Stephen Scrase Group Leader.



## October's Art Exhibition

Colne Valley Art Group held its annual art exhibition in Chappel and Wakes Colne Village Hall on 24th September. Many beautiful and interesting paintings were on show by local artists, with some coming from further afield including Pebmarsh, Great Tey, Halstead, Yeldham and Hedingham. For the first time we included entries from school children as we want to encourage anyone interested in art to have a go.

Although fewer visitors attended than in 2021, there was a steady stream throughout the day who also enjoyed the home made cakes, and tombola. Despite the difficult financial times, several exhibitors made sales.

The group is open to artists of all ability and meets every Tuesday in the Village Hall from 1.30 to 4.00 pm. Further details from [peter.chillingworth@btinternet.com](mailto:peter.chillingworth@btinternet.com) and by telephone on 01206 240230



## BRITISH LEGION

It was lovely to see those who attended the Remembrance Service at Wakes Colne Church and on the Green on Sunday 13th November. Thank you to all those who donated to the Poppy Collection at the school, the Swan Inn and the shop. Sorry there was no poppy selling outside the shop this year. A wonderful £452.76 was raised.

Best wishes to all for Christmas and for the New Year.  
Val Sayer on 01206 240328

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## CHAPPEL & WAKES COLNE VILLAGE HALL



If you go up to our Village Hall, you're sure of a big surprise!

### Enovert Community Trust

We have been awarded a generous grant from Enovert Community Trust to repair and renovate our Hall. This worthy Trust offers support to all kinds of organisations – from renovating foodbank buildings to projects improving outdoor spaces to promote sport, play and good mental health. It also supports charities like our own who provide community spaces for everyone to enjoy. We are very grateful to them for their interest and financial help with our project, which will complete in our centenary year!

Wayne Goodchild, our local builder, began work in early September. So far he has painted the roof – you may have seen the scaffolding – now removed. Then he repaired, replaced where necessary, cleaned and repainted the exterior weather boarding. Flashings over the windows and doors were replaced and new guttering was fitted. The railings have been repaired, improved and repainted white. When weather permits he will turn his attention to the front of the building. If weather does not allow, as is usually the case in winter, he will start work on the inside of our Hall.

### Flag Pole

You may have noticed the new flagpole, complete with union jack, flying at the front of our Hall. The flagpole is a gift from the Estate of Jim Taylor, chairman of our Village Hall from 2011 to 2019. He is much missed and the gift reminds us of his valuable contribution in keeping the spirit and fabric of the Village Hall in good heart for many years.

### Legacy

We were also very moved to receive a legacy from the Estate of Anne Graham, to use as the Committee wishes. Anne had so many fond memories of our Hall, from the days when her children took part in Village events to her own visits as a member of the WI almost until her death. She is also sadly missed but her thoughtfulness and generosity are more than appreciated.

### The Raven

This production was never going to disappoint and it more than lived up to its expectations. Spooky as it was in parts, the actors had us spellbound for the whole evening and we were all very sorry when it ended.

Despite the enthusiasm of the audience, we were unable to persuade Common Ground Theatre to put on a performance of 'A Murder at St. Muttley's' for us because their schedules are so tightly booked a long way in advance! The nearest venue is Headgate Theatre, Colchester on 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> January. Tickets from their box office: 01206-366-000.

### Booking our Village Hall

Our Village Hall exists to be used and enjoyed! Contact Christine Underwood on 07983242517 or e-mail [Christineunderwood506@gmail.com](mailto:Christineunderwood506@gmail.com)

**Francesca Mead, Chair of Management Committee**

## Ambling Arthritics

This friendly group of up to ten people has enjoyed several walks of one and a half to two hours duration over the footpaths of Wakes Colne and Chappel this autumn. We go at our own pace, take in the landscape and nature, and monitor the footpaths along the way.

We meet fortnightly on a Friday from 10.30am, usually at Station Approach, where parking is available.

If you would like to join in please contact 01 787 223425 and sign up to our WhatsApp group, or just turn up on the day. Our next walks will be 25<sup>th</sup> November, 9<sup>th</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> December, 6<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> January, 3<sup>rd</sup> February, weather permitting.



## CHAPPEL AND WAKES COLNE WOMENS INSTITUTE

You could not say that a WI meeting was dull if you had joined us in September when we had chair based exercises with fitness instructor Karen Lawrie. The attendance was excellent with several guests. There we were thinking that it would be a relaxing evening but not so – Karen got us following her lead accompanied by music – lots of laughs and concentration on left and right moves. By the time the session finished with the can we were all glowing and ready for the tea and cakes.

A very entertaining evening was enjoyed in October when we had a nostalgic trip back to the past with David Webb – a cast member in the hit TV series Hi De Hi. David was a twin who began his career in the music business. The brothers went into acting and were lucky to be cast in the Hi De Hi series about fun and games in a holiday camp in the 60's. It was filmed at Warners Holiday Park, Dovercourt, which is no longer there of course. David illustrated his talk with video clips, hilarious anecdotes and a sing along to some of the popular songs of the time. Repeats are still being shown on TV.

November was jewellery night with our professional jeweller Sarah Smith. Lovely meeting with many guests and members. Sarah set us up to make a set of earrings or a pendant – needless to say it was very absorbing with something to take home with us – our own unique piece of jewellery. Sarah also brought with her some beautiful rings made from laboratory grown diamonds. These stones have exactly the same chemical composition as natural diamonds and can be used in industry as well as jewellery and of course a benefit to the planet with no mining.

Finally it has been decided to have a Christmas social gathering for our next meeting on 14<sup>th</sup> December. Food and drinks will be supplied by us with various fun and games – nothing taxing of course. We will hope to have a New Year meal out in 2023.

**The following are the dates and subjects of the next four meetings:**

**December 14<sup>th</sup> – Christmas Social Gathering**

**January 18<sup>th</sup> – You need feet to walk to Scunthorpe with Sarah Johnson**

**February 15<sup>th</sup> – Our 75<sup>th</sup> Birthday Meeting with Lucy Allen**

**March 15<sup>th</sup> – Treasures beneath your feet with Gordon Bailey.**

**At the village hall 7.30 with refreshments provided – all welcome.**

**[Dorothyb.crees@googlemail.com](mailto:Dorothyb.crees@googlemail.com)**

## CHRIS EATON RETIRES - COME AND EAT CAKE

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**SUNDAY 22<sup>ND</sup> JANUARY 2023, from 2.30pm till 5pm**

**to celebrate Chris' retirement and to thank him for his dedicated service to us all for the last 48 years**

I need to know numbers so please text Glynis on 07754758961 or email me - [glynisparker@btinternet.com](mailto:glynisparker@btinternet.com) with your name and how many will be in your party



Please send in any thank you comments to Chris that you would like to share with the villagers for the next issue to: [mamdymsxton@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:mamdymsxton@hotmail.co.uk)



## Nature notes

I'm not sure exactly when our House Martins left our roof eaves. I was away in mid-September for a week, and when I got back (17<sup>th</sup> Sept) they'd all gone. What I do know though is that they had a pretty good season, with 7 nests and two productive broods. Perhaps the constant hot weather helped.

The Naze at Walton is a migration hot-spot. It always seems to record the first returning summer migrants, the first thrushes arriving in the autumn. I don't go there very often – it's quite a long way of over 50 miles for the round trip from here, but there had been reports of rare warblers seen there and it was a nice end-October sunny day, so why not.

In the event I saw no interesting birds at all, although I did hear a warbler singing a song I didn't recognise. It wouldn't come out of its clump of brambles though for me to see it despite a patient 20- minute wait. However, during the walk I came across a group of people kneeling on the ground around a clump of dead thistles. A bit eccentric, I thought, praying to thistles. It turned out what was happening was a moth twitch. Bird twitches are regular events, although dashing round the countryside after rare birds is not quite my thing. I'll do it locally sometimes: I did belt over to Aldeburgh a few years ago for the Ivory Gull which spent a few days feasting on the trimmings around the fishing huts on the beach for a couple of days. But moths!?

Usually in late summer and if the winds are favourable, moths and butterflies from the continent are blown over, and places like the Naze sticking out into the sea can be a first landfall. The moth in question was a Crimson Speckled from Mediterranean Europe and North Africa. A few make it to southern England most years, but this white moth covered in black and red spots is a very rare sight here, and it had drawn a small crowd. I was lucky; right place at the right time. I missed the Long-tailed Blue butterfly though, also a migrant from the same part of the world as this moth, which someone had seen earlier that morning in much the same spot.



The warm autumn has certainly extended the butterfly season. In the garden I have seen Speckled Wood in mid-October and had a Red Admiral on a sunny 10<sup>th</sup> November. The most surprising one was a Brimstone at the end of September: usually it's just a spring sighting here but there it was over the beech hedge.

Winter thrushes have arrived. I saw Redwings at The Naze and earlier in October also at Fingringhoe. It takes a while for them to get further inland, and it was not until mid-November that I saw some in the village. No Fieldfares as yet though.

Over at Abberton, the winter ducks are now arriving. On a mid-November visit there were hundreds of Tufted Duck, and with them many Pochard and a few Goldeneye. On the reservoir edges were a few Teal, and several Great White Egrets. Another reason for going that day was to try to see the Slavonian Grebe reported there. Trying to find one small diving bird at this big reservoir can be needle and haystack stuff, but this one obliged and was quite close to the eastern causeway and preening a lot instead of diving. Abberton also has become a regular winter home for a few Long-tailed Ducks, and one was there too, fortunately quite close to the Grebe.

Things change quickly at Abberton; birds come and go overnight. Just 4 days later, I went again. 2 Bewicks Swans had just arrived, and around them were probably at least 500 (yes, five hundred) of that most elegant duck – Pintail. Also a hundred Wigeon, and in amongst this great duck gathering a few Shoveler, Mallard and Goldeneye. Fifty Black-tailed Godwits then arrived, along with probably a hundred Lapwing flying in from another direction. The place was buzzing.

How's avian flu affecting birdlife, I asked Essex Wildlife Trust, who's HQ is just down the road from Abberton at Abbots Hall Farm in Great Wigborough. Nothing on the website, so I knocked on the door despite the note on the gates saying "We are closed" and basically go away. I did find a staff member, and the message seemed to be don't ask us, try the Environmental Agency. Very helpful. Questions to be asked at the next AGM about fingers being pulled out.

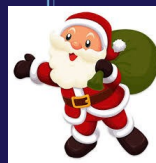
All the very best for Xmas and New Year, Tony Witcher



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## Bee Lines



Who can really believe it is almost Christmas again. Another year has simply flown by and the record high temperatures of summer have been replaced by the record high rainfalls of autumn.

My quest for a little autumn Ivy honey has, unfortunately, failed. The Ivy certainly produced nectar, as always, but I think that the conditions in late summer were so good that my bees showed little interest in the late forage. There were certainly bees on the Ivy this year, along with wasps, hornets and hoverflies, but there is a bee, slightly smaller than the honey bee but very similar, whose life cycle is specially adapted to the flowering period of Ivy. This bee is called, perhaps unsurprisingly, the Ivy bee.

Despite this failure on my part, it was still an excellent year for honey. I had four productive hives this year, and so my harvest was a record for me. I usually only have two or three. Other bee keepers are reporting record harvests from all areas of the country, so maybe this will be one of the benefits of global warming!

Going into winter, I now have six hives, as a result of a couple of late summer swarms. Each of the hives are currently healthy, and with any luck all six will make it through to spring.

Next year, however, may prove difficult, for in late summer this year, an active Asian Hornet nest was discovered in Rayleigh. Although the nest was destroyed, it is possible that some Hornet queens may even now be hibernating locally.

Asian Hornets have become a major pest of honeybees in Europe over the last few years. They are a new predator for our bees, so the European (including the British) bees have no defence against the predatory nature of the Hornets, which will happily destroy whole hives in the space of a few weeks.

Our native European Hornets, however, have evolved alongside our bees, and although they will kill a few bees given the chance, the defensive mechanisms of the bees are sufficient to make sure the two species can co-exist.

So from next spring we should all be on the lookout for invasive Asian Hornets.

The European Hornet is pictured on the right, above. It is a common insect locally but quite shy in its habits so may not be familiar to some of you. It resembles a really large wasp, with its yellow body and legs. It

has a very low pitched drone when flying. It will sting if provoked, but is rarely a nuisance to humans.



Its Asian cousin, on the left above, is slightly smaller and much darker. It has an almost black abdomen with a single orange segment towards the tail end. Its legs are black near to its body, but terminate in yellow segments towards the foot.

I will be setting hornet traps near my hives next spring, hopefully they will not be sprung. If you think you see an Asian Hornet, try to get a photograph of it, or if possible, trap it in a jam jar or net. Be careful, for these insects can be quite aggressive if threatened. Any sightings of Asian Hornets must be reported to the appropriate authorities; details can be found on the gov.uk website. Alternatively, a search on google for Asian Hornets will give you plenty of information on identification and reporting sightings.

If, however, you are lucky enough to spot a European Hornet, try to observe it from a safe distance and marvel at its presence. It is one of our most magnificent insects, and a joy to behold.

So that's all for another beekeeping year. Further challenges await for next year, as I know from experience that no two bee years are ever the same.

In contrast, Christmas has always followed a well set routine, at least in our house; that was until the last few Covid influenced years through most of our plans into chaos. I can only hope that this year will bring you all the exact Christmas you are hoping for, and that it will be a happy, merry and prosperous one for everyone.

I look forward to updating you on the progress (or otherwise) of my bees in the New Year.

Your bee correspondent, The Old Drone

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## Claude Robert Southernwood

11th July 1931-8th October 2022

I first met Claude, or Rob as his family knew him, when we moved to Lower Green almost thirty years ago and discovered him and his wife Anne living next door. So although I only knew him for less than one third of his life, I am able to piece together this short version of his life based upon conversations with him over the years and with invaluable contributions from his immediate family.



His parents, Edith and William had six children, five boys and a girl. Claude was the youngest and the family lived in Little Horkesley. His formative years were greatly influenced by war. He recollected camping out at night by the river, watching the planes flying off towards Germany, and some of them returning in the early hours of the next morning. He also attended dances at the Village Halls in the area, to which the newly arrived American servicemen were invited. The American military were segregated on racial lines at the time, but the two factions were allowed to mix at the social events. Unfortunately, this often resulted in fights outside at the end of the evening!

He left school at fourteen, working as a gardener at The Chantry manor house, installing in him a passion for gardening which would continue for the rest of his life. At 18 he started his National Service in the Royal Army Service Corp as a driver. He saw service in Libya, which he described as the easiest place in the world to drive a lorry, as there was only one tarmac road which ran east west along the coast. He was warned never to turn off this road on one of the many tracks heading south into the desert.

Claude moved to Wakes Colne in the early 1950's, living initially in the displaced persons camp formed from the Nissan huts that had been used as an army camp at Wakes Hall. When the council houses were built in Lower Green, Claude and his wife Greta were fortunate enough to be allocated one. It is a little unclear as to how many times he moved between the council accommodation, before they settled into Legerton Cottages with their daughter, Sonia.

Later he met and married Anne, who herself had three daughters, Debbie, Belinda and Kirsty. Claude adopted the children as his own and he and Anne married in 1975. Many of you may well remember Anne, as she was the caretaker at the Village School for over thirty years before her retirement in 2006.

It must have been difficult to bring up four girls at that time, but Claude worked hard. His career was in sales, to which he seemed ideally suited. When that ended, after many years, he returned to driving a lorry, working for Cammacks in White Colne. He was, by all accounts, quite a strict father, but versatile enough to turn his hand to any and everything that needed doing, installing in his girls a strong sense of family value and integrity. They all remember their childhoods with great affection, and would not have had it any other way. He remained close to all four, their husbands and partners and his five grandchildren and two great grandchildren.

Speaking personally, what struck me most about Claude was his kindness, generosity and sense of humour. When leaving on an early morning start, he would park his lorry outside his house but let it coast down the slope before starting the engine, so as not to wake his neighbours. Similarly, in retirement, when he loved gardening, and in particular mowing his lawn, he would put the task off until late afternoon if he knew I was working the night shift.

His generosity knew no bounds. He loved growing vegetables, always sowing extra seeds in the spring to give to his friends and neighbours. At harvest time, the family and his neighbours were all treated to beans, carrots, cucumbers, leeks, parsnips and onions. Anything remaining was left outside the front gate for passers-by with a sign saying "please help yourself"

His wit was legendary and could be quite dry. For many years we competed to grow the earliest new potatoes. After several years of losses, I sneaked a few tubers into the greenhouse and was rewarded with a dozen or so thumbnail sized spuds which I proudly showed him, along with

a sprig or two of mint that grew wild at the bottom of the garden. "Fantastic", he declared, "But I had my first ones last week, and they were twice the size of yours"

As he entered his mid eighties he began to slow down, giving up driving and reducing his vegetable plots from four down to one. The loss of Anne, in 2019 after a long illness, was a major blow, and we all wondered how he would cope. He was resilient however, and bounced back well, always with the support of his family and friends. Then came Covid and isolation. The family rallied round and made sure he was visited every day, but always sticking religiously to the strict government guidelines. He was a little deaf, and we would often hear him shouting down the telephone when in the garden, always ending the call with his trademark "love you"

Several admissions to hospital were to follow, but each time he returned, a little slower but still determined to maintain his independence. The day before his final admission he was out weeding his veggie patch, even being taken out for breakfast the next morning to the Shoulder of Mutton.

So that was the Claude I knew. A much loved family man, a great gardener and a well respected friend and neighbour. It was a long life, well lived, and in the overall scheme of things, I think most of us would settle for that.

**Michael Brown**

### More news on help available to cope with the Cost of Living, Energy and Climate Crises

Our community renewable energy project is making slow but steady progress, and we expect to be able to welcome Carole Randall, Low Carbon Officer for Essex County Council (ECC), to the Village Hall 7pm-9pm Wednesday 22nd March to show all who would like to be involved in the project how you could benefit if you decide to take part.

Just to remind you, if you have the right roof and cash you could just go ahead now independently, and benefit from home made energy sooner. If you decide to wait, ECC can help by recommending trusted traders, and by linking you up with a network that may enable you to sell your surplus power to our community if you so choose rather than to an energy company. Octopus are currently paying us 15p/unit for our surplus, but with the energy price cap at 34p/unit clearly there is room for both the resident with a surplus and the resident without solar panels to do well by dealing more directly with each other.

If you don't have the right roof, but can invest, I believe returns are currently 4%, and you can rent solar panels in another location and use the cheap renewable energy they generate. Clever stuff, this project was devised by the University of East London with ECC, you can see that they really understand the issue and have come up with some brilliant solutions.

If you have the right roof but no cash, you can have the solar panels at no cost, and pay for them over time with the money you are saving by generating your own electricity

If you have neither the right roof or the cash, it's still worth registering an interest, as that could enable you to buy the cheaper energy that is being generated locally.

Of course I don't have all the detail now, that should be available on 22nd March so please put the date in your diary.

Warmest thanks to Peter Robinson at East Anglian Railway Museum, Nat & Archie Browning at Browning Bros. events business in White Colne and Richard Browning, organic farmer, Great Tey for kindly signing the paperwork to make this all happen. Chappel, Wakes Colne, White Colne and Great Tey are all included within the project.

Finally I would like to wish everyone a very Happy and Sustainable Christmas. If you have people on your gift list who are difficult to buy for because they neither want or need anything, please save yourself time and money, consider having a conversation with them instead. Perhaps along the lines of "shall we meet up for a coffee/meal/walk/escape room/insert your own idea instead of exchanging unwanted presents?" Everything that's manufactured has a carbon, water and recycling footprint, and is hastening the climate change we see around us. If it's not wanted or needed, I hope I'm not being a Grinch to say please consider not buying it.

Best wishes for a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year  
Jill Bruce  
Climate Ambassador, Chappel and Wakes Colne WI



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Please contact the Clerk for further information or come along to our next meeting to find out more.

### **Christmas Bin Collection**

There will be no change to your collection, however garden waste collection will be paused from the 23<sup>rd</sup> December until 10<sup>th</sup> January.

### **Parish Council**

Our next meetings are due to be held on the 12<sup>th</sup> December & 9<sup>th</sup> January. These meetings will be held in the Village Hall starting at 7.30pm.

If you would like an issue raised, but would rather not attend a Public Meeting, please feel free to email the Parish Clerk.

The Agenda and Approved Minutes of all meetings are placed on the Parish Council Noticeboard and also on our Parish Council website [www.chappel.org](http://www.chappel.org)

If you have something to report and you're not sure who to report it to, please feel free to contact me and I will be happy to report the problem to the right authorities on your behalf. Please email the Parish Council with as much detail and if possible photographs to [parishclerk@chappel.org](mailto:parishclerk@chappel.org)

**Contact details:** Website: [www.chappel.org](http://www.chappel.org)  
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### **THE SKY AT NIGHT**

The most prominent stars in the sky are to the south. First find Orion. Three bright stars make up his belt; two stars (including a very bright red one to the upper left are his shoulders, and two more (including a brilliant blue star to the lower right) make his legs. The very bright red shoulder star of Orion is called Betelgeuse (pronounce it "beetle-juice"

and you'll be close enough). The brilliant blue star in his leg is named Rigel. (It's pronounced "rye-jell".)

Above Orion and to the right is a very bright orange star called Aldebaran. It's the brightest star in the constellation Taurus, the Bull. This constellation is a member of the zodiac, the twelve constellations which the Moon and planets travel through. In a zodiac constellation, if you see a bright "star" that doesn't appear to 'blink', there's a good chance it's a planet.

Above Taurus, north and east of Aldebaran and almost directly overhead this time of year, is a large lopsided pentagon of five stars. By far the brightest of these stars, the one to the north and east, is a brilliant star called Capella. These stars mark the location of the constellation Auriga.

High in the northern end of the western sky are five stars in the shape of a large W (or M, depending on your orientation). This is Cassiopeia. Looking east of Auriga, you'll find two bright stars close to each other. They're Castor and Pollux. Stretching out to the south and west from Castor and Pollux are the stars of Gemini, the Twins. With a little imagination you can

"connect the dots" to make out the shape of two stick men, lying parallel to the horizon during this season. Gemini is also a zodiac constellation - watch for planets here.

To the southeast of the Twins, back towards Sirius, is the brilliant star Procyon.

Finally, the three stars in Orion's belt point down and to the left to a dazzling blue star, Sirius, rising in the southeast.

This star is in fact the brightest star in the sky and belongs to the constellation Canis Major, Latin for "big dog." Hence it's often called the "Dog Star."

In all, the stars Sirius, Rigel, Aldebaran, Castor and Pollux, and Procyon

make a ring around Betelgeuse. This is the part of the sky richest in stars of the first magnitude - and brighter! To the north looking east, the Big Dipper is rising. Part of its handle may be obscured by objects on the horizon, depending on how far south you live. The two highest stars, at the end of the dipper's bowl, point to the north towards Polaris, the North Star. Face this star, and you'll be sure that you are facing due north.

South of the Big Dipper, rising in the east, is Regulus and the stars of Leo.

**Peter Willett**



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