

The Chappel & Wakes Colne

Village Reporter



December 2023 to February 2024 Issue no. 119

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



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Quiz Night FOCs
Friday 3rd February
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Christmas Church Services
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Join the Millennium Green 200 Club. Details on page 7

View of the Millennium Green taken by Rosemary Prestney. See page 7 for more photographs

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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 Sarah Stevenson 01787 222296
Churches: COE	Rev. Ian Scott-Thompson 01206 215772
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	Clr. Sue Chamley sue.chamley@chappel.org
Wakes Colne Parish Council	Clerk: Ms. Diane Jacob 07508787869
Wakes Colne Website	www.wakescolne.org
Wakes Colne Chairperson	Clr. Denise Stocker chairman@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



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AIR CONDITIONING



The United Reformed Church in Chappel

Working towards the Kingdom of God, through faith in Jesus and love for the world



Chappel URC website via: www.lionwalkchurch.org/chappel-urc/

Rose Green, Colchester Road (A1124)
Chappel, Nr. Colchester, Essex CO6 2AB

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Colchester, Essex CO6 2DS. Tel: 01787 220147
E-mail: valeriedent1947@gmail.com

The Minister writes . . .

IN this winter season when the days are at their shortest and darkest, when the weather is at its coldest, and the seasonal gloom is punctuated for only a few short weeks by the cheer of bright seasonal lights and the pleasure of social gatherings at Christmas and New Year, thoughts turn perhaps to lighter and brighter things.

This is the time of year when many people start thinking about warmer days, sunnier days – and holidays. A few hours leafing through brochures or looking at holiday websites is just the tonic for a cold dark winter. And once the holiday is all booked up, of course, there is the pleasure of anticipation, which may go on for months. Whenever there is a particularly dark drizzly day, or whenever there is a particularly frustrating day at work or home or school, there is always the thought that in a few short months it will be holiday time, the weather will once again be bright and warm, and the world will feel a better place. Yes, it's always nice to have something to look forward to.

But not too much, I hope. Each season of the year has its own attraction, and there is much to be seen and experienced even on the darkest days. It's all very well to look forward to things to come, but not at the expense of wishing our lives away.

The Christian gospel has much to say about the future. Jesus spoke of the coming Kingdom of God, when peace and justice will prevail and there will be no more poverty and suffering. A time when there will be peace and plenty for all. Christians today continue to look forward to the coming of

that Kingdom, but we know that we can't just sit back and wait – wishing and hoping. We are called to work – and sometimes to fight – for the justice and peace of the world. There is much darkness in these days: the darkness of hatred and war, the darkness of prejudice and injustice, the darkness of pain and suffering. But here and there we find glimmers of light and hope that encourage us to go on in our struggle for transformation and to know that the Kingdom of God is not just something to look forward to, but to experience in our world today.

Ken

Thought and prayer . . .

As the world appears to grow increasingly dark, remind us that You are the Light of the world. May we use our time, talents and resources to push back the darkness and shine God's light wherever we are.
Elizabeth Knox (URC Prayer Handbook)

News . . .

The blue and gilded cross at the front of the chapel's interior is now softly back-lit with concealed LED lighting – creating a meaningful focus.

Looking back . . .

Harvest Festival saw 34 kgs of foodstuffs given to Colchester Foodbank, many tins/pkts of soup given for Colchester's nightly Soup-run and £237 raised for Christian Aid.

Preachers in December, January and February

On Sundays at 6.30pm
URC unless indicated

DECEMBER

3 Rev'd Dr Martin Camroux
10 CAROL SERVICE
17 NO SERVICE
24 CHRISTMAS EVE
31 NO SERVICE

JANUARY

7 William Glasse
14 Rev'd Ken Forbes
21 Rev'd Dr Martin Camroux
28 Alan MacNaught

FEBRUARY

4 Rev'd Mark Payne (Anglican)
11 Rev'd Ken Forbes
18 Sam and Helen Brown
25 William Glasse

Scrabble and Afternoon Tea

Saturday 27th January 2.30pm at the Chapel

Donations invited.
Please contact Anthony Percival in advance arpchapel@btinternet.com

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
except January

Study and Discussion Group



Advent and Christmas Candlelit Carol Service

Sunday 10 December at 6.30pm
led by the Minister, Rev'd Ken Forbes with soloists and organ music.
Mince pies, tea/coffee after the service.

Christmas Eve Service

at 6.30pm
All welcome



St. Barnabas Church, Chappel



THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND



All Saints Church, Wakes Colne

Rector: Revd Ian Scott-Thompson, tel 01206 215772, email ian.scott.thompson@gmail.com
Church Warden - Chappel: Mrs Christine Maskell, tel 01206 241261, email: lbriar@aol.com
Church Warden - Wakes Colne: Nigel Impey, tel 01206 240260, email: nigelandfiona@hotmail.co.uk
Treasurer: Richard Bareham, tel 07977 111817, email: wccpcctreasurer@gmail.com

Ian Scott-Thompson writes...

Dear Friends,

What comes to mind, when you think about Hope? Hopes and dreams for the future, which may or may not come to pass? Do you feel hope-ful or hope-less, when you look at the world around us? There are plenty of bad things featured in the news. Is 'hope' just 'wishful thinking', or could it be more powerful than that?



My wife Jane grew up in a Christian home: "My parents were good at encouraging me to try new things, and to persevere with things I found difficult. My grandmother was a person of hope, and used to encourage me to memorise Bible verses. Faith and hope are connected: they work together. 'Hope' in the Bible has more certainty than 'wishful thinking': it's more like 'hoping' that the sun will rise tomorrow. You don't yet see it; it hasn't yet happened: but there isn't really any question that it will happen! So our hope in God, in Christ, in salvation, in eternal life - these don't rest on chance outcomes, or even on our personal virtues. They depend on God, and he is trustworthy. So we have faith when we grasp hold of this, and begin to trust that God will do what he promises. We don't see it yet, it hasn't happened yet: but we are sure that it will, we have 'assurance of things hoped for'.

The shops are full of Advent Calendars, and maybe you're enjoying one at home, with chocolate or gin or something else nice? They're a way of building up excitement towards Christmas, counting down the days until the big celebration.

In the church, we talk about 'Advent Hope'. Advent means coming and is a time of preparation - not just all the preparation to celebrate Jesus coming as a baby at Christmas, but also looking forward to His second coming when He will put right all that is wrong in the world, there will be a new heaven and a new earth. Now that really IS something to hope for! We see enough evil and tragedy in our world, and we long for it to be dealt with: many of our superhero films are based on this.

We want to explain about Advent, and being ready for Jesus' second coming, though that's usually not what folk want to hear. For most people, Jesus returning in power and authority seems like a threat to them, not something to look forward to at all! They are not at all sure of their standing before him, which is partly why some people swerve to avoid Christians and churchgoing. It all makes them uncomfortable; much easier to stick with the comforting Christmas stories of the baby Jesus. But the same Jesus is returning one day, to deal with evil and put the world right. Never lose Hope!

With best wishes,

Ian

CHURCH SERVICES

DECEMBER

- 3rd December - Morning worship 10am led by Rev Ian Scott-Thompson, Preacher Bishop Roger at CHAPPEL Church
17th December - Carols and Readings 3.15 pm led by PCC at CHAPPEL Church
24th December - Christmas Eve - Morning worship 10 am led by PCC
25th December - Christmas Day - Benefice Holy Communion 10 am at GREAT TEY CHURCH
NO services in the Benefice on the 31st December

JANUARY

- 7th January - Epiphany - Morning Service led by PCC, Preacher Christine Maskell at WAKES COLNE Church at 10 am
28th January - The Presentation of Christ Benefice Holy communion led by PCC Preacher Rev Ian Scott-Thompson at WAKES COLNE Church at 10 am

FEBRUARY

- 4th February 2nd Sunday before Lent - Morning Worship at CHAPPEL Church, 10 am led by Rev Ian Scott-Thompson Preacher Christine Maskell
There will also be the baptism of Richie Halls during the service.
25th February - 2nd Sunday of Lent, Benefice Holy Communion led by PCC, led by preacher Archdeacon Kate Peacock at 10 am CHAPPEL church

Baptisms, Weddings & Funerals

Baptisms, weddings and funerals for your family can take place in Chappel and Wakes Colne Churches. You don't need to be a regular Sunday worshipper. We are your church - please ask, and we'll do our best for you!



Ashley Millar and Ronnie Bryant were married on 14th October 2023 at Wakes Colne Church. They would like to share part of the address written and read by Reverend Sharon Quilter:

The lead character in one of my favourite American cop shows, has a number of rules by which he lives. One of those is that there is no such thing as a coincidence!

In my line of work, we kind off think the same, because for clergy, we speak of God-incidences. So I am standing here, right now, because of a few God-incidences.

Earlier this year, in February I believe, I was sitting with my husband in a hostelry in Earls Colne where we live. We were having a meal ahead of our film club and I happened to overhear the conversation of the couple on the table next door.

They were wondering whether the local church was a working church and whether the bells worked. They were talking about this very church in which we are gathered today.

I happened a glance in their direction, as you do, and sensed they clocked my collar; I was as my husband calls it, 'in uniform'. As we were nearing the end of our meal, I had the audacity to intervene and said that yes, All Saints was a working church and assured this couple that the bells do work.

They smiled and then I asked if they were getting married. A logical question - don't you think - when a couple are talking church and bells. Their answer was no, just that they were going to be moving into a new home right next door to the church.

God-incidence number 1! Fast forward a few months to April, I receive an email from the vicar of this parish asking if I remembered meeting this couple in Earls Colne months previously. Well of course I remembered them; they are kind of hard to forget!

Well he said, the couple were looking to get married in October and the vicar, Ian, was going to be on holiday.

God-incidence number 2! Ian said he told the couple he would see if one of his colleagues would be free to conduct the ceremony and apparently, the couple asked for me. Ian asked if I was available and whether I would like to do the wedding. And, as you can see, there was a free slot in my diary.

God-incidence number 3! And it has been a blast getting to know Ashley and Ronnie. We have had some interesting conversations and a lot of laughs along the way, peppered with a few tears. But I have no doubt that I was supposed to be in that place, at that time and overhearing that conversation, so that I could be here with them and all of you today.....

Nature notes November 2023

Time now to review the year - what was good, surprising, familiar. Starting with the birds, a lot of the winter revolved around glancing out of the kitchen window as often as possible to see what's eating on the garden feeders. I think too that what we see in (and over) the garden reflects well on what the valley holds. As usual, finches were the most numerous, tits a close second. Goldfinches have been plentiful in recent years and again this was the case daily over January to March, often towards ten on the feeders and half a dozen Chaffinches on the ground hoovering up the seed crumbs spilt by the messy Goldfinches above. Greenfinch numbers have fallen in recent years, and no recovery this year with only three or four regulars.

Surprises were no Siskins at all, not one, back to the old days of none. In recent years we've had sometimes six of these little green finches, this time not a single one. On the other hand, having been absent for many years, Bramblings were around on several days from January onwards, usually one, sometimes two, and then quite late on into the spring six were around for a couple of mid-April days, the males turning into their bright summer reds and black breeding finery.

Back to the familiar, tits were also there, mostly Blue and Great, an occasional single Coal Tit and then frequently small parties of Long-tailed. Otherwise, there was a Nuthatch most days and a Great Spotted Woodpecker too. Surprising was a Reed Bunting once, and a male Blackcap for a couple of dark January days. Redwings were in the garden fairly often, but that other winter thrush, Fieldfare, only flying over. Also overhead were daily Buzzards and weekly Red Kites, plus the occasional Sparrowhawk being a sometimes successful opportunist hunting around the garden feeders for a well-fed finch.

Storm Noa blew through in the second week of April, and it obviously delayed the spring migrants. For how long was the question. It turned out to be not much. Our regular six to seven pairs of House Martins appeared a week late, but Cuckoo seemed to be much more delayed as I didn't hear one until early May. But once it had arrived, I heard it calling in the valley until practically the end of June.

After the heat of summer 2022, how would the garden butterflies fare? The answer was mixed. Brimstone and Orange Tip did ok, the first of several Brimstones on 15th April followed two days later by the first Orange Tip. By May I'd seen Small Copper and Red Admiral, and then the Meadow Browns came out in their dozens. Skippers were down (just a few Large and either Small or Essex – they move too quickly to tell) but Commas up.

This was a Red Admiral year, very numerous throughout the summer and still a few around into October feeding on the fallen plums. Peacocks too did well, as did Speckled Wood, but it was definitely not a year for Painted Lady or Small Tortoiseshell. I only saw one of the former, in a Copford garden in late August, and of the latter none at all.

Would the Purple Hairstreaks reappear on our oaks? Yes they did, as always only a handful and neck-achingly high up, but they flew late well into mid-August. Dragonflies, my self-improvement thing, were not bad, with large numbers of Banded Demoiselle from late June and also again several Scare Chaser and Brown Hawker being the pick of that side of the family.

The House Martins left at the end of September, pretty much their usual departure time, and they had a good year. As the broods fledged, we sometimes had 40 or more flying around in the evening sunshine.

Over at Abberton, Nightingales were not affected by Noa, singing away on time on 16th April. Spoonbills were starting their breeding season in early May, and by July the heronry just by the western causeway was like a Mediterranean scene with not just the Spoonbills but also three egrets (Little, Cattle and Great White) nesting along with the Grey Herons. Early May too brought lots of waders there to the pools left by Noa: many passing-through Greenshank and Ruff and the breeding Little-ringed Plover, plus a surprise in a Pectoral Sandpiper, which would normally be a rare autumn visitor.

So all in all, not a bad year for the familiar, and a couple of surprises to add some spice. Have a good Xmas and New Year. I'll be off to the local marshes to see the hopefully large flocks of Brent Geese.

Tony Witcher

CHAPPEL AND WAKES COLNE WOMENS INSTITUTE

In September we had our own celebration of harvest with a talk and slide show by Catherine Scott – a farmer's wife from Aldham. Catherine had brought samples of the grains that are grown in the fields of Aldham and Chappel with slides showing the crops in the fields and being harvested. Some of the crops we are familiar with but some are comparatively new to the area like Bulgur Wheat and Buckwheat. Many of us are used to seeing the giant maize plants grown for biofuel and the pretty borage plants much loved by bees. Some of the facts about the changes in farming were quite alarming especially if you can remember all the dairy cows we used to have in our area – there are now only five dairy herds in Essex. The evening ended with a wonderful array of cakes made by Amanda – What a spread!

If you wanted an evening of great entertainment, you should have joined our October meeting when the speaker was Carolyn Carter a retired magistrate of many years standing. She had so many tales to relate from the youth courts to the more serious crimes. We learnt how the system works in essence and how the sentences are applied. Carolyn laced her talk with impressions of some of the characters she had dealt with including a wonderful anecdote of a vicar who sat on the bench but seemingly had no concept of the type of people he would be sentencing – this particular story caused much hilarity. She also told us of some of the prison visits she had made throughout her long career and what a peculiar feeling it is when you enter a prison, the doors are locked, and you realise that you are in with the prisoners. Carolyn said the strangest is Broadmoor, the mental prison where the inmates are treated in a totally different way. It was a very interesting insight into something most of us know little about. The meeting was on the night that storm Babet arrived in the UK so we were not expecting a huge turnout but in true WI spirit everyone arrived through rain, wind and flooded roads. Thank you, ladies, for your support.

November was a complete contrast with a trip to Mongolia via a wonderful presentation by Ammabelle Laurie who is a geologist and spent two years in Ulaanbaatar the capital city. Ammabelle had her three month old son with her and took us through some of the challenges she had to face trying to cope with food, transport and language. Her husband worked for Rio Tinto and was involved in the mining of copper – apparently Mongolia has some of the largest copper and gold deposits in the world. The country itself is very poor with dirt roads and basic medical care. Temperatures go down to minus 20 degrees and below as Mongolia is one of the highest countries in the world sandwiched between Russia and China. The currency is the Togrog and you have to have thousands to buy anything. Traditional sports like hunting with eagles, horse riding and archery are popular and a little known fact is that the country has world champion contortionists!

Dates for your diary:

Xmas Party – 13th December – usual venue

January 17th 2024: Own health, menopause and beyond by Glynis

February 21st: Black cats, broomsticks and Bellatrix – Who were the witches by Lucy

March 20th: Pets as Therapy by Helen Beard

HAPPY CHRISTMAS AND A VERY HAPPY NEW YEAR FROM ALL OUR LOVELY LADIES

Dorothyb.crees@googlemail.com



Chappel Primary School Join LIFE Education Trust



Date: 1st Nov 2023

Local primary, Chappel, recently joined the LIFE Education Trust, a multi academy trust with schools across London and Essex. Executive Headteacher, Sarah Stevenson said *"We are very excited to be joining Life Trust and know that it will provide opportunities for colleagues and pupils to flourish. Being part of LIFE brings fresh ideas, investment in resources and a huge network to support the school"*. Trust CEO, Julian Dutton said *"We are delighted to have Chapel join the Trust and welcome all colleagues, governors, parents, carers and pupils to the LIFE family. Our mission is to build great learning communities which unleash creativity and champion optimism, in a spirit of compassion and we look forward to bringing this ethos for education to the local communities."*

The school have also recently opened a reflective garden which is dedicated to the memory of Richard Fordham and was built using generous donations from Richard's family. It is a special place for children and staff to go to have some quiet and reflective time within the school grounds, and in December the pupils have lots to celebrate with a traditional nativity service, carol service, Christmas Fayre, a visit to the pantomime and, of course, parties! Taking time to remember why we celebrate Christmas and the special meaning it has.

Sarah added *"I look forward to getting to know some of the wider community. If anyone would like to know more about our school, please call the office or arrange to make a visit. The children would be very happy to give you a tour and talk to you about our school."*

Find out more about the school and how to apply for a place: chappel.essex.sch.uk/essex/primary/chappel or call 01787 222296.



About Chappel:

The Chappel family nurtures independence and courage whilst promoting faith and a lasting passion for learning. *"Jesus said to him, 'If you can believe? All things are possible for one who believes.'" (Mark Chapter 9 verse 23)*

Chappel C of E Primary School, The Street, Chappel, Colchester, Essex. CO6 2DD

Telephone: [01787 222296](tel:01787222296). Email: admin@chappel.essex.sch.uk

About LIFE Education Trust:

Our mission as the LIFE Education Trust is to build great learning communities which unleash creativity and champion optimism, in a spirit of compassion. Everyone in the LIFE family shares and demonstrates our beliefs:

Courageous optimism: It takes courage to hope for a better future. We champion a 'can do' attitude and encourage our pupils and staff to tackle challenges with resilience and perseverance as they reach for ambitious targets.

Boundless Creativity: Through captivating discoveries in the classroom and eye-opening adventures in the outside world, we give pupils freedom and promote varied learning experiences which stimulate innovation and develop adaptability.

Heartfelt compassion: We show love and respect to each member of our community as we nurture a powerful collective spirit. In humility we embrace difference and individuality, show forgiveness when necessary, and are united by compassion.

lifeeducationtrust.com

Chappel School Annual Christmas Fair

Friday 1st December

As a small village school, we rely heavily on the generosity of our parents, local businesses and other individuals to help us to make school events a success.

At the time of writing, with just over ten days to go until the Christmas Fair on the 1st December, we have had some incredible prizes donated for the raffle, and donations are still being received.

We would like to take this opportunity to give thanks to our supporters so far. We are truly grateful for your overwhelming generosity.

The businesses listed below are all within just a few miles of the school. Some of them are in the villages of Chappel and Wakes Colne themselves. With these fabulous resources on our doorstep, hopefully we can support them as they are supporting our lovely school this year.

In no particular order, thank you to the following local businesses:

Mannings Farm Events for the Air BnB prizes

www.manningsfarmevents.com

Barron Farms for the voucher for a Christmas turkey

www.barronfarms.co.uk

Kida-Majig for the voucher for preloved quality clothing

www.kidamajig.co.uk or Instagram @kida_majig

Comfybe for the hand carved bespoke wooden chopping board

www.facebook.com/comfybe or comfybe@hotmail.co.uk

Busy Bee Honey for the honey box

SiSu for the voucher for handmade gifts

www.sisu-handmade.co.uk

Evans Gifts and Interiors for the room diffuser

www.evansgiftsandinteriors.com

Nails by Kelly for the gel manicure voucher 07805 458 347

Platform Two Café for the brownie basket

www.stourvalleycatering.com

The East Anglian Railway Museum for the family voucher

earm.co.uk

Colchester Brewery for the beer www.colchesterbrewery.com

JD Gardens for the garden tidy voucher 07966 389 800

RAB Professional Cleaning for the window cleaning voucher

www.rabprofessionalcleaning.co.uk or telephone 07957 740 436

The Essex for the day passes

www.theessexgolfandcountryclub.com

D Salmon Cars for the free MOT and Winter Health Check

www.dsalmon.co.uk

Pizza on the Green voucher

www.facebook.com/pizzaonthegreen

The Swan Inn www.swaninn-chappel.com for the £20 voucher

The remaining prizes have been donated by individuals:

Afternoon tea for 2 at the Barn Brasserie, First Stroke swim Vouchers, £50 Sainsburys voucher, £25 Amazon voucher and bottle of bubbly

A special thank you as well to Kande and Jamini at **The Chappel and Wakes Colne Village Shop and Post Office** who have discovered a talent for selling raffle tickets, and who have also generously donated to the chocolate tombola. An extremely popular stall with the children!

At a time when we know people are feeling the squeeze in many ways, we are so grateful for the support we have received so far, both in the prizes donated and through the raffle ticket sales we have made to date.

In the next edition we will reveal how much is raised, along with the final list of donors.

If you read this before Friday 1st December and you would like to lend your support by buying raffle tickets, they are available at the shop until midday on Friday 1st December at £2.50 a ticket or £10 for a strip of five. We will contact lucky winners with their prizes.

If you read this after the 1st December, and would still like to get involved, you can make a cash donation to Friends of Chappel School by visiting www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/chappelpta/
Date for the Diary: FOCS Quiz Night on Saturday 3rd February 2024 at the village hall. Details of how to take part will be available in the New Year.

Friends of Chappel School

Bee Lines



The honey harvest has been safely gathered in, as pictured.

It was a good year for honey but a poor one for the bees. With only two productive hives left after some winter losses, I was unable to increase my stock over the summer, so must hope that my hives overwinter well. On a positive note, there will be more than enough honey to meet my needs, including some beautiful honeycomb which will go well with the blue cheese over Christmas. Which brings me to the subject of Christmas, so soon after the last one it seems.

As a child, I loved Christmas. Not, as you may think, for the presents, more for the opportunity to get together with relatives in order to listen to the tales of the older members of the family and friends.

I have always been fascinated by the anecdotes of previous generations; not the headline stories of great events, war and tragedy, but their stories of everyday life, often humorous, featuring themselves and characters long gone. Christmas was the best opportunity of the year for large gatherings of these groups with sufficient time to just sit and chat. As a child, I would listen avidly. In our house, one of the highlights of the festive season was my father's Christmas morning drinks party.

The family would gather before lunch; children, parents and grandparents. They would be joined for a couple of hours by a variety of aunts, uncles, family friends and so on, who would enjoy a drink and some good conversation. I would listen, engrossed, to these stories from a previous generation or three. Now, of course, I qualify as a previous generation myself, so I feel I can share with you my own "Tale of Christmas Past", although I should warn you it is not for the faint hearted, and as the TV sometimes warns, "reflects the values of its time"

It must have been around 1966 or 67 that my elder brother and I were first entrusted as drinks waiters for the annual Christmas morning get together. At first, all went well, until my bother decided he should take a little sip of each drink as he poured it. As an impressionable twelve year old, I naturally copied him.

In those days, the men all drank beer (A Double Diamond Works Wonders), whilst the ladies favoured sweet sherry.

It was far easier to sup the sherry, so it was this on which we concentrated, and small sips soon became large gulps as we realised, for the first time, the amazing effect of alcohol on the body. Of course, a wise uncle soon spotted what was going on, and ratted us out to our father.

Father, in his infinite wisdom, decided to do nothing, on the grounds that we needed to learn the hard way that excessive drinking would be bad for us. So, we continued to overindulge.

Roll the clock on a couple of hours, and the family are sat around the table for Christmas lunch. My brother has just passed out, falling slowly, face forward into his dinner, lucky indeed not to drown in the gravy and bread sauce.

Others rush to help him, whilst my grandfather, sat next to my brother, steadfastly continued to munch on his brussel sprouts and turkey as if nothing has happened. Born in 1890, Grandfather had probably seen it all before, and worse.

I remember my mother quietly suggesting that it might be better if I went upstairs for a lie down. I left the room, but was unable to make it upstairs, collapsing on the half landing under a bay window.

My memory of the next few days is quite vague, except for the headache, but I do remember my father adopting the role of Mr Badger from "The Wind in the Willows", stomping around the house muttering, "That'll learn 'em" under his breath. I am not entirely sure if mother agreed with him.

Anyway, no lasting harm was done, but was father right to take such a hard-line approach. The answer, strangely, was both yes and no.

To this very day, the mere smell, sight or mention of a bottle of Harvey's Bristol Cream (other brands of sweet sherry are available) still makes me nauseous, and I have not touched another drop of the stuff in almost sixty years.

On the other hand, if it had only been traditional back then for elderly ladies to drink red wine instead of sherry, I could have saved myself a fortune over the years, and this article could have come to you from my own private island in the sun, instead of cold, damp, wintery Wakes Colne.

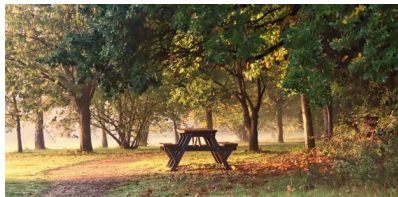
Bah, Humbug! (and a Merry Christmas to all)

Your bee correspondent, The Old Drone



Chappel Millennium Green

As Autumn fruits, seeds and berries ripen and bronze leaves carpet the pathways, there is still much to enjoy on The Millennium Green. As the early morning sun warms the air, our trees reveal their seasonal palette of colours.



In a few weeks time, the trees will have shed their leaves and entered a period of rest and regeneration.



There is still time to sit under their canopy and watch and listen to nature at play.

My special thanks to Rosemary Prestney for allowing me to share some of her wonderful photographs taken recently on the Green (also on the front page).



May I encourage you to follow in Rosemary's footsteps and enjoy the early morning sun blazing through the arches of the viaduct. Or find that empty bench and watch the low blanket of mist evaporate before your busy day beckons.

As the days grow shorter, there is still much maintenance to complete and our contractors are as busy as ever. The 200 Club helps generate essential funding towards this and I am pleased to announce the following winners who will each receive £40.00.

September Draw – Ticket Number 72 – Christine Wakeling
October Draw – Ticket Number 22 – Michael White
November Draw – Ticket Number 6 – Nerris Roberts
Do remember, a donation of £24.00 a year will give you 12 opportunities of winning £40.00. Our Treasurer Nick Ingram will be contacting the lucky winners and delivering their prizes.

Do continue to visit and enjoy The Green and all it has to offer our community.

**With Every Good Wish, Peter Neubauer, Chairman.
Chappel Millennium Green Trust.**

Email: chappelmillenniumgreen@hotmail.com



Chappel and Wakes Colne Station Adopters



The station adopters wish to give heartfelt thanks to all those who came, from the village and farther afield, to the station on a bright sunny morning on 6 October to plant a total of 350 daffodil bulbs on station approach. It wasn't easy, the ground was very hard! Thankfully everyone persevered, and we got the job done. The cup of tea/coffee, homemade cake and a chat with new friends was well earned. Thank you for making our station look pretty in spring.

Our next big project is to establish a garden at the entrance to the station. This is to mark the 175 anniversary of the opening of the line and viaduct in 1849. The adopters are very grateful to the two Parish Councils for their generous support with this project. We also have support from the Essex and South Suffolk Community Rail Partnership and advice from The Bee Friendly Group. Celebrations to mark the event will take place Saturday and Sunday 29 and 30 June 2024. Plans for the 29 June include a morning walk from Marks Tey station to Chappel and Wakes Colne Station. In the afternoon there will be a talk in the village hall by a railway historian who will give us further insight into the building of the viaduct and the railway line. In the evening a Music Hall train will make two return trips between Marks Tey and Sudbury. Events on Sunday 30 June include a steam day and picnic. Further ideas and activities, plus the involvement of all stations along the line are emerging from our liaison group of interested parties. Look out for details nearer the time.

Greater Anglia celebrated 20 years of station adoption across East Anglia at the annual awards event at Ipswich Town Football Club on 13 October. A colourful book of photographs illustrating the work of adopters across the region, a coffee mug, and a badge have been presented to all adopters to celebrate this milestone. If you wish to see the book, ask one of the adopters, Kath Beck, Al Cochram, Monica Taylor or Stephen Scrase. Greater Anglia made a delightful 10 minute video about the successful projects of station adopters, including ours. You can view it on YouTube <https://youtu.be/S-Y-we4wrPo> I'm really pleased to let you know that the judges at the awards event gave Chappel and Wakes Colne Adopters Group together with the group from Hockley Station the Best Adopter Group Award 2023.



We wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year, and look forward to an exciting year ahead.

Kath Beck, Station Adopter



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TRACTOR RUN

There will be a tractor run from Bures to Chappel along the main road to Wash Corner and up to Fordham on Sunday 7th January 2024 approx. 12 noon. Anyone wishing to join in please get in touch with Tallon on 07983633006

REMEMBRANCE SERVICE

It was lovely to see those who attended the Remembrance Service at Wakes Colne Church and on the Green on Sunday 12th November. Thank you to all those who donated to the Poppy Appeal in the villages. I wonderful £417.57 was raised from the collection boxes and further money was donated via the scanning app.

Thank you to the following people and businesses for their support and for displaying collection boxes: the church services, school, Post Office shop, Colchester Brewery, Bodyworks, Chequers the pub and the Parish Councils.

Best wishes to all for Christmas and for the New Year.



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Climate Change in Chappel and Wakes Colne

As I write this in mid November the trees and hedges are ablaze with autumn colour, and very few trees have lost their leaves in preparation for winter, making the Christmas sparkle and traditional cards depicting bare trees and snow covered fields already in shops feel out of sync with the real world. Our seasons are changing, only one grass frost here and no fog so far this autumn unlike previous autumns when November was usually a cold, harsh month.

We've been lucky in dodging the storms too. Storm Babet caused havoc in Suffolk with Framingham and Debenham, only 25 miles from us, flooded to the extent that one Debenham resident I know told me of domestic heating oil tanks being lifted off their brick pillars by the rising water, then tipping over to spill their oil into the flood water, so that the affected homes had oil as well as dirty water to mop up as the flood receded. I hope no one reading this still has an oil tank, the Debenham flooding was both sudden and unprecedented. We rarely need to scrape ice off our windscreens now, but there are new hazards for us to watch out for.

On the positive side our Colne Valley Community Renewable Energy project continues to see more solar panels on local roofs. Halstead Town Council invited us to talk to them about it and voted unanimously to take part. CPRE, the Campaign for the Protection of Rural England, are campaigning for more solar panels on roofs to avoid the need for solar farms in fields, so we feel part of a much bigger network.

Warmest thanks to all the Chappel and Wakes Colne residents who came to "Hot Debate 7: Can we control the climate crisis?" at Colchester Institute in October. Feedback from delegates was excellent, it truly was a Hot Debate on what needs to be done, with our Chair, Lord Deben, a Conservative peer, calling out our MP, Sir Bernard Jenkin, by saying "that's not true, Bernard". The green careers courses being offered by Colchester Institute are impressive, with more youngsters being taught the skills needed for new jobs as we embrace the green revolution. Tom Day, Essex County Council told us of a number of energy projects like ours around Essex, all going well, and there were other great speakers, but Lord Deben, our Chair, was rated brilliant. If you ever get the chance to hear him it's well worth going.

I wish you, your families and friends a very Happy Christmas, and hope you make it fun by cutting out all the competitive bigger and better stuff that exhausts our energy and budgets. If you are still struggling to think of a present for a "difficult to buy for" friend or relative, may I make the radical suggestion that you offer them an experience instead? Just tea, cake and a catch up over Christmas or in the New Year might be all they are wishing for, try giving them a call to ask before desperately buying something for them.

Merry Christmas! jillbruce321@gmail.com

STOP PRESS! I've just heard the Colne Valley Community Renewable Energy Project will have access to a thermal imaging camera for a limited period this winter, please let me know if you would like us to find out where your home would benefit from improved insulation.

Our "Hot Debate" panel, from left to right, Tom Day, ECC, John Ahern, Indaver, Sir Bernard Jenkin MP, Issi Kent-Jackson, Hedingham School, Alison Andreas, Colchester Institute Gareth Redmond-King, ECIU, Jonathan Scurlock, NFU, Michael Staines, PAIN, Lord Deben



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WAKES COLNE PARISH COUNCIL

I had the privilege of representing the Parish Council and laying a poppy wreath at the memorial on Remembrance Sunday 12th November. It was very heart-warming to see so many parishioners attending the church service, paying their respects to all those lost during those dark years of conflict.

Some positive things to report in this edition. Our **two telephone book exchanges** have been painted along with the **parish council notice** boards. The Wakes Colne owned **VAS system** on the A1124 is performing its duties very well, allowing us to furnish the **Community Speed Watch Team** with valuable data, helping them plan their sessions effectively. The **Flood Barriers** located at the Post Office were called into active service this month due to the heavy rains and risk of flood.

In addition, a big thank you to our volunteer **litter pickers** (you know who you are) who go out unprompted, and to those who maintain our four large **planters**. All these things continue to help make our village look attractive and a pleasing place to be.

When at full complement, our Parish Council has seven Councillors. Currently, we are but four, with three vacancies.

To legally hold a Parish Council meeting, we must always have three Councillors present otherwise there cannot be a meeting.

Without a meeting, we cannot make decisions to arrange essential maintenance activities for example, street light servicing & repairs, verge cutting, defibrillator checks and non-essential maintenance as those described above.

Without a meeting, we cannot pay the invoices, nor can we respond positively to requests from village groups for support e.g., the Village Hall and Station Adopters.

Equally importantly, with a full complement of Councillors, we would be able to work more effectively for the residents, representing the village's position to Colchester City council in respect of consultations and planning applications, informing them of important 'local knowledge'.

So, we really could do with a bit of help. If you are interested, please contact me, Denise Stocker, in the first instance (details below) and we can have an informal chat about what is involved and introduce you the other Councillors. Being able to welcome new councillors onboard in our next Village Reporter column would be the best Christmas present we could wish for.

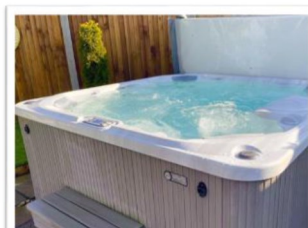
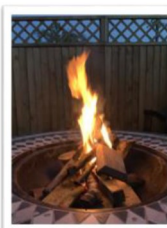
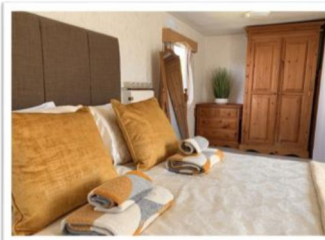
Our next Parish Council meeting will be on **6th December 2023** and our first meeting in the New Year will be on **10th January 2024**. All meetings are at 7.15pm in the Village Hall.

Don't forget that you can access Agendas and Minutes on our website <https://e-voice.org.uk/wakescolne/>

So that just leaves me, on behalf of Wakes Colne Parish Council to wish you all a Merry Christmas and a very, very Happy New Year.

Denise Stocker, Chair, Wakes Colne Parish Council
Chairperson@wakescolne.org

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