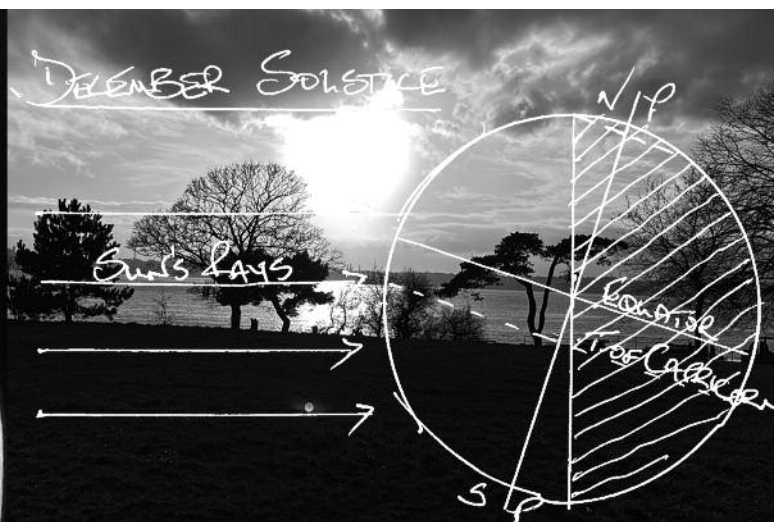


PARISH NEWS

OF THE UPPER WYLYE VALLEY

SEPTEMBER 2026

HONOUR THE SLOWING OF THE YEAR AND FIND
YOUR INNER PEACE



See Angela's article on page 6 to appreciate these drawings.



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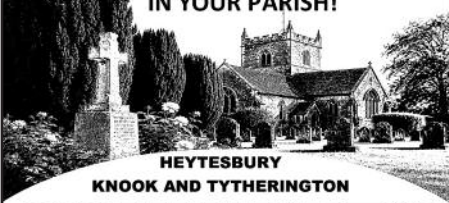
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UPPER WYLYE VALLEY MEN'S FELLOWSHIP BREAKFASTS

Appropriately for our rural benefice, the
autumn season of the Men's Fellowship
Breakfasts starts on Monday 5th October
with an opportunity to hear from Richard
Williamson, who describes himself as a
strategic change maker for land-based
businesses.

Over the last three decades
Richard has held key positions in two of
the UK's leading and most diversified
farming operations, most recently as
Managing Director at Dyson Farming and
previously as Farms Director and share-
holder at Velcourt Ltd. He offers a
multi-dimensional understanding, built on
practical experience, of all aspects of
land-based business, from farming, energy
production and property to supply chains,
technology, innovation, commodities and
consumer-facing projects, and how to
integrate them for the most effective
returns. His insights into the current state
of British agriculture should definitely get
the season off to a thought provoking
start.

The breakfasts take place at The
George Inn, Longbridge Deverill beginning
at 8.15am. The cost is £15, of which £2 will
go towards the charity of the speaker's
choice. Please note, this is not a club, but
is open to all. Just contact the organisers
via email (uwvmfb@gmail.com), before
the preceding Friday at the latest, if you'd
like to attend.

Richard Jackman

PARISH NEWS Editor

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MINISTRY LETTER - OLD AGE IS NOT FOR WIMPS

We don't get to choose how we age. We would prefer to grow old gracefully (though disgracefully might be more fun), with all our faculties in good order. But that's not what happens to most of us. Modern medicine is fantastic; it prolongs life, provides greater comfort from aches and pains, and better health in general. But we all wear out eventually, and for some people, old age is really lonely. Once you relinquish your driving licence (because of poor eyesight, frailty, or expense), your horizons close in.

Progressive deafness is a hazard; it takes the fun out of repartee if you have to guess what is being said, and intimacy is not the same if you have to shout. The outside world fades. It's quite normal to get forgetful, but the likelihood of dementia is one we dread.

My brother's retirement did not go as expected. His carefully-planned adventure around the world came to an abrupt end at Southampton airport when his wife collapsed with a brain tumour. She died three months later. He was diagnosed with

Alzheimer's soon after. He was a doctor so he knew the trajectory, but cheerfully told us that his cancer would 'get him first'. His house was deep in beautiful woodland, two miles from the nearest village, and he was consoled by his love of gardening and a succession of girlfriends. He was always a great charmer, and not short of a joke. Alzheimer's was advancing, and we were sad to see him with his newspaper upside down - until he lowered it with a beaming smile, turned it the right way up and started reading! His life was blessed with the help of a wonderful carer and companion called Christian from Romania, who was studying for a master's degree in gerontology. What a saint!

Have you ever thought how exhausting (and lonely) it must be to care for someone day and night, especially if you are old yourself. Paid carers get days off; family members don't have that privilege. Carers are the key for many old people to maintain their dignity and an independent life without being confined in a care home.

Our villages have a higher than

average number of old people, and many are bereaved. If they live alone, days may pass when they have no-one to talk to. Human beings are social animals. Few of us choose to be on our own 24/7 with no way of getting out of the house and meeting people. They might enjoy your company.

Codford has Thursday coffee mornings with particularly good cake. Goldies 'Sing and Smile' happens once a month on a Wednesday in Codford, alternating fortnightly with the Occasional Singers. Heytesbury church hosts a group called 'Singing for the Brain' on Wednesdays from 2-3pm for old people who like company and for people with dementia. Singing is well-known to help people stay cheerful. Most people enjoy singing folk songs, and favourite numbers range from the music hall to the Beatles. Come along and keep us company.

Katherine Venning

THOUGHT FOR THE MONTH

This is what the Lord says:

"Cursed is the one who trusts in man, who draws strength from mere flesh
and whose heart turns away from the Lord.

That person will be like a bush in the wastelands;

they will not see prosperity when it comes.

They will dwell in the parched places of the desert,

in a salt land where no one lives.

"But blessed is the one who trusts in the Lord,

whose confidence is in him.

They will be like a tree planted by the water

that sends out its roots by the stream.

It does not fear when heat comes;

its leaves are always green.

It has no worries in a year of drought

and never fails to bear fruit." (Jeremiah 17 v5-8)

Robin Hungerford

ARCHDEACON'S LETTER

A Time of Turning

September always brings a change of rhythm. Children and young people head back to school or off to college. Holidays end, routines return, and the light begins, almost imperceptibly, to soften and shorten.

It can be a season of mixed feelings. For some, there is real hope: new classrooms, new opportunities, new beginnings. For others, there is nervousness - a new school, a new job, a step into the unknown. Some of us mourn the passing of long summer evenings and find the turning of the year quietly sorrowful. Others long for the crispness of autumn, the cooler days and fresher nights.

Both responses are honest, and both are welcome. Change can be exciting, full of promise. It can also be disorientating, even painful, carrying its own small grief.

The sixteenth-century saint Ignatius of Loyola encouraged Christians to seek 'God in all things' - not just in church or in prayer, but in the ordinary texture of daily life. Noticing God, for Ignatius, was less about looking for the extraordinary and more about paying attention: to what stirs us, what unsettles us, what draws us closer to life and love.

That practice of attention feels well suited to September. The changing of the seasons, in nature and in our lives, can be a place to notice God. In the dimming evening light and the turning leaves, in anticipation and hope, and equally in anxiety and loss, God is present. The Psalms are full of this same honesty - praise and lament sitting side by side, often in the very same breath.

So perhaps this September, whatever this new season holds for you, it's worth pausing each day to ask, as Ignatius might: where do I see God breaking through today?

Whatever changes around us, we hold to this promise: seasons turn, circumstances shift, but God does not change - and God does not leave us to face the turning alone. This is the heart of the ancient Celtic tradition of prayer, echoed in the ancient breastplate prayer attributed to St Patrick, which speaks of Christ beside us, before us, behind us, beneath us and above us, in every direction and in every moment. Whatever this September holds for you - hope or hesitation, excitement or grief - may you know that same presence: God with you, in all things, every step of the way.

Archdeacon Louise, Archdeacon for Wilts

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TURBO'S DOG BLOG FOR THE HIGHEST SUMMER EVER (in dog years anyway)

It seems absolutely ages since I had to persuade my Guvnor to type up my contribution to the Parish News - and with half the summer gone, it is ages. Quite a lot has happened in my life and as I approach my 14th birthday, I have had a lot of time to lie resting on one bed or another in a cool breeze, with frequent visits to my cool water bowl in the corner to reflect on not just the present but the future, however long or short it might be.

The first thing is to tell you that at last the Guvnor managed his timing right and took me off to the groomer before the heat wave struck. As a result, I was well prepared for the recent, and unprecedented, onset of 30° plus for many days on end. The groomer, on the other hand, got quite sweaty sweeping up half a ton of discarded JRT fur. I was astonished at the timing of this appointment because they usually do this just as a cold snap arrives; an indication to my mind about where I sit on their list of priorities - or my place on the domestic totem pole.

He always tries to be amusing when he comes to collect me; for example, this time he said to the groomer: 'What have you done with

Turbo?' I've never seen this smart dog!' She smiled patiently - and gave him the bill. Ah well, as I say so often, 'It's a dog's life being endlessly embarrassed!'

It has been much too hot to put paws on hot pavements, so we have been on grassy walks early in the morning which the Guvnor does not do happily, or later in the evening which is another thing he is reluctant about. We have managed, as is our wont, and nothing has changed the sacrosanct timings of breakfast and tea meals for the Animal Kingdom here.

I have discovered a new wheeze!

It is to use my age to stand at the back door and whinge to be let out - every 20 minutes at the most inconvenient times I can find in the evenings. It infuriates him, but after 11 pm I simply put my paws together and give him the look that pleads, 'Keeper of our souls, let us see out our days in deep rest and quietude'. I think he gets that nowadays.

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THE BLACK COCKEREL

a haiku by Nat (aged 12)

*Sharp horns crown his head
Piercing look and proud red face
Fierce and devilish.*

*King of the Farmyard,
Beady eyes invite rebels,
His call wakes up all.*

A haiku is a short, unrhymed Japanese poem defined by three main rules: three lines, a 5-7-5 syllable count, and a focus on nature. Nat achieves that in fine style.

Matthew (aged 14) composed a rap.

*Do cockerel in
do field in do middle
of nowhere, yo see.
Cockdoodledoo
it go, it wake everyone
yo see, do yo see.*



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THOUGHTS FROM MY GARDEN

What an amazing summer! My garden has almost no shade in it, making gardening impossible - and sitting out in the garden impossible as well before late evening.

Any gardening had to be done between 6.30 and 9.30am, I'm simply not awake any earlier! And with the added hazard of solid ground that no self-respecting garden fork will penetrate. After that, it's time to find some indoor jobs, and having a siesta has been a good idea. Any gardening has been dead-heading, watering and feeding. I'm sure we've all found our veg. harvest on the small side although courgettes seem to get on with it as long

as they're watered. Bindweed seems to carry on regardless and I guess prairie gardens are now coming into their best. I'm sure I'm not alone in watching garden programmes and reading garden magazines that have been telling us for some time that we need to think of our gardens differently, with a view to global warming. Perhaps I shall now take notice and think more carefully when planning next year's planting. Fewer pots and more drought tolerant plants perhaps.

My son who lives with his family in Dubai, loves coming here for a yearly visit and waxes lyrical about how green everything is - but not this year! I don't want wet summers but a bit of rain would be welcome.

I wrote earlier about the number of bees in the garden and that has continued, but the insect that seems most prolific is the Hummingbird Hawk Moth. Such a

beautiful insect! It migrates from Southern Europe and is so called because it resembles a Hummingbird in flight, it has a long proboscis, and hovers over our Hot Lips Salvias, and any other flowers that have a deep well, to feed. Its eggs have been seen on Red Valerian which is happily self-seeding in many parts of the garden and its green caterpillars feed on Lady's Bedstraw, which I don't have, but I would like to encourage them so I'll get some seeds.

With the school summer holidays over, according to my gardening books we need to think about autumn and how to extend the flowering season. There are a few gaps and I hope I might find something to fill them; school may be back but for those of us not bothered by such things, now tends to be the time we go on holiday. If that's you, enjoy!

Ali Tebbs

DID YOU KNOW? SEASIDE PIERS

If you have been on holiday recently in England and visited the coast, you may have seen or walked along a pier. There are currently approximately 55 surviving seaside piers in England and Wales. Today they are championed and monitored by groups such as the National Piers Society.

Seaside piers originated as functional landing stages for passenger and cargo boats. However, in Victorian times, driven by the rise of railways, piers evolved into pleasure pavilions, featuring arcades, bandstands and theatres. By 1914 there were over 100 seaside piers along the British coast.

The earliest pier in England was Ryde Pier, on the Isle of Wight. It opened in 1814 and was built to handle ferry passengers at low tide. In the mid 19th century, the construction of piers was revolutionised by the use of cast-iron screw piles, which were screwed directly into the seabed, which allowed waves to pass harmlessly underneath, while supporting large numbers of people.

The golden age of pier building peaked in the 1860s, when dozens of decorative piers emerged across the UK, functioning as pleasure palaces, free from the rigid moral codes of mainland Victorian towns. However, by the mid 20th century, holiday habits began to change. Affordable air travel allowed people to enjoy cheaper overseas holidays. This new trend, coupled with high maintenance costs, led to the loss of many of Britain's historic piers.

The longest pier in England can be

found at Southend-on-sea. It is over two thousand metres long. However, the Britannia Pier in Great Yarmouth won the official Pier of the Year Award for 2026. It features a massive amusement arcade, two pubs, a casino and a working summer theatre.

The longest pier in the world can be found in Mexico, Progreso Pier, which is four miles long, but Southend Pier is the world's longest 'pleasure pier'.

Seaside piers remain powerful symbols of British coastal culture and the traditional seaside holiday. They evoke a particular kind of nostalgia, for simpler times. The pier experience, walking on wooden boards over water, playing in amusement arcades, eating fish and chips while watching the sea, has become deeply embedded in British collective memory.

Culturally, piers have inspired countless artists, writers and film makers. Brighton Palace Pier featured heavily in Graham Greene's novel 'Brighton Rock'. Cromer Pier welcomed literary figures like Oscar Wilde, who drew inspiration from the bracing Norfolk air and coastal views. J.M.W Turner painted dramatic Sussex coastal scenes and L.S. Lowry captured holiday crowds and pier-goers during his visits to northern seaside towns.

The well known song 'I do like to be beside the seaside' helps to remind us of the simple pleasures of coastal holidays. Happy holidays everyone!

Jonathan Wansey.



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When I heard that the theme for this edition would be the Equinox, my thoughts immediately went back to days teaching Geography and attempting to draw circles on the board to represent the relationship between the sun and the earth. Sometimes a torch and ball would also come into play. I thought maybe a précis of such a lesson might jog a few memories in others.

The earth's axis, through the North and South poles, around which the earth rotates each day, is tilted. This gives us different seasons during the year as we orbit around the sun, summer when tilted towards the sun and winter when tilted away. It creates the Summer and Winter



Solstices in June and December. I have drawn a diagram of the December Solstice when the sun is overhead at the Tropic of Capricorn and places within the Arctic circle have no daylight. Between the two Solstices are the Equinoxes, in March and September, this year on 23rd September. At these times, the earth is vertical in relation to the sun, meaning that, on

those days, every part of the earth will have 12 hours of daylight and 12 hours of night during the 24hour rotation, hence the name Equinox, equal night. A second diagram shows this.

I am sure many of you will have drawn such diagrams in the past, possibly with wobbly, hand drawn circles....my blackboard versions certainly were. AR

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THE WYLYE ANGLER

We have had one of the hottest summers on record. English chalkstreams like the Wylfe have been managed for centuries to cope with our typical English weather. But this year we seem to be experiencing Mediterranean weather, with at least 4 or 5 heatwaves so far and credible forecasts suggest that this type of summer heat may continue, perhaps changing the way our environment evolves.

Rising temperatures and prolonged heatwaves are pushing ecosystems to their limits. Rivers can suffer shallow summer waters, slow flow rates, and limited bank-side shade which amplify the warming effect. When temperatures exceed critical thresholds, the unique biodiversity of these rivers suffers immediate, severe consequences.

Because water temperature dictates exactly how much oxygen it can hold, cold water is essential. Wild brown trout thrive in water at 15°C and below. Because warmer water holds less dissolved oxygen, it can leave trout severely stressed. At temperatures above 20°C they can experience severe physiological stress, and 25°C can be fatal.

Water temperatures fluctuate during the day and night but for example, on 16th July the water temperature on the river Avon at Durnford reached a worrying 21.4c. As temperatures reach 20°C, angling clubs enforce strict fishing bans to protect the species from exhaustion and fatal stress. Stressed fish stop feeding, abandon spawning grounds, and crowd

into dwindling cool refuges. The Wylfe is fortunate because its temperature remains somewhat lower due to the lateral springs that feed it but it still gets warmer.

Heat stress impacts more than just fish; the damage extends down the food chain. The Wylfe's famous fly hatches, including the iconic mayfly (*Ephemera danica*), freshwater shrimp and caddis species are highly sensitive to temperature. Thermal spikes disrupt their life cycles, causing premature emergence, or killing larvae hidden in the gravel. With fewer insects, the river's entire food web fractures, leaving surviving fish with less food to eat. Additionally, warm, slow-flowing water encourages excessive growth of blanket weed, which smothers the gravel beds needed for autumn spawning. This collapse in the insect population has a knock-on effect, and can create a food problem for birds, amphibians, and fish.

It is not all gloom and doom, however. Many clubs continue to work hard to mitigate climate effects long term; planting native trees like willows and alders along riverbanks creates vital canopy shade. Narrowing over-widened channels increases water depth and accelerates flow, keeping water moving and cooler. Restricting groundwater abstraction during dry spells ensures a steady supply of cool aquifer water and leaving fallen logs in the river creates deep, shaded pools where fish can escape

the heat. We British are famous for moaning about the weather, how wet and miserable it can be, very little sun and awful summer...but be careful what you wish for!

MT



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DOWN ON THE FARM

The subject cannot be avoided, the weather!

Harvest completed the earliest ever in the 90 years we have farmed here, the corn a disappointing 30% down from an average year, good weight in the grain virtually nothing of it though. The barley the same but a reasonable amount of straw. Spring barley in the same position and the rape down by 30-40% and we are seriously considering if it's worth planting it for next year. We are running out of time to do so and with the ground so dry the chances of germination low and the risk of being eaten by bugs extremely high.

The beans are the next crop but look equally dismal and as for the maize which is so stressed and is almost going backwards meaning there are those who are already cutting it which is far too early. We are thinking there will be fields with no cobs, devastating as a major feed for us. Fortunately, we have enough from last year's crop to feed until December.

We will not be cutting any more grass as nothing to cut. We have enough to feed the cows for the winter but nothing for the heifers (young cows). We have our own straw but are buying every bale we can. We use our own wheat to feed the cows and had hoped to have some to sell but every grain will be used for feed as feed prices are shooting through the roof

as there is no spare to sell.

The cows are so stressed from the heat. Happier in the barns as no grass in the fields and exposed to the heat and flies whereas in the barns it is cooler with some fans; a new huge investment of a fan system is waiting to be installed and we have provided a shower system for the cows to keep them cool, they love it!

One of the biggest concerns is the drop in fertility, the heat is affecting pregnancy and will have a knock-on effect with calf numbers and when they are born. So where do we go from here?.....

The conditions are having a huge knock-on to all areas. Getting hold of grass seed is challenging, and we may not plant

oil seed rape; plenty of farmers are talking about not putting wheat in the ground because of the dry conditions and the price of nitrogen let alone being to get it.

The ground conditions also have an impact on wearing metals as they are being destroyed in the hard ground. Robert wore a set of points out on the cultivator working 70 acres, should last for 200 acres; looks like the plough will have to be dusted off.

It's all things to consider and an opportunity to look at alternative crops that can manage these drought conditions and supply a crop that grows down on the farm.

Kit Pottow

BIG SLEEP

On the evening of Friday 26th June through to Saturday morning, 120 of us gathered to sleep out in the grounds of St Paul's Cathedral as an act of solidarity with the many who sleep rough every night. Our aim was to help homeless veterans by raising funds and to increase awareness of their dreadful situation.

The numbers are sobering - in London alone 13,231 people slept rough last year with 7,500 veterans homeless in the UK. Thus, every night thousands of people go to sleep without safety, warmth, or support. Alabaré works across the Southwest and Wales to change that.

As a Trustee of Alabaré I signed up early on and was soon followed by my wife Kim and Henry Collins from Codford. In addition, a family group representing the late Brigadier Simon Firth CBE signed up to be 'Big Sleepers'. Simon who lived in Codford was an extremely active Patron of Alabaré and was tireless in promoting its work. So there was a strong team linked with the Benefice sleeping out to support this amazing event.

The evening started with Choral Evensong followed by a concert and service of remembrance with the Salisbury Plain Military Wives Choir and The British Imperial Military Band. We also heard stories from some ex-veterans whose lives had taken a bad turn but who with the help of Alabaré were back in control, had jobs and were leading more stable lives. We 'Big Sleepers' turned in after a hot drink and slept fitfully until 0400 when we woke up to the rumble of thunder and heavy rain. Many of us ran for shelter under the trees but a few decided to hang on in the hope of staying reasonably dry in their plastic bivvy bags with varying degrees of success! Thanks to the superb support team, we each had a hot drink, a

Danish and an opportunity to exchange experiences and thoughts. The whole atmosphere was extremely positive with a clear recognition that what we had experienced in this one night was nothing compared to what many must suffer every night.

Our sincere thanks to all who have supported this event through your generous donations to our Just Giving pages. So far the total amount raised to help Alabaré with its vital work of supporting homeless veterans through this event is £105,597.

The Just Giving pages will remain active for a while so if you or anyone you know who hasn't contributed to this aspect of Alabaré's vital work feels moved to do so; a donation would be greatly appreciated, visit justgiving.com/phil-sutton. Thankyou. *Phil Sutton*

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VILLAGE NEWS

CODFORD COMMUNITY KEY EVENTS SEPTEMBER 2026

2nd Film night 'The devil wears Prada 2', Woolstore theatre 7.30pm
4th Fishy Friday menu at Codford tea rooms 5.30pm
6th Live music 'Dubious brothers', Codford tea rooms 1.30pm
9th Ladies circle talk on Hadrian's wall, Codford village hall 3.00pm
11th All you can eat menu at Codford tea rooms 5.30pm onwards
12th Free drama workshop, Woolstore theatre 10.30am
12th Screen on the green showing 'Hoppers and Grease', Codford village hall grounds 2pm onwards
13th Codford community park run, Codford village hall grounds 10.00am
16th Codford & District gardening club talk, Codford village hall 7.30pm
17th/18th Autumn production 'Winner takes all', Woolstore theatre 7.30pm
19th Step back in time menu at Codford tea rooms 5.30pm
20th Monthly drinks at the Woolstore theatre 12.00 noon
20th Monthly arts and crafts market, Ginger piggery, Boyton 10am
25th Burger night menu at Codford tea rooms 5.30pm
26th Free drama workshop, Woolstore theatre 10.30am

ST PETER'S CHURCH CLOCK STRIKES AGAIN

It's rewarding to be made to realise how many people react positively to the striking of the clock of Codford St Peter. But the same people also react - rightly and appropriately - when the clock fails to perform as it should. Which has been the case during the past fortnight. At first it was merely an hour adrift; but then, sensing this wasn't an adequate display of character, it emitted a series of groans and stopped altogether.

All now seems to be well - I know I'll be told soon enough if not. The clock has suffered the same problem as the rest of us - it hates the heat. When the barrels expand by more than a few millimetres in diameter, they lose the ability to drive the adjacent gears correctly, with the result that time either accelerates or stops. Add a misbehaving sprocket (lovely word, sprocket!) and you have a recipe for chaos.

Thank you for bearing with us during this difficult period. Perhaps someone will run a sweepstake on how long our lovely 200-year old clock will perform faultlessly. But don't ask me to chance my arm -

Anthony Bainbridge

IT'S BEEN A SCORCHER OF A SUMMER ...

Unless you've been hiding under a rock, you'll have noticed it's been a scorcher of a summer so far. I'm not normally one to complain about sunny weather, but it has made walking dogs a bit of a challenge. We're all heading out first thing in the morning, seeking shade from the blazing sun and water for a quick dip to cool down. I've found myself taking walks I wouldn't usually take, heading to the woods for example. I do love a big view and so walking in the trees has never been my first choice, but I've found a new joy in the cool, dapple green of the tree canopy and the beams of light that dance as we're walking along. The dogs love it of course, so many smells to find and undergrowth to rootle about in. We've also spent some time on the riverbank between Wylve and Fisherton, taking a lazy stroll along the path. We were even treated to a swim-past by 5 cygnets and their feisty protective parents one morning.

On a serious note, it really is important not to walk your dog when the temperature is so high. There is a useful chart here

<https://www.poochandmutt.co.uk/blogs/lifestyle/when-is-it-too-hot-to-walk-your-dog>.

As a general guide (it does depend on breed, age and health of your dog) anything above 24C is deemed too hot and 28C and above can be life threatening. Try and walk first thing in the morning or much later in the evening. Lunchtime and afternoons have been far too hot to walk - I've just been providing home visits for any clients after 9.30am! No dog ever died from missing a walk, they may give you 'that' look but it really is better safe than sorry.

Emma, Wylve Valley Walkies

CODFORD AND DISTRICT GARDENING CLUB

Our second outing of the summer was to Corsley House gardens, near Warminster. The afternoon was not as hot as some we have had this summer so we all had a wonderful hour or two wandering around the gardens finishing with a mug of tea and a piece of delicious cake!

The house is looking out over an amazing 'wavy' lawn - it is suffering from the dry summer, but we were all intrigued and could imagine what fun small children would have had running up and down the mini hills! Not only are the gardens filled with unusual and beautifully cared for plants, shrubs and vegetables but there is a great feeling of fun and innovation

everywhere. We were well looked after and given an excellent introduction by the Head

Gardener, Jo Downes, followed by our tour of the gardens guided by Annelies, one of her gardeners.

'J' Claypoole

CODFORD VILLAGE HALL ACTIVITIES

Tue: Pilates & short mat bowls.

Wed: Pilates, Choir, Fit club.

Thurs: Community café, Happy hearts, Clubercise and Badminton.

To find the Codford community website, type "Codfordcommunity.co.uk" into your search bar to access the website. There you will find various useful and informative content

A WEEK OF PIRATES, FRIENDSHIP AND FUN

Last week we had the pleasure of attending the end-of-camp production at the Wylve Valley Disabled Children's Camp. Since 1970, this wonderful local charity has given disabled children the opportunity to enjoy a week-long camping holiday filled with adventure, friendship, independence and fun, away from their usual routines and carers.

We were amazed by the scale of what the volunteers achieve. The camp welcomes 14 children each year and offers a packed programme of activities, including horse riding, visits to local attractions, games, crafts and entertainment, all made possible through the dedication of a committed team of volunteers.

This year's pirate-themed camp ended with a fantastic showcase of the children's creativity. From artwork and decorations to original sea shanties they had written and performed themselves, their enthusiasm, confidence and sense of achievement shone through. What stood out most was the warm family atmosphere, created by volunteers of all ages who return year after year because they believe so strongly in the camp's mission.

Most importantly, it was inspiring to see the children enjoying themselves so fully, making new friends and growing in confidence and independence. The Wylve Valley Disabled Children's Camp makes a real difference to local families and relies entirely on charitable donations and volunteer support. Having seen its impact first-hand, we can wholeheartedly recommend supporting this extraordinary local charity. If you would like to learn more about the charity, volunteer, or make a donation, please visit the Wylve Valley Disabled Children's Camp website.

VILLAGE NEWS

HEYTESBURY HAPPENINGS

As I write I can see a patch of yellow straw that calls itself my lawn. My sympathy goes to our farmers who are having a tough time.

However, the weeds are flourishing and, in the prolonged absence of our Parish Steward, the Parish Council is extremely grateful to those individuals who can be seen 'doing their bit' around the village. Thanks go to Michael Davies and Archie Bligdon who did a wonderful job of clearing all the weeds from the front of the church on a hot morning. Some parish councillors have been seen attacking the brambles with secateurs or wielding a hoe to clear the High Street, and several residents rallied to the cause when the road sweeper visited.

Councillors Dave Bond and Andrew Kennedy have been cleaning and re-etching the names on the War Memorial. They have done an amazing job, as it looks very smart. The new roses look wonderful due to Amelia Jackson, Maureen Saunders and Penny Atkin-Berry regularly watering them. Thank you to everyone. A new Parish Steward will be seen in the village again soon.

We remember former Parish Councillor and member of the clergy, Rev. Anne Bennett-Shaw (1938-2026) who died recently after a long illness. She lived in Tytherington before moving into the Hospital of St John and was a familiar figure in our villages. Rest in Peace.

There still has not been a decision by Wiltshire Council on the Planning Application to build 9 Houses South of Park Street. Apparently, they have requested that the applicant provide further information on drainage and ecology.

Now, a comment on the everlasting subject of dog excrement. Our village footpaths, especially along the riverbank to the Mill, are NOT a canine toilet. Please pick it up and dispose into the bins.

Finally, do support the free Heytesbury Community Showcase in the church on Saturday 5th September, 2.00 - 4.00pm. If you are new to the village then this is your chance to find out more about what, who and when make up the community framework. If you think you know already you might be surprised at the variety on offer, and it is an opportunity to chat with your fellow residents over a cup of tea. We hope to see you there.

The next meeting of the Parish Council will be at 7.00pm in the St John's Residents Hall on Tuesday 29th September.

SB

NEWS FROM HEYTESBURY C of E PRIMARY SCHOOL

Gosh, what a hot month it was, but this has not stopped us in school!

Cherry Class, our YR/Y1/Y2 children, have been busy with 3 trips out of school. They enjoyed a walk at Heaven's Gate where they looked for and found many signs of summer, and created beautiful flower crowns. The children also took part in the West Wiltshire KS1 Dance Festival, performing a dance inspired by the book 'The lion who wanted to love' at the Bath Forum to a packed audience. The children gave a wonderful performance and did themselves and the school proud. In addition to all of this they were lucky enough to take a trip to Palette and Pasture where they learned about many different aspects of how the farm operates, and had a fantastic time making ice-cream.

It is very important to us in school that our wider curriculum provides opportunities and experiences that support our children's personal growth, and we have undertaken a number of activities this month to contribute towards this. We had a whole school day out at Thoulstone Park supported by the Wiltshire Outdoor Learning Team, where the children get to experience archery, a variety of team-building games and activities, and

the climb and clamber challenge. The focus of the day was for children to live out some of our school values, in particular courage and resilience, and the children did this in abundance which was amazing to see. This week we had the pleasure of a visit from Paul Sturgess, a former professional basketball player who is also the tallest ever basketball player and tallest person currently in the UK as he stands over 7 feet 7 inches tall! As well as showing off and coaching the children in a number of basketball skills and tricks, he shared a very powerful message of using one's individual differences as a means to excel and as something to celebrate. We were all blown away by Paul.

We also took part in an Explore Trinity event, kindly put on for us at Heytesbury Church by the church community and team vicar. Through this the children engaged with and learnt about the complex concept of the Holy Trinity. As part of our programme of personal growth for children we support their spiritual development, and this session provided a wonderful opportunity for reflection and deep thinking.

We are particularly excited that we will have more children joining us in September than we have leaving us in July, and we hope that 2026-27 continues as a period of growth for us.

Lindsey Hermon, Headteacher

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HEYTESBURY CHURCH

We are finally starting the project to install two Herschel Halo Infrared chandeliers in the Chancel of the church. It has been a long process involving consultation with various organisations and suppliers, but we have taken the first step which is the installation of three phase electrical supply to the church. The chandeliers have been ordered, and B E Services Ltd is doing the complicated

cabling. WiFi is being installed in the church to enable us to control the heating system remotely!! Thank you to various individuals who donated to the project, The Friends of Heytesbury, Tytherington and Knook and the grant organisations, Community First, Net Zero Carbon Quick Win (Salisbury Diocese) and Wiltshire Historic Churches Trust.

GARDEN PARTY AT ST JOHN'S HOSPITAL

On Saturday 25th July, a Garden Party was held in the grounds of St John's. This was organised by the Residents Social Committee and was considered a great success, and the fantastic sum of £673 was raised for Salisbury Hospice.

The idea behind this was to invite villagers from Heytesbury and surrounding villages to come into the grounds of St John's and see for themselves the beautiful gardens and allotments where some of the residents grow flowers and vegetables. Also to be seen were beehives, wildflower areas, garden benches, and a wildlife pond. A villager was heard to say "I had no idea there was all this here!"

On the day, there was a Pottery demonstration by the White Horse Pottery in Westbury, an exhibition beehive and honey for sale from the bees at St John's, several local craft stalls, animal portraits for sale, art work painted by some of the residents from the Art lessons taught by one of St John's trustees, and an information board about the history of St John's and other almshouses in the area.

There were savoury snacks, cakes, cream teas and strawberries and cream for sale, with an endless supply of teas, coffees and soft drinks, and also a raffle for a Summer Hamper, containing many savoury and sweet items and a bottle of wine. One of our Heytesbury villagers was lucky enough to win this prize.

It was amazing to see the number of people who turned up on the day, and the Committee would like to thank the villagers and residents and everyone else for supporting this new venture.

*Linda Pictor, Treasurer
St John's Residents Social Committee*

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SHERRINGTON

August and the relentless heat burns on. I have enjoyed early(ish) walks albeit short ones, evenings in the garden, the balm of the trees. I love the lime tree that overhangs the kissing gate at the end of Parsons Path. However, a cruel summer for wildlife, the environment and farming. Instead of a litany of disaster I offer an account of a period in life when, under the aegis of Nigel, I had a brush with falconry. It is rather long, so may appear in halves or even thirds. I hope it may be of interest.

The Kestrel's Tail

I hunched into my jacket and turned up the collar against a pick pocket breeze. Behind me the sky had lightened, to my right the land sloped up to a sprawling wood and rooks tumbled away with raucous voices as they launched for a days foraging. What on earth was I doing I asked myself at this hour in the early autumn trudging along a hedge line swinging a lure on a length of string? Suddenly movement to my left, a bird had landed in an ash tree set in the ragged hedge line. My heart missed a beat and I knew exactly why I was there. A year or two before I had read a book 'As the Falcon Her Bells', written by Phillip Glazier. I was fascinated by the thought of setting out with a dog and a trained falcon on my gloved wrist. A bird of prey is never a pet, a look at the imperious turn of the head and the full wild eye that rakes the landscape tells us that, but perhaps one could hope for a partnership.

Nigel had some experience of falconry and he encouraged me. To that end he acquired a male Kestrel from a bird hospital that needed to be rehabilitated, a modest beginning but quite taxing enough for me. Charlie, as we named him, had recovered from a wing injury. He was given to us on condition that he would be hacked back to the wild. Alymeri anklets and jesses fitted and I was able to begin the manning process. Charlie had to realise that my glove was the best place to be, so he had to take all his food from me on the glove. It seemed that I sat for hours in the garden tempting him with morsels of meat. The thrill when he finally lowered his head and picked at it! There was a complication to overcome. Charlie had rebelled against capture and during his convalescence had hurled himself against the wire of the aviary and by so doing had severed his tail feathers. If he wanted to begin to fly, then he had to have a tail!

At one time Nigel had flown a Sparrowhawk and when she had broken a tail feather he had 'imped' in a replacement. Would it be possible to replace a complete tail? In a box of feathers was a complete set of tail feathers from a dead Kestrel albeit female ones! The operating theatre was set out on the kitchen table. I held Charlie gently down on a cushion. His new tail was set out in the correct order. To cause the minimum stress we had to work fast. The shattered quills were levelled off leaving the opened shaft. One by one the new feathers were dipped in glue and inserted into the appropriate shaft; the whole operation took under half an hour! I could not believe it was over. I walked round the garden with my beautiful little falcon complete with tail. I must explain at this point that when the moult takes place the new tail feathers grow down the shafts and in so doing push out the false feathers so that eventually he regained the full beautiful slate tail of the male Kestrel.

Further experiences of Charlie and me to follow next month

Betty Lewis

UPTON LOVELL

I am sure you have attended one of the many Fetes that have taken place over the Summer. The work that goes into the organising the event, designing, laminating and distributing flyers, not to mention remembering where they are in order to remove them afterwards is huge. If you had the time and the energy you could have attended one a week for at least 6 weeks and three on the day of the Upton Lovell one, without travelling out of the Wylve valley.

The Upton Lovell fete took place on a glorious day in July and included the ubiquitous dog show - most handsome dog, (we went to France so that my hound did not sweep the board) dog most like its owner, best child handler etc. Judges beware, the offence caused by not choosing a favoured pooch can be lasting. The Tug of War teams fielded by the Vicars and The Band, cream teas, ice-creams, bric-a-brac, books, coconut shy, bottle store, whack the rat, the Bratton brass band, a plant stall, plus the Leo running a beer tent. Alarming the most popular with the men, apart from the bar, was crock smashing, such a satisfying noise! The event raised over £3000 Thank you all for attending and organising.

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WORSHIP in the UPPER WYLYE VALLEY SEPTEMBER 2026

SEPTEMBER 5 Trinity 14	Norton Bavant Codford St Peter Heytesbury Upton Lovell	9.30am 11.00am 11.00am 6.00pm	BCP Communion + hymns Parish Communion Sunday Worship Evensong (BCP)	choir
September 13 Trinity 15	Tytherington Sutton Veny Upton Lovell Heytesbury Codford St Mary	8.30am 9.30am 9.30am 11.00am 6.00pm	Holy Communion (BCP) Parish Communion Celtic Morning Prayer Harvest Sunday Worship Evensong (BCP)	choir
September 20 Trinity 16	Boyton Codford St Peter Upton Lovell Sutton Veny Sherrington	9.30am 9.30am 11.00am 11.00am 6.00pm	Harvest Sunday Worship Morning Prayer on Sunday Parish Communion Matins (BCP) Patronal and Harvest Festival	choir
September 27 Trinity 17	Sutton Veny Codford St Mary Knook Heytesbury	8.30am 9.30am 11.00am 6.00pm	Holy Communion (BCP) Morning Prayer on Sunday Parish Communion Evensong (BCP)	choir

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Congratulations to

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Lucy Waters and Christian Files
on 20 June in Sutton Veny

Poppy Hindle and Stuart Brightmore
on 20 June in Boyton.

**Evangeline Cronchley and
Joshua Vickers**
on 27 June at St Mary's, Codford.

*May they have many
happy years of married life together*

Baptisms

We welcome into the Christian Church

**Sarah Katharine Brown
& Hannah Claire Brown**

on Sunday 5th July in Heytesbury.
May they grow in the Christian Faith

Funerals and Burial of ashes

*Our sympathy and love to those
who mourn the passing of*

Henry James Corp

on 6 July at Tytherington

David Delius

on 6 July at St Mary's, Codford

Alan & Sue Parker

on 3 July at Sutton Veny.

*May they rest in the peace
and light of Christ*

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jonathan.hiscox@btinternet.com

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Barbara Luscombe LLM 840830
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