

PARISH NEWS

OF THE UPPER WYLYE VALLEY

OCTOBER 2026

AUTUMN...THE YEAR'S LAST, LOVELIEST SMILE." ~

WILLIAM CULLEN BRYANT



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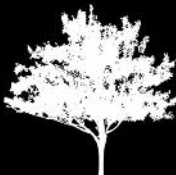
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UPPER WYLYE VALLEY MEN'S FELLOWSHIP BREAKFASTS

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..

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*



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MINISTRY LETTER

I expect most would agree that 2026 has been unprecedented given the very wet winter followed by a dry spring and several extreme heat waves.

Farmers are often accused of never being happy with the weather, and there is an old poem written during the depression of the 1930s to that effect:

'The farmer will never be happy again,
He carries his heart in his boots,
For either the rain is destroying his grain,
Or the drought is destroying his roots.'

I have always felt that we enjoy a benign maritime climate in the UK and it is just the weather we have to work round. After this summer I am beginning to re-think this assumption. Is this the new normal - very wet winters and hot dry summers and more frequent extreme weather events? Only time will tell but already we are being told to prepare for the next El Niño. So how do we respond? Most farmers are trying to be more resilient by building up soil organic matter and generally farming better. But without rain we still have a problem.

In the bible there are many references to farming, sowing and climate. In Deuteronomy we read of God's abundant provision for the Israelites as they are brought into the good land - 'a land with brooks, streams, and deep springs gushing out into the valleys and hills; a land with wheat and barley, vines and fig trees, pomegranates, olive oil and honey; a land where bread will not be scarce and you will lack nothing'. But God also warns them not to forget Him and to keep his commandments and decrees to avoid them becoming proud of their achievements. So when the Israelites do forget God, we also read laments for their plight when, for example, locusts eat their crops. Today, despite bad harvests around the world and more challenges with climate change, we can be hopeful. In John's gospel one of the most well-known verses says: 'For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life'. We think this verse just means people, us, but the Greek word translates as cosmos so it

actually means whole world/universe. This gives a bigger picture, God loves the entire universe that he created. And the challenge for us is simple; in the words of Archbishop Tutu, we need to 'love the world as much as God does'. By taking this on board we can, with God's guidance, learn how to look after our world better, and if that feels too difficult we can all look to our neighbour's needs, care for others and share our harvests with those who are hungry.

Henry Collins

THOUGHT FOR THE MONTH

Jesus answered the woman "Everyone who drinks this water [of Jacob's well] will be thirsty again, but whoever drinks the water I give them will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give them will become in them a spring of water welling up to eternal life. (Jeremiah 17 v5-8)

Robin Hungerford

'It's not that the Christian faith has been tried and found difficult, but rather it's been found difficult and left untried'.

GK Chesterton

ST JOHN'S HOSPITAL GARDEN PARTY

On Saturday 25th July, a Garden Party was held in the grounds of St John's Hospital in Heytesbury. It was decided that all the money raised from this event was to be donated to the Salisbury Hospice Charity, in memory of one of St John's residents, Maureen Philbert. Maureen and her twin sister Muriel were fondly known as "The Twins", and have both lived at St John's for several years. Maureen sadly died at the Hospice in May, and is greatly missed by everyone at St John's.

Katie Jackson, a representative

from the Salisbury Hospice Charity, attended a recent coffee morning held at St John's, and Muriel was so pleased to be able to present Katie with a cheque for £1,000, consisting of the Garden Party donation, St John's Lunch Club donation and several other donations all contributing to this amazing sum of money.

Katie added, "We are extremely thankful to the residents of St John's for this generous support and all their efforts in organising a successful Garden Party in aid of Salisbury Hospice. The money will be put to excellent use supporting patients and their families who are helped by our services."



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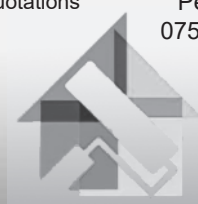
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TURBO'S DOG BLOG FOR THE HIGHEST SUMMER EVER (in dog years anyway)

The 'dog days of summer', and leading as they do in, into the leafy and cooler ones of autumn, have reminded me today of my mortality, or is it caninity? And why, you ask? Because both the Guvnor and I have had a birthday in the last ten days; his was a massive one, not only because for any 80-year-old it is not just a celebration but a target to be reached - an achievement. In his case, one of a number he has set himself. What he does not fully appreciate in his self-centred mission is that my own goal is equally large, if not more so. I have been banished to the schoolroom to write this on my 14th birthday, and as little has been made of it so far, all I may receive in recognition will be an extra half scoop of biscuits for my tea. Fair enough; frankly, all I need really would be a full scoop, or two!

You see, I am 98 today which is a triumph in anybody's book. The trouble with living in this household is that any so-called success that I have is belittled and I will reveal what happened this time at the end of my piece.

Meanwhile, I try to remind him often that one of the upsides of being an elderly dog (and in the autumn of life) is that the age-old saying 'you cannot teach an old dog new tricks' is incorrect. For example, he keeps removing me from his favourite chair, indicating that if he keeps doing it, I will remember. In his so-called 'wisdom', he forgets that it works the other way round too; I have found the best spot and, in my wisdom, why change

a new habit? It has now become a matter of who gets there first and my four legs usually win against his two.

I promised to reveal his coup de grace which entails his revelation that a new algorithm shows the seven-year correlation to human years is invalid; I am, he insists, only 72! Hurrah, I bark at him, I have a lot of living to do, so who is Peter Pan or even Peter Paw now? The last laugh is on me. Hah!

WORD WEAVERS

We have recently had our fifth monthly meeting at the Tea Rooms in Codford and hope that a few others may want to consider joining our small group. We meet to enjoy the fun and creativity of writing: it may be prose or poetry, short or extended, comic or serious, thoughtful or frivolous...Anything goes.

Being a small band, our meetings are very democratic - any of us can make suggestions for our writing exercises and we all get an opportunity to share our

creativity and the world of our imaginations. Meetings last about an hour and a half and naturally our activities include treating ourselves to Tea Room refreshments.

If you enjoy writing and would like to try us out, please contact Charlotte Mozley on 01985 851 099. Our next meeting will be on Wednesday 30th September at 10.30am in the Codford Tea Rooms.

The poem below was written by one of our members.

IDLE WORMS

Writing is easy, they say: just open a vein and bleed,
but my hand had not held a pen for many months
and so I used the nib to prick my fingertip
and watched as Mercutio's round little worms
spilled across the page.

They lay lacklustre, void of purpose;
listless squiggles refusing to take form.

I did my best to coax them into words,
tried to shape them into language with a pulse
and when that didn't work, I gripped the pen
and crushed their idle bodies, smeared their remnants,
because you can edit a bad page, they say—
but not a blank one.

S.A. Spencer

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THOUGHTS FROM MY GARDEN

Isn't nature wonderful! I've been sitting in my garden early this morning and enjoying the peace and quiet with just the sounds of a few birds waking. I'm listening to the gentle sound of water whilst the solar pump gets to work as the sun creeps over the garden fence and onto the solar pad that operates the little fountain close to me. You have to remember that I'm writing this in early September! As the sun lifts the light I can still see lots of colour in the garden.

In fact the small amount of rain we have had has already had a dramatic effect on the plants. The lawn is showing signs of recovery although there are a couple of very bare patches which might need re-seeding; time will tell.

We all used to think of October as a time for putting the garden to bed, but with the extending hot weather that is no longer the case. I have an Hibiscus in full flower, Dahlias and of course Geraniums and Pelargoniums, all looking wonderful and with the sun lower in the sky the colours are reflected and

enhanced. I also have a miniature Buddleia in a pot and I did wonder if it was ever going to flower this year but there it is, covered in strong blue flowers and providing late nectar for so many bees and hoverflies.

We will have to look at more draught tolerant plants and veg for next year and I'm sure our gardening magazines are going to give us plenty of advice once we are forced indoors by the weather to sit and read what to do. I have been given a fig tree for my birthday by my son who lives in Australia and as yet I'm not sure where to plant it. I know it likes a sunny spot and its roots restricted but all our sunny walls are already covered! I have also bought more bulbs for the spring: something I always tell myself not to do, as there are already so many making my spring garden very colourful. Making holes in the soil to plant them will have to wait

until we've had plenty of rain as the ground is impossibly hard at the moment. Much of the summer has been too hot for me, so I've had to retreat indoors more than I would have liked but change is coming and there will be plenty to do!

Ali Tebbs

Darren Ashley Gardening and Handyman

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DID YOU KNOW? THE BAYEUX TAPESTRY

For the first time since it was made nearly 1,000 years ago, the Bayeux Tapestry has returned to England. This extraordinary 70 metre tapestry is being loaned to the British Museum from 10th September 2026 until 11th July 2027. I wonder if you have booked tickets to see it?

Two initial points of interest are that it almost certainly was not made in Bayeux and it is not technically a tapestry. Most scholars believe that it was probably made in or around Canterbury in England, having been commissioned by Bishop Odo of Bayeux in the 1070s. It probably took between two and five years to make. This incredible artwork is in fact an embroidery, not a tapestry. True tapestries are woven on a loom, but the Bayeux tapestry features coloured woollen yarn, which is stitched by hand onto plain linen strips of cloth.

The Bayeux Tapestry depicts the period from 1064 to 1066, when the English throne passed from Edward the Confessor to Harold Godwinson, and then to William the Conqueror, following the Norman Conquest. Although the end of the embroidery is missing, the story ends with the Anglo-Saxons fleeing at the end of the Battle of Hastings.

I expect many of us remember studying this period of history at school. We were often taught that Harold was killed at the Battle of Hastings by an arrow that struck him in the eye. It now seems that the arrow was possibly a later addition and that he was actually killed by a sword.

There are 58 scenes depicted in the tapestry featuring 627 figures of men, but only 6 women. There are 737 animals, 37 ships, 33 buildings and 23 trees. The tapestry gives a fascinating insight into so many aspects of life in the 11th century. It is a unique visual source depicting the events that sparked the Norman Conquest of England. This was one of the most significant events in British history.

France is the legal owner of the Bayeux Tapestry and it has been housed in Normandy for over 900 years. Its return on loan to England in July is, therefore, the first time it has crossed the channel for nearly 1000 years.

The tapestry is considered to be priceless and of course, will never be sold. Tickets to see it at the British Museum are selling fast. Good luck!

Jonathan Wansey.



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WHAT IF YOU ONLY NEEDED FIVE MINUTES?

You know you should probably do a bit more exercise. The trouble is, 'doing more exercise' has somehow come to mean joining a gym, buying Lycra, sweating enthusiastically for an hour and doing alarming things with kettlebells while someone half your age shouts encouragement.

So perhaps you walk instead. You garden. You keep busy. And that's certainly better than sitting on the sofa. But gradually, little things can start to change. Getting up from a low chair takes a bit more effort. Carrying something heavy feels heavier than it used to. You think twice about getting down on the floor because, frankly, you've got to get back up again. Stairs become something to endure rather than bound up.

None of this happens overnight. That's the problem. We lose strength gradually enough that we can simply

adjust our lives around it. But strength matters enormously as we get older. It helps us keep doing the things we actually care about - walking, gardening, travelling, playing with grandchildren, carrying our own shopping and remaining physically independent.

The good news is that doing something about it doesn't have to take over your life. In fact, forget the hour-long workout. Start with five minutes.

Try this at home. Sit down on a dining chair and stand back up five times. Rest for a moment. Put your hands against the kitchen worktop and do five gentle press-ups. Then walk briskly around the house or garden for a couple of minutes. That's it. It won't turn you into an Olympic athlete. But that isn't the point.

The first goal is simply to remind your body that you expect it to remain useful. Do a little today. Do it again tomorrow. As it becomes easier, do slightly more. Because the best exercise programme isn't necessarily the cleverest one. It's the one you actually do.

The five minutes you do is considerably more useful than the hour-long workout you keep meaning to start on Monday.

Hadrian Howard is a fitness coach based in Upton Lovell and runs Strength for Life, helping local people build and maintain strength, fitness and physical confidence through simple, manageable exercise. You can find out more at www.strengthforlife.training or contact Hadrian on 07401 69061

THE WYLYE ANGLER

Have you ever seen a Grayling?

Most people think that chalkstream fly fishermen only catch brown trout. But they have another quarry that many people have never heard of, a distinctive and very ancient fish called the European Grayling. It is a slender fish that has a striking beauty unlike any other species. With sleek dark lined, greyish-silver sides, its most recognisable feature is an exaggerated, sail-like dorsal fin, which is a beautiful dappled, deep purple colour. Grayling probably colonised our rivers when Britain was still connected to continental Europe by the North Sea land bridge, about 12,000 years ago. It thrives in our chalkstreams and it's hardly surprising that such a beautiful fish has different names and legends. It is often called 'The Lady of the Stream', although in older English and French it was rather enchantingly called the 'Umber', from the Latin word for shadow, owing to its ghostly ability to disappear by blending into the stream bed, which makes spotting grayling in the river rather difficult, and the reason so few people know what they look like!

It is also a rather odd fish. Although now fully accepted as a game fish, grayling spawn at a time closer to coarse fish, typically in April or May, whereas brown trout spawn generally between October and March depending on location. Grayling are a real indicator of good water quality, they need clean and healthy gravels to spawn, and that luxurious fin appears to have a function in this, as the males actually drape it over their partners! Sleek and perfectly adapted to swift flowing cold water, the grayling is a delicate and short-lived fish that had no protection whatsoever until 1977, when a small group of game fishermen formed The Grayling Society, which now protects and represents the grayling as a true, wild, game fish.

One of the joys of grayling fishing is that they will not only willingly take a surface or sunk fly when conditions allow but also will respond to coarse fishing methods using bait such as worm, maggot and sweetcorn. They fight strongly when hooked and use that massive dorsal fin in the current to try and escape before being

gently released in the water to fight another day.

Their defence strategy is 'safety in numbers', so they tend to congregate in shoals and average about 12 to 15 inches. Unlike other native salmonids, they have an unusual scent that smells like thyme, which is where their scientific name *Thymallus thymallus* comes from.

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DOWN ON THE FARM

Autumn means the drilling (planting) season and for us to plant the crops the ground needs to be prepared.

Why do we cultivate? To get good soil conditions for germination, seed to soil contact is crucial. It aids for good conditions for the roots to go down deep and the plant to go up. A wheat plant can easily put roots down 2 meters even on chalk ground.

Different plants need different drilling depths. Oil seed rape and grass need to be just under the surface; wheat will be planted at minimum 5cms which helps avoid slugs. Maize 7cms, partly to stop crows and rooks eating it, they love it!

Traditionally we ploughed everything, which is slow and expensive, but it has advantages, such as burying seeds a long way down, for example black grass (our nemesis) is difficult to kill and is a huge reduction to yield in wheat. Plough black grass 15cms down 60% will die and not germinate before the next crop. This reduces reliance on expensive selective herbicides and that at the same time helps reduce resistance to the chemical building.

We nearly always plough after grass because of compaction from trailers going over the ground during silaging etc.

Almost all other crops we will minimally cultivate, ideally and depending on the weather we cultivate the stubble of

the preceding crop, we will let all the seeds on the surface germinate and then use a non-selective herbicide to kill everything before we plant the crop.

Reducing the green bridge, reduces the aphid population which then limits virus infection in wheat.

This year because it's been so dry and hot a lot of the weed seeds have become dormant, cultivation this year would have meant the seeds would still be dormant after cultivation, so we have left everything until it rains.

Final option is direct drilling with no cultivation at all. This is popular on arable farms as its cheap, but you have to be very aware of traffic over the fields and

compaction, so with grass and maize in our rotation this is not the best option, however we do direct drill cover crops between wheat and maize.

Cover crop is a mixture of 4/5 different seeds, this will give a green cover over winter, reduces nitrogen leaching down into the soil where the plants get to it, also soil run off. It also helps build carbon in the soil which encourages all the soil microbes, bacteria and fungi which are good for the soil.

Let's now wait and see what the weather brings as we head further into autumn down on the farm.

Kit Pottow

IAN STOCK CELEBRATES 50 YEARS AT HILLSIDE

What a fabulous place: no wonder people keep coming.

Many of the customers are regulars; some come in every day, and there is a great family atmosphere in the café as well as in the kitchen. It's a great haunt for all, including dogs. (Dexter, a well-trained giant hound, was sitting quietly with his owners when I arrived.)

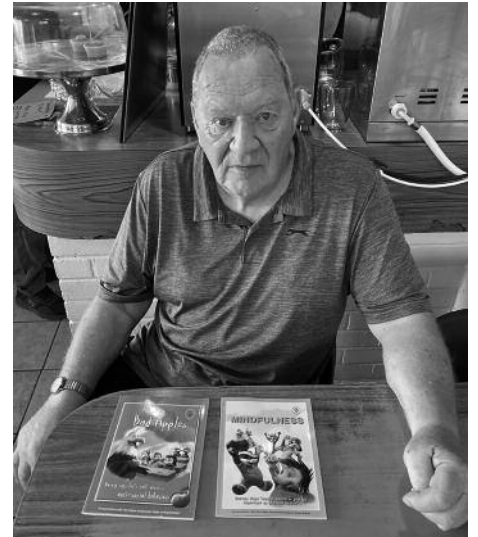
Good food and good company, and you can stay as long as you like. The menu is straightforward, with plenty of variety, and even includes vegetarian options to cater for all. At first the customer-base was 90% lorry-drivers, but now most people arrive by car.

Ian, who grew up on a small holding in Wales, took over the café from his aunt in 1976 when it was housed in a redundant army hut with a corrugated iron extension; his nephew Paul is set to take over, along with Paul's daughter Emily. Ian says he is retiring, but I don't think anyone believes him.

All of them take a share in the cooking and front-of-house. I looked into the kitchen area which seemed very calm, despite the number of customers coming and going. Everything is home-cooked, and Ian believes in ordering the best quality ingredients.

They serve about 150 meals a day including breakfasts, dinners (including roast dinners & salads) + dessert and the popular home-made Bread pudding; the whole enterprise runs like clockwork. Office-work is fitted in somehow - Ian is always one of the first to reply to my 'Market Place' queries. The photo shows Ian with a couple of booklets published by the Police Community Club of Great Britain which are donated to Codford School, courtesy of Hillside Café sponsorship.

I asked one of the regulars as he left how he would describe Ian. "Super chap" he says. KV



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CODFORD COMMUNITY KEY EVENTS OCTOBER 2026

- 2nd Fishy Friday menu at Codford tea rooms 5.30pm
3rd Ploughman's lunch in aid of St Peter's church at Codford village hall 12 noon
4th Codford community park run, Codford village hall grounds 10.00am
4th Live music at Codford tea rooms 1.30pm
5th Men's fellowship breakfast at the George Inn, Longbridge Deverill 8.15am
7th Film night 'My Mother's wedding' at the Woolstore theatre - 7.30pm
9th All you can eat menu at Codford tea rooms 5.30pm onwards
10th Free drama workshop at the Woolstore theatre 10.30am
13th Codford local history society talk at Codford village hall 7.30pm
16th Step back in time menu at Codford tea rooms 5.30pm
17th Free drama workshop at the Woolstore theatre 10.30am
18th Monthly drinks at the Woolstore theatre 12.00 noon
18th Monthly arts and crafts market at Ginger piggery, Boyton 10am
21st Codford & District gardening club talk at Codford village hall 7.30pm
23rd Burger night menu at Codford tea rooms 5.30pm
24th Songs from the stage at the Woolstore theatre 7.30pm
24th Codford apple juicing at Codford village hall 10am

CODFORD'S FIRST 'SCREEN ON THE GREEN' A REEL SUCCESS

On Saturday 12th September, the grounds of Codford Village Hall were transformed into an outdoor cinema as the village hosted its very first Screen on the Green event, and what a fantastic evening it proved to be.

With the weather playing its part and more than 100 people attending, families and friends arrived armed with picnic baskets, camping chairs and cosy blankets, ready for an evening of entertainment under the stars. The atmosphere was buzzing from the moment the gates opened, with children making the most of the fairground rides while the tempting aroma from pizza stalls and other food vendors filled the air.

The early showing was the family favourite Hoppers, which delighted younger audience members and kept little eyes firmly fixed on the big screen. As dusk settled over the village and the

stars began to appear, the audience grew ready for the evening's main feature, the much-loved classic Grease. Before Danny and Sandy took centre stage, however, there was a special treat during the interval as local favourites Sticky Toffee Jazz provided a wonderful live performance, creating the perfect soundtrack to a memorable summer evening.

One of the most heartwarming sights of the night was seeing so many local families and friends gathering together. Rows of picnic blankets stretched across the village hall grounds, neighbours chatted, children played, and people simply enjoyed spending time together in the community. The event captured everything that makes village life so special: friendship, fun and a shared sense of belonging.

A huge amount of work went into organising the evening, and the success of the event is a testament to everyone involved behind the scenes, as well as the fantastic support shown by residents. From the fairground attractions and food stalls to the films themselves, there was something for everyone to enjoy.

Judging by the smiles on faces as people headed home at the end of the night, Codford's first Screen on the Green was a tremendous success and one that many hope will become a regular fixture on the village calendar.

LOCAL HISTORY PROJECT

During the Summer Term, Year 6 pupils at Codford Village Primary were researching the impact of World War I and World War II on the village of Codford as part of their local History curriculum with the aim to produce webpage projects. To help with this, their teacher Maria Denham contacted the Codford Local History Society to see if they could help. The Society enthusiastically agreed, lending a range of material from the archive including maps, letters and photographs. After the introduction to the various artefacts, the Chairman of the CLHS, Sir William Mahon, led the pupils on a 'field trip' of Codford High Street, explaining how the village would have looked, where the military camps would have been situated, as well as where the various shops, banks and cinema would have been located. The pupils were amazed to learn the nickname for Codford by the soldiers as 'Codford-in-the-Mud' due to the heavy flooding in 1914, as well as the soldiers having to wash in the River Wylfe until better provision was made.

Two members of the Committee

also went into the classroom to answer the pupils' questions arising from the Field Trip. The pupils spent half a term working on their projects and when finished these were then read by the Committee of the CLHS in order to award prizes. The best project was written by George who showed an impressive understanding of the role of Codford, particularly during World War I. As a good historian he also used sources effectively too. Second prize was awarded to Marlie and Aria who included some particularly interesting original research in their project. The winners were each awarded a commemorative mug. All the pupils were congratulated on their engagement with the topic, with some original research shown in the best projects. The Society hopes very much that all the pupils will continue to enjoy History at their new schools and have a life-long interest in the subject.

If you would like to learn more about Codford Local History Society please contact the Secretary Gilly Walker at mivskywalker@yahoo.co.uk

CORTON AND BOYTON CUTTINGS

The Fane Hall committee have been busy arranging events for the village. The next Big Breakfast is 24th October from 9am - 11 am, followed by the Quiz Night on the 30th. We really appreciate the efforts made by the committee to provide opportunities for the villagers to get together... ..thank you.

The village Litter Pick has been delayed until 14th November, make a note in your diary. Another opportunity for everyone to get involved and meet up for cake afterwards.

The fields around the village, as everywhere, have been such wonderful golden colours after so little rain and an early harvest. It has been so hard for the farmers, but I have loved the views, taken lots of photos and hope to capture it in paint sometime.

There seem to have been quite a few problems on the A36 recently which we can deduce from the increase of traffic on the valley road. Complete chaos when it coincides with large numbers of cyclists heading for Ginny's Café. I faced a gaggle of caravans on the bend on the edge of Corton on one such day, quite a lot of manoeuvring required. Satnavs are brilliant things but not always realistic.

A

VILLAGE NEWS

NEWS FROM HEYTESBURY C of E PRIMARY SCHOOL

It was wonderful to welcome all our children back into school last week, including our new starters in Reception, and children in other year groups who have joined our community. We always love it when our family grows. All the children have made a fantastic start to the year - the school is happy, calm and full of learning already, which is a fantastic achievement.

Term for the school staff started a couple of days before we opened the doors to the children. These training days are a key time in the school year when we plan and prepare for all the learning and other exciting opportunities we have in store. But it is also the time when we complete the majority of the statutory training we have to undertake each year. Most of the content we have to cover falls within our safeguarding remit, and as such is incredibly important as our first duty in school every day is to ensure that all the children are safe. Guidance and requirements from the Government are up-dated annually for safeguarding to ensure that they reflect current societal issues and the most up-to-date research. This year they include the implementation of Benedict's Law to ensure that the school is operating as an allergy-aware and safe environment.

The start of the school year has been made even more exciting for the children this year by the fact that our playground has been turned into a swimming pool! We are incredibly lucky that the multi-academy trust (Acorn Education Trust) our school belongs to, is funding a pop-up swimming pool for us and Heytesbury Hedgehogs to have the sole use of it across the first few weeks of term. This means that every child is having daily lessons in a small group with a qualified swimming coach. This is such a fantastic opportunity for all the children to grow their confidence and skills, and they have all taken to it like ducks to water!

Lindsey Hermon, Headteacher

HEYTESBURY HAPPENINGS

What an amazing summer we have had. After some rain, the land is gradually becoming green again. I hope everyone enjoyed the sunshine. Sadly, some people that had been swimming in the Mill Pool caught a stomach bug. Unfortunately, the water in our rivers does suffer from some pollution. Be aware.

Various successful events have taken place in Heytesbury recently. The Village Garage Sale on 29th August, organised by several residents, was a great initiative and enjoyed by all the participants.

That was followed by the Community Showcase in the Church on 5th September. Organised by Councillors Judith Dando, Karen Riggs and Louise Morris on behalf of the Parish Council and aided by the Church Warden, Tina Sitwell, it was a huge success. The church was crammed full of tables advertising all the activities, organisations, artisans and groups that make up our villages.

Our Member of Parliament, Dr Andrew Murrison spent all afternoon chatting and answering questions; Wiltshire Council was represented by Councillor Bill Parks, and three police officers were available to listen to our concerns and offer advice. Members of the Woolstore Theatre, including Felicity Scard of Heytesbury, were there in costumes, and Moni Williams of Tytherington was encouraging people to arrange flowers with a magnificent array from her garden. The buzz of talking and laughing could be heard from the High Street. Thank you to Ralph Oxborrow and his team for setting up, and clearing away afterwards.

There was no Parish Council meeting in August, but councillors have kept working behind the scenes. Several uncontentious planning applications have been dealt with; a new Parish Steward has tidied the western end of the village, and we are advertising for a new Parish Clerk. If you have some bookkeeping experience,

and 7 hours per week spare to work from home, then please contact our Chairman, Dave Bond or any Parish Councillor.

I expect you noticed a large tent suddenly appear for 24 hours on the green opposite the school. It was equipped with a solar panel and arrived one evening in a trailer being pushed by a young man. On enquiry, he was walking to raise awareness for mental health issues and autism. We wish him well. SB

HEYTESBURY CHURCH

The chancel heating project is at last underway thanks to the generosity of some Heytesbury residents who responded to an appeal for the final £5000 required for the budget. Thanks to them, the target was reached and by means of Gift Aid, the total came to almost £6000. Now we wait for the electricity company to install a three phase electrical supply to enable two Herschel Halo infrared chandeliers to be wired and connected in the chancel. Those who contributed will read this knowing that through their largesse we will be able to sit warmly in the winter!

The Heytesbury Community Showcase was packed with Exhibitors and visitors, providing a great opportunity to highlight local businesses, artists, charities and volunteer groups with the added bonus of a tour of the bell tower.

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SHERRINGTON

Towards the end of August the sky over the village was laced with the flights of swallows and martins, darting, weaving and stooping over the cress bed hunting for insects and topping up with water in preparation for their epic journey south. It is the seasonal miracle that these seemingly fragile birds that you can scarcely feel in your hands embark on that journey of thousands of miles. The dangers they face are many, from hunters with mist nets, adverse weather and this year wildfires. I feared for the swifts who left earlier at a time when the fires were at their height. One or two days of birds over the village and then they were gone, taking summer with them. Finally, we have been blessed with a little rain and we have our bridge!

THE KESTREL'S TAIL, PART II

Charlie now associated my glove with food, phase one accomplished. Behind our cottage is a convenient paddock. We used this as our training ground taking the garden fork, handle bound with Velcro. Charlie on my glove, jesses attached to a long creance (a falconry term for a long length of nylon string). Charlie had been weighed (on adapted scales) to ensure he was at his flying weight (a critical weight when the bird in good condition is keen to eat). I set him on the fork handle and walked a distance away. Not looking at him I held out my baited glove and called. What excitement, he flew to the glove without hesitation to eat the meat. Wonderful, amazing, I was almost a falconer. After two or three flights Charlie tried to fly-off but the creance lead

brought him down on the grass. The session was over, he was not sufficiently hungry to disobey his instinct by flying to the hand of a human being. One must remember he was an adult kestrel when he broke his wing so would have had at least one year in the wild, maybe many more.

At night Charlie was on a round perch in the sitting room. His leash was attached to a circular pivot in the centre of the base; this enabled him to move around the perch even fly from side to side. Provided there were no sudden movements he would perch calmly on one leg (always a good sign of a contented bird) then much later as the evening wore on we would hear a 'plop' and Charlie would drop down onto the platform for his night roost.

We both worked at that time so during the day Charlie had to be safe and secure but in the fresh air in the garden. He was kept in what is known as a 'weathering shed', safe from cats and other predators, he could enjoy the sun, sheltered from the rain and wind but was limited to the length of his leash attached to a falcon's block that was his 'command post'. On our return from work it was a scramble to change, weigh him and set off for some training flights. Finally, the time came when Nigel felt he was now 'trained' and could fly free, in the knowledge that he would return, stooping to the lure and at the appropriate moment be captured and taken-up.

With the little falcon on my glove we set off along a bridle path to a hillside bordered by a hedge and then a heart-stopping moment, free of jesses Charlie was released into the air. He circled and made for an ash tree in the hedge row. I stood, glove extended, minutes seemed to pass and then the light touch as he lighted on my glove and took his meat, unbelievable. Then back to the tree and it happened again. We had three brilliant flights and then while he was feeding slipped in the jesses and came home, wonderful. This now happened daily. At weekends we would walk back up the hill with Charlie flying from fence post to fence post and back to the glove. Now however the afternoons were closing in and flying time was at a premium.

Further experiences of Charlie and me to follow next month

Betty Lewis

UPTON LOVELL

Once again, I am mourning the departure of the migrant birds as the Autumn wraps itself round us, the light and the colours change and I start to think of fires and woodsmoke, mashed potato and stews. I love the changing seasons and how my daily walks with the hound show minuscule differences. My late father kept a daily diary of his walks for 40 years with what he saw and heard, the days the swallows and warblers arrived and departed, and did tiny drawing to illustrate them. We have dozens of little books as a reminder of his passion for nature and the countryside around him. I also look forward to not having the same quantities of livestock left around the house in differing stages of dismemberment. How the cat sneaks live pigeons and rabbits through the cat flap and past the hound is a mystery.

The unending heat and lack of rain has affected everyone, particularly farming neighbours and market gardeners. We have all had mixed success this year with our garden produce. Loads of cucumbers, squashes and courgettes, poor and very stringy beans. Early apples, lovely plums and I have picked kilos of blackberries to go with the apples, made loads of chutney and pickle. I love the end result but the pervasive smell of vinegar does get rather trying. I am amazed at how miraculous grass is; we not only had no-mow May, but June, July and August, the parched desert that was our lawn has been transformed once more following the recent sprinkle of rain. I have had numerous conversations with various people about whether the grass is rejuvenated from the old or new from dropped seed or both. I know that in the Namib desert the swathe of flowers that appears after a short spell of rain is the dormant seeds, but grass is a mystery to me.

While part of me welcomes the new season I really don't like the shorter days and get progressively more sluggish and less cheerful and can't wait for the Spring. At least I can do Winter chores in the house and plan what things to plant and what seeds to buy in anticipation of next year. Who knows El Niño might throw at us, the Met office gurus are promising torrential rain and floods followed by freezing. Oh Joy!

Amanda Cheesley



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October 3		Holt	10.00 -3.30	PCC away day
OCTOBER 4 Trinity 18	Norton Bavant	9.30am	Holy Communion (BCP) + hymns	
	Codford St Peter	11.00am	Parish Communion	choir
	Heytesbury	11.00am	Sunday Worship	
	Sutton Veny village hall	4.00pm	All Age Worship	
	Upton Lovell	6.00pm	Evensong (BCP)	
October 11 Trinity 19	Tytherington	8.30am	Holy Communion (BCP)	
	Sutton Veny	9.30am	Parish Communion	
	Heytesbury	11.00am	Parish communion	choir
	Codford St Mary	11.00am	Harvest Festival	
	Upton Lovell	5.00pm	Harvest Festival	
October 18 St Luke	Boyton	9.30am	Parish Communion	
	Tytherington	11.00am	Harvest Festival	
	Upton Lovell	11.00am	Parish Communion	choir
	Sutton Veny	11.00am	Harvest Festival	
	Codford St Peter	6.00pm	Informal Worship	
October 25 Last Sunday after Trinity	Sutton Veny	8.30am	Holy Communion (BCP)	
	Codford St Mary	9.30am	Parish Communion	choir
	Knook	11.00am	Harvest Parish Communion	
	Heytesbury	6.00pm	Evensong (BCP)	

UWVT WEEKDAY SERVICES

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