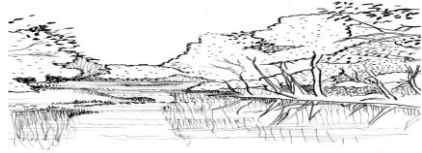


CLYST VALLEY NEWS

JANUARY 2023



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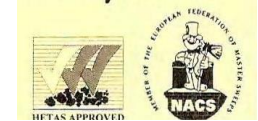
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MESSAGE FROM THE VICARAGE

After my second dose of radiotherapy, after the late Queen had died, I wrote the following:

A time for reflection.

*Often have I heard these words -
and yet ...*

How little I understand.

*How can our new king
find time to reflect?*

*How did our heavenly King
find time to withdraw?*

... by creating space.

Space I found in

Sunday Worship this a.m.

Time to withdraw,

to think, and to write.

*There is a time to speak
... and a time to be silent.*

*If ever there is a time
to be silent, said our Scottish Reverend,
this is it.*

*In the silence of our hearts,
in the stillness of Holyrood Palace,
in Westminster Hall, ...
Wherever.*

Be still – and listen.

Con-tem-plate.

The Sunday Worship referred to was the early service on Radio 4, led by a Scottish minister. During my radiotherapy, I tried quite hard to come to church, but my body was unable to do so. I had to just listen, and rest. The fact that the service was during a national time of remembrance added to how the silence spoke. In a way, this is an odd message for the beginning of a New Year, but for me, and perhaps for others, it's as if things have moved on, or I have.

On New Year's Day, we traditionally think of the naming of Jesus, as well as re-making a commitment to God (the second idea is from the Methodist tradition of a 'Covenant Service'). What does the name of Jesus mean to us now? For many they only use the name of Jesus as a swear-word, or rather as blasphemy. I don't like it, but it is difficult to protest in this secular culture (about which we are continually reminded). However, most people, at some stage in their life, even men, do pray. Perhaps we do this when times are hard, or there is some national crisis, or bereavement is in the air. Perhaps we do it even more if our own life is threatened, or it seems to be ending sooner than we had expected.

Our Diocesan Bishop quoted some better poetry than mine about prayer, by Ann Lewin, who likens prayer to sitting on a riverbank, watching for a glimpse of a kingfisher:



'Prayer is like waiting for the Kingfisher. All you can do is Be where he is likely to appear, and

Wait.' (Bishop Robert, Ad Clerum December 2023, quoting Ann Lewin)

We could learn from this in our New Year, learning to spend more time in silence, in waiting, and also, I suggest, catching the beauty of a moment – like in the brilliant flash of a passing kingfisher, for instance.

May I wish all readers a very happy, peaceful and thoughtful New Year.

Bill and Daff Lemmey, Woodbury Vicarage revbillwhitecross@gmail.com 01395 232161

WHITE CROSS MISSION COMMUNITY

Please see the schedule of services within the WCMC for January at the back of the magazine. Please contact Jill Dupain at dupain@hotmail.co.uk or on 01395 232953 if you have any questions.

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If you'd like to receive your own copy of the CVN (in full colour!) direct to your email address every month, completely free of charge, all you have to do is email the Editor, Peter Skelton, at clystvalleynews@gmail.com with the following message: **'I am happy to receive the Clyst Valley News at this email address once a month. I understand that the CVN will not pass on my email address to any third party without my written permission.'** Please do sign up! You can cancel at any time. Thank you.

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If you'd like to advertise your business or organisation in the Clyst Valley News in this New Year, we have slots available NOW! Please get in touch - with no obligation - our rates are very reasonable! Contact the Editor, Peter Skelton, at clystvalleynews@gmail.com without delay!

Contributions, photos and letters to the editor for the February 2023 issue of the Clyst Valley News should be sent by email, to the editor, Peter Skelton, at clystvalleynews@gmail.com by Sunday 15th January 2023 at the latest, please. Please note that contributions may be edited.

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There must be a lot of photographers out there snapping away around our villages. After all, our neck of the woods is rather photogenic. Why not share your results with our readers? Most months we aim to put one nice pic on the magazine cover and we need yours! So please do send in your efforts to the editor, Peter Skelton, who'll choose one each month. Try to use relatively high-definition settings but that's not a must. Just email them to clystvalleynews@gmail.com and we'll do the rest. Simple!

WE ARE URGENTLY SEEKING A SPONSOR FOR THE CLYST VALLEY NEWS

Burrington Estates have not renewed their much appreciated sponsorship of the CVN. So we now need to secure new sponsorship as a matter of urgency - something we rely on heavily if we are to be able to continue to produce, print and distribute the magazine to the current standards. If any of our readers would be interested in knowing more – or you know of a company or organisation that might be interested – please do get in touch with Peter Skelton at clystvalleynews@gmail.com or on 01392 879857 and he will provide the details. In short, in return for an agreed donation, the company's advert will **exclusively** occupy the whole of the back cover of the magazine for a period of twelve months. Thank you.

EDITOR'S NOTE



Hello and welcome to this January edition of the Clyst Valley News. My thanks to Steve Tasker for his lovely cover photo, taken from Mill Cottage in Clyst St Mary. Very atmospheric. Thanks also to Peter Blackmore for another nice snowy scene for the back cover.

So we're approaching the end of a fairly tumultuous year – with contrasting feelings, I'd imagine. Most years are a mixed bag for most of us. The only consolation for me is that, as time passes, my brain seems to filter out a lot of the bad bits and only leave the good bits in my memory...So let's accelerate that process by not dwelling on negative recollections and, as they say, 'accentuate the positive'. In that spirit, let us welcome in the New Year with renewed hope, confidence. – and trust (a rare commodity at the moment). Alfred Lord Tennyson put it rather succinctly: 'Ring out the false, ring in the true.'
It just remains for me to wish you all a happy, healthy, peaceful, just and fulfilling New Year. Enjoy the magazine. Best wishes. Peter Skelton

CLYST ST MARY



Church Services

The Family Service will be held on 1st January, starting at 9.30 am. This is a very informal gathering for parents and children. There will be a Family Communion Service on 15th January, at 9.30 am as usual. Tea and coffee are served after both services, and we encourage people to stay and enjoy some fellowship. We welcome new families who would like to bring their children to join us in these services.

New Look for the Monthly Coffee Mornings



The PCC has decided to replace the monthly coffee mornings, which are poorly attended, with one-off coffee mornings and other events through the year. Watch this space for more details. As a result, there will be no January coffee morning.

Village Hall: New Sound System



We are installing a new sound system in the Village Hall in January. This will allow hirers to play music at their events by linking to their mobile 'phone or computer. We are also buying a small number of more comfortable chairs as a trial. If you would like to help with the running of the Hall, please call our Chairman on 01392 874305.

Our website <https://www.clyststmaryvillagehall.co.uk/> gives details of hiring availability and prices but if there's anything else you'd like to know, please drop Ali West an email on: bookings@clyststmaryvillagehall.co.uk. We look forward to seeing you soon.

Bishops Clyst Parish Council



Elections May 2023 – New Councillors Needed! Getting away from the challenges current in national government, local government faces its own challenges in the forthcoming year. It is time for District, Town and Parish Council elections which will take place in May of 2023 and include our own Bishops Clyst Parish Council.

Bishops Clyst PC consists of the parishes of Clyst St Mary and Sowton. It is a non-political council giving residents the opportunity to represent and support their communities independent of any political dogma, a very refreshing opportunity. The Council is made up of twelve councillors who stand for election every four years, supported by part-time staff. It is led by a Chair and Vice Chair, elected/confirmed annually, and operates via a committee system addressing finance and planning matters, coupled with ad hoc groups which are formed to address important matters as they arise. These report back to the monthly Council Meetings where debates take place and decisions are reached.

Currently the Council operates with only ten Councillors, leaving two posts unfilled. It is likely that some sitting Councillors will be standing down so new blood is needed. This is YOUR opportunity to step up, address those issues which have been troubling you, support your neighbours and the community in general and make a difference.

The Council addresses several ongoing responsibilities in supporting its community, but also seeks out areas to add to the quality of life for residents. Some of the areas addressed over the last election cycle of four years have been:

- Maintaining our car parks, including relining them and refurbishing the footpaths at the lower car park, replacing dying trees.
- Refurbishing the children's play area adjacent to the Village Hall.
- Opening up the football area on the Village Field for use by the Football Club for young teams.
- Refurbishing the allotments and currently seeking an increase in such provision.
- Planning a new footpath from Greenspire to give safe access to the village centre at Clyst St Mary.
- Addressing flood issues in Clyst St Mary and recruiting volunteers to prepare flood defences.
- Successfully campaigning to obtain a speed reduction on the A3052 road to address safety issues, especially for residents of the Cat and Fiddle.
- Providing community grants to qualifying organisations.

Being a Councillor is interesting, rewarding but not onerous. There is a breadth of opportunities to support your community in a very rewarding way. If you are at all interested, speak to one of the sitting Councillors or contact our Clerk (details below).

Try it, learn how local government works and make a large contribution to our democracy.

Environment Agency Contacts for Reporting Incidents (Particularly Odour and Noise). 24/7 Incident reporting hotline: 0800 807060; non-urgent incident reporting, email: incident_communication_service@environment-agency.gov.uk.

Community Grants. Community grants of up to £500 are available to groups, clubs and voluntary organisations based in the parish for non-commercial activities which benefit residents of the parish. Please see further details on our website www.bishopsclyst.org.uk/community-grants/.

Parish Council Meetings. Parish Council meetings take place each month and dates, agendas and minutes are posted on our website (www.bishopsclyst.org.uk) and on noticeboards in Clyst St Mary, Cat and Fiddle Park and Sowton Village.

Contact the Parish Council. Karan Bennett, PC Clerk, working from the PC office in Clyst St Mary Village Hall on Monday to Wednesday, 9 am to 1 pm. Call 01392 874405 or email bishopsclyst@gmail.com.

Clyst St Mary Primary School



Before the Christmas festivities began, the mild weather afforded us the opportunity to get actively involved in helping to create a canopy of trees to commemorate the Queen's Jubilee - and now her life.

Thanks to the donation of saplings from the Woodland Trust, our children donned wellies, took up their spades and dug in, creating what we hope will be a beautiful hedge in our top field, providing shelter for wildlife - and a lasting memorial to the Queen.



The PTFA-organised Christmas Fayre kicked off the festive season - and was a great success! Despite the dreadful weather, we had a terrific turnout, with everyone enjoying a visit to Santa's Grotto, a raffle, games and a chance to admire our beautiful displays. The turkey rolls went down a treat too!



An enchanting 'Christingle' performance by our older children was celebrated in the second week of December, and enjoyed by all our parents in the school grounds. The weather was crisp and clear and set the Christmassy scene perfectly.



For many weeks, our Class 3 children

have been practising their performance for a 'Disney



'Aladdin' dance performance for a 'Disney Showdown' at the Barnfield Theatre in Exeter. They all did tremendously well and very much enjoyed the experience. A big thank you to Nadia at Premier Education for organising this opportunity, and for all her enthusiasm!



Christmas Jumper Day coincided with Christmas Lunch this year and the children all enjoyed pulling crackers and tucking into their turkey dinners while listening to festive music.

Next on the festive agenda is the Nativity, performed by our younger classes, which we're all excited about. They will hold two performances on Wednesday 14th at the Village Hall, then a final one the following day at the church, for all the parents and carers to enjoy.

I'm sure we're all looking forward to spending time with family and friends over the Christmas period - to celebrate the holidays, re-fuel and prepare for the New Year ahead. We look forward to seeing our children back in school on Wednesday, 4th January 2023.

Walking Group



Clyst St Mary Walking Group will meet on Tuesday 17th January 2023 at 10 am at the Village Hall car park to share transport. A walk of approx five miles with a local pub lunch. Do join us and walk off those extra pounds in the New Year. Contact Sue Dawe for further information 07986 864625.

Clyst Valley Preschool



We start 2023 after a very busy autumn term, with the children all enjoying their Christmas party, Nativity concert, making Christmas cards, decorations, and stickmen for our church Christmas Tree entry. Check out all our fun activities on our Instagram page!

Our Preschool has been inundated with enquiries and demand for spaces for this term, and the coming summer term and is now full...However, we will have plenty of spaces available in the autumn term, September 2023 and are now happy to receive applications via email, our website www.clystvalleypreschool.org or by calling us on 01392 876615.

Table Tennis Club



Please come and join us! New members always welcome. We play at the Village Hall every Thursday, 4 - 6 pm. The minimal fee of £20 for a 10-week session includes use of all equipment and refreshments. Alternatively, fees may be paid on a weekly basis if preferred. For further details please contact Pam Gardner on 07714 097220 or by email to pamelamgardner9@gmail.com.

CLYST ST GEORGE AND EBFORD



A Journey into Christian Lay Ministry

On a beautiful morning in late September, with a little trepidation, I entered the Riverside Centre in Exeter for my first study day on South West Ministry's Training Course (SWMTC), 'A Foundation into Christian Lay Ministry 2022-2023'. Several of us had arrived at the same time and we were greeted with smiles and a warm welcome by the Course Chaplain and the

Director of Lay Training. Following the obligatory distribution of passes we were taken upstairs into a large room with a considerable volume of chatter and importantly, coffee! Eventually people graduated to one of the tables, which were scattered around the room and the morning began with a welcome and worship; this was followed by a lecture on 'Spiritual Pathways', presented with a dry wit and much enthusiasm by the engaging Licenced Lay Minister who guided us to meet God the Creator through nature and the senses.

Following a coffee break with CAKE! we received really useful information on 'The Learning Community' and 'Journaling'; again, peppered with humour. The act of journaling, reading the Bible and prayer, encourages self-discipline, introspection and opening oneself up to God. Prior to lunch we gathered into our small tutor groups; introductions followed with potted histories

of our Christian journeys so far. Tentative building of relationships began and our first task as a tutor group over the intervening weeks was to plan an Act of Morning Worship and to give a briefing to the whole course on our experiences of meeting 'God through our Senses'.

Lunchtime gave us the opportunity for more chatter and getting to know people; food being an important part of any welcome (Matthew 18.5), we were certainly given a very generous lunch of excellent sandwiches and more CAKE! The afternoon proceeded with 'An Introduction to the Bible' with guidance and suggestions on how to approach a programme of reading the Bible every day; encouragingly there are publications like John Stott's *Through the Bible and Through the Year* or a little pocket book entitled *More Precious Than Gold*, both of which break down the task into bite-size chunks. Another break for tea and more CAKE! followed by 'An Introduction to Spirituality'. Throughout the course we will be looking at various forms of spirituality including, for example, 'Desert and Monastic' and 'Celtic' and we will experience these and other different forms in our morning and evening worship.

As the course continues tutor groups will each take responsibility for various aspects of our training, including leading worship and individual briefings on our developing spiritual experiences. Course lectures are all recorded and available to listen to repeatedly; we also have access to a considerable electronic resource, available under the auspices of Durham University; whilst Tutors also recommend additional books for study. Students are encouraged to share their views in an atmosphere of positive and open acceptance; humour interlaced the day and as I walked back to the car park I realised just how much I had enjoyed my first study day, how affirming it was and how energised I felt. Jacquie Manser

Cards for Sale in the Church



Recycled cards are again available in the church. They cover ones that can be used for any occasion, eg notelets, birthday, get well, sympathy, anniversary, new home, new baby, etc. You are welcome to visit the church at any time and spend time looking through the boxes of cards. The church is open every day between 9 am and dusk. I would also welcome any cards you may wish to recycle, with the exception of Christmas cards. These can be left in the church for collection. Many thanks. Linda Wilkerson (01392 873699)

Clyst St George Parish Hall



The Parish Hall committee held its AGM on Wednesday 23rd November. Pamela Diffey stepped down as Chair but remains a trustee and valued member of the committee. Isobel Stubbs was elected as the new Chair. We also welcome two new committee members: Lillian Kynaston and Jacquie Spencer and thank them both for their enthusiasm and willingness to support the local community.

Monthly coffee mornings have resumed and our next meeting will be on Wednesday 4th January from 10.30 am to 12 noon. If you want to banish those January blues, please do pop in for a coffee and chat.

Save the Date. On Saturday 4th February we will be hosting a quiz event: more *Tipping Point* than *University Challenge*, this is nevertheless an opportunity to activate the grey cells and discover who the parish brainiacs are. Tickets/more information available later this month.

We are always looking for people to support our community events and if you would like to get involved, please contact Isobel Stubbs (Chair) on 07826 806919 or Paul Bragg (Vice Chair) on 01392 874599.

Lady Seaward's C of E Primary School



As 2022 draws to a close, we reflect on an eventful first term of this school year and for the year to come. We welcomed our new Headteacher, Mrs Michala Firth, who joined us in November and has been busy getting to know our busy school community. We look forward to continuing to grow our school under her leadership and many more exciting times ahead.

Class 1 received a very special letter from our late Queen, Queen Elizabeth II, in response to their congratulations on her Platinum Jubilee. This letter arrived just as the nation learned of her passing and so has extra special significance to our children.



Class 2 enjoyed a very interesting and messy hedgehog-house building session under the guidance of Lizzie, a vibrant member of our village. Lizzie also explored some of the history of our school and village with the children and they certainly found these sessions very informative and enjoyable. Thank you, Lizzie!



We enjoyed a welcome return to performing our Carol Service at Darts Farm and we are thankful for their kindness in providing a Christmas tree to our school on a crisp and sunny day. Thank you, Darts Farm!

2023 promises to be just as eventful with Year 5 getting stuck in to Bikeability training in February and preparations have already commenced for the usual fixtures of a busy school year. Please remember to apply for primary school places for those starting in September 2023 by 15th January 2023. We welcome enquiries at the school office for anyone considering Lady Seaward's C of E Primary School for their child. More information is available on our website. We wish you all a very fulfilling and prosperous 2023!

Nature Garden

Clyst St George has a delightful nature garden by the side of the parish church. The aim of the garden is to grow local Devon indigenous plants and trees and to encourage a Devon meadow with local wild flowers. Should you wish to help develop this 'green' facility, you can come along on the first Saturday of every month from 9.30 to 11 am.

Norman's Weather Report



November was an extremely wet and record-breaking month; 199 mm (7.8 inches) of rain fell here at Ebford – the greatest amount for an individual month for at least the last 22 years. Three of the four weeks saw over two inches of rain. However, 2022 is still a very dry year as, interestingly, only 16 inches fell in the period January – September, to be followed by 12.5 inches during October and November. Gardening has been somewhat challenging but a recent bonus for me has been the appearance of autumn raspberries even in December on canes, that seemed to hibernate during the drought of July, August and September; and only moving once their environment had been well soaked. Norman Cann

Little Dragons Pre-School

We are based in Lady Seaward's School and open four days a week, from Monday to Thursday, 8.45 am – 3.15 pm during school term times. For more information please telephone Elly on 07939 995486 (in school hours), email littledragons@live.com or visit our website www.littledragonsclyststgeorge.com.

WOODBURY SALTERTON



Thanksgiving for the Birth of a Child

The Family Service in November, conducted by Rev'd Sid Humphries, included one of Thanksgiving for the Birth of a Child. Charlotte and Steve Mearing had brought their younger son Noah to church for a blessing and to thank God for his birth. The words of the second hymn, *He's Got the Whole World in His Hands*, were changed from 'little tiny baby' to 'dear little Noah' and the choir sang a special song which ended 'Noah we welcome you'. We pray for them and for their elder son Albie.

Carol Service

It had originally been decided to repeat last year's experiment of having the Carol Service outdoors just as it started to get dark as people seemed to like that. However, it then became apparent that this was going to clash with the final of the World Cup! The Carol Service therefore took place in church on Sunday 18th December. Mulled wine and mince pies were served after the service.

Carol Singing Round the Village



As usual some members of the church choir plus other volunteers went round the village singing carols and collecting for The Children's Society. This took place on Wednesday 21st December.

Children's Film Night



It was so good to see a large number of happy and excited children coming to church in pyjamas or onesies and carrying duvets and sleeping bags on a Friday evening in late November. Some parents also stayed with them to watch the film *Paddington 2*. Debbie Jung and Jill Dupain sold a lot of popcorn, sweets, crisps, soft drinks and hot chocolate and Katharine Wheeler sold many small knitted Paddington bears and other items. The evening raised over £265 for church funds.

Monthly Coffee Mornings.



These continue on the first Saturday of each month in church from 9.30 till 10.30 and bacon butties are available. The January event will therefore take place on the 7th.


Woodbury Salterton Crafters



We had a fun afternoon in Woodbury Salterton Village Hall making a Christmas table decoration, together with mince pies, coffee and wine. It was our first attempt in this craft and it was agreed that we could be a bit more ambitious next time and make a door hanging. A very special thanks to Louise Lee for providing the most delicious coffee and walnut cake.

The crafting afternoons will continue on the last Wednesday of the month - the next being on 25th January 2023, from 1 to 4 pm. Bring your knitting or other craft project to the Village Hall. The afternoon is very informal. All are welcome even if you just wish to sit and chat and watch the various crafters at work; or have a sociable chat and enjoy coffee and the delicious cakes kindly made by Louise Lee

Quiz

 A reminder that the 'On the Map' quiz entries should be submitted by Sunday 8th January to Katharine Wheeler.

Monday Morning Coffee



People walking their dogs together, or others who just joined them for company, used to meet for coffee at The Digger's Rest. Now coffee will be served in the Village Hall on Mondays at 11 am and anyone is welcome to join them. Donations are invited for Village Hall funds.

POETRY CORNER

Time Traveller on a Frosty Morning

By John Smith (of Clyst St Mary)

This is how it must have felt
Ten thousand years ago
On a still winter's morning
With not a sound in the woods
Except for occasional bird call.

We hunter gatherers did not
Know that name – just human folk
Living in nature's larder
With fox and deer and wolf,
And seeking our temporary shelter.

This path could not have existed-
Only wildlife left its trail,
But our human mind would remember
And pass the knowledge on -
The uniquely human advantage.

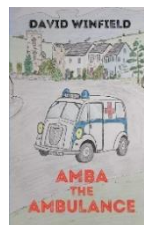
And so this escape is just that-
Recognition of basic essentials,
For the spirit is just the same,
Despite softness of modernity,
I overcome the amnesia of time.
©John Smith



LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Dear Peter

This might be of interest to your readers. I have just had a book published on Amazon. It is called 'Amba the Ambulance'. I live in Clyst St George and the book is my first (and probably only one). It a collection of twelve short stories for children about the adventures of an ambulance. I am a retired GP and in a small way I wanted to pay a tribute to the emergency services that I have worked with. I hope it gives its readers some pleasure and at the same time promotes the interests of the emergency services. Here's the link:



https://www.amazon.co.uk/Amba-Ambulance-David-Winfield/dp/BoBMSZ934Y/ref=sr_1_1?crid=KBHR9PSFTDJ7&keywords=Amba+the+ambulance&qid=1668959266&s=books&prefix=amba+the+ambulance%2Cstripbooks%2C5&sr=1-1.

Regards

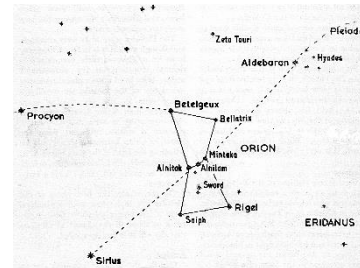
David Winfield

AND FINALLY...

The Sky Tonight

This is the first of a monthly series which aims to guide you around the wonders of the night sky. January is a good month to begin our journey, with its long dark nights, bright constellations plus a meteor shower and, this year, four naked-eye planets on view for good measure! All you need is a clear sky, an open space with a clear horizon, a way of telling in which direction you are facing and, ideally, a pair of binoculars.

We'll begin with our Constellation of the Month. (The information which follows will match the star positions at about 9 pm in mid-January but the date or time is not that critical. If you are observing at an earlier date or time the stars will be more to the left and vice versa.) *Face south and about half way up the sky you will find a group of seven bright stars - a line of three sloping to the left with two above and two below.* These are the main stars of the constellation of Orion, the hunter. The top left star is Betelgeuse, a red giant which pulsates, altering brightness, and may soon (in astronomical terms, ie within 100,000 years or so) explode to form a supernova. Compare its colour and brightness with the white star Rigel at bottom right. *If you look below the middle star of the line of three (which make up Orion's belt) you will see a line of fainter stars and, within them, a hazy patch of light.* This is the Orion nebula, a star factory. Through binoculars you will see some of the detail of stars surrounded by shining gas. The other stars that make up this constellation are much fainter. *Look for a curve of stars to his right.* This is Orion's shield. *Also look for a vertically elongated diamond of four stars to the left.* This is his club.



Now I'm going to introduce you to 'star hopping'. This is a technique for finding your way around the night sky by using the stars of a known constellation to point to a new group.

From the line of the three stars making Orion's belt, follow a line diagonally upwards. You will come to a bright orange star. (The planet Mars is also around here but higher and more to the left. We will return to it later.) This star is Aldebaran, the brightest star of the constellation of Taurus, the Bull. Look carefully and you

will see that Aldebaran is the top left star in a V formation stretching to the right. This is an open star cluster called the Hyades, the nearest cluster to Earth. *If you continue the two lines of the V to the left you will come, in each case, to a single star marking the tips of the bull's horns. Look just above the lower one with binoculars and you will see a faint patch of light.* This is the Crab Nebula, the remains of a supernova. The explosion of the star that formed it was seen by the Chinese astronomers in 1054.

Now come back to the line you were following from Orion and continue it through Aldebaran and you will come to a tight cluster of faint white stars, the Seven Sisters or Pleiades. They look beautiful through binoculars.

Any hunter needs companions and Orion had two dogs. So let's find them. *Return to Orion's belt and follow it the other way, down to the left and you will come to the brightest star in the sky, Sirius, the dog star in the constellation of the Great Dog.* One last 'hop' will find his other companion. *Return to Orion, take a line from the top right star through Betelgeuse (top left) and curve it slightly down and you will come to a single bright star. This is Procyon, the brightest in the constellation of the Lesser Dog.* Many of the constellations are named for characters in Greek mythology. Check their stories out online.

Now we'll leave the stars in their courses and search for the planets. But first a word of warning. Please wait until the sun has set before you observe in that direction, especially with binoculars. *Look to the south-west after the sun has set and you will see a brilliant white 'star'. This is the planet Venus.* Through binoculars you may notice it is not quite a disk. Having an orbit nearer the Sun the planet shows phases, like the Moon. But we will come back to that in later articles. *Also after sunset, above and to the left of Venus is Saturn, appearing as a bright yellow star.* You can see the ring system through binoculars; they are well open at the moment. You may also see a faint single point of light close in, This is its moon, Titan, the largest in the solar system.

Almost due south at sunset but higher up in the sky is Jupiter, appearing as a very bright object. Through binoculars the disc is easily visible plus, perhaps, the two equatorial darker cloud bands. Look for a line of up to four points of light running diagonally top left to bottom right. These are Jupiter's largest moons. They could be either side of the disc.

Turn to your left and look for a bright orange object in the eastern sky at sunset. This is the planet Mars. It is quite a small planet and rather disappointing in binoculars but this is a good time to look as it is almost at its closest point to the Earth, called opposition.

The observations I have described so far can be done any day you have a clear sky but there are some events that happen only at certain dates and times. Here is a list of these special events in January:

1st: The planet Uranus is faint and normally difficult to find but today you can spot it using the Moon, which is almost full. *From about 7.30 pm. search with binoculars just to the left of the Moon for a tiny greenish disc.* It's not easy to find this planet - but satisfying if you do. (Observers living further north would see the Moon appear to move in front of Uranus!)

3rd: *Face north and watch the sky for a while and you should see some meteors of the Quadrantid shower.* They usually come over about one per minute. *Also this evening the Moon and Mars are very close together with the Pleiades to the right.*

22nd: *Look in the south-west soon after sunset.* Venus and Saturn are less than a full-moon diameter apart. The following evening the two planets are slightly further apart but are accompanied by a thin crescent moon. A stunning tableau.

Finally I do recommend downloading the phone App 'Sky Safari'. It will not only show you the night sky when you are out observing (which would help you identify the stars and planets I have described) but also lets you alter the date and time of the screen display so were you to miss one of the events listed above you could run a second-by-second simulation. Until next month, Happy Observing! Clyde Bish

The Exeter Forum Talks Programme: January – March 2023



The Exeter Forum weekly talks take place on Wednesdays at the Mint Methodist Church in Fore Street, Exeter, EX4 3AT. Members get together from 10.15 am. After time for coffee and socialising, the talk starts, usually at around

10.45 am. All are very welcome to attend these meetings. There is an admission charge of £3 if not a member of the Exeter Forum. More information at www.exeterforum.org/talks.

Date	Speaker	Title
4 January 2023	David Oates	<i>How to Look at Exeter's Heraldry</i> Heraldic designs and coats of arms are a common sight in our streets, churches and many other places. From pub signs to elaborate shields on tombs in cathedrals, they tell us much about the individuals, places and organisations that they represent. David will use a wide variety of examples from Devon, with an emphasis on Exeter, to show how to interpret this rich symbology.
11 January	John Monks	<i>The Exeter Ship Canal: Why It Matters</i> This talk will cover different attitudes over the years to Exeter's historic canal. John will challenge the city not to turn its back on its waterways but recognise them as part of its future.
18 January	Tony Davis	<i>Doctor at Sea</i> Tony Davis spent six months as a Ship's Surgeon on Union Castle's <i>Braemar Castle</i> . This humorous talk is about some of the more curious adventures which happened during that time.
25 January	Imogen Salmon	<i>The Exe Estuary - Wildlife, Threats and Management</i> This talk will look at the importance of the Exe Estuary and Dawlish Warren for wildlife and the current threats to its ecosystems and species. Imogen will describe the ways that the estuary is being managed for the benefit of both wildlife and people.
1 February	Mike Richards	<i>A History of Exeter Hospitals</i> Exeter Forum member Mike Richards will look at the long history of hospitals and medical care in the city of Exeter from Mediaeval times to the present day. He will outline how some of the main establishments evolved and detail some of the local characters. He will also show the important part Exeter has played in introducing significant medical procedures.
8 February	Dr John Salvatore	<i>What the Romans Did for Exeter!</i> Archaeologist and Roman historian Dr John Salvatore will provide an overview of how the Romans shaped the development of Exeter as a city, from water supply and baths to roads and villas.
15 February	Charlie Courtenay, The Earl of Devon	<i>Exeter and the Earls of Devon – Frenemies for a Millennium</i> Charlie Courtenay, the Earl of Devon, will tell the story of the relationship between the Earldom and the City of Exeter over the last 1000 years, recounting the good times and bad that helped shape our historic community.
22 February	Derek Gore	<i>The Kingdom of the Dumnonia</i> Historian Derek Gore from the University of Exeter will describe the Kingdom of the Dumnonia in the South West and how it evolved after the Romans left. He will show how recent excavations, stone sculpture inscriptions and pottery finds are helping to provide a clearer picture and explain how an organised church and trade, high status activity and some fabled kings feature in this still mysterious period.
1 March	Professor John Bryant	<i>Human Genetics – What's Ethics Got to Do with It?</i> Rapid developments in human genetics are raising very important questions about privacy, testing, confidentiality and genetic therapies. Professor John

		Bryant will make a welcome return to the Exeter Forum to look at the ethical issues associated with the developments in human genetics.
8 March	Salli Carr-Griffin	<i>A La Ronde, Exmouth</i> A La Ronde is a fascinating, unique house on the edge of Exmouth owned by the National Trust. This talk will focus on the transformational A la Ronde Project which includes the conservation of the internationally important Shell Gallery. The project also incorporates working with the local community and partnerships in a new way and will set the direction of how A La Ronde will continue to develop in future years.
15 March	Robin Thomas	<i>The Incorporation of Weavers, Fullers and Shearmen and Tuckers Hall</i> 400 years ago, a Royal Charter granted by King James 1 allowed the Weavers, Fullers and Shearmen of the City to become an Incorporation, based at Tuckers Hall. Robin's talk will look at the history and development of the Incorporation and its present role. He will also show the importance and historical significance of Tuckers Hall in Fore Street, Exeter.
22 March	Leigh Edwards	<i>Human Microbiome Part 2</i> Leigh makes a welcome return to the Forum to give his talk on the Human Microbiome Part 2. The Human Microbiome is the ecological community of microorganisms that literally share our body space. This talk focusses primarily on the gut microbes and the link between our immune systems, our brain, and our gut, and how it affects our general health.
29 March	Robert Hesketh	<i>Devon Castles</i> Devon has a fascinating array of castles and historic fortifications. Photographer and author Robert will explain how they were developed and altered over the centuries to meet the changing military, political and domestic needs of the people who used them. Examples from every major period from the Iron Age to England's newest castle, Castle Drogo will feature in the talk.

Let's Get Down to Topsham Business in 2023!



Let's start with the obvious - the whole Love Topsham team extends good wishes for a successful 2023. What a Christmas it was, thanks to the strong support of the local community for the range of events organised by Love Topsham from the Switch On celebrations and festive Market in late November, through competitions for the best Christmas shop windows and house decorations, and the lovely Christmas Trail for Children at the end of the school term.

We're so grateful for the support shown by visitors and residents ahead of Christmas, and with a new year here we hope that same solidarity will be shown in 2023, especially to our local businesses and shops. The commercial side of our lovely town will be our focus for the early part of 2023. Of course more details will be revealed in the near future as we discuss with businesses how best to help them, but to whet your appetite, here's some of what's coming up:



- A *Small Business Fair*, to publicise those many businesses in our town which do not need or have a shopfront showcase;
- *VIP Events* where businesses can showcase their activities to local people;
- *Social Media Publicity* to emphasise how and why shopping local keeps our town (and our environment) healthy.



More anon but next, a shameless plug for Love Topsham's new 2023 card! With the support of our community and businesses last year we achieved such a lot - a *Join The Club* event attracting hundreds of local people and boosting the volunteers in our groups and societies; almost 100 hanging baskets across the town throughout late spring, summer and early autumn; regular street entertainment in the warmer months; maintaining our public benches at Topsham Quay and the Recreation Ground; continual publicity for the town and the upkeep of our website and the town calendar; and of course the Christmas Lights, Festive Market and Children's Trail. Love Topsham is run entirely by unpaid volunteers as a Community Interest Company - and to do what we do, we need the £3 monthly donation from cardholders. This gives YOU a stake in the community and allows US to make our community even better. If you want to get a card and know more about what we do, please check out lovetopsham.co.uk or follow us on Twitter, Instagram or Facebook. We'll also be at Matthews Hall market in January, promoting the card. Enough of the advert! You need to get on with your New Year plans, so we'll leave you with some images from our spectacular Christmas events. All the very best for 2023, from your Love Topsham team.



Hogmanay Howlers



'Youth is when you're allowed to stay up late on New Year's Eve. Middle age is when you're forced to.' [Bill Vaughn]

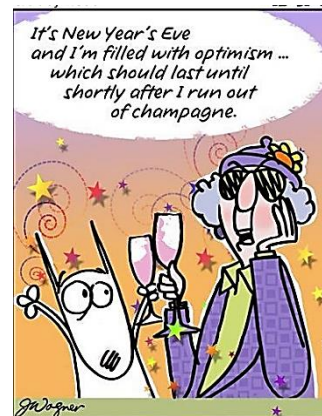
My resolution for 2023 is to accomplish the resolutions of 2022 which I should have done in 2021 because I promised them in 2020 and planned them in 2019.

A woman took an afternoon nap on New Year's Eve. When she woke up, she told her husband, 'I just dreamed that you gave me a diamond ring for a New Year's present. What do you think it all means?'

He replied, 'Aha, you'll know tonight!' At midnight, her husband handed her a small gift-wrapped present. Excited, she opened it quickly, but was even more surprised: In it was a book titled *The Meaning of Dreams*.



"Hurry! Our New Year's resolutions start in ten minutes."



Instead of saying, 'Happy New Year', couldn't we just break it into months? You know, like, 'Happy January!' I function better with smaller tasks.

What does a caterpillar do on 1st January? Turns over a new leaf.

A man who had too much to drink decided to walk home on New Year's Eve. A policeman stopped the man and asked where he was going. 'I'm on my way to a lecture,' the man replied.

The officer scoffed, 'Who gives lectures on New Year's Eve?' The man answered: 'My wife.'

Chris Isaac
Carpenter

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WCMC SERVICES JANUARY 2023

Sunday 1st January: New Year

Week 1

11-15	WBY	Holy Communion	Rev'd Sid
09-30	WST	Holy Communion	Rev'd Bill
09-30	CSM	Breakfast Family Service	Lay led
11-15	AYL	Holy Communion	Rev'd Margaret
18-00	EXT	Evening Worship	Rev'd Bill

Sunday 8th January: Epiphany

Week 2

09-30	EXT	Holy Communion	Rev'd Sid
11-30	AYL	Baptism	Rev'd Bill
11-15	FAR	Holy Communion	Rev'd Chris Cant
09-30	CSG	Breakfast Family Service	Rev'd Bill
11-15	WBY	Holy Communion	Rev'd Margaret

Sunday 15th January

Week 3

11-15	AYL	Family Service	Rev'd Bill
09-30	CSM	Holy Communion	Rev'd Bill
09-30	EXT	Morning Worship	Lay led
09-30	WST	Breakfast Family Service	Lay led
18-30	WBY	Evensong	Rev'd Peter

Sunday 22nd January

Week 4

11-15	CSG	Holy Communion	Rev'd Margaret
09-30	FAR	Morning Worship	Rev'd Bill
10-30	WBY	Café Church	Lay led

Sunday 29th January

Week 5

11-15	WBY	Whole Mission Holy Communion with Baptism	Rev'd Bill and Team
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*AYL Aylesbeare FAR Farringdon EXT Exton WST Woodbury Salterton WBY Woodbury
CSG Clyst St George CSM Clyst St Mary
For all queries, please contact Admin Officer, Jill at dupain@hotmail.co.uk or
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