

CLYST VALLEY NEWS



September 2023



Have a swooping September

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EDITOR'S NOTE



Hello and welcome to this September edition of the CVN. Thank you to Dave Aylott from Exeter for his wonderful photo of a pair of Godwits at RSPB Bowling Green Marsh, Topsham which graces our cover this month. Fabulous!

You know, I've long held the (not original) belief that there are these pivotal moments in our lifetime – a sort of fork in the road where the decision you take has an unconscious but profound, long-term impact on the direction that the rest of your life will take. And, of course, you'll never know the outcome if you had taken the alternative path. An example: Go that way and you'll unknowingly meet your future spouse. A second example: Take that path and you'll give up that job you've always cherished, only to find a new career that turns out to be just right for you and brings you much happiness and satisfaction. Of course, at the time you have no inkling as to where your chosen route will lead but just maybe you have a hunch that it looks right for you. Is it fate? I honestly don't know but, if you twist my arm, I'll probably admit that I do think that, on occasions, I've felt some sort of 'guidance' when confronting these decision points. And it's usually been right! I mention all of this because, in common with so many of our readers who are parents, our beloved offspring will in recent days have received their A level or GCSE results. In the case of the former, earlier decisions about what to do next will need to be confirmed or otherwise. It's no exaggeration to say that how they act on those letters or numbers appearing on the results sheets will essentially shape what's going to happen to these young people as they embark on their independent lives. I hope they all make the best decisions and wish them all the luck in the world. Trust your instincts! By the way, the two examples I gave earlier were not actually plucked from the air. They really happened to me...

Enjoy the magazine. Best wishes. Peter Skelton


Contributions, photos and letters to the editor for the October 2023 issue of the Clyst Valley News should be sent by email, to the editor, Peter Skelton, at clystvalleynews@gmail.com by Friday 15th September 2023 at the latest, please.

Please note that contributions may be edited.

If you experience any difficulty in receiving your copy of the CVN, please contact your local distributor, as follows:



CSG & Ebford	Isobel Stubbs	07826 806919
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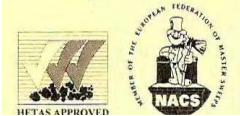
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If you'd like to advertise your business or organisation in the Clyst Valley News, please get in touch - with no obligation. Our rates are very competitive! Contact the Editor, Peter Skelton, at clystvalleynews@gmail.com.

YOUR PHOTOS ALWAYS NEEDED FOR THE COVER OF THE CVN! 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. Simples!



CLYST ST MARY



Village Hall

New Status for the Village Hall. The Village Hall officially transferred to become a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) on 1st July. Apart from a having to make payment to the CIO rather than the Village Hall, users should not notice any difference in hiring or using the Hall. The changes make it easier for Trustees to run the Hall and relieve them of some liabilities. As Trustees are all volunteers, we are hoping that this will make it easier to recruit new Trustees. Village Hall meetings are now open to everyone. If you have ideas about events, clubs or activities or just want to know what groups you can join, you are welcome to come along to our next committee meeting on Monday 18th September at 7.30 pm in the Hall. There will be an open session for any points people would like to raise. Our Treasurer will be retiring in December and we are looking for someone who could replace him. If you think this is a role you could fill, speak to our Chairman on 01392 874305 or come along to the meeting. Recruiting a new Treasurer is essential for the continued running of the Hall.

Defibrillator. The Village Hall now has a defibrillator which is fitted near to the entrance in a fully accessible cabinet. There are RevivR posters and flyers in the kitchen at the Hall. If you are in the Hall, feel free to take one away. If you scan the QR code on these resources with your 'phone, you will be taken directly to RevivR training. You can also use this link for a short instructional video [Learn CPR in 15 minutes with RevivR™ CPR Training](#).

Many of us will witness a cardiac arrest in our lifetime. Be ready for that day. The BHF's digital training tool – RevivR, teaches you vital CPR skills and how to use a defibrillator, in just 15 minutes on your mobile 'phone or tablet. Created by BHF's medical experts, the tool will take you through a real-life scenario, so you feel prepared for an emergency. You never know when you'll need to give someone CPR, so learn today. Our thanks go to British Heart Foundation and Bishops Clyst Parish Council for grants towards providing this equipment.

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.





Please help Support

CLYST VALLEY AFC



Maintain and improve the sports ground in Clyst St Mary.

We would be grateful if you would join the Clyst Valley AFC Lottery to help the club maintain and improve the sports facilities within the village which are used by the club, the primary school, the preschool and other organisations within the village.

To join you buy a lottery ticket number which will be entered in to every draw during the season. Each lottery ticket costs £10 and there is no limit on the number of tickets that individuals may hold. There will be 4 draws during the season where we will pay out £250 in prize money at each draw allocated as follows. 1st prize £100, 2nd prize £50, 3rd prize £20 and 8 joint 4th prizes of £10 each. Your number and the results of each draw will be published on the club website.

So each number has the chance of winning up to £400 over the 4 draws!!!

To join the lottery and help improve village facilities please complete the tear off slip below and forward it together with your payment by the 1st of November to:-

Peter Cain (Chairman) 10, Winslade Park Ave, Clyst St Mary, Exeter EX5 1DA or pass it back to the person who gave you the form.



I/We wish to purchase tickets in the Clyst Valley AFC Lottery at £10 each and enclose £

(Please make cheques payable to Clyst Valley FC)

Please print your name, address, postcode, telephone number here and date and sign the form.

THANK YOU

.....
.....
.....
.....

Sign:

Date:

East Devon Small Lottery Number SL0051



Bishops Clyst Parish Council

Clyst St Mary Upper Car Park – Thursday 31st August 2023. Please avoid parking in the upper car park on Thursday 31st August as tree surgeons will be undertaking tree coppicing and cutting back. Specifically, all spaces on the lefthand side as you look into the car park from the road and the top three spaces on the righthand side (Rydon Garage side).

Apples! The Parish Council has an orchard within the allotment gardens site in Church Lane. If anyone would like to pick some apples when they are ready, please contact the Clerk (details below) to arrange.

Make A Change Campaign! The National Association of Local Councils (NALC) is hosting a free online information event on getting involved with your local council. The event will be on Tuesday 14th November 2023 from 12 noon to 1.15 pm. If you would like to attend, visit <https://www.nalc.gov.uk/our-events> and follow the 'Democracy in Action' link.

Bishops Clyst Parish Council Vacancies. There are vacancies for Parish Councillors which we need to fill urgently. If you would like to be involved, you can be co-opted on to the Council. Just email your details to the Clerk (bishopsclyst@gmail.com) or drop a letter in to the Village Hall.

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. 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 12.30 pm. Call 01392 874405 or email bishopsclyst@gmail.com. *You are very welcome to drop in, but we recommend making an appointment to ensure someone is available to see you.*

Watching Your Speed in Our Communities!



Community Speed Watch (CSW) aims to educate drivers who exceed the speed limit and make communities safer by reducing vehicle speeds. Volunteers assist the police in achieving this aim by monitoring vehicle speeds in locations where speeding is a known problem. Volunteers are registered and only operate at police-approved sites and are trained in health and safety and how to use the speed monitoring equipment. A CSW volunteer records and logs details of vehicles exceeding the speed limit from which a staged warning system is employed using advisory letters. Details of vehicles which have already been recorded exceeding the speed limit are then passed on to the local police for attention. CSW operates under the direction of the police.

Ian Adams, Coordinator of the Devon and Cornwall Police Community Speed Watch for Clyst St Mary, said, 'Speed is one of the main factors in fatal road collisions. The difference of a few mph can mean the difference between life and death. Small increases in speed can have significant consequences and the faster someone is driving the less time they have to stop if something unexpected happens. It's so important that people drive according to the conditions of the road.'

Ian went on to say, 'Consider the consequences of causing injury or even death to others due to driving at excess speed. I don't want anyone in our local community to get the dreaded knock

on their door, hence the reason I have launched Community Speed Watch in Clyst St Mary and am looking for volunteers to join our CSW group.'

If you are interested in supporting the safety of our local community through CSW, you can register to join the group and complete your online training by going to CommunitySpeedWatch.org.



Walking Group



A reminder to anyone interested that there is an active walking group in the village. The group meets at 10 am at the Village Hall on the third Tuesday of each month. The walks these days usually take place in the mornings and are around 4/5 miles long. This is usually followed by a pub lunch or occasionally a picnic. In September the walk takes place on Tuesday 19th. The route has yet to be decided but do come along and share the exercise and the company of the walking group. We should add that we do all walk at our own risk. For any further information contact Peter or Pat Cusa on 01392 877907.

Exton Drama Club Are Looking for Contributors for Their Pantomime!



Quite a few of us Clyst St Mary residents belong to the Drama Club and we wanted you to know that we are planning a pantomime at the beginning of December in Exton Village Hall. I know that we have true supporters in the village and do hope that more of you will come along and enjoy the fun that pantomimes can give us. We are always looking for new members who have often wondered if they could do this or not so now is your chance to find out what it is all about. Musicians; painters; backstage workers; stage organisers; refreshment teams; and of course ACTORS. The Hall is an intimate space and we are a friendly bunch with amateur dramatics as one of our hobbies. Thank you and please give me a ring (01392877907) if you would like to chat through your thoughts; or use my email pat@cusa.org.uk. Hope this has got you thinking.

Clyst Valley Preschool



September brings a return to Preschool; sadly, the summer holidays were not so sunny this year but hopefully we may enjoy a mild autumn.

September will see some big changes here at Preschool: After 23 years at the helm, Barbara is stepping down from managing the Preschool and instead will be concentrating on the administrative side only. Alison will be our new Manager, having stood as Deputy for the last ten years. We will have a new Deputy Manager in Sophie, and Katie will be our Assistant Manager in charge of our Early Years curriculum.

If you are looking for a nurturing and fun Early Years setting for your child with dedicated, experienced and highly qualified staff, please check out our Instagram account and our website www.clystvalleypreschool.org. Alternatively, call us to arrange a visit on 01392 876615. We have spaces available for September and beyond, but these are filling fast!



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 pamelamgardner@gmail.com.

CLYST ST GEORGE AND EBFORD



Clyst St George Parish Council Chairman's Notes: September 2023

At our delayed July meeting on 2nd August, we were able to comment on a couple of planning applications as we had asked EDDC to await our comments.

The Parish Council plans to acquire some public open space behind Model Cottages and the Parish Hall are progressing and we are hoping to consult with residents and the school as to how to you want to utilise it this autumn.

It's hedge cutting time so can I ask if your hedge or even shrubs are impinging on a road or pathway, then get them cut back please.

The next coffee morning will be on Wednesday 6th September, 10.30 am – 12 noon in the Parish Hall in aid of Hospiscare (cakes are welcome). All the best.

John Manser

JEManser@outlook.com

01392 874861

Clyst St George Parish Hall



Upgraded Fire Alarm. Regular visitors to the Hall may have noticed that our fire alarm system has been upgraded. Brett from Be Secure South West installed the new system over several days in July and did a wonderful job in ensuring we were still able to honour our existing bookings. He also organised a comprehensive training session for committee members and will be testing the alarm for us on a weekly basis. Please remember that if you wish to hire the Hall and bring your own electrical equipment, do ensure that all items used in the hall are in good working order.

September Coffee Morning. The September coffee morning will be on Wednesday 6th. Do pop in for tea/coffee and a chat.

Big Breakfast. The Big Breakfast will be back on Sunday 17th September from 9.30 until 11.30 am. We are offering a full English breakfast with unlimited tea/coffee and toast for £7.50 and a breakfast bap with tea or coffee for £4.

Save the Dates. Quiz Night, Saturday 11th November; Big Breakfast, 19th November; Christmas Prosecco Party, Sunday 10th December.

If you would like to get involved in our community events, please contact Isobel Stubbs (Chair) on 07826 806919.

Norman's Weather Report



The drought of July 2022 was replaced in July this year by 110 mm (4.3 inches) of rain here at Ebford, just over half of which fell during the second week. The extra dry and warm weather of May and June caused a two-week early harvest of winter barley, carried out between the rainy days of July.

It is interesting to note that a very similar situation occurred in the recent years of 2016 and 2017; drought followed by 116 mm (4.6 inches) of rain. Over four inches is about double any July average here in Ebford. This seems to show that averages are no prediction of rain to come in any approaching month! Norman Cann

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.

Little Dragons Pre-School



As some of you may be aware Elly won't be at Little Dragons from September but the rest of our lovely staff will continue to be there and work within the Federation. We just wanted to give our new parents a heads up of what Little Dragons will look like going forward.

Little Dragons is in the process of being taken over by the First Federation. This has enabled them to look at their class structures for the future resulting in Little Dragons and Reception children being together to make a foundation stage unit. Little Dragons' provision will work alongside the Reception class; the children follow the same early years curriculum. Although the legal change can't happen immediately, we will start working closely together from September. We will also work towards extending Little Dragons' provision to be five days a week. Although there is risk the transfer could take time, we are passionate about ensuring the provision can stay open and continue to flourish. If you have any questions, please let us know at littledragons@live.com. Thank you. Elly, Sam, Emma, Emily and Codie

WOODBURY SALTERTON



New Kitchen for the Village Hall

The Committee felt that the present kitchen in the Hall leaves a lot to be desired so the plan is to move the kitchen to the green room at the end, which is currently used for storage. The project is in its early stages but fund raising for this has now started.

SOWTON VILLAGE



Harvest Festival at St Michael and All Angels

The date for the Harvest Festival in Sowton has been set for Sunday, 1st October. It will be followed by the annual Harvest Supper in Sowton Village Hall on Saturday, 7th October. This is always a well-attended, sold-out event and we look forward to another great evening together.

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WHITE CROSS MISSION COMMUNITY



A dedicated section of the magazine for news and information from the WCMC and our village churches. The list of services for September is, as always, on page 23.

Clyst St Mary



August Family Service. We have been working over the last year to build on our numbers at our Family Service and so far we have met new families within and outside Clyst St Mary and we thank them for coming along and supporting the church. On

Sunday 6th August Archdeacon Andrew took our Family Service that included the Baptism of six month-old Charlie who was our first baby at our relaunched Family Service. It was very special and his big brother Alfie was a very useful right-hand helper to the Archdeacon. The service was enjoyed by all of Charlie's family and the people who normally attend the church. Our thanks to Andrew for his hard work and for making it a very special service for the community.



Pat Cusa, Churchwarden. pat@cusa.org.uk

September Services. The Family Service will be held on 3rd September, starting at 9.30 am. This is a very informal gathering for parents and children. There will be a Family Communion Service on 17th September, 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.

Devon Historic Churches' Trust Annual Fun Day. This will take place on Saturday 10th September. It is a fun day out and a good way of helping the church. Get as many sponsors as you can and see how many churches you can visit on the day; or hold another event. Money raised goes to help the Trust and your local church. Sponsor forms available in the church.



Clyst St George



Cards for Sale in the Church. Recycled cards are available in the church. They 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'd also welcome any cards you may wish to recycle, except for Christmas cards. These can be left in the church for collection. Many thanks. Linda Wilkerson (01392 873699)

Woodbury Salterton



Farewell. At the July Family Service Clare Rooke, who was leading the service, said farewell to the Keery family, who will be returning this summer to their native Ireland. Ian, Erin and their three boys have been part of our church family for some time, regularly supporting the Family Services, and Erin has

been a much-loved member of the church choir. We will miss them but wish them every happiness in the future.

[This section continued on page 13]

Kids' Corner

What's happening this month?

International 'Talk like a Pirate' day

Since 2002, the 19th September has been a day of international silliness where we are encouraged to talk like a pirate. The idea was created by a group of friends in America who then contacted a journalist and convinced him to help them spread the word of their newly-created holiday.

Devon has been home to some of the most notorious pirates in history and whilst people often think of Brixham or Lundy Island as places inhabited by pirates, East Devon had its very own born-and-bred pirate in Jack Rattenbury, known as Rob Roy of the West. He grew up in Beer and was known to have visited Seaton, Sidmouth and Ladram Bay.

In summary, 'Avast me hearties! I've got a special task for ye. Try to be talking like pirates as best ye can. Shiver me timbers!'



Get involved...

Have a go at solving the riddle below. Send your answers in via email to clystvalleynews@gmail.com and you could be featured in the next issue.

Riddle: What is yours but mostly used by other people?

We would love to have some children writing for the Clyst Valley News.

If you would like to get involved, please email

clystvalleynews@gmail.com

**Last month's answer: What two things can you never eat for breakfast?
Lunch and dinner!**

What A Splendid Idea! The School Leavers' Service, held in church on the last day of term, was led by teacher Mrs Nikki Wickes, assisted by Mr Tim Naish. The leavers were surprised to be summoned one by one to take their place in the vicar's stall where Nikki put a robe on them, a school tie and then a hat similar to one which a witch might wear. This was in fact the Sorting Hat (from the *Harry Potter* stories). Mr Naish then addressed each pupil in a strange voice and said something about each individual child before deciding to send the child to Exmouth College, King's, etc. All the children were enthralled by this and it will be something they will doubtless remember for the rest of their lives.

Rev'd Sid Humphries gave a short talk and presented each leaver with a Bible, a gift from the church. This will be the last year that the church gives copies of the Bible to pupils as they leave the school. For some years now the church has been giving a child-friendly copy of the Bible to each child as they start school so they can look up at home the stories they learn in school and their collective worship in church. This year's leavers are the last group who did not receive a Bible when they started.

Coffee Mornings. Every Saturday morning from 9.30 till 10.30 outside in the churchyard but inside the church if wet. A chance for a friendly chat and raise some funds for our church.



~~~~~  
**POETRY CORNER**

*Jabberwocky*, chosen by John Smith

This month we have another in our series of famous poems that some readers will have come across before. This poem is usually described as a 'nonsense poem' and is by the famous author of *Alice in Wonderland*, Lewis Carroll but perhaps it demonstrates that many words rely on their sounds to convey their meaning and that was how they were first invented. Shakespeare made up over three hundred words that are still in use today. Read the poem out loud and it makes perfect sense, certainly to any children in the family – of any age!

*Jabberwocky* by Lewis Carroll

'Twas brillig, and the slithy toves  
 Did gyre and gimble in the wabe;  
 All mimsy were the borogoves,  
 And the mome raths outgrabe.

'Beware the Jabberwock, my son!  
 The jaws that bite, the claws that catch!  
 Beware the Jubjub bird, and shun  
 The frumious Bandersnatch!'

He took his vorpal sword in hand:  
 Long time the manxome foe he sought—  
 So rested he by the Tumtum tree,  
 And stood awhile in thought.

And as in uffish thought he stood,  
 The Jabberwock, with eyes of flame,  
 Came whiffing through the tulgey wood,  
 And burbled as it came!

One, two! One, two! And through and  
 through  
 The vorpal blade went snicker-snack!  
 He left it dead, and with its head  
 He went galumphing back.

'And hast thou slain the Jabberwock?  
 Come to my arms, my beamish boy!  
 O frabjous day! Callooh! Callay!'  
 He chortled in his joy.

'Twas brillig, and the slithy toves  
 Did gyre and gimble in the wabe;  
 All mimsy were the borogoves,  
 And the mome raths outgrabe.

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**Colyton 11+ this September?**  
 Places still available for mock 11+ CEM tests  
 on 8<sup>th</sup> July, 20<sup>th</sup> August and 3<sup>rd</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> September  
 at Lympstone Village Hall.  
 For more details contact Jane on 07730 877889

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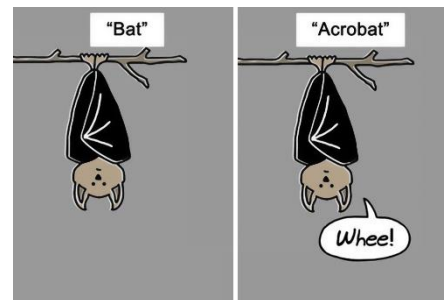


**LETTER TO THE EDITOR**

Dear Peter  
Here is a picture of our lovely new neighbours' property in Clyst St George who charm us with their horticultural prowess in our village.  
Kind regards  
Barbara Horner, Clyst St George



**MONTHLY GIGGLE**

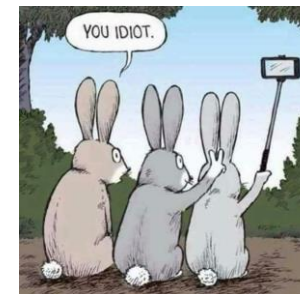


Doctor: Face the window, would you? Now stick out your tongue.  
Patient: But – why am I facing the window?  
Doctor: Because I don't like the man next door.

The famous statesman, William Penn, had two old aunts named Natalie and Ellie who were great at baking pies. But, alas, they got greedy and raised the prices up and up till all the people in Quakertown were talking about the pie rates of Penn's aunts.

My mate said that he's booked a luxury holiday in India. I said 'Mumbai?'  
He replied, 'No, my dad paid for it.'

I went to buy a parrot from a pet shop. They were in cages at different levels with the top ones being very expensive. I asked why and was told that the top ones were on higher perches.



I went to the seaside for a holiday last year. The landlady said to me, 'We charge twenty pounds a night, bed and breakfast – or twelve pounds if you make your own bed.'  
'Oh, all right,' I said, 'I'll make the bed.' And the landlady gave me a saw, a hammer and some nails.

What did they say to Julius Caesar when he went into a pub?  
'Ale, Caesar?'

**AND FINALLY...**

**The Sky Tonight: September**



We'll start our journey across the heavens this month with the three stars that form the Summer Triangle. Look overhead around 10 pm and you will see a bright star at the head of a large cross formation stretching down towards the SW. This is Deneb, the brightest star in the constellation of Cygnus, the Swan. (It is also, for obvious reasons, known as the Northern Cross.) Incidentally, when astronauts land on Mars, because of the inclination of that planet's axis, this will be their



North Pole Star! *About six full-moon widths to the left of Deneb is a giant gas cloud illuminated by the star. Look for it on a dark night and you will see it has the shape of North America – which is the name given to this nebula.* The bottom-most of the line of stars forming the upright of the cross is named Alberio. *With the naked eye it appears as a single star but with binoculars it resolves into what it considered as the most beautiful double star in the sky, one component being golden yellow and the other fainter one blue-green.* The first star to have its distance from Earth measured was in this constellation, the insignificant (but relatively close) star, 61 cygni. This was done by measuring its apparent shift against more distant stars on two occasions six months apart and applying trigonometry, using the diameter of the Earth's orbit as the base line. *If you have a dark sky you will see that the Swan flies down the Milky Way. Look with binoculars and you will see that this misty band resolves into a myriad of stars!* The Milky Way is our galaxy, the star city of which our Sun is but one insignificant member part way out from the central black hole region. The whole disc of the galaxy is slowly rotating, taking about 225 million years to go around once – so the disc was last in its present position when the early dinosaurs walked our Earth! *Follow the Milky Way below Deneb and you will see it splits into two bands. This dark area, called the Great Rift, is caused by dust blocking our view of the stars beyond.*

*Now look to the right of Deneb and you will see an even brighter star. This is Vega, the brightest star in the constellation of Lyra, the Lyre. To the left of Vega is the star Epsilon lyrae. On a clear night (and if you have good vision) you will see it is a double star but steady binoculars will show that each component is itself double. Below Vega you will see a narrow parallelogram of four stars. Look between the lower two with binoculars and you may be able to discern a tiny ring shape.* This is the Ring Nebula, a shell of gas blown away from a very hot central star much too faint to be seen.

*Deneb and Vega form the base of our inverted Summer Triangle so look down towards the southern horizon and you will find the apex of the triangle marked by Altair, in the constellation of Aquila, the Eagle.* It is one of the brightest stars in the sky. It has two fainter companions, the rest of the constellation forming a double V under it. Like The Swan, the Eagle is flying down the Milky Way towards the 'teapot' of Sagittarius we met in our July foray.

Now to find my favourite constellation! *Look to the left, slightly above Altair and directly below Deneb and you will find a small diamond shape of four stars with one underneath looking like a fish jumping.* This is what it is – almost. It's the constellation of Dolphin, the Dolphin.

To find our last constellations we need to use a planet as a guide. *Look for the yellow glow of Saturn quite low down in the SE. The stars to the right belong to Capricornus, the Sea-Goat whilst those to the left are part of the constellation of Aquarius, the Water-Carrier. Finally look directly below Saturn and almost on the horizon is the star Formalhaut in the Southern Fish.* Aquarius is pouring water over them!

The 23<sup>rd</sup> of this month marks the Autumn Equinox. This is when the overhead noon Sun crosses from north to south of the equator and on this date, night and day lengths are equal. If you compare sunset times for a period either side of this date you will see they change rapidly day by day unlike those around the Solstice, 21<sup>st</sup> June, when the times do seem to genuinely 'stand still'.

Turning now to other events, on the 4<sup>th</sup> the Moon and the planet Jupiter (which we will be seeing much more of in future months) are low in the East and on the 5<sup>th</sup>, late in the evening the Moon is just below the Pleiades (now doubly immortalised in the 'Seven Sisters' series of

novels). The Moon is near Saturn on the 26<sup>th</sup>. On the 19<sup>th</sup>, Neptune, the most distant planet of the solar system, is at opposition. It is only shining at magnitude 7.8, which, because of the scale that is used, is less than half the brightness of magnitude 6 – the faintest visible naked eye star. *If you want the thrill of spotting this most distant wanderer, find Saturn low down in the SE then with binoculars sweep to the left through the stars of Aquarius and at about the same distance again look for a tiny bluish disc under a ring of five stars, part of the constellation of Pisces, the Fish.* My congratulations if you spot this most elusive of our planets!  
Clyde Bish

### The Exeter Forum Talks Programme: September 2023



The Wednesday weekly talks take place at the Mint Methodist Church in Fore Street, Exeter, EX4 3AT. Coffee and socialising from 10.15 am; the talk starts usually at around 10.45 am. All welcome to attend these meetings. There is a small admission charge for non-members. More information at [www.exeterforum.org/talks](http://www.exeterforum.org/talks).

| Date         | Speaker           | Title                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|--------------|-------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 6 September  | Davy Johnston     | <i>Ceremonial Exeter</i><br>Davy Johnston is one of the Mayoralty's Mace Sergeants and is the Beadle of Tuckers Hall. His talk will look at his ceremonial duties, including civic processions and welcoming visitors, featuring the customs and regalia of the city.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| 13 September | Candy Atkins      | <i>Spitfire Girl</i><br>Candy's lively talk is about her mother Jackie Moggridge who wrote the book <i>Spitfire Girl - My life in the Sky</i> , reprinted in 2014. Jackie joined the Air Transport Auxiliary (ATA) in World War Two and was a pioneer for women in aviation. She flew up to 5 different warplanes every day with only a map and a compass to help her. The ATA was a civilian organisation set up to ferry new, repaired and damaged military aircraft between factories, assembly plants, depots and squadrons.                                                                                                                                                                               |
| 20 September | Aylwyn Bowen      | <i>Making his Mark in Exeter</i><br>Popularly known for his public artworks across Exeter, Aylwyn will give a colourful and entertaining talk on his fifty years working as a designer/illustrator for many local and national companies. Alwyn's professional career, since studying at Exeter College of Art in the 1970s, spans the use of traditional skills and more recent digital art techniques, all of which he will present on screen as well as in hand-produced examples.                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| 27 September | Lt Col Tony Clark | <i>Mapping Dartmoor</i><br>This talk will cover the development of the mapping of Dartmoor from Queen Elizabeth I's reign to the present day via the creation of Ordnance Survey, the use of triangulation, and aerial surveys. The accuracy of early maps drawn by hand is incredible, especially as local guides had to be engaged before venturing into the wilderness of Dartmoor. Lieutenant Colonel Tony Clark OBE, late of the Parachute Regiment grew up in Okehampton and via military service around the rest of the world returned to Dartmoor 27 years ago to look after the military training area for 17 years. He is chair of the Dartmoor Trust and assists with the organisation of Ten Tors. |

## Making the Deserts Bloom. Part 2



How it begins...

This month we visit a very different kind of desert where there is even less rain than in the Negev in southern Israel; here every single tree has to be regularly supplied with water pumped from large wells dug by each forest plot. The water table lies approximately three metres down.

Due to the wind, sand deserts such as in this area in Abu Dhabi on the fringe of the Empty Quarter are constantly on the move; this makes it difficult for plants to establish naturally. The first photo shows hessian tree guards to protect the very young plants from wind and sand damage.

The trees are chosen for their drought resistance and some have very long roots. The principal ones are the two Mesquites (*Prosopis spicigera* and *Prosopis juliflora*), the Christ thorn (*Zizyphus spina Christi*) with inch-long thorns and blood red berries, the Gum arabica (*Acacia nilotica*) and the Umbrella thorn (*Acacia tortilis*). It takes up to seven years for the tree roots to reach the water table and grow away on their own.

Between eight and nine hundred million people live in and around the deserts of the world and these populations are increasing rapidly whilst at the same time desert areas are spreading equally fast but we know that there are ways to stop them and therein lies our hope. Tony Rule



...and how it ends.

## Love Topsham's Summer Entertainment – August



Hello and it's September already – but just because autumn is around the corner, there is no need to stay indoors! And there are two outdoor events organised by Love Topsham that we have lined up this month. Firstly, on Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> September

we have the arrival of the wonderful *Exmouth A Capella Ladies Choir*. This is a fabulous group of local women who will begin their 'two-hour tour of Topsham' at 11 am outside Matthews Hall, and who will then move around the town entertaining shoppers at different points, until 1 pm.

This troupe have played at two other Love Topsham events over the past 12 months and were a great hit, so do try to catch some of their performances. You won't regret it! Secondly, on Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> September we have the return of the *Love Topsham New Residents Meet-Up*. This will take place from 6 pm at the Lord Nelson Pub and Kitchen. It's open to people who have arrived in Topsham since 2021 and they can bring a partner (no under-18s alas, because of licensing laws). It's the perfect opportunity to meet other newcomers and enjoy a complimentary glass of Prosecco and some canapés! Please check out the Love Topsham website ([lovetopsham.co.uk](http://lovetopsham.co.uk)) to complete the form. We can only accept 50 people in total so it's first come, first served via the form. We have a busy autumn programme of events to discuss in the October issue but in the meantime if you're visiting town please enjoy the last couple of months of our wonderful hanging baskets – they're looking delightful as they enjoyed so much 'natural watering' from our wet summer! And also do please check out the new accessible benches at Topsham Quay and the Recreation Ground.

That's it from us for this month. Enjoy September. All the best. The Love Topsham team

## Researching Family History: A Short Guide. Part 3 of 3



In Part 2 we covered names, dates, places and looking horizontally – widening your search.

*Pitfalls and Accuracy.* You want your family history to be as accurate as possible. However, unfortunately there are quite likely to be errors in what you find. Some of these errors are infuriating rather than serious. For example, it does not really matter if your

great-great-grandmother was christened on 18<sup>th</sup> May or 25<sup>th</sup> May but it does make a huge difference to your family history if it is subject to the third type of error discussed later. There are three types of errors.

First, the original record was wrong. Even census data can be wrong; I have found many cases where the recorded age of a person is obviously wrong because it does not accord with that person's other records.

Second, the original record has been misinterpreted when transcribing and digitalising it and placing it on the web. If possible, search for the original record and not just its interpretation – use a provider which enables you to see and enlarge the digitally scanned copy of the original document recording an event. Occasionally you may find the interpretation of a parish record, especially of a date, does not exactly agree with what you see on the scanned document. Again, such errors will not normally detract from the main story of the family you are researching. But dig deeper or wider if there is a large discrepancy in dates.

Third, researchers who have constructed family trees have not given enough thought to interpreting information they have found or not double-checked events. In one case the researchers mixed up two sisters to such an extent that they had each sister being married to the other's husband! The most common pitfall is to rely on only one or two providers. This is especially the case if the provider gives you a family tree of the person you are researching. There is plenty of evidence of 'copy and paste', ie researchers X, Y and Z have simply copied what researcher A or B has produced. I have found numerous examples of 'copy and paste' which produce erroneous results. That being said, looking at family trees is often a good starting point for more detailed searches.

*Disappointments and Elation.* Don't be surprised if your research doesn't take you back very far. At some point you have to accept that you have come to a full stop and you can't go back any further or with confidence that what you find is accurate or believable. For example, the family names on my mother's side were quite common and they lived in London in the 19<sup>th</sup> century so it was not possible to identify a particular ancestor because there were so many born with the same name and about the same time in the same locality. It helps if your ancestors have unusual names and lived in a small rural area. Also, as mentioned above, family names can change over time and so, however many variations on the name you input into the website, you may still draw a blank. Although you may well be disappointed at times there are others when you are excited; for example, when you find a piece of information which opens up a whole new chapter of the family history. So persevere and hopefully you will be rewarded with an interesting history.

Email me at [m.j.macmillen@btinternet.com](mailto:m.j.macmillen@btinternet.com) if you'd like a slightly longer and more detailed version of the three parts in one Word document. Malcolm Macmillen



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09:30 WST Holy Communion  
 09:30 CSM Family Service  
 11:15 AYL Holy Communion  
 11:15 WBY Holy Communion  
 18:00 EXT Evening Worship

Week 1  
 Rev'd Margaret  
 TBA  
 Rev'd Tony  
 Rev'd Peter  
 Rev'd Roz

## Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> September

09:30 EXT Holy Communion  
 09:30 CSG Breakfast Family Service  
 11:15 FAR Holy Communion  
 11:15 WBY Holy Communion

Week 2  
 Rev'd Chris Cant  
 Christine Grist  
 Rev'd Sid  
 Rev'd Nigel

## Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> September

09:30 CSM Holy Communion  
 09:30 EXT Morning Worship  
 09:30 WST Breakfast Family Service  
 11:15 AYL Family Service  
 18:30 WBY Evensong

Week 3  
 Rev'd Sid  
 Lay led  
 Rev'd Peter  
 Christine Grist  
 Christine Grist

## Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> September

09:30 FAR Morning Worship  
 10:30 WBY Café Church  
 11:15 CSG Harvest Festival Holy Communion

Week 4  
 Rev'd Karen  
 Lay led  
 Rev'd Sid

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