



January 2024



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**EDITOR'S NOTE**



Hello and welcome to this January edition of the CVN. A very Happy New Year to all our readers! I hope we can look forward to 2024 with confidence and optimism. My grateful thanks to Susie Boyland for our lovely cover photo of the Clyst St Mary 'lake' in all its glory. It could be the French Riviera! Very exotic.

Lots to mull over as we bid farewell to one year and welcome in the next. We'll all have our own personal thoughts at this time of the year – some happy, some not so. I guess there will be people glad to see the back of 2023, for all sorts of reasons; while others wouldn't mind extending it a bit! Wherever you find yourself on that spectrum, may your hopes, dreams and aspirations for the New Year bring you peace of mind and reasons to be positive about the future. Cheers!

I hope you enjoy the magazine. Do have a go at our New Year Quiz on page 19; and find out about Robert Burns in Kids' Corner and see all the words to his famous poem 'Auld Lang Syne' on page 20. I close with my immense gratitude to all the volunteers who help with the production and distribution of the CVN, month in, month out, come rain or shine. Thank you for all your superlative efforts over the past year. And of course a big thank you to our sponsor and advertisers for your continuing financial support.

I'd like to sign off with a quotation from Tom Golway, who's a respected American technologist: 'Chaos Theory teaches us that the key to the future lies in the sensitive dependencies among present conditions. Small changes in the present conditions may lead to drastically different outcomes. As we start a new year, take the time to reflect on those small positive changes you can make in your life. Sometimes very little is needed to make a happy life.' Best wishes. Peter Skelton

**Contributions, photos and letters to the editor for the February 2024 issue of the Clyst Valley News should be sent by email, to the editor, Peter Skelton, at [clystvalleynews@gmail.com](mailto:clystvalleynews@gmail.com) by Monday 15<sup>th</sup> January 2023 at the latest, please. Please note that contributions may be edited.**

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**VOLUNTEER CVN DELIVERER STILL NEEDED**

We continue to be short of someone to deliver the Clyst Valley News in the north-west area of the Cat and Fiddle. This has been done recently by Dan and Bev Maher and we would like to thank them for the help they have given us but unfortunately they are unable to carry on. If anyone would like to volunteer to do this job, please let me know and it would be greatly appreciated. Ivor Spriggs (01392 874382)

**WHY NOT ADVERTISE IN THE CLYST VALLEY NEWS?**

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! The CVN is delivered free to around 1300 homes and businesses in Clyst St Mary, Clyst St George and Ebford, and Woodbury Salterton; with other copies going to Exton, Aylesbeare, Farringdon and Woodbury. We also cover news from Topsham. In addition we post the magazine online (in full colour!) via various Facebook village and town group pages (including Woodbury and Topsham), parish council websites, etc; and we have an emailing service whereby subscribers receive a free pdf colour copy of the magazine each month directly in their inboxes. Contact the Editor, Peter Skelton, for more information at [clystvalleynews@gmail.com](mailto:clystvalleynews@gmail.com).

**YOUR PHOTOS ALWAYS NEEDED FOR THE COVER OF THE CVN!**



Photographers: Why not share your photos 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 most months. Try to use relatively high-definition settings but that's not a must. Just email them to [clystvalleynews@gmail.com](mailto:clystvalleynews@gmail.com) and we'll do the rest. Simple!

**CLYST ST MARY**



**Village Hall**

*Next Village Hall Committee Meeting.* Village Hall meetings are 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 15<sup>th</sup> January

at 7.30 pm in the Hall.

*New Treasurer Urgently Required.* Our Treasurer retired in December and we are now in urgent need of someone who could replace him. If you think this is a role you could fill, please speak to our Chairman on 01392 874305 or come along to the meeting. Although most of the day-to-day work of running the Hall is now contracted out, it is essential that we have sufficient Trustees to oversee the management and development of the Hall. Recruiting a new Treasurer is essential for the continued running of the Hall; if you have a background in finance and would like to help to keep this vital local amenity going, we need you **NOW!**

*Hiring the Hall.* 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](mailto:bookings@clyststmaryvillagehall.co.uk). We look forward to seeing you soon.





## Bishops Clyst Parish Council



*Bishops Clyst Parish Council Vacancies.* There are still 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](mailto:bishopsclyst@gmail.com)) or drop a letter in to the Village Hall.

*Community Grants.* Community grants 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/](http://www.bishopsclyst.org.uk/community-grants/)).

*Parish Council Meetings.* Council meetings take place on the second Monday of the month and dates, agendas and minutes are posted on our website ([www.bishopsclyst.org.uk](http://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](mailto:bishopsclyst@gmail.com). *You are very welcome to drop in, but we recommend making an appointment to ensure someone is available to see you.*

## Clyst St Mary Primary School



turnout of parents enjoyed



As part of their RE studies this term, Class 5 took the train into town to visit the historic Exeter Cathedral. It was, of course, a fascinating experience for the class who thoroughly enjoyed it. After the tour, we had a wander through the Christmas market, delighting in the wonderful sights and smells wafting from the food stalls!

Our KS2 classes put on an enchanting 'Christingle' performance on the evening of 6<sup>th</sup> December: they were brilliant and the excellent turnout of parents enjoyed the show immensely.

Christmas Lunch and Jumper Day once again were a smash hit: the children looked so festive in their Christmas gear; they pulled crackers, tucked into their turkey dinners and sang along to Christmas music – a really festive atmosphere!

Our last week of term saw our KS1 classes performing 'The Donkey Seller' Nativity at the Village Hall and Clyst St Mary Church. They all practised their parts diligently in the weeks beforehand and their performance delighted their families who came to watch.

November and December are always busy months at school – with lots of festive activities and excitement for the children – so I'm sure the holidays were a welcome break for everyone: a chance to spend time with family and friends, to recharge and prepare for the New Year ahead.

**QUIZ NIGHT** at the CAT & FIDDLE

Depending on interest, we are looking at organising a pub quiz in the New Year once a month on a Thursday evening at 7pm.

If you are interested, please contact,  
**Dave Moore on 07971 843621**  
**Email. [dave.marg.moore@gmail.com](mailto:dave.marg.moore@gmail.com)**

We would like to think we could get at least 5 teams of 4 to make it worth while

## Clyst Valley Preschool



*Happy New Year!!* A big thank you to all who attended our Christmas Market on 3<sup>rd</sup> December; we were overjoyed to see it so busy – thanks to everyone we have now raised the fantastic amount of £867 to be able to develop a specific area of our garden for our children to plant vegetables and flowers, and to explore wildlife and nature. Our children's Christmas Party celebrations were enjoyed by all. They especially loved meeting Santa and receiving their gifts; they also made their teachers very proud by performing and singing so well in our annual Nativity, always a very special event for all of our families...some very proud and emotional parents that day!

During spring term, our focus will be on traditional fairy tales alongside some more modern versions of these; the children will be enjoying exploring these stories through role play, arts and crafts, small world play, music, songs and of course books.

We have some spaces available for an immediate start, and our waiting list for next year is filling fast, especially for two year-olds when many will be funded for 15 hours a week from April 2024. So, if you are looking for a nurturing and fun Early Years setting for your child with dedicated, enthusiastic, very experienced and highly qualified staff please check out our Instagram account and our website [www.clystvalleypreschool.org](http://www.clystvalleypreschool.org). To arrange a visit, please call 01392 876615 or email [admin@clystvalleypreschool.org](mailto:admin@clystvalleypreschool.org).



## Walking Group



Should you feel the need for some bracing outdoor air after the Christmas festivities, why not come for a walk with the walking group. Never too demanding, a morning walk followed by pub lunch and good company. The location of the January walk is yet to be decided but we meet as always in the Village Hall car park at 10 am, this time on Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> January. We walk at our own risk but all are welcome. For more information contact Peter Cusa on 01392 877907.

## 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](mailto:pamelamgardner@gmail.com).

## Anyone for Tennis?



Some of us play tennis in Clyst St Mary on Friday mornings. Why not join us for some fresh air, exercise and good fun? Call Janice on 01392 876858

**Badminton Club**  
Clyst St Mary Village Hall

The club, which plays on Tuesday evenings in the Village Hall will re-start after the summer break on:  
**Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> September 2023 at 8 pm.**  
ALL are welcome (young and not so young!) so come and join us. It is good exercise and a sociable evening.  
For more information please contact either:  
Hilary 0139 2874722 or Anne ([annecurryer@gmail.com](mailto:annecurryer@gmail.com))  
Thank you.

## CLYST ST GEORGE AND EBFORD



### Clyst St George Parish Hall

**AGM.** We held our AGM on 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2023 where trustees were re-elected and roles for 2024 confirmed: Isobel Stubbs will remain as Chair, Paul Bragg as Vice Chair, Donna Pagliero as



Secretary, Claire Marks as Treasurer and Alan Marks as Booking Officer. 2023 was a successful year for the Parish Hall and we are lucky to have such dedicated and enthusiastic committee members. An enormous amount of work goes on behind the scenes in terms of both event preparation and ensuring that the Hall is a welcoming and safe environment. Event planning for 2024 includes more Big Breakfasts, another quiz and a summer fête. We are also planning to upgrade our audio-visual system and looking at how the Hall could be 'greener'.

**Big Breakfast.** The first Big Breakfast of 2024 will be on Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> January from 9.30 until 11 am. We are offering a cooked breakfast with unlimited toast and tea/coffee for £7.50 and a sausage/bacon roll with tea or coffee for £4.



**Christmas Prosecco Party.** The parish Prosecco Party was a roaring success and a fabulous start to the festive season. Claire and Donna prepared a delicious selection of canapés and with Helen in charge of the bar there was no danger of anyone's glass running dry. Jacquie, Alan and Paul, our social butterflies, completed the Parish Hall team. Thank you to everyone who supported this community event and we wish you all a joyous 2024!



**Get Involved.** If you would like to get involved in any of our community events, please contact Isobel Stubbs (chair) on 07826 806919.

### Lady Seaward's C of E Primary School



Welcome to 2024! A new year brings in the prospect of new beginnings and new applications. If your child is due to start Reception in September 2024 and you would like to consider Lady Seaward's, please join us for an Open Afternoon on 10<sup>th</sup> January at 2 pm. Contact the school office on 01392 873629 or email

[admin@clyst-st-george.devon.sch.uk](mailto:admin@clyst-st-george.devon.sch.uk) to book your space.

### 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



The rather wet autumn continued in November with another 133 mm (5.2 inches) of rain here at Ebford; this month less precipitation during the last ten days, in fact only 7 mm (0.3 inches). November is usually a wet month, 2021 the exception in recent years showing only 15 mm (0.6 inches). In spite of that, the average between 2018 and 2023 at Ebford was in fact 123 mm (4.8 inches). Norman Cann

[Continued on page 9]

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[Clyst St George & Ebford section continued from page 7]

**Little Dragons Pre-School**



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 have started 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. Any questions, please let us know at [littledragons@live.com](mailto:littledragons@live.com). Thank you. Elly, Sam, Emma, Emily and Codie

**WOODBURY SALTERTON**



**Woodbury Salterton C of E Primary School**

Here at Woodbury Salterton Primary School it has been a busy half term so far and the children in Class 1 are all buzzing with excitement about the upcoming Christmas events in school. The whole school are enjoying learning



the songs for our Nativity performance and will soon be practising in the church, ready for our final performance.

In November, Class 1 marked Remembrance Day by making poppy wreaths and decorating biscuits and as part of our Friday Sharing Assembly the children held a two-minute silence. The children also learnt about Diwali, the Hindu festival of light and made some beautiful paper lanterns and clay diva lamps.

For *Children in Need*, the children in Class 1 worked collaboratively to create some transient art for Forest School by assembling an impressive Pudsey Bear using natural materials.

In our English lessons, the children in Class 2 have absolutely loved learning about Rosa Parks and we believe that many of them have been inspired to stand up for what they believe is right. The children produced some thoughtful writing.

In maths, the children have enjoyed learning about 2D and 3D shapes. The children are getting really good at knowing the differences between the 2D and 3D shapes and naming them.

The children have been enjoying developing the shading techniques and have practised creating light and shade in their pieces of art work. They enjoyed using the computer software *Kleki* to produce digital images and are now currently working on their end of unit black and white masterpiece!

During Anti-Bullying Week the children discussed how important it is to make a noise about bullying. The class discussed what bullying is and learnt the acronym STOP: Several Times On Purpose. We discussed how important it is to tell an adult that you trust if you or somebody that you know is being bullied. The class then wrote a class poem (poetry has taken over Class 3) reminding people what to do if they are being bullied.



**WHITE CROSS MISSION COMMUNITY**



**Rev'd Bill Lemmey: Valedictory Remarks – On Dealing with Loss**

It seems very strange to me to use the word 'valedictory' as I prepare to leave White Cross. Many, or most, of you, will know the huge sense of loss I have experienced lately, with the deaths of my stepson Dane last year, then my mother this August and finally (for the time being) my dearly beloved Daff in September. I am feeling a little maudlin as I write this, understandably. My own health has also been impacted; my prostate cancer is now being kept at bay (my PSA rate is less than 0.01, which is great – fellow men, get yourself checked out), but I still get very fatigued. Sometimes it is difficult to tell whether it is emotional or physical – probably both.



I am re-reading some of the stories about Abraham (in Genesis) at the moment, and empathising with him about how it must have felt to have to go to a different land, one he wasn't necessarily familiar with. Like him, I am about to go on a new, different journey.

So where does that leave me? As I have been off sick, permanently, since just after Easter, I have been unable to officially communicate with my churchwardens and congregations. I really wanted to go to one meeting, to try to explain things, but was told firmly not to. I can see why. If you can't work, you can't work. However, I have managed to stay in touch in a very low-key way and am, of course, indebted to the many retired clergy, lay workers and churchwardens who have supported both the Mission and me. However, many don't know what they can do to help, if at all, which is quite understandable. The schools have been wonderful too – a couple of ready meals arrived on my doorstep just after Daff died; one from an Asian family (I assume) who had only heard of me. It has been a privilege to give a little back to Woodbury School Art Department.

Of course, I want to thank everyone who helped make Daff's funeral go as smoothly as possible – I won't name you as you know who you are. We will have raised about £1500 to be split between her three charities – thank you all.

But also thank all of you who have made our brief sojourn with you here in White Cross, and specifically in Woodbury village, such a good time, when not dealing with death, dying and grief. I am sad that I haven't done more, and got to know many of you a little better – but sometimes these things are just not meant to be. Only God knows why.

So, I am journeying on to pastures new, I know not where exactly – though do pray for me and Seaton, where I might settle. I have something new to do with my life, I know not what. I need some time to reflect and wait and decide what to do in early retirement (through ill health). If Abraham moved in his considerable old age, so can I, much younger, though perhaps less healthy. I will hold you all in my heart and pray for the right new person/people to lead WCMC into the future. We are all on a journey; may it be God's will for you and for me. God bless, Bill.

**Clyst St Mary**



*Christmas Tea Party.* We had a very successful Tea Party in the church on Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> December and a big thank you to all of you who baked and made sandwiches and generally helped to make the afternoon such a success, and, also, to organist Judy Reeves for playing for us.



*Family Services.* Our December Family Service was taken by Rev'd Tony Raven, and it was lovely to see the increasing number of children and families taking part and enjoying the activities. Our next Family Service will be on 7<sup>th</sup> January at 9.30 am. Our Holy Communion Service is on Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> January. Coffee and biscuits are served after both services with a chance to chat to old friends and make new ones.

**Supporting the Church.** We would like to give our very grateful thanks to all those who have so generously given grants and donations. The new oil tank is in place and the church is lovely and warm again. Unfortunately, we still need to increase our income to cover rising costs, and while individual donations are extremely welcome, a regular monthly commitment enables us to plan in advance. If you feel able to make even a small regular payment, please contact our Treasurer Gill Fenwick. at [gill\\_fenwick@hotmail.com](mailto:gill_fenwick@hotmail.com) or on 01395 239802.



**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**



**Church Christmas Services.** Although this news will go into the January edition, the magazines will be out early so a reminder that The Carol Service is on Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> December at 6 pm and the Christmas Communion on Christmas Eve starts at 11.30 pm.

**Carol Singing Round the Village.** Likewise, if you intend to join members of the church choir carol singing round the village on Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> you should wear bright clothing so you can be easily seen by passing traffic. There are some sections of the route which are not as bright as others. We will be collecting for The Children's Society. Meet outside The Digger's Rest at 6 pm.



**Coffee Mornings.** Throughout the winter months we will continue our pattern of two per month, on the first and third Saturdays from 9.30 till 10.30 am in church. On the first Saturday bacon butties are on offer and on the third it will be coffee and cake. So for January these will be on the 6<sup>th</sup> and the 20<sup>th</sup>.



**Quiz.** Thank you to everyone who has bought and sold quizzes. The closing date is 14<sup>th</sup> January. Katharine Wheeler

**Film Evening.** Another very popular and successful film night was organised by Debbie Jung and Jill Dupain when 28 children and some adults enjoyed the film *Sing 2*. The children love coming to church in their onesies or pyjamas, carrying duvets and pillows, and watching the film and buying popcorn, crisps, bottles of pop and hot chocolate. £135 was raised for church funds.



**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.

*My New Year's resolution is to get down to the weight I was before the accident. And to stop calling it 'the accident' when I eat too many snacks.*



Trevor's New Year's Eve party was an annual occurrence with numerous guests arriving. During the evening, a man knocked on the door, was greeted heartily although no one knew who he was, and was led to where the drinks were, in the kitchen. He sat there happily chatting away for a couple of hours before a strange light dawned on his face. 'You know,' he confided to Trevor, 'I wasn't even invited to this party. I just came over to tell you that some of your guests' cars are blocking my drive.' He continued, 'My wife's been sitting out in the car waiting for me to get them moved, so that we can go out.'



"Before you go inside, give me a chance to explain the mess..."

*What is a New Year's resolution? Something that goes in one year and out the other.*

Jemima was taking an afternoon nap on New Year's Eve before the festivities. After she woke up, she confided to Max, 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?' 'Aha, you'll know tonight,' answered Max, smiling broadly. At midnight, as the New Year was chiming, Max approached Jemima and handed her a small package. Delighted and excited, she opened it quickly. There in her hand rested a book entitled 'The Meaning of Dreams'.



"Either cheer up or take off the hat."

*Before I agree to 2024, I'm going to need to see the terms and conditions.*

What's a cow's favourite holiday? Moo Year's Eve.

*What did Adam say to his partner on 31<sup>st</sup> December? It's New Year's, Eve...*

What happened to the man who shoplifted a calendar on New Year's Eve? He got 12 months!

**LETTER TO THE EDITOR**

*Dear Peter*  
*I was fascinated to read of your visit to the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem on Christmas Eve. In 1976 I was in Bethlehem on Christmas Eve and choirs from all the world were singing their carols in the busy and noisy Manger Square when a small girl in the Australian Choir (aged about 12) sang Away in a Manger and she hushed the noisy crowd! It was lovely. I too was able to spend a few quiet moments in the Church of the Nativity by the spot where Jesus was born. I was living on Kibbutz Ka Fa Aza, one of the kibbutzim that suffered the horrors of the Hamas attack and they were such nice people. I later worked alongside Palestinian workmen down in the Negev Desert and they too were such nice people and I was invited into their very humble homes. This is why one weeps for what is happening now.*

Kind regards  
 Tony Rule, Clyst St Mary



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# Kids' Corner

What's happening this month?

## 25<sup>th</sup> January – Burns Night

Each year on or around the 25<sup>th</sup> January, the life of Scottish poet Robert Burns is celebrated. On this night, known as 'Burns Night', a traditional meal of haggis, neeps (turnips/swede) and tatties (potatoes) is enjoyed. Traditionally, the host of the evening will recite the poem 'Address to a Haggis' when bringing the haggis to the table and will then 'slay' the haggis by slicing it.



## Who is Robert Burns?

Robert Burns was born on 25<sup>th</sup> January 1759 in Ayrshire, Scotland. Despite dying at the young age of 37, he wrote over 550 poems and songs. His poem/song Auld Lang Syne is often sung on New Year's Eve.


## Get involved...

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

Riddle: What kind of lion never roars?

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](mailto:clystvalleynews@gmail.com)

Last month's answer: What goes in a birdbath but never gets wet? The bird's shadow!

  
**Robert Williams**  
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**POETRY CORNER**

*Last week I read again the poetry of one of my favourite poets of all time, Imtiaz Dharker, still a young woman whose husband died a few years ago. Her poetry of bereavement has taught me to be unafraid of exposing my feelings to others and she has been one of my greatest inspirations in the honesty of the words. John Smith [The illustration is a painting entitled 'Abschied' ('Farewell') by Veronica Ulrich. Ed]*

*In gratitude*  
By John Smith of Clyst St Mary

She needed to write that poem  
To tell of their undying love,  
The vehicle subject irrelevant,  
The life unique explained.

We shall never meet, nor  
Compare what it is like to  
Lose the half of yourself  
When the time is never right.

But the sunshine of love bedazzles  
With its personal blinding rays  
To keep its fire alight  
And growing to the end of time.  
©John Smith



~~~~~  
**AND FINALLY...**

**The Sky Tonight: January**



2024 promises a celestial banquet: eclipses, occultations, conjunctions, super-moons, bright meteor showers – and two comets! This year, along with highlighting the seasonal procession of the constellations and drawing attention to the ever-changing dance of the planets and other celestial events, we'll also look at some wider aspects of astronomy.

The year opens again with the usual winter tableau of dazzling stars: *Look to the south about 9 pm and you will find the constellation of Orion – three stars making his belt (with his glowing sword hanging below) whilst above, the red star Betelgeuse marking his left shoulder and below, in contrast, the blue-white star Rigel marking his right knee. Hiding below Orion, the Hunter are the faint stars of Lepus, the Hare.* Readers who have been following this series throughout last year will remember that the constellation of Orion is a 'signpost' to others but for new readers allow me to be your guide. *Follow the three stars of the belt down towards the horizon and you will come to Sirius in the constellation of the Great Dog, the brightest star in the sky.* Orion has a second hunting dog. *Find the two stars above the belt (Betelgeuse being the left one) and follow the line they make to the left to Procyon in the constellation of the Lesser Dog.* *Returning now to the belt, follow the line upwards to an orange-red star. This is Aldebaran, marking the eye of Taurus, the Bull. It forms the top left of a V of stars, the Hyades.* *Continue the line further on and you will come to a tight cluster of stars, the Pleiades or Seven Sisters (although there are many more than seven to be seen in binoculars).*



Turning now to other sights in the heavens, The Quadrantid meteor shower returns on 3<sup>rd</sup>/4<sup>th</sup>. *These bright colourful shooting stars appearing in the north-west should provide a good display.* Jupiter is still bright in the sky. *Look to the right of Orion near the Square of Pegasus. To find Saturn follow a line from the top left through the bottom right stars of the Square of Pegasus towards the horizon.* Uranus is just visible to the naked eye (but is easier with binoculars). *Look halfway between Jupiter and the Pleiades for a small greenish disk.* Neptune certainly needs binoculars. It can most easily be found in the late evening on the 15<sup>th</sup>. *Find the crescent moon near the western horizon then look for a tiny bluish disk just above the right cusp.* Venus and Mercury are both ‘Morning Stars’. *Venus will be obvious as a very bright object in the south-east before sunrise.* Around the middle of the month elusive Mercury makes one of its regular, if fleeting, appearances. *Look in the dawn glow to the lower left of Venus. Don't be tempted to view with binoculars as both planets are much too close to the Sun for this to be safe!*

Everyone will have marvelled at the spectacular images recently produced by the James Webb Telescope and although we can't compete with these you could try your hand at basic astrophotography. A digital or a ‘phone camera are often capable of more than we think. (Try reading the manual!) As light levels are low, exposures need to be longer than usual so the key to any successful night-sky photo is a steady camera. This, ideally, means tripod mounting but ‘propping it up’ will work. Putting your mobile ‘phone on selfie mode makes it easier reach the button when the camera is pointed at the sky. Also set the delay timer. This allows you to make any last moment realignments and stops camera shake. Set the sensitivity to the highest pixel level. Use manual zoom but not the digital option. Do that on the computer later. (After downloading your pictures zoom in, press Print Screen and paste to Word.) Ideas for photos are: **Quadrantid meteors** – aim the camera 2/3 up the NW sky and take a series of 30 second exposures. **The Moon** – not full! Photos are best between Crescent to Half (13<sup>th</sup> – 16<sup>th</sup> January). **Jupiter and its moons** – don't expose for too long. The earth turns and your picture will smudge! **Mercury and Venus (plus moon)** on 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> around 7 am) – pictures are most effective when they include the horizon. **The Moon** – crescent to half. Surprisingly short exposures are needed. **Orion and adjacent constellations** – try a 30-second wide angle exposure around the time of the waning Moon (before the 12<sup>th</sup>). Enjoy experimenting!! Clyde Bish

### Love Topsham



Hello and Happy New Year from the Love Topsham team!

We're already planning another exciting programme of events for 2024 but before any announcements are made, allow us to thank all our supporters, businesses and volunteers for a fantastic holiday season. We enjoyed our biggest ever crowd to celebrate the *Christmas Lights Switch On* at the end of November, and that

same evening we had our most successful *Festive Market* yet at the town's St Margaret's Church – well over 20 stalls showcasing the artisan skills of local businesses and organisations.

Then we had our much-loved *Best Dressed Windows* competition – the best home was on Fore Street and the best shop was Erin Cox Jewellery (pictured) where almost all of the decorations were hand-crafted. To end our celebrations we had the traditional *Children's Trail* running this time from Nancy Potter House down to Topsham Museum, via a large number of pit-stops for children's' treats – and it was a treat indeed to see so many participating.



Throughout Christmas and for a few days yet in January, Love Topsham's lights will remain lit along High Street, Fore Street and Ferry Road. If you didn't get a chance for a stroll to take in

those lights – and those from businesses and residents too – make it a New Year's resolution to find an hour to enjoy the sights!

Now a special word of thanks to our volunteers. Every individual involved with Love Topsham – whether the directors and organisers, up to and including those who give time to help with specific events – is a volunteer and the organisation itself is a non-profit making Community Interest Company. We rely on good will (and of course donations!) via the Love Topsham card – so if you want to contribute towards a card or get involved with our events, please get in touch via our website [lovetopsham.co.uk](http://lovetopsham.co.uk) where you will also find a clutch of photos of the town's Christmas celebrations.

And right now we're after your ideas for 2024 – what would you like us to do again or for the first time? If it's for the benefit of Topsham and makes our town even more special, we're interested! Happy New Year from your Love Topsham team.

### The Exeter Forum Talks Programme: January 2024



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                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|------------|----------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 3 January  | Dr Todd Gray   | <i>Exeter's Lost Buildings: Destruction from 1800 to 1899</i><br>Dr Todd Gray will make a welcome return to the Forum to talk about the loss of the city's historic buildings in the 1800s, and the main reasons for this loss.                                                                                                               |
| 10 January | John Walters   | <i>Wildlife of Devon from Shore to Moor</i><br>Renowned wildlife photographer John will show the rich variety of wildlife in Devon through his photos.                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| 17 January | No meeting     | <i>Exeter Forum Annual Lunch</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| 24 January | Joanne Yarwood | <i>Vaccinations – Their History, Value and Current Provisions</i><br>Joanne will draw on her experience as National Immunisation Manager, Public Health England, to give an overview of the history and significance of vaccinations.                                                                                                         |
| 31 January | Lucilla Phelps | <i>Fine Art Photography</i><br>Lucilla was principal photographer of Sotheby's auctioneer. She will talk about the photography for the huge and amazing castle auctions in Germany and France and about photographing the Duke and Duchess of Windsor's possessions in Paris for auction in New York. She will bring some example catalogues. |

### Answers to the New Year Quiz on page 19

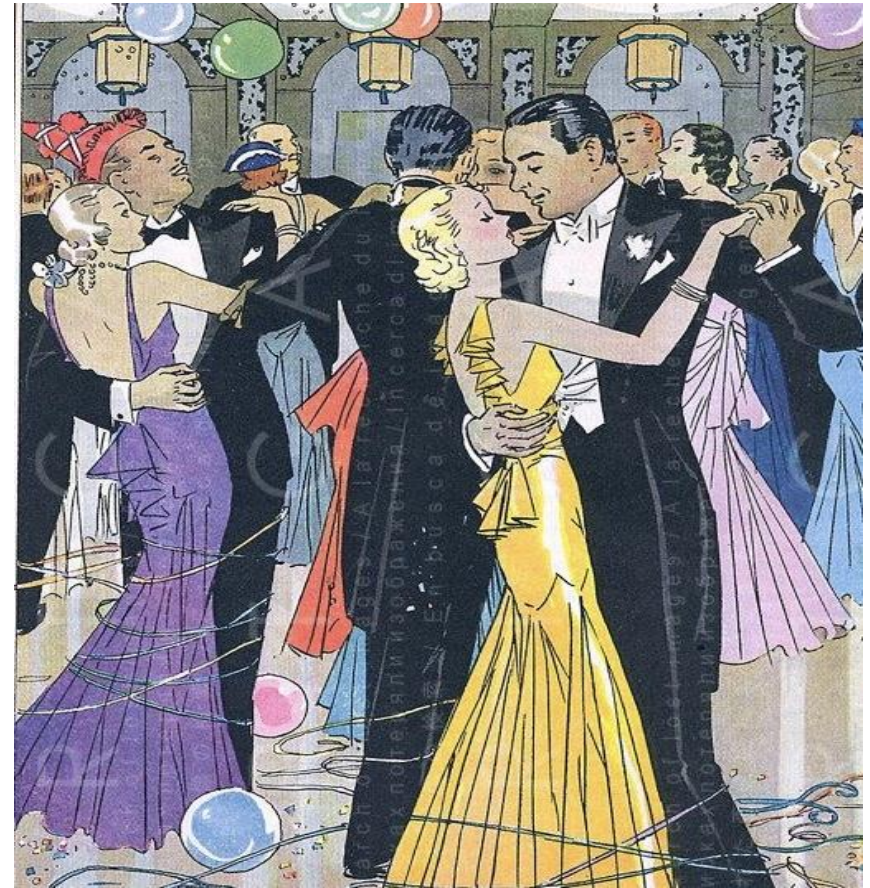
1. China 2. Indonesia 3. Katy Perry 4. Canada 5. Liverpool 6. Spain 1 – 0 England 7. Taylor Swift 8. A bed bug invasion 9. October 10. Rizz 11. Coco Gauff 12. Jimmy Carter 13. Girl Dinner 14. Vladimir Lenin 15. David Cameron 16. Tim Burton 17. Weird Barbie 18. England wicket-keeper Jonny Bairstow picked up one of the protesters and moved him off the pitch 19. 'Padam Padam' 20. Bulgaria



## *New Year Quiz - What do you remember about 2023 and know about the year to come?*

*[Answers on page 18]*

- 1. At the start of 2023 which country re-opened its borders three years after the beginning of the Covid pandemic?*
- 2. Nusantara will become the new capital of which country on 17<sup>th</sup> August 2024?*
- 3. Which guest couldn't find her seat at King Charles' Coronation?*
- 4. 'The One' will become which country's first skyscraper over 300 metres in height in 2024?*
- 5. What city hosted the 2023 Eurovision Song Contest?*
- 6. What was the result of the 2023 Women's World Cup final?*
- 7. Which singer will conclude the Eras Tour on 17<sup>th</sup> August 2024 in London?*
- 8. In September what epidemic was said to be being brought to the UK from Paris?*
- 9. In which month will 2024 Black History Month be celebrated in the UK?*
- 10. What was the Oxford English Dictionary 2023 word of the year?*
- 11. Who won the women's singles title at the 2023 US Open?*
- 12. Which American politician will be 100 on 1<sup>st</sup> October 1924?*
- 13. What is the name of the TikTok trend where people showcase their meals of mismatched items?*
- 14. In January 2024 it will be a century since the death of which European political figure?*
- 15. Which former British Prime Minister was appointed Foreign Secretary in November 2023?*
- 16. Beetlejuice 2 is set to be released on 6<sup>th</sup> September 2024? Can you name the film's director?*
- 17. What is the name of the Barbie played by Kate McKinnon in the Barbie movie?*
- 18. How was a Just Stop Oil protestor removed from a 2023 Ashes test match at Lords?*
- 19. What was the name of Kylie Minogue's viral single released in May 2023?*
- 20. On 1st January 2024, which country will adopt the euro as its official currency?*



### *Auld Lang Syne*

*Should auld acquaintance be forgot,  
And never brought to mind?  
Should auld acquaintance be forgot,  
And auld lang syne?*

### *(Chorus)*

*For auld lang syne, my jo,  
For auld lang syne,  
We'll tak a cup o' kindness yet,  
For auld lang syne.*

*And surely ye'll be your pint-stowp!  
And surely I'll be mine!  
And we'll tak a cup o' kindness yet,  
For auld lang syne.*

*We twa hae run about the braes  
And pu'd the gowans fine;  
But we've wander'd mony a weary foot  
Sin auld lang syne.*

*We twa hae paidl'd i' the burn,  
Frae mornin' sun till dine;  
But seas between us braid hae roar'd  
Sin auld lang syne.*

*And there's a hand, my trusty fiere!  
And gie's a hand o' thine!  
And we'll tak a right guid willy waught,  
For auld lang syne.  
Robert Burns, 1788 (See also Kids' Corner)*



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 11:15 AYL Holy Communion  
 11:15 WBY Holy Communion  
 18:00 EXT Evening Worship

## Week 1

Rev'd Sid  
 Rev'd Stuart Huntley  
 Rev'd Peter  
 Rev'd Margaret  
 Christine Grist

## Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> January

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 Margaret  
 Rev'd Stuart Huntley  
 Rev'd Tony  
 Rev'd Sid

## Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> January

09:30 CSM Holy Communion  
 09:30 WST Breakfast Family Service  
 09:30 EXT Morning Worship  
 09:30- AYL Family Warm Space  
 11:00  
 18:30 WBY Evensong

## Week 3

Rev'd Chris  
 Rev'd Stuart Huntley  
 Lay Led  
 Lay led  
 Christine Grist

## Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> January

09:30 FAR Morning Worship  
 10:30 WBY Family Service  
 11:15 CSG Holy Communion

## Week 4

Christine Grist  
 Lay led  
 Rev'd Tony

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