

# CLYST VALLEY NEWS



May 2026



Have a munificent  
May!

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## EDITOR'S NOTE



Hello and welcome to this May edition of the Clyst Valley News. My thanks to Paul Dunn for this month's cover photo reminding us how serious the flooding threat at the CSM Old Bridge was back in February. I'm glad the sun has taken over now!

The familiar hum of our village life – the church bells, the local markets, and the seasonal rhythms of the land – can often feel worlds apart from the digital frontier. Yet, over the past year, Artificial Intelligence (AI) has moved from the realm of science fiction into our daily conversations and living rooms. Whether it's a grandson using a chatbot for homework or a doctor using computer software to spot an illness earlier, AI is becoming an invisible thread in our social fabric. For many of us, this 'progress' feels daunting. We wonder: what happens to the human touch when a machine provides the answers?

As a community, we need not fear this shift but we must approach it with wisdom. Technology, for all its brilliance, lacks a soul. It cannot offer the warmth of a handshake, the empathy of a listening ear, or the shared silence of a prayer. Our parish has always been a sanctuary for connection—real, face-to-face connection that no algorithm can replicate.

Let us embrace the tools that help us live more efficiently, but let us also double down on our humanity. In an increasingly automated world, the simple acts of being a good neighbour and a present friend become more radical, and more necessary, than ever.

I wonder how many readers guessed that this editorial was written by AI? Worrying or reassuring? Enjoy the magazine. Best wishes, Peter Skelton

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



Calling all photographers! 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, who'll choose one. Just email them to [clystvalleynews@gmail.com](mailto:clystvalleynews@gmail.com) and we'll do the rest. Simple!

## WHY NOT ADVERTISE IN THE CLYST VALLEY NEWS THIS YEAR?



Advertising your business or organisation in the CVN makes a lot of sense. How about joining our loyal band of advertisers? We print and deliver the magazine free to around 1300 households and businesses in our villages and towns; and, in parallel, we upload an online, full colour version on various Facebook village and town pages and parish council websites each month. We have also built up a sizable mailing list for direct emailing of the CVN to subscribers – all also for free, of course! To find out more (Our rates are very competitive), please contact the Editor, Peter Skelton, at [clystvalleynews@gmail.com](mailto:clystvalleynews@gmail.com).

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**Contributions, photos and letters to the editor for the June 2026 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 Friday 15<sup>th</sup> May 2026 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
CSM	Ivor Spriggs	01392 874382
WS	Debbie Jung	01395 232328
Sowton village	Mike Galloway	07764 582023

**CLYST ST MARY**



**Church News**

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

*Supporting the Church.* Very many thanks to everyone who continues to support us as we endeavour to maintain and keep our beautiful old church open. If you would like to become a regular giver or make a one-off donation please contact our Treasurer, Nicky Blacker, on 07501 223654 or [nicky.blacker@gmail.com](mailto:nicky.blacker@gmail.com).

**Walking Group**



The walking group in Clyst St Mary meets once a month. Generally, this takes the form of a morning walk

of varying difficulty followed by a pub or café lunch. Occasionally a picnic will be taken with some walking in the afternoon. The walk in March took us down the Byes to Sidmouth with lunch at the Anchor Inn before returning to our cars at Sidford. We are a friendly group and all are welcome; indeed, we would benefit from some fresh faces. We meet on the third Tuesday of each month (19<sup>th</sup> May this month) at 10 am in the Village Hall car park. So please come along and enjoy some exercise, fresh air and good company. We are an informal group and walk at our own risk. Any questions, please contact Peter Cusa on 01392 877907.

**ARE YOU INTERESTED IN LOCAL HERITAGE?**

We are looking to set up a group of local people to help identify heritage assets across the parishes. If you think you could help, please contact [clerk@bishopsclyst.org.uk](mailto:clerk@bishopsclyst.org.uk)

**Bishops Clyst Parish Council**

**Village Hall**



*Committee Meeting.* The Village Hall Committee Meeting will be held on Monday 18<sup>th</sup> May at 7.30 pm in the

Parish Council office at the Hall. 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. There will be an open session for

**Help Wanted**

*Clyst St Mary VILLAGE HALL CO*

Trustees needed for our village hall. We are finding it increasingly hard to run without more help. Contact our chair on [admin@clyststmaryvillagehall.co.uk](mailto:admin@clyststmaryvillagehall.co.uk)



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any points people would like to raise. If you would like to help with the management and running of the Hall, speak to our Chairman on 01392 874305 or come along to the meeting.

*Hiring the Hall.* Our website [www.clyststmaryvillagehall.co.uk/](http://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.


**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 


**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](mailto:pamelamgardner9@gmail.com).



**Badminton Club**  
Clyst St Mary Village Hall



The club plays on **Tuesday evenings at 8 pm in the Village Hall**

**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 01392 874722 or Anne ([annecurryer@gmail.com](mailto:annecurryer@gmail.com))

Thank you.

**CLYST ST GEORGE AND EBFORD**

**Church News**

*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)

*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.

**Clyst St George Parish Hall**



*Summer Fête Returns This July.* The much-loved Summer Fête is set to return on Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> July 2026, running from 2 to 5 pm, and promises to be bigger, brighter, and better than ever. This popular community event will once again bring together families and friends for an afternoon full



of fun, laughter, and summer spirit. Visitors can look forward to a fantastic range of attractions, including a raffle, fairground games, a drinks tent, and the ever-entertaining welly wanging, along with many extra surprises throughout the afternoon. The much-anticipated Dog Show will also be making a return, sure to delight crowds and steal the spotlight once again.



With something for all ages to enjoy, the fête is a wonderful opportunity to come together as a community and make lasting summer memories. Further details will be shared soon, but for now, be sure to mark the date in your diary.

*Coffee Morning – Cake, Chat and Community!* Come and join us at the Parish Hall on Thursday 7<sup>th</sup>



May from 10 am – 12 noon for a relaxed and friendly coffee morning. Enjoy a cosy cuppa, a slice (or two!) of delicious homemade cake, and plenty of cheerful conversation. It's a lovely chance to catch up with friends, meet new people, and spend a relaxed morning



together in the heart of our community. Everyone is very welcome – we'd love to see you there!

*Get Involved – Help Shape the Future of Our Parish Hall!* Do you enjoy village life and want to play



a meaningful role in keeping our community vibrant and thriving? We're looking for enthusiastic, friendly people to join our team of trustees and help guide what happens at the Parish Hall. We're often asked how people can get more involved in village life – this is the perfect opportunity! Why not take that next step and join the committee? Becoming a trustee is a fantastic way to meet new people, share ideas, and make a real difference. Whether it's supporting much-loved events, helping to organise new activities, or simply being part of a positive and welcoming team, you'll be right at the heart of it all.

No special experience is needed – just a willingness to get involved, a few spare hours, and a passion for community spirit. If you'd like to be part of something special and help make great things happen in our village, we would love to hear from you. Email: [Clyststgeorgeandebfordvhall@outlook.com](mailto:Clyststgeorgeandebfordvhall@outlook.com).

*Your Perfect Venue Awaits!* Looking for a place to host a birthday party, wedding, meeting, fitness



class, or community event? Our bright and welcoming Parish Hall is the perfect spot to bring people together and create unforgettable memories. With flexible hire options – hourly or daily – and fantastic rates, it's ideal for any occasion. For bookings or more information, please email: [Clyststgeorgeandebfordvhall@outlook.com](mailto:Clyststgeorgeandebfordvhall@outlook.com).

**Norman's Weather Reports for February and March**



*February.* The very wet winter was vigorously continued by February's rainfall here at Ebford, particularly during the first week; otherwise evenly distributed. The monthly total was 154 mm or 6.1 inches. February averages were: over the previous five years – 69 mm (2.7 inches); over the previous ten years – 73 mm (2.9 inches).

On the subject of a very wet winter (monsoon?), the total recorded here at Ebford during the recent months of November, December, January and February was 646 mm or no less than 25.4 inches, only a little less than the annual total for 2022! Perhaps the slight increase in Atlantic sea temperatures is responsible? However, now in mid-March is a 'dry season' beginning as happened in 2025?

*March.* This month between winter and spring provided, as often, all sorts of weather, including a genuine taste of spring during the third week and typical gales at the end of the month. Rainfall here at Ebford was only 18 mm or ¾ inch, most of which (14 mm) fell during the second week. There were actually 18 days to the month end without any substantial rain; the forecast showers avoided Ebford! March averages have been: over the previous five years – 70.6 mm (2.8 inches); over the previous ten years – 76.0 mm (3.0 inches). Shall we expect another hot, dry summer? Norman Cann

## WOODBURY SALTERTON



### Church News

*Palm Sunday.* The united service for the Mission Community took place at Holy Trinity Church, Woodbury



Salterton. The choir and congregation led the way from the church to the Village Well where Rev'd Lewis welcomed everyone and blessed the well and Phil Dent read the story of Our Lord's ride into Jerusalem on a donkey. Dawn Cowler had brought her two donkeys and she and David led the donkeys followed by about fifty people back to church for the service.



*Annual Parochial Church Meeting.* This took place on Monday 13<sup>th</sup> April in

church. At the Vestry Meeting Debbie Jung was unanimously re-elected as Church Warden. The APCM followed during which the members of the PCC were all re-elected – Debbie, Jill and Nigel Dupain, Phil Dent, Mark Lovett, Julia Cullen and Katharine Wheeler. Debbie agreed to continue as Synod Representative. Nigel reported that the church had had a good year financially and had paid its parochial share in full. Rev'd Lewis Eden paid tribute to all those who contribute to the life of our church: Debbie, Jill (Secretary), Nigel (Treasurer), the choir and Katharine (organist), the flower arrangers and all who help in any way. The church enters the coming year in a good place with confidence and faith.

### Coffee Mornings



From the second Saturday in May, the 9<sup>th</sup>, Saturday coffee mornings will be every week from 9.30 to 10.30 am in church.

### Scarecrow Quiz



The spring church quiz, the seventh in this Scarecrow series, is now on sale from Katharine Wheeler, Lin Ashby in Woodbury and Liz Whittaker in Clyst St Mary. The subject this time is things you could find in a country garden. The price remains at £2 and the prize to the winner is £10. You have until the beginning of May to solve the clues.

### 100<sup>th</sup> Birthday

On 2<sup>nd</sup> June Shelia Mills, formerly of The Old Vicarage, is due to celebrate her 100<sup>th</sup> birthday. If anyone would like to send her a card, her address can be obtained from Gill Bricknell or Katharine Wheeler.

### Vera Doran



We were sad to hear of the death of Vera Doran in Exmouth at the beginning of April. Vera was for many years a member of our church choir and was a wonderful worker, raising many hundreds of pounds for our church, through her stall at the Christmas bazaars of Christmas puddings and cakes, jams and preserves; and her cakes at the Saturday stalls. Many people were also grateful for her agreeing to have a stand by her

back door where people could collect their newspapers from the shop at Clyst St Mary. We extend our sympathy to all the members of her large family, whom she loved so well.

### Golden Wedding



Congratulations and all good wishes to Geoff and Ros Pollitt on their Golden Wedding on 19<sup>th</sup> April. We wish them many more happy years together. Ros has been a member of our church choir for over thirty years. We wish them many more happy years together.

### Woodbury Salterton C of E Primary School



*Little Buds.* We're delighted to announce that our Baby and Toddler Forest

School sessions are back! These free sessions run every Thursday from 10.30 to 11.45 am. Come along and let your little one explore the outdoors in our beautiful Forest School setting. Each week features different hands-on activities designed to encourage play, build new skills, and nurture a love of being outside. To find out more, please give us a call – we'd love to tell you how you can join in the fun!



*The Big Easter Sing Up.* Our Year 5 and 6 children attended the Big Easter Sing-Up alongside around 200 other children from across Exmouth at Holy Trinity Church. Throughout the day, the children took part in a hands-on experience retelling the Easter



story, led by members of the Diocese. The day culminated in a special Easter service. It was a lovely occasion and a wonderful opportunity to meet the Bishop of Exeter, along with other members of the church. The children explored the Easter story in a new way and learned about the different feelings and emotions that the story can bring.

*Animal Visit.* Our youngest pupils in the school, enjoyed a visit from Animals 2 U as



part of their science and literacy work. They enjoyed finding out about ferrets, frogs, giant millipedes and snakes and were even able to touch and hold some of the animals during the visit. The visit has inspired their story writing and they are all busy writing some fantastic stories that incorporates some of the facts that they learnt on the day!



*Foundation Governor.* We are still looking to our parish to find a Foundation Governor to support our church school. This is an opportunity to be part of the work of the School Ethos Group, which follows a cycle of monitoring and evaluating the curriculum, collective worship, justice and responsibility, RE, and wellbeing – all underpinned by the school's vision and values. The group meets twice a term, and the Foundation Governor shares the minutes of these meetings through feedback given at the half-termly Local Advisory Committee. This ensures that all stakeholders in the Link Academy Trust, to which the school belongs, are aware of the Christian distinctiveness of our lovely church school and how this is enabling all to flourish.

Please contact us by calling 01395 232649 or emailing [adminwoodburysalterton@thelink.academy](mailto:adminwoodburysalterton@thelink.academy) if you are interested in learning more about this exciting role.

### Woodbury Salterton Village Hall



*Hall Improvements.* Our planned maintenance and improvements to Woodbury Salterton Village Hall are coming to a conclusion in May. The Hall floor is getting a facelift – a company that specialises in village hall floors will be sanding/sealing and staining our floor, bringing it up to the standard required for Keep Fit



and Pilates classes being held in the Hall.

*Cream Tea.* Our next fundraising event is a Cream Tea with home-made cakes – Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> May from 2 to 4 pm. £6 per person. We look forward to seeing everyone on the day.

## SOWTON VILLAGE



### Easter Egg Bingo

Though Easter may seem a long time ago by the time you hold this issue of Clyst Valley News in your hands, news from Sowton Village wouldn't be complete without a mention of the by now traditional Easter Egg Bingo and Supper, which was this year held in the Village Hall on 28<sup>th</sup> March. As usual prizes came in the shape of Easter eggs and there was a draw to raise funds towards the rethatching of the Village Hall roof with a generous first prize of a meal for two at the Pinhoe Hoard and a second prize of a Banquet Roast dinner at the Black Horse. A big thank you to Anna and Andy Bastow for organising the event and for acting as Bingo callers!



### Afterstone

One of Sowton Village's residents, Vicki Marsh, has recently bravely left corporate life to set up a new business called Afterstone (<https://afterstone.co.uk/>) which creates beautiful stones and other stoneware from human and pet ashes to offer an alternative, meaningful way of commemorating loved people or pets. We wish her all the very best with this thoughtful concept.

### POETRY CORNER

#### *A Bangle for Irene*

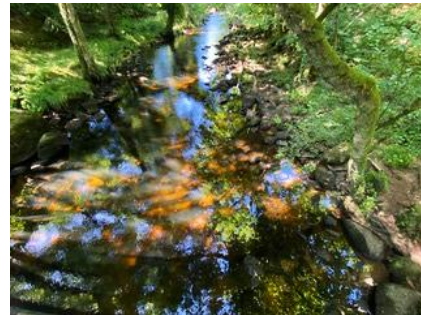
By John Smith of Clyst St Mary

When we walk by the river,  
You and I in my mind,  
We feel the constant change  
In the waters, and in our life.

Yet the magic is unchanging  
Weaving fantasies in our mind,  
Images from imagination  
That bind us to each other.

The river reveals its precious hoard,  
Old gold laying among silent shingle,  
And silver strands in the ripple stream pebbles –  
I will make a memory bangle for Irene to wear.

©John Smith



## MONTHLY GIGGLE



### Signs

Shoe repair shop: We will heel you. We will save your sole. We will even dye for you.

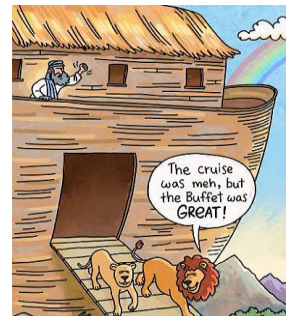
Optician: If you don't see what you are looking for, you have come to the right place.

Plumber's truck: We repair what your husband fixed.

Restaurant: Don't stand there and be hungry. Come in and get fed up.

Funeral director: Drive carefully. We will wait. [Thanks to Lesley Richardson.]

Went to my son's house. Bit bored. Went into the kitchen to see him. 'Have you got a newspaper?' 'Newspaper? Get modern, Dad. We get the news online nowadays!' and he handed me his tablet. Later he asked me



what I thought about using the tablet. 'It's really good! I tell you that fly didn't stand a chance!'

## FEATURES IN FOCUS

### Gracie's Column: World Bee Day



Bees are vital for the planet because they act as pollinators, enabling the reproduction of millions of species of plants and are responsible for a third of the world's food production. Bees often have a bad reputation of being angry creatures with a vicious sting but, in reality, they are gentle and important for maintaining biodiversity and healthy ecosystems. Without them, we also wouldn't have the fruits, vegetables and nuts that we enjoy as part of our diets. 20<sup>th</sup> May is World Bee Day and there are ways of recognising their importance on this day and beyond. As bees become endangered through manmade processes like climate change, we can take small steps to increase their presence in our gardens and therefore, bolster the ecosystem processes.

Firstly, planting bee-friendly gardens is a helpful way of encouraging them to pollinate your garden. It's not uncommon to stumble upon a bumblebee on the ground that is struggling to gain the energy to fly. Usually this is because they are unable to locate plants to pollinate and this issue can largely be accredited to urbanisation. Growing a variety of native wildflowers, shrubs and trees prevents this and ensures that the bees always have somewhere to go. Examples of these include lavender, sunflowers, foxgloves and herbs like mint and thyme. In a similar vein, avoid pesticides as much as you can. While they are extremely helpful for issues like caterpillars and slugs, they are also highly toxic to pollinators. Choose organic gardening methods to create a safe environment for bees.

In the summer, grass grows long and hay fever runs wild which is easily managed by mowing the lawn and cutting weeds back. However, reducing mowing frequency allows clover and dandelions to flower, providing an added source of food for bees. You may think they are unsightly especially if you like to maintain a pristine and aesthetically-pleasing garden, but there is a lot to be loved about grass filled with 'weeds'.

If you're into building or DIY, constructing a little 'bee hotel' out of bamboo tubes or drilled wood blocks creates a habitat for bees that come into your garden, especially solitary bees that make up around 90 per cent of all bee populations. This helps to combat habitat loss caused by urbanisation and agricultural expansion. Along with this bee hotel, placing shallow dishes of water with pebbles or twigs inside for bees to land on lets them drink from the dish safely without accidental drowning. If you see a slow, drowsy looking bee, mix this water 50/50 with white sugar to give them an energy boost.

If you don't have a garden or are unable to tend to it in this way, there are numerous other ways to help bees indirectly. For example, shopping for honey from local small-scale beekeepers supports

### Seasoned Logs

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healthy hive management. (Local-bought honey always tastes better than honey from the supermarket anyway!)

Finally, teaching others to not be scared of bees is an essential step to removing the stigma bees maintain of being stinging little beasts. In reality, bees will only sting when truly threatened and instead deserve our protection.

To finish with a fun fact, magnolias are primarily pollinated by beetles rather than bees because the flower evolved before bees and butterflies did! This relationship has existed for over 95 million years since the Cretaceous period. Gracie Moore

#### Ash's Albums. This Month: *Magnolia Electric Co* by Songs: Ohia



At the juncture of alternative-country, americana and classic indie rock is singer-songwriter Jason Molina and producer Steve Albini's prodigious album *Magnolia Electric Co* (2003). It is often quoted as one of the best indie/alt-country albums of its era. It features pronounced uses of electric guitars, sparse (but compelling) arrangements, and an overall raw, live-feeling production. Throughout, it is intentionally unpolished, almost as if the listener is in the same room as the band. The common lyrical themes are isolation, meaning-searching, vivid midwestern imagery and working-class life, as well as touching on mortality and emotional fortitude. Molina's lines are delivered conversationally and feature frequent repetition, and the lyrical content is relatively simple, but hard-hitting.



The album's pacing is slow and thoughtful, yet doesn't ever bore or feel like it's dragging out. The opening track, *Farewell Transmission* was my introduction to *Songs: Ohia* and immediately sets the tone. The song is slow-building, slightly hypnotic and unfolds gradually; in a way, it feels more like a journey than a song. Instead of changing chords and lyrics, it just layers in intensity, which is extremely rewarding and remarkable to hear. Repetition in the song isn't lazy, more so meditative, cumulative and intentional. Molina's voice is strained, crude and aloof, paired with ghostly, communal backing vocals. It almost sounds as though he's pushing through weariness than performing, whilst the vocal harmonies make this feel like a shared affliction instead of a solitary admission.

Following this, *Just Be Simple* is contrastingly a more stripped-back and heartfelt ballad. It's more muted and less expansive than other tracks on the album, and somewhat functions as a 'pause' on the album; a moment for Molina to be fragile, restrained and heavy, without needing to rely on loudness. Instrumentation is minimal with a lot of empty space, putting lyrics and emotional tension on centre stage. This simplicity isn't just an aesthetic choice, but reflects the core message of the song: a longing for clarity and peace, and frustration at how complicated life really is. The title *Just Be Simple* feels less like didactic guidance, and more like a plea.

Finally, the closing track, *Hold On Magnolia*, works exceptionally well as the last track as it very much feels like an *ending*. It feels like a closing statement that doesn't offer any resolution, and instead gently fades away. Molina's voice is less tense, more so accepting, and tiredly tender. The song emotionally builds, but remains sonically subdued, and instrumentation is delicate and controlled throughout. Themes of hope and endurance are very evident through the repeated phrase of 'hold on Magnolia'. *Magnolia* could be a person Molina is addressing directly, a more allegorical symbol of beauty, or perhaps an emblem for hope itself. Its ambiguity allows it to belong to anyone who hears it; Molina doesn't tell you what to feel, and lets you open up space for your own meaning. The absence of clarity also feels authentic to the kind of ineffable emotions Molina is exploring.

[Continued on page 15.]



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# Kids' Corner

## What's happening this month?

### May – Brixham Pirate Festival

Every spring, the seaside town of Brixham turns into a world of pirates during the exciting Brixham Pirate Festival. For one whole weekend, people dress up as pirates, sailors, and even mermaids, filling the harbour with colour and fun.



Visitors can watch thrilling pirate battles, listen to lively sea shanty songs, and explore old ships. You might even spot a pirate captain telling stories of treasure maps and adventures on the high seas! There are also games, food stalls, and activities for families to enjoy together.

The festival is not just about fun—it celebrates Brixham's history as an important fishing town. It's a chance to imagine what life might have been like long ago, when sailors set off on big journeys across the ocean. If you love adventure, costumes, and a bit of history, the Brixham Pirate Festival is the perfect place to let your imagination sail away!

## Get involved...



This month's joke: **What did the big flower say to the little one?  
Keep growing bud!**

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 riddle answer: **Where the river meets the sea, sandy beaches wait for thee. Boats and birds and waves in view— Which seaside town am I to you? Exmouth.**

[Ash's Albums continued from page 11.]

*Magnolia Electric Co's* legacy holds up as a landmark indie album and I would highly recommend it to fans of introspective, atmosphere-focused music. It exists beyond just as an album, and more as a pensive environment for the listener to inhabit.

Favourite songs: *Farewell Transmission, I've Been Riding With The Ghost, Just Be Simple, Hold On Magnolia*. Least favourite song: *Peoria Lunch Box Blues*. Overall rating: 9/10. Ashik Skelton

## WHITE CROSS MISSION COMMUNITY



### From the Vicar's Desk...

Growing up as child in Aberdeen, every Sunday we would drive from our house in the city out to my grandma's in Ellon, roughly 15 minutes north of Aberdeen. To get there we would drive through gorgeous rolling hills with the sea on the right-hand side. It was wonderful. However, the bit I didn't like was driving at around this time of year when the farmers were adding slurry to their fields. I used to absolutely hate it; to ten-year-old Lewis, it was the most horrible scent. Yet as I have grown up, experienced a bit more of life and moved to the countryside, the smell of slurry is one of the best smells, with only the scent of silage being even sweeter.

May is the month when all the hard work that farmers have put into getting their fields ready is beginning to pay off, and the fields and countryside are full of different scents and smells. It is truly mesmerising the different things that can be nosed when out and about outside. Moreover, May is usually when it is a little warmer and the weather more settled, meaning it is far more pleasant to be out and about outdoors. As we journey through May and venture outdoors, I invite and encourage you to take a deep breath and sample what can be smelt. By doing so you, not only are you allowing yourself to be centred on what is around you, but also you invite the peace of God to come into your heart.

We enter this month unsure of what is going to happen next, especially in geopolitics as well as in local, regional and national politics. Yet we can take certainty in the peace of God. For it is something that has been brought into the world through God's love, it is something that cannot be bought and is available to all people, no matter who and where we are.

One of the best ways to experience this peace and love is to get outside and be still or journey slowly to your destination (walk or cycle rather than driving). May is a good month to do just this. Your friend and Vicar, Lewis



## AND FINALLY...

### The Sky Tonight: May



While the evenings are still quite dark let's enjoy making the acquaintance of the constellations of spring. *Looking overhead you will find the seven stars of the Great Bear making probably the best known of all the asterisms, the Plough*. This is best known for pointing to the North Star, useful to wayfarers, but it also acts as a signpost to the stars of spring. *The pair of stars nearest the 'handle' if followed towards the south, point towards the star Regulus we met last month*. This is the first of the three stars making up the Spring Triangle. To find the other two we need to return to the Plough. *Continue the curve of the handle across the sky and you will come to a bright orange star at the base of a kite-shape of fainter stars*. This is Arcturus, the brightest star in the constellation of the Herdsman – although what he is herding appears to be two bears, a dragon and a whale circling the pole! Arcturus – a name which means 'bear driver' – is the fourth brightest star in the sky and the second nearest to Earth. It is a red giant star but, in spite of being in old age, still shines 170 times more brightly than our Sun. It spins round once every ten hours – our Sun takes 30 days – resulting in a pronounced midriff bulge!

*Continue following the curve further towards the horizon and you will come to a bright white star which completes the Spring Triangle. This is Spica, the lead star in the constellation of Virgo, the Virgin*. To the Greeks she was the goddess of justice (with her scales, the constellation Libra, at her feet) but to the earlier Babylonian star-watchers the whole Y-shape of stars was fertile furrows in a field. In fact the name Spica translates as 'Ear of Wheat' reflecting this more ancient tradition. Spica is a hot star, 20,000 times brighter than the Sun. It is a double star, its companion lying so close that the gravitational attraction between them pulls each into an egg shape.

*Between the 18<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> the crescent Moon drifts past Venus and then Jupiter*. Venus is at its most impressive this month, blazing at magnitude -3.9. *From the 20<sup>th</sup> look for Mercury at magnitude -0.6 making a reappearance down to the lower right of Venus*.

You may have noticed that the Moon was full at the beginning of the month. *Now watch for another full Moon at the very end!* This is unusual, occurring only once every two –three years, but quite easily explained. The Moon takes about 29.5 days to go from full back to full whereas most of our months runs for more days than this. So get the timing right, as happens this May, and you can fit in two full Moons (and of course in February you can miss out completely!). This second one is called a Blue Moon – but don't expect an azure hue to our cosmic companion. It derives from the phrase 'once in a blue moon', first recorded in print in 1528. There is some confusion over the etymology of the meaning of 'blue'. The Old English word *blewe* meant blue. So where's the problem? Well, at a time when spelling wasn't a big thing, there is another very similar OE word, *belewe*, meaning to betray so it has been suggested that the second meaning was the one intended as the second Moon 'betrayed' ie upset the normal pattern. Originally a Blue Moon was an extra one in a season of three months and was noted as such in the *Maine Farmers' Almanac* of 1937, but a writer in the prestigious astronomy magazine 'Sky & Telescope' misinterpreted the almanac entry and described the second full Moon in a calendar month as a Blue Moon and it was this meaning which caught on, especially when it became an answer in the quiz game *Trivial Pursuit!* Clyde Bish

### Budleigh Salterton Male Voice Choir Concert



On Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> May at 7 pm at St Margaret's Church, Topsham the Budleigh Salterton Male Voice Choir have a joint concert with their guests from Derbyshire, Gresley Male Voice Choir. All profits from the concert will be donated to the Estuary League of Friends. Tickets are £12 and can be purchased from the Estuary League of Friends Charity Shop at 38 High Street or from The Hub on Nelson Road, Topsham. They will also be available on [www.budleighmvc.co.uk](http://www.budleighmvc.co.uk) or cash at the door on the night. Please come along and enjoy a wide range of songs from musicals, opera and well-known popular music. We are always looking for new members to join us – no previous singing experience is required!

### Monthly Talks at the Fleet Air Arm Museum, Yeovilton, Somerset BA22 8HT



*Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> May 2026 at 19.30: Chris Holliday and The Lynx World Speed Record* This year sees the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary and Chris was one of the team at Westlands who added to the success of G-LYNX with his expertise on blade technology and will describe the build-up and flights involved to achieve this still unbroken record. To view our Talks programme in 2026 and to purchase tickets to attend the Museum or our live stream on Zoom option, visit our website [www.fleetairarmfriends.org.uk/talks/](http://www.fleetairarmfriends.org.uk/talks/).

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### OurLocalExpert



Local residents have always been very supportive of OurLocalExpert – the free printed guide of recommended tradespeople – now in its 15<sup>th</sup> year. Nick always welcomes genuine feedback about businesses who do and don't feature in the guide using the contact details below. If you didn't receive your free copy of last year's little orange book (2025-26 edition), you can phone or email Nick Hall with your details on 01392 340304/[Nick@OurLocalExpert.co.uk](mailto:Nick@OurLocalExpert.co.uk) and he will be happy to post you a copy out at no charge. The guide is also available online at [www.OurLocalExpert.co.uk](http://www.OurLocalExpert.co.uk).

### Have You Ever Wanted to Visit Terracina, Exeter's Sister City, in Italy?



Exeter Twinning Circle was established to maintain social and cultural links between the twinned cities of Rennes (France), Bad Homburg (Germany) and Terracina (Italy). In 1988 Exeter signed an official twinning accord with the city of Terracina, in the commune of Lazio in Italy. The cities of Exeter and Terracina have maintained links ever since.



Terracina is a very pleasant seaside resort between Rome and Naples. It is on an important part of the Roman Appian Way and above it, on a hill, the site of a major temple to Jupiter. The historical heart of Terracina is Piazza del Municipio, containing paving stones from the Roman Forum, a crumbling archway and the Cathedral. This Cathedral was built over a Roman temple to Augustus. Terracina has a lovely long sandy beach. Ferries leave from the port for the Pontine Islands. A party from Exeter plans to travel to Terracina from Bristol to Rome on Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> September and return on Monday 7<sup>th</sup> September 2026. Accommodation in Terracina is usually provided by local families. You will be warmly welcomed and enjoy what Terracina has to offer and including its

local cuisine. Where possible, the ages and interests of participants are matched. It is expected that participants reciprocate with accommodation, if possible, when visiting twinner come to Exeter. The principal expense for participants is the cost of travel (unless one is incorporating this visit as part of a larger Italian itinerary). If you would like to find out more about Terracina, to meet some of the Italians who live there, please get in touch with us.

The Twinning Circle would welcome new members and invites any who are interested to join us to take part in any Exeter Twinning Circle events. In the first instance, please contact our secretary by emailing [secretary@exetertwinningcircle.org.uk](mailto:secretary@exetertwinningcircle.org.uk) or visit [www.exetertwinningcircle.org.uk](http://www.exetertwinningcircle.org.uk). We can also be found on Facebook.

### Exton Drama Club: Auditions!



*A Christmas Carol (But Not As You Know It)*

Exton Drama Club are thrilled to announce they will be bringing to life an adaption of *A Christmas Carol* by local playwright Rachel Feeny-Williams. So, what's different in this classic tale? Well, set against a dark and gritty backdrop of modern London, the figures of Scrooge and Marley are both women and the story is narrated by two charity magazine sellers. Tiny Tim has also been replaced by an unseen baby, providing a particularly heartbreaking scene later. If you are interested in reading the script ahead of the audition date then please email [rfwscripts@gmail.com](mailto:rfwscripts@gmail.com). **Audition Date:** 3<sup>rd</sup> September, 7.30 pm. (If you are interested in participating but unable to make this date, please contact [extondramaclub@gmail.com](mailto:extondramaclub@gmail.com).) **Audition, Rehearsal and Performance Location:** Exton Village Hall, Station Road, Exton, EX3 0PS. **Performance Dates:** 10<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> December (7.30 pm). **Rehearsal Days/Times:** Tuesdays and Thursdays (7.30 – 9.30 pm) starting from 8<sup>th</sup> September. (The early weeks of rehearsals, until 3<sup>rd</sup> November, will be split between Act 1 on Tuesdays and Act 2 on Thursdays so some roles will only be required once a week during that period.)

### The Art of the Bloom: Discovering Club on the Exe



Since its founding in 2002, Club on the Exe has redefined what it means to work with botanicals. More than just a flower club, it is a hub for Contemporary Floral Design, where traditional techniques meet modern, innovative artistry. Affiliated with the [National Association of Flower Arrangement Societies \(NAFAS\)](http://www.nafas.org.uk) since 2004, the group has spent over two decades fostering a community that values creative expression as much as the flowers themselves.

*A Sanctuary for Creativity.* Whether you are a seasoned national demonstrator or a complete beginner picking up secateurs for the first time, you will find a seat at the table. The club welcomes teachers, florists, and hobbyists alike, all united by a desire to challenge the boundaries of floral design. Members travel from up to a 70-mile radius to attend, drawn by the high calibre of dynamic workshops led by renowned designers from across the UK and beyond.

*Join the Experience.* The group gathers five times a year for full-day 'hands-on' sessions, running from 10 am to 4 pm. These meetings offer a relaxing, friendly environment to learn new techniques and transform your skills alongside like-minded enthusiasts.

*Location.* [Village Hall in Clyst St Mary](http://www.villagehallinclyststmary.co.uk), near Exeter (conveniently located just off M5 Junction 30). *Next Workshop.* Sunday, 7<sup>th</sup> June 2026. *Membership and Fees.* Annual membership for five workshops is approximately £100, or you can experience the magic with a one-off taster session for £30. Ready to grow your skills? Reach out to Louise at [clubonthexelouise@gmail.com](mailto:clubonthexelouise@gmail.com) for more information or follow their latest designs on [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/clubonthexelouise) and Instagram.

### Clyst Valley Choral Society's Spring Concerts



'Simple Gifts' is the theme for Clyst Valley Choral Society's spring concerts. Join us for two evenings of choral delights and enchanting melodies, featuring Bruckner, Mozart, Holst, Gjeilo, Lauridsen and many more, at 7.30 pm on Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> May at Clyst St Mary Church, Church Lane, EX5 1DY; and at 7.30 pm on Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> May at Holy Trinity Church, Exmouth EX8 2AB. Tickets at £12 on the door (£10 in advance). See [www.clystvalleychoral.info](http://www.clystvalleychoral.info) for details.

### The Exeter Forum Talks Programme: May 2026



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 <sup>th</sup> May	John Webber followed by AGM	<i>Exeter's Forgotten Royal Daughter – Henrietta Stuart (Short Talk)</i> Henrietta Stuart was the youngest daughter of Charles 1. John will tell the story of her survival from her traumatic early years to life in the French Court of her cousin, Louis XIV, the Sun King, where she married Philippe, Duke of Orleans. The Exeter Forum AGM will follow this 25-minute talk.
13 <sup>th</sup> May	Angela White	<i>The History of Expatriate Women in Hong Kong</i> Former Hong Kong resident Angela makes a welcome return to the Exeter Forum to describe the lives and importance of the many women who shaped Hong Kong and its connections with China since the Victorian times.
20 <sup>th</sup> May	Brian Fernley	<i>The Schneider Trophy</i> Brian will describe the history, significance and importance of this inter-war aviation trophy. It was awarded for the winner of a demanding seaplane race and took place 12 times from 1913 to 1931. It was intended to encourage innovation in aircraft design, particularly speed. The 1931 winning aircraft, built by Supermarine, led to the development of the Spitfire.
27 <sup>th</sup> May	Spring break	<i>No meeting</i>

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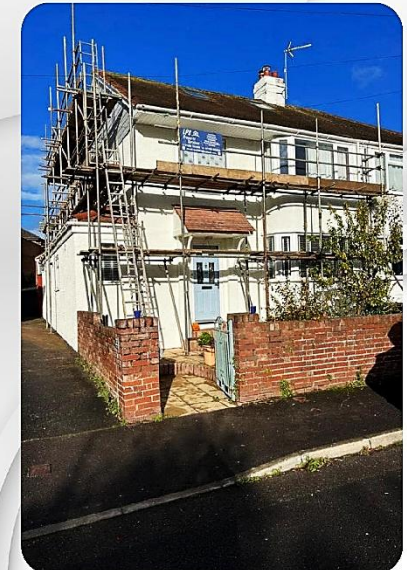
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# WCMC SERVICES MAY 2026

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3 <sup>rd</sup>	11-15	Holy Communion	Rev'd Eden
17 <sup>th</sup>	09-30	Family Service	Rev'd StirlingTroy
24 <sup>th</sup>	10-30	Holy Communion Whole Mission Community	Rev'd Eden

## Clyst St George

10 <sup>th</sup>	09-30	Breakfast Service	Rev'd Eden
24 <sup>th</sup>	09-30	Holy Communion	Rev'd Scrivener

## Clyst St Mary

3 <sup>rd</sup>	09-30	Family Service with Baptism	Rev'd Eden
17 <sup>th</sup>	09-30	Holy Communion	Rev'd Scrivener

## Exton

3 <sup>rd</sup>	10-30	Midweek for Mission Community HC	Rev'd Eden
10 <sup>th</sup>	18-00	Evening Worship	Rev'd Eden
13 <sup>th</sup>	10-30	Midweek for Mission Community HC	Rev'd Scrivener
20 <sup>th</sup>	10-30	Midweek for Mission Community HC	Rev'd StirlingTroy
27 <sup>th</sup>	10-30	Midweek for Mission Community HC	Rev'd Eden

## Farringdon

10 <sup>th</sup>	11-15	Holy Communion	Rev'd Stirling Troy
14 <sup>th</sup>	19-30	Ascension Day HC	Rev'd Eden
24 <sup>th</sup>	09-30	Morning Worship	Rev'd Eden

## Woodbury

3 <sup>rd</sup>	10-30	Family Service	Lay'd led
10 <sup>th</sup>	11-15	Holy Communion	Rev'd Eden
17 <sup>th</sup>	18-00	Evensong	Rev'd Eden
24 <sup>th</sup>	11-15	Holy Communion	Rev'd Eden and Rev'd StirlingTroy

## Woodbury Salterton

3 <sup>rd</sup>	09-30	Holy Communion	Rev'd StirlingTroy
17 <sup>th</sup>	09-30	Breakfast Family Service	Rev'd Eden

For all queries, please contact Admin Officer, Jill at [dupain@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:dupain@hotmail.co.uk).

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