

The Stourton Caundler

April—May 2025

Issue 189





Clubs and Committees in Stourton Caundle

Cycling Group Weekly, Mon & Fri	John Howes	01963251264
Garden Club 2nd Wednesday (Sep to Apr)	Christine Peters	362430
Events Committee	John Waltham	362890
Knit and Stitch Mondays Oct to May	Linda Walters	07805182477
League of Golfers Monthly, 3rd Sunday	Roger Paull	07970977404
Parish Council Monthly	Sue Harris	362864
Village Hall '100 Club'	Isobel Bull	07969 700140
Sports Club Weekly Mon,Tues,Thurs	Neil Duke	07383 866768
St Peter's Church Secretary	Jon-Paul Hughes	07779 287894
Village Hall Committee Chair Twice yearly plus AGM	Debbie Pritchett	362405
Welcome Club Chair 3rd Wednesday	Rob Page	363886

The Caundler Team

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Message from the Editors

It seems impossible to believe, that by the time you receive your copy of The Caundler, we will be heading into the giddy month of April.

As I write this on a glorious mid-March afternoon, I find the speed of the passage of time somewhat disquieting (I'm told it has something to do with my age: well, thank you!)

Ironically, we're appealing this time to the youngsters of the village. Hopefully, you'll all read and enjoy the great poem sent in by Keeva (see page 8). We'd really love to have your contributions too, on any topic, and really, in any format with a few explanatory notes; a poem or photo; your artwork or crafts; your favourite book, or film; a piece of prose on any subject; an autobiographical account; a piece about someone you admire/respect/would like to take after; your thoughts on life for a young person living here...the list of topics is endless.

Obviously, if you're not in the first flush of youth, please don't feel excluded: we really need contributions from anyone who'd like to provide them, and there is NO age discrimination at this magazine, I can guarantee!

Thank you!

Please use "**Word**" documents when sending contributions
by e-mail if possible to:

thecaundler@stourtoncaundle.org.uk

Please send content submissions by May 18, 2025

We made this!

STOURTON CAUNDLE
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
in the
VILLAGE HALL
on
MONDAY 14th APRIL 2025
At
7.00pm

Everyone in the village is very welcome to attend!

Spring Plant Sale
Saturday 3rd May 2pm-5pm Village Hall

Tea & Cake available to buy
 Contributions, of plants
 and/or cake, to the hall between
 10-11am.

Thank you!



Studies have suggested that growing and keeping houseplants can offer both psychological and physiological benefits. Psychological benefits often include improved general mood, reductions in stress levels, increased productivity (in office environments), and improved attention span. Houseplants can also help to reduce blood pressure and reduce fatigue as well as the frequency and severity of headaches.

Houseplants can greatly help to improve indoor air quality, especially during summer months when windows and doors are open and air contaminants increasingly find their way into our homes.

Garden Notes for April-May 2025

Just typing those 2 months feels uplifting! And after a "dry" and "sunny" spell; it's sunny again today; so much has appeared, really exciting, every day something new has popped up!

In Cornwall last weekend the narrow lanes with steep banks were thick with Violets/ Primroses/Celandines/Wild Daffs etc.. heaven.

So it's all taking off!

The usual list goes like this:

1. Split Snowdrops
2. Prune Winter Jasmine once over and don't be afraid to take out some old stems right to the base
3. Any of the early flowering shrubs that have gone over can be pruned back to shape
4. Evergreen hedges/shrubs can have a trim if needed
5. Early Clematis, ie Montana/Alpina etc can have a trim if needed, otherwise leave
6. By May you should be noticing new growth on Lavender/Sage/Curry plant/Rosemary/ some Salvias, so if they need a tidy up or cut back to promote new growth, then now is the moment
7. Penstemon, with the odd exception, should be cut down to where you see all the new growth
8. Feed Roses, with high potash feed Vitax 4, or a good dollop of well rotted horse manure
9. Start looking out for that blinking Lily BEETLE!
10. Tidy evergreen grasses by combing through with gloved hands
11. Top dress plants in pots and start to feed as they start to come into leaf
12. Have you staked? Go on, you know it's worth it!
13. In dry periods don't forget that as the plants start to kick in and get going they need a drink.

Well I could go on, as the jobs are endless, but that's a start.

My final word is: patience! In this world we live in, everyone wants everything right now! We have come to expect immediacy with regard to our gardens too. What I'm thinking of right now is the new CONCRETE boundary. My first choice was to buy Willow hurdles so that I wouldn't have to look at the concrete. But they aren't cheap, will eventually rot, and I'd have to get someone to do the job. No : I must be patient. So now I have planted a Climbing Hydrangea Petiolaris, which will cope with my poor soil, plus they like shade and are as tough as anything, and "eventually" will cover the said concrete. Also I shall transplant some roots of my variegated Ivy; that should get going!

Good luck with your plots and remember to make time to sit and enjoy being in them.

Your Garden Guru

A Chance to Embark on a Spring Clear-out

As a result of a leak in our boiler room, I had to empty various cupboards whilst Graham Parsons sorted out the problem.

I soon realised that, having lived in our house for 28 years, we had accumulated a lot of stuff which we simply did not need.

Bedlinen, DVDs, crockery, the contents of a gadget graveyard, various kitchen utensils taking up space in already full shelves and cupboards, and overstuffed wardrobes with clothes I might just squeeze into next year.

Daughter Josephine, who deals with clients in similar situations, told me about the Anglo Doorstep Collections.

They are a charity, **free of charge** and collect the stuff you want to get rid of. They provide a comprehensive list of the things which they will take and the only expense you have is some black bin bags, a few labels, cardboard boxes from the supermarket, sticky paper tape and a felt tip pen. They even invite you to choose which charity you would like to support.

Click on the link and discover the most helpful website. [https://
anglodoorstepcollections.co.uk](https://anglodoorstepcollections.co.uk)

Vinny Taylor



Garden Club

March Meeting

The meeting of the Garden Club on Wednesday 12 March was entertained by a lecture on "Painting with Plants" from Jane Moore, a writer and broadcaster on garden design, who has also been a head gardener in her time. Almost forty members were in attendance, on a cold night when firesides must have offered a compelling alternative! Jane's talk was illustrated with slides of various gardens she had worked at or designed (or both), and she had much helpful advice on how to combine colours, with emphasis on the power of green in its almost infinite range of shades to contrast, blend with or support flowering plants.

Forthcoming Events

The next meeting of the Garden Club will be on Wednesday 9 April, when Alan Down will talk about recently introduced plants for growing in our gardens. The Club's Spring Show will be held on the same night, and members are invited to bring along their prize exhibits. A schedule of categories will be circulated closer to the date. On Saturday 3 May, the Garden Club will be holding a plant sale at the village hall. All contributions will be welcome, including unwanted gardening implements, as well as the more usual cuttings, split perennials, spare house plants, etc. Finally, the annual Discount Evening at Castle Gardens, for paid-up members only, will be held on Wednesday 7 May.

Broken Nails

Roof Fund Progress on Grant Applications

Several people have asked for an update on where we've got to in applying for grants to renovate the hall roof, so here goes.

We started the ball rolling by submitting an Expression of Interest to The Community Ownership Fund at the end of 2023 which was potentially worth £150k, by far the most significant. We appeared to meet the eligibility criteria, but were advised that, for any bid to be successful, our charity needed to be a legally incorporated entity – i.e. a Charitable Incorporated Organisation or CIO - at that point we put in a full application. We began the process of setting this up. Sadly, this grant was withdrawn after the change to a Labour government in 2024. We have continued to evolve the hall into a CIO as we feel this is the most appropriate model for us.

We also applied to the Capital Leverage Fund – for £25,000 – and the Shared Prosperity Fund Community Grant – for £15,000 – around this time. Both applications were declined, the former mainly because the funders felt the project was at too early a stage, not least because we did not have up-to-date quotes for the roof renovation, and could not demonstrate that we had raised sufficient funds from village fund-raising activities. They also advised we needed to refine some of our hall policies. The latter was because of the timescale: we needed to have completed the work by March 2025.

Where we were successful was applying to the National Lottery Community Fund for £20,000, and we received this in February 2024.

As you know, Ness, Jane, Isobel and others then embarked upon a vigorous programme of local fundraising which has allowed us to demonstrate how committed the villagers are to raising funds. Thank you to everyone who has been involved in organising and running events, and to all the villagers who have attended them and contributed so generously. In parallel, we rewrote all the hall policies, developed a business plan, and canvassed views of villagers through the questionnaire we distributed last September.

At the same time, Peter Riley, who in a past life project managed many significant infrastructure projects, set about obtaining up-to-date quotes. This involved obtaining three quotes from local contractors who are also certified for asbestos removal. The tenderers were prequalified through site visits; requirements were issued in October; and tenders were returned in December. We have reviewed and compared the three tenders to make sure the work quoted for is wholly compliant with our requirements. We feel one, which has quoted £112,000 inclusive of VAT, fully addresses our needs and the trustees are minded to accept it once we have raised the necessary funds.

Following receipt of these quotes we re-applied to the Capital Leverage Fund for £22,400 and have been granted 50% of that. We believe it helped enormously having a letter of support from James Vitali, our local councillor, and Simon Hoare, our MP. They both came over to see the hall and discuss the project at the end of February. We also applied to the Sturminster Newton Cheese Festival fund and received £1,000.

Another recent application to The Dorset Community Foundation Neighbourhood Fund has been unsuccessful as they prefer not to fund large capital projects. We are currently awaiting a response to our application to The Garfield Weston Foundation for £20,000.

That is as far as we have got so far! We have still to apply to the Hall & Woodhouse Community Chest Fund. This closed for new applications towards the end of 2024 but we believe there will be a further round in 2025. We will continue to monitor the availability of new grants via the Dorset Fundfinder which provides a fortnightly alert service and through our contacts on Dorset Council.

Our current total raised towards the work on the Hall roof stands at £76,200. The Trustees continue to seek donations from both public and private sources so if you hear of any other funding opportunities, please let us know!

Keith Lindsay and Pete Bull

Stourton Caundle

I like going in the woods,
Adventuring as much as I can,
I've always got a plan,
When I step into the wild.

The streams bubble,
As I make a dam,
I love jumping in puddles,
It splashes everywhere!

All the broken trees,
Are perfect for me to climb,
I climb as high as I can,
Over my dam.

When I go home,
I start to moan,
I never want to leave,
Please!

By Keeva age 10

The Editors are very eager to hear from the younger residents of our village. We want to learn about and see what you're writing, drawing, painting, photographing, building, creating.

See page three for information on where and how to submit your creations.

Naturally Thinking April-May 2025

Out of the blue, a friend asked me if I had ever heard of tardigrades. This bit of information must have passed me by all my life, because I hadn't a clue what she was talking about. I think this is surprising because there are countless numbers of them, all around us in the great outdoors. Google, as usual, was a great help. They are apparently vital in the great scheme of things in that they are a food source for other microorganisms which live in the soil and provide the nutrients necessary for its decomposition. In fact, they seem to be right up there in the important food chain. It would also seem that I must have millions of the things on my roof because they thrive in the moss that grows there.

These microscopic monsters are the most resilient of creatures, living almost anywhere, from the tops of mountains to the depths of oceans, from ice to hot springs, and they particularly love mosses and lichens. They have even been found in five million year old fossils so they've been kicking around for quite a long time. They're not very pretty - in fact, basically they are just a head and they're so ugly that their structure and clumsy movements have been the inspiration for many of the baddies in science fiction, only considerably enlarged of course. In close up pictures you can see a sort of minute nose and up-tilted, closed eyes, and then four segments with eight pairs of legs. They're also known as water bears or moss piglets. I don't have to love them of course, but since my friend sort of introduced me, and I've read a fraction of the reams about them on Google, I have got a little bit interested. At least if I leave the moss on my roof I'm doing a bit towards re-wilding!

At last I've been out on Genevieve, and as she and I haven't had a good airing since last October, it was especially gratifying. Someone told me that there wasn't much to look at but I found lots. It was fine and sunny and the sun glowed on the leaves of the Hart's Tongue ferns on the banks of the ditches. Mosses growing on the old trunks of trees in the hedges gleamed like well brushed velvet and back-lit the large holly tree near the bottom of Rowden Mill Lane. Celandines gleamed from the verges and a few clumps of Primroses joined them here and there. A bank of the stream has been cleared leaving the water clear and gurgling beneath the pack horse bridge. I can't see how far the clearance goes, but it has certainly made a big difference and, presumably has helped towards cutting down on the flooding at that point. The hedges have been cut back - it's amazing how ravaged they look to begin with and how they recover so quickly. All hedge cutting had been delayed because of the never ending rain, and by October they had grown so much that the lane felt as though it was enclosed by high walls. Now, though there was no obvious change in them, they look as though they are ready for tiny leaf buds to make their first clue that something different will happen very soon.

Everywhere was wonderfully silent. Somewhere in the distance I could hear a tractor and watched it toil its way up and down a far off field, otherwise nothing. No birds because they don't often sing in the early afternoon, and not even the distant barking of a dog.

And the views - oh I have missed the views of the distant misty hills and the trees silhouetted against the skyline. There is something different about those trees too. They don't look quite as stark now but seem to hold the promise of spring.

Yes, it was a deeply satisfying outing and as I bumped my way over the track home, I thought, spring is really on its way.

Margaret Waddingham

A History of Citizens Advice

In the Beginning,

The idea of a national advice service in the UK emerged in the years between the two world wars. Complex new regulations and the impact of the First World War on families made the need for information and advice apparent, but nothing was actually started until war was declared on the 3rd of December 1939.

Then the CAB service mobilised its embryonic forces to allay the fears of those bombed out, drafted or evacuated. Within the first month 200 bureaux had been set up in houses, town halls, libraries and churches. From the start they were staffed by a committed group of volunteers.

The need for advice and information was high. Not only were there problems of war brought to “Mrs B of the bureau” but also the everyday problems which still have to be dealt with today. Bureaux stocked a variety of leaflets and explained everything from rationing and Red Cross messages to war damage relief. Some of the most complex problems involved finding lost relatives who had been in the bombed areas.

The Post War Years

Government funding was channelled away from the service and alternative funds had to be sought. Charitable trusts provided support and the number of CABs rose by 50%. With recession kicking in, debt and benefits enquiries reflected not only the rising poverty, but also the increasing expertise of CAB. In this area, working with other national and local groups CA increasingly took the information they received from the thousands of clients they helped every year and used this in discussions with government on the formulation of their policies. This social policy work of CA is now a central part of the service. In the past 60 years, Citizens Advice have dealt with more than 165 million enquiries. The 15,000 volunteer advisors who give their time and energy to help others, now go through a rigorous and demanding training course. Each bureau is funded by grants from their local authority, charitable funds and donations from local businesses.

Citizens advice believes everyone deserves access to independent free advice to help them deal with life's problems and challenges. Volunteers are at the heart of how we deliver citizens advice service.

This can be helping people online, over the phone, or in person:

raising funds,

researching and campaigning for policy changes,

helping witnesses in court,

helping the service to run smoothly in our admin and customer service roles,

as a trustee .



Apple and Orange Crunch.

Approx 12 thinnish slices of bread, brown or white
 110g butter
 1 small orange-half rind and all juice
 75g demerara sugar
 3 medium cooking apples



Pre heat oven to 180 C

Melt the butter—do not let brown.

Cut crusts off bread.

With a pastry brush, spread six or seven pieces liberally, on both sides, with melted butter. Place in dish to form a lining to cover base and sides. Sprinkle in a layer of apple and a little orange peel and juice and a layer of sugar. Carry on like this until all apples are used up. Keep back one tablespoon of sugar.

Brush rest of bread with butter and put over top to form a lid. Sprinkle over rest of sugar and any remaining butter. Bake for 45 minutes or until top is crisp and golden.

Serve with custard or cream..

VILLAGE HALL '100' CLUB MONTHLY DRAW RESULTS

Drawn at the Beehive Cafe on 13th February 2025:

First Prize:	£35.00	No.52	Vanessa Boal
Second Prize:	£30.00	No.177	Amelia Perkins
Third Prize:	£25.00	No.151	Shirley Mitchell

Drawn at the Beehive Cafe on 13th March 2025:

First Prize:	£35.00	No.285	David Jeanes
Second Prize:	£30.00	No.80	Helen Harris
Third Prize:	£25.00	No.267	John Mitchell

The next two draws will be on 17th April and 15th May at the Beehive Cafe.

Anna Oliver 01963 362109

New Members of the Caundler Team

We are delighted to welcome several new members to the Caundler Team:

Sue, (who is taking over the Secretary's role from me) and Peter, (who is taking on the Treasurer's role in order to allow Rob Page to make his escape), Chapman.

Sue and Keith Palmer Simmons who are taking on the task of managing distribution from the long-serving Anna and Andrew Oliver.

Helen Saxton, who volunteered even before she moved to the village, has now joined us.

Welcome all! And a huge thank you to Anna, Andrew and Rob who have provided such massive support to the Caundler over so many years.

Neil Gillard, Chairman.

Samaritans

Hallo? You are through to Samaritans. Can I help?"

These are the words with which we begin our calls when we pick up the telephone in our branch in Yeovil. And the phone never stops ringing.

On November 2nd 1953 the first ever call was made to a pioneering helpline for people thinking about ending their lives and needing someone to listen to their story. It began in a backroom in London and now has over 200 branches and 23,000 volunteers. Every 10 seconds Samaritans responds to a call for help.

I have been a Samaritan for about 10 years and have never regretted a moment. A tough training over several weeks is followed by mentored shifts until finally you are fully trained and have earned your 'number' – and that is what you are known by, your chosen first name and your number. Who you are, where you come from, what you have done in life doesn't matter – we are just fellow Samaritans, supporting each other and our callers.

A strong commitment is required to the Branch, to keep shifts open, to provide all night cover, to raise money, to train new Samaritans, to support fellow Samaritans – and most importantly to be there to listen to our callers who so often have no-one else to turn to.

One of the hardest parts for me in training was the guiding principle that we never give advice. Being a mother, and naturally bossy, I longed to sort out the lives of those who called – but that is not what we are there for. By skilful handling of the call, the caller may, in the end, say it has really helped them to arrive at some sort of solution – and we can offer to signpost them to an appropriate helpline that does offer practical advice. We can also offer to call back at a pre-arranged time. That call would be made by another branch member. We are not allowed to become 'involved' personally.

Sometimes we are thanked, which is wonderful, sometimes abused, sometimes cut off. Some calls are hugely rewarding – others less so, but the service is not about us. We are privileged that desperate people turn to us knowing we are confidential, non-judgemental and will listen with empathy. We never say, "I know how you feel..." because we don't.

We allow our callers to tell us how it is for them and we have time to listen. Our number 116 123 is free from any phone. Quite a number of our Samaritan volunteers have used this number at some low point in their lives. We are always so glad that people turn to us.

If you are 18 or over and would like to find out more about volunteering there are info evenings on the first Wednesday of every month at 7.00pm. These are held at Morley House, 26, West Henford St, Yeovil BA20 1XE. Just turn up – no need to book and parking available.



Treasured Possession

I'm cheating a bit. My most treasured possession is not a thing at all but a memory, a very precious memory of my parents.

They were two of the wonderful people, calm, stoic and ever there through all points of my life, whether high or low. Was it their tough north country upbringing that shaped them I wonder? Whatever it was, I think they were remarkable people.

I was born four years before the outbreak of the last world war and as so much of your life is shaped by your childhood, perhaps this is why I remember so much about it. My memories of my parents begins there.

The first, very clear one is of a Sunday morning in 1939. My two sisters, both much older, Gwen by nine years and Beryl by six, were away at Girl Guide Camp and I was just four that day when I sat on my mother's lap drinking fresh lemonade, whilst she and my father listened intently to a man's solemn voice on the radio. Now and then mother put her finger to my lips if I started to talk and hugged me tightly. When it was over I asked what my father had been hammering just outside. 'Shutters' he said. It didn't mean anything to me then. It soon did though. It was the day that war was declared on Germany.

We lived in North Harrow, just outside London, though probably now it has all merged into one. Consequently we were not directly aimed at by German bombers, but we did catch some of the bombs that they jettisoned on their way back to Germany, or even some that had overshot their targets. My father, having been badly injured in 1938 when he fell down a 30ft lift shaft whilst inspecting it at his place of work, Odhams Press, had not recovered sufficiently ever to be called up. The right side of his face and head were still badly affected from the fractured skull he had sustained and for years after we had to be careful not to even kiss him on that side. He also walked with a limp because of a badly broken leg sustained in the same accident. Even so, he did a lot towards the war effort. He volunteered for fire watching on the roof of the Odhams buildings in Covent Garden throughout the worst of the war, which included the blitz, sleeping on a camp bed set up in his office. His weapons against fires from incendiary bombs were a stirrup pump and a bucket of sand. He also joined the local ARP branch in our road. I didn't think much about it at the time, just took it for granted that this was what fathers did if they hadn't already disappeared with a kitbag and wearing strange uniforms.

Meanwhile, the blitz had begun in earnest and often when I had gone to bed, I would hear

heavy bombers flying over our house, and I would call out to my parents, 'Are they coming to bomb our house?' and 'Are we going to win the war?' and one or other of them would come in and tuck me up again and say without fail, 'No of course not darling, and yes, of course we'll win the war, but it might be as well just to ask God for some help when you say your prayers.' So I would roll over onto my tummy, comforted, one leg tucked beneath me and rock and say over and over, each and every night and for a while even after the war, 'God bless mummy and daddy and grandma and Gwennie and Beryl and please help us to win the war and keep us safe from fires, bombs, explosions, explosives, murderers, burglars and appendicitis.' I don't know when the appendix crept in but I obviously didn't like the sound of it. Maybe I thought it had something to do with the war.

We had no air raid shelter of our own but when the bombing was really near and my father had rushed out for his ARP duties, my grandmother (who lived with us then), sisters and I crowded into our cupboard under the stairs, and my mother sat in the doorway as there was no room for her and she would chat and get us to sing until it was over. As the bombing got more intense, my sisters and I slept beneath the big deal dining table in the dining room. Always my parents appeared calm and matter of fact about everything, and consequently so was I, even though the crump, crump, crump sounds were getting nearer. I'm sure my sisters shared this, though I regret to say, it is far too late to ask either of them.

We had a map of Europe on the wall in the dining room, and we all gathered round when my father moved little flags around, either nasty German swastikas or our own Union Jack flags to mark the passage of the war. Sometimes we cheered, led by father, sometimes we didn't.

One day, I was playing in the garden and my mother came out to take in the dry washing, then chatting and laughing over the fence with our neighbour. Over lunch I asked her why they had been laughing and she said, 'Because there has been a miracle and I want you never to forget it.' And over lunch she told me about hundreds of little boats that had answered a call from our prime minister, then gathered, waiting for decent weather, and how when the weather had suddenly become just right, they had gone to a place called Dunkirk and they had rescued thousands of our own troops and brought them home. I didn't really understand how huge a miracle it had been of course, but when we went to church that Sunday, packed out as usual, and we were singing 'Eternal Father strong to save,' I felt mother was doing something strange. I looked up at her and to my dismay, I saw that she was crying. I looked away quickly and then saw that many of the congregation were crying too. I have never been able to get through that hymn without a lump coming into my throat.

I think it must have been very soon after that, again over lunch, that my mother heard a bulletin which was read after the news, giving the names of thoses who had been reported dead or missing. That day the name of one of our near neighbour's sons was read out. Mother didn't hesitate. As soon as lunch had been tidied away, we hurried up the road to visit her, and with her instructions still in my ears that Mrs Moore would probably be very upset and crying but that I was to be very quiet because this is what happened when a person loses someone very dear to them. So I stood in the bay window and followed a large bluebottle up and down the glass, up and down, up and down. with my finger, whilst in the background Mrs Moore lent into my mother's comforting arms and sobbed and sobbed.

'I have his photo by my bed but that's no comfort now,' she said over and over again.

When we at last went out, mother gathered me into her arms. 'Good girl', she said and kissed me and hugged me tightly.

About two years later, Gwen, who by then had left school and travelled up to London each day with my father to work for Cable and Wireless, was badly injured when Australia House took a direct hit. Gwen and her friend were walking on the opposite side of the road at the time and they were blown several yards away by the blast. Gwen had 33 pieces of shrapnel removed and a piece that was never taken out because it was too near her spine. She was in Charing Cross Hospital. My parents went to see her regularly which must have been a problem in itself, but when she was moved to Hydestyle in Surrey, the problem became greater. Any travel in those days was difficult, They must have been frantic with worry yet they never passed it on to me, but always said that since Gwen was so much better she had been sent further away to get well and it had been decided that Beryl and I were to go and stay with our only aunt and uncle who lived just outside Manchester (which had its own share of bombing) for a holiday until she was better. I can't remember how long we were there but I remember one happy occasion when they came to see us and we all went to Manchester Zoo. It was a cheerless place on a cheerless day with hardly any animals to see and only stale buns to eat. But I didn't mind because both mother and father were there and father and his brother were making lots of jokes that made us all laugh. At some stage Beryl returned home but I went on to stay with my little friend, Joyce, who had moved with her family to Chester a few months previously. I can't remember how long I was there either, but I did want to go home. That was the sum total of my 'evacuation'.

One of the first Christmases I really remember was that in which I had a much longed for baby doll. In those days, the Christmas tree was never put up until after I had gone to bed on Christmas Eve. I must have been told that it would be there for the big day, because I remember creeping downstairs while it was still dark towards a dim light coming from the sitting room. And there indeed was a little Christmas tree, all lit up and decorated, just as I had been told it would be, and underneath it - wonder of wonders! - a perfect baby doll sat, dressed in turquoise and white in clothes knitted and sewn by my mother. I don't think I even touched her then, just marvelled that the baby doll I had longed for was there, waiting for me to love her. And I did. I called her Joyce and all day I shared my meals, my chair, my every moment with her and, after tea, I was allowed to get down as soon as I had finished and go into the other room on my own, where I lay down on my tummy in front of the fire with her and told her about the pictures I could see in the flames. My father came in after a while to check the fire and I remember him smiling at me before he left again. Later we had games and I loved it because my father, normally so serious, was so funny.

I didn't start school until I was six years old, because the two main ones where we lived had been taken over by the government. Finally, two sisters, who lived in adjacent houses, had the buildings knocked into one and together they opened a very small primary school. I don't think there could have been more than 20 pupils there but at least it was a school. Two years later I went with Beryl (Gwen having left by then) to a convent school in Rickmansworth, five stations along the Metropolitan line, which was just at the end of our garden. In fact, we backed onto the platform there. Beryl's friend Pam travelled with us. North Harrow platforms for both London-bound trains and the ones we took, were reached by three big flights of stone stairs, over which was a glass roof that had been reinforced at the beginning of the war with stiff yellowish netting. I remember that the

three of us had nearly got to the top of the second flight when there an enormous crash, beginning at the bottom and working its way rapidly towards us. It was commuter time, so there were a lot of people on both platforms.

I remember Beryl grabbing my hand and hauling me up to the top, then we stopped and looked behind us. The whole of the glass roof had crashed down and it only just missed us. I remember a peculiar silence then everyone seemed to be screaming and only then did the air raid warning begin wailing. Somehow we managed to scramble down and then we were running home, with Pam rushing towards hers. On the way home - and it was only just round the corner - we met my mother rushing towards us. Mother checked us for damage - we hadn't suffered anything but shock, except that I kept complaining that I had something in my eye, but I'm not sure that I wasn't just wanting a bit of attention. In the end, she took me round to the Chemist who, with a tiny paint brush carefully examined it and said that maybe I had a minute piece of glass in it. Instantly my eye recovered. The only damage to our house was to the windows - we had none left.

Beryl rushed round to see Pam who lived a little further away. Their house was all right but her grandmother was not so lucky. She was much nearer to the site of the bomb, which had dropped on The British Restaurant, newly opened the day before. An entire wall of the house had come down, leaving her shocked grandmother, sitting up in bed exposed to the world. Both Pam's father and Pam herself immediately climbed what was left of the staircase to be with her, so Beryl joined them. When the ARP got there they were immediately ordered down. Shortly after that they rescued her grandmother, in the nick of time before the entire house collapsed. I remember both of my parents staring hard at Beryl, telling her she must never do such a thing again but I heard them say later when they thought that nobody was around, that they probably would have done the same in similar circumstances.

Like everyone else, mother and father grew as many vegetables as they could, both in the garden and on our first allotment a nearby walk away. My mother bottled, jammed and made chutney out of anything that came her way. She salted beans in big brown jars, and put eggs into a bucket of isinglass when there was a glut of them. I remember father every so often steeling himself to finish off the oldest hen that no longer served any useful purpose. Its tough little body ended up as a Sunday roast. One evening I remember my father bringing home a huge, unwieldy parcel wrapped in brown paper and string. It was his first brood of bees, complete with combs full of bees. He had brought it home on the 2 trains from London. Imagine what Health and Safety would have said about that these days. I remember the excitement of extraction day when father brought in the big silvery extractor, lifted it onto the table, sliced the wax covering from each comb and slotted them into place while all the family gathered round to watch them whirling round. One after the other of us turned the handle and I was spellbound when it was my turn and saw how the golden stream of honey flew against the sides, then flow through the tap and into the jars.

Just a fraction of memories that are so precious. But overall that most precious one of all, that whatever happened, their love was always there, guiding and protecting. How extraordinarily lucky I was, yet it has only been in recent years that I have come to realise just how very precious those memories are to me. I loved them so much. I do hope I told them that.

Margaret Waddingham

PARENTS

I'll tell you of my mother -
 she'd kisses warm as sun
 and hugs as big as eiderdowns
 and eyes that always shone.
 She'd tolerance and patience,
 was the family diplomat
 and I loved her, oh, so hugely -
 But did I tell her that?

I'll tell you of my father -
 He was full of northern steel,
 he teased a lot, hummed out of tune,
 kept feelings well concealed.
 He was always there for all of us,
 had depths I never tapped
 and I loved him, oh, with all my heart -
 but did I tell him that?

Oh, I hope I told them that.

Margaret Waddingham

Confessions of a Chorister: Part One

Many years ago, the lovely lady who still teaches music at the school where I was also teaching stated that 'anyone can learn to sing'. This was in response to someone very close to me protesting that they were in fact unable to sing in tune and therefore would not be a great asset to the school staff choir! For me, however, singing began to be something I really, really enjoyed, both in the aforementioned choir, and, latterly, with two very different types of singing groups based in Stalbridge.

Ironically, one of the best things about both of these Stalbridge sessions is that they are difficult, indeed quite challenging (well, they are for me, anyway!) The Benefice Choir is run by a tremendously talented lady: Helen Hitchins. Her knowledge of music, musical notation, history of music, interpretation of musical scores and indeed, all things relating to church music in particular, is incredible. Our practices, on Wednesday evenings in St.Mary's Church, are intended to prepare us to sing anthems, psalms, responses and whatever other fiendish pieces Helen chooses for the various key services held throughout the year.

A number of lovely people from Stourton Caundle are now regulars in this choir, and it's become a delightful 'fixture' in our lives.

We attempt to sing in four part harmony, and a wonderfully patient pianist by the name of Maggie accompanies us. Whilst this is obviously immensely useful, particularly to those of us not so familiar with a given piece of music, or what, for example, middle 'C' sounds like, it does have its disadvantages: we're singing away, at the top of our voices, feeling that finally, we've 'got it', even beginning to feel just the tiniest bit smug...only to have Helen, with that unerring ear of hers, ask Maggie to play the final notes of the piece again...in order for us to hear just how flat we have become throughout the phrase, or verse, or whatever it may be! How dispiriting, how annoying...how humbling.

Another challenge is the speed at which we're expected to learn a new piece, and the number of pieces Helen introduces into the sessions. She'll then very gently remind us that 'we've only got three more practices before this service'; at which point audible gulping can be heard throughout the ranks (not in tune either!)

The once - a - week practices are never quite enough on their own, and Helen devotes huge amounts of time providing us with homework: in the form of sound files and recordings of the pieces. Woe betides anyone who tries to wing it; pretending they've practised religiously (pun intended). We aren't exactly named and shamed, but it soon becomes painfully obvious which one of us is 'the weakest link' when we have to try to sing our particular tune or harmony part.

As the time for our performance draws ominously close, we discuss additional practice sessions, and one of my favourite times is when, on the day of the actual service, we meet at the venue a good hour and a half beforehand, in order to have 'a complete run-through of all the pieces'. There's a great atmosphere of anticipation, and often a tot of Kate's deliciously throat-warming sloe gin to loosen the vocal chords very nicely, thank you. It's a lovely, friendly time with a great sense of camaraderie and support for one another.

I only became involved with this particular choir in order to sing Christmas carols in our very own St.Peter's Church. Now, over two years' on, it's become something I look forward to with relish, for all that I'm so often feeling under prepared or 'out of my depth, or 'outside my comfort zone'. They say (whoever 'they' are) that we should do things that scare us, don't they? Well, for me, this frequently does the trick. I just hope the congregation we sing to, and with, don't feel too terrified and traumatised after being subjected to our efforts!

Bayleaf

Part Two to come in our next edition.

Sir Thomas Beecham (1879-1961) was a noted British conductor. He founded the London Philharmonic Orchestra in 1932 and was artistic director of the Royal Opera House. During his career, he was influential in promoting classical music to American and British audiences.

Rehearsing Handel's 'Messiah', Beecham pleaded with the choir "When we sing 'All we, like sheep, have gone astray.' might we please have a little more regret and a little less satisfaction."

Knit and Stitch Group

Our friendly group meets on Monday afternoons 2pm to 4pm, from October through to Easter. Last year, in addition, we met once a month during the warmer months to “show and tell” and socialised with a couple of lunches out together. We enjoy knitting, crochet, sewing and tapestry. Sometimes we work on our personal projects, but mainly we produce items for charity.



Crochet seems to have been really taken up by some of the members this season and several beautiful, colourful blankets have been produced.

The photos show just a few of the items we have made for charity.

The charity items include cot blankets, jumpers for children and babies, knitted toys, mittens, scarves and hats of all sizes. Since the war in Ukraine

started all of the charity items have all gone to Ukraine via volunteer lorries leaving from Castle Point north of Bournemouth. They are still going there and are much appreciated.



If you or someone you know is having a sort out and has any unwanted knitting wools, (any thickness, colour or quantity) our group would love to accept it and would make very good use of it.



Contact : Linda Walters

Lindawalters1@aol.com

07805182477

Golf Report - Sunday 16th February

There were a good number of golfers, to make the most of a dry morning, even if the course was understandably a little damp. A stiff, chill wind made it difficult to keep the ball straight, at least according to one competitor – it was only partly reflected in his score! Given the recent weather, we should thank Steve and his team for the morning's entertainment. As always there was a warm welcome in the clubhouse.



The Des Austen Challenge was nearest the pin on the first, and clearly that first shot on a cold February morning proved to be a bit of a test! But rising to the challenge, and our winner for February was Paul Wavish.



The winning team with 39 points were RGN (good at golf, not so hot on team names) Roger, Simon.....Goody! and Noah!



The overall winner, with a wonderful 19 points, was Noah McIntyre. Noah was well ahead of the chasing group, on 16 points : Pete Blundell, Simon Price and Messrs. Goudge – Bill and Mark.

Sunday 16th March

A cold, frosty but beautifully clear, spring morning made for an enjoyable morning's golf. As ever, there was a warm welcome in the clubhouse and the coffee and bacon baps were well received. The challenge, this month, was a three player Texas Scramble. Teams were randomly selected and 10% of the combined handicaps were taken as the team's handicap: as an additional condition, each player had to have two counting drives off the tee. Despite the wonderful sunshine, there was a difficult cold breeze and with the ground drying out, pitching balls onto the green proved difficult – at least for some groups!

The competition was close, with only three shots separating the first three teams; the remaining three teams were some way behind! In third place with 33.7 were the 'PinUps' (Pete Hallam, Pete Woodman and Neil Duke), second place, with a score of 31.4 went to the 'Young Uns' (Bill Goudge, Scott Wareham and Marty Bond). The winners of this month's Texas Scramble were 'Jim and the Beans' with a score of 30.2.

These fine gentlemen (Jim Ackland, Rob Mitchell and Neil Kersley) also won the Des Austen Challenge. This was for scoring a birdie two on the first hole. Bragging rights all round for the next month. Well done gents!



Abandoned Hobbies

A year or so ago I went through a frenzy of trying out new things – just to see if any of them struck a chord and would go on to become steadfast hobbies or life-long rituals.

Here's what I tried in one year:

Reiki training – I joined a group of eight or ten, over a weekend, to learn the basics of Reiki. It was taught in a lovely converted stable in Chettle by a serene lady called Sarah, who is a Reiki Master.

The course focused on how to work with the 'Universal Energy' which is available to us all. Some may know it as 'chi' or 'qi' if you practice yoga. During the weekend the Reiki Master / Sarah gave each one of us individual attunements (to help open us up to the Universal Energy), we learnt about the history of Reiki, about the Chakra system and were taught the hand positions for a Reiki self-healing treatment and hand positions for giving a

full Reiki healing treatment to others. It was a wonderfully tranquil and calming experience and I connected with a couple of splendid ladies, with whom I returned on several occasions for some Reiki top-up sessions called 'Reiki Share Groups'.

Mindfulness & Meditation – this was an eight week course providing practical tools to navigate the stresses and anxieties of daily life. The course combined guided meditation techniques, movement exercises, and reflective exploration of everyday challenges such as physical pain, emotional stress, anxiety, and role-related pressures. There were only three of us on the course which made it very intimate with plenty of time to chat with the tutor and each other, thereby gaining a strong degree of trust fairly quickly. I also joined a Vagus Nerve workshop to understand how much of an impact this ancient part of our nervous system has on us in everyday life. Far more than you would realise.

Yoga & Pilates – I joined a weekly Hatha yoga class and tried out two types of pilates. One of the pilates sessions was a group based class using 'reformer' equipment (basically a springs and pulley type machine which helps create tension for your muscles to work against), and the other a one-to-one session more tailored to my own requirements (e.g.



Mindfulness & Meditation, Chettle



Reiki Share group, Chettle

from several years of rowing I had an over-developed set of muscles on the right-hand side of my back, meaning I had a certain degree of scoliosis). Sadly the pilates classes have dwindled (lack of effort on my part), but am still attending the weekly Hatha yoga classes.

Gardening – in the spring/summer of 2023 I embarked on a garden design project based on the prairie style planting of Piet Oudolf (of the Hauser & Wirth fame and many other global projects). I decided however, that I would not call in the help of any garden designers, or professional gardeners in general, and would do it all myself (on a back garden that was pretty much a wilderness). I also decided to use the Charles Dowding 'no dig' method as it would be faster and less back-breaking than trying to dig out tons of paddock style rough grass and create flower/veg beds in the more traditional manner. I also believe in the rationale behind 'no dig' i.e. digging soil destroys

the natural structures and vitality of the earth. I visited the wonderful Knoll Gardens and Nursery near Wimborne, on an almost weekly basis, to supplement the stock of prairie style plants that I already had. By the end of the summer – I had transformed approximately

60% of a garden wilderness into flowerbed and veg plots.

All of the above pastimes and hobbies fell foul of increased workload (you know, the stuff required to pay the bills) during 2024, and virtually all of them fell by the wayside completely. The only one remaining being the weekly Hatha yoga. However, this year I have promised myself that this will change. I have re-started the garden project and intend to finish off the 30-40% still remaining (this will be more of a small pond / wildlife area of the garden, still 'managed' but in a light-touch way). And I will attempt to re-ignite the Meditation practices and upweight the yoga/stretching projects.

Work can wait

Cat Lane Recollections

Articles about hobbies or interests that somehow have become abandoned (due to lack of time; professional workload; stop being interesting anymore, or any other multitude of reasons). All contributions for future issues gratefully received.. (see page 3 for details)

Welcome Club Report

Sadly, we lost members Colin Wood and Jan Carson in December. Our thoughts go out to their family and friends.

We held our Christmas lunch at the Halsey Arms in December and it was as excellent as ever.

We returned in January 2025 for a talk on *The Wonderful World of Glass* by Dr Francis Burroughes. From his own collection, he brought historic and valuable items to illustrate the history of glassmaking from 3,000 B.C. to the present day. Francis handed out items for members to examine only mentioning their rarity and cost once they had been passed around and stories of past breakages by his audiences!

For our February meeting we had the most enjoyable afternoon with Cyril's Ukelele Band with our member Cyril also playing his trumpet. Song sheets were handed out to get everyone in good spirits by joining in.

At our March meeting we had Dr Helen Walker from the Blandford Cavalcade of Fashion giving a talk on the work of the charity (www.blandfordfashionmuseum.co.uk). Many of our members remember the late Mrs. Betty Penny MBE who founded the Blandford Fashion Museum, located in Lime Tree House, Blandford in 1996.

The charity is involved with conservation and education/handling of garments as well as the museum itself and will lend garments to schools undertaking projects.

Interestingly the museum receives fewer men's clothes or working-class clothes as these were normally used to destruction. Children, prior to the early 1900's, were dressed in the style of adults after the age of 5 and before that no difference was made between boys and girls dress.

Our next meeting on the 16th April 2025 is Life in Dorset Workhouses with Luke Moulard.

sandwiches and cake and a good natter. We also aim to have two trips a year and a Christmas lunch, so do come and join us.

If anyone would like to join us on a trip to Swanage on the 27th May 2025 where we will be taking a train from Norden to Swanage and return, both trips on Steam trains then please let Nic Walters or myself know. The trip will cost £28 payable in advance.

Looking forward to seeing you.

Rob Page



St Peter's Stourton Caundle - PCC Annual Report

The Parochial Church Council started the year with the retirement of our long serving Church Warden Vinny Taylor and Vice Chairman Terry Taylor. No one can overestimate the work they have done for our Benefice over the years and will be sorely missed. At the same time John Hedges was voted to take on the Church Wardens role along with David Jeanes.

On 29th June 2024 Belinda West our Assistant Curate was 'Priested' in Salisbury Cathedral. In April 2024 members of the Benefice, including Rev'd Canon Richard Handcock and Assistant Curate Belinda West attended a three night retreat in Wantage, Oxford, at the community of St Mary the Virgin, much appreciated by all who attended.

The Church Wardens have directed professionals to check the electrics of the Church and assess the safety of the trees in the church yard and cemetery. Ongoing is the project of getting fibre broadband in the church and repairing the wall around the graveyard.

There has been a keen interest in rewinding part of the churchyard to the east of the church which is now in its second year of rewinding.

Much is owed to Rachel and Rob Page and all their helpers running the Beehive Café raising money for the church and other activities in the village. There is also now a Breakfast Church every 4th Sunday of the month before the Service.

The PCC has a team of volunteers to help keep the church very active which is appreciated so much: Belinda West – Assistant Curate, Rachel Page – Pioneer Minister and Synod representative, John-Paul Hughes – Secretary, Jeremy Hughes – Treasurer, Sue New – Organist and Music Director, Janie Harris- Keeping the Church Brass shining, Polly Hedges and helpers for the Floral displays, William Webb – Maintaining the church Clock, Mark Paull - Maintaining the Church, Ray Steel – Helping Mark and William, Delia Lord – Safeguarding Officer

Village Volunteers – Church Cleaning/flowers.

The Benefice is currently made up of five parishes, Stalbridge, Stourton Caundle, Purse Caundle, Kings Stag and Stock Gaylard and we have been made aware that we must fund our own needs regarding our Vicar, otherwise other parishes may be added to our Benefice 'diluting' our already over stretched Vicar.

David Jeanes and John Hedges
St Peter's Church Wardens

Village Diary - April 2025

Day	Date	Event	Venue	Time
Tues	1	Badminton and Table Tennis	Village Hall	7.30 pm
Wed	2	Pilates / Pilates (Gentle) at 10.45am	Village Hall	9.25 am
Thurs	3	Beehive Café - Little Bees	Village Hall	9:30-12:30 am
Thurs	3	Short Mat bowls	Village Hall	2.00 pm
Mon	7	Snooker	Village Hall	7.30 pm
Tues	8	Badminton and Table Tennis	Village Hall	7.30 pm
Wed	9	Pilates / Pilates (Gentle) at 10.45am	Village Hall	9.25 am
Wed	9	Garden Club talk by Alan Down (see page 6)	Village Hall	7.00 pm
Thurs	10	Beehive Café - Little Bees	Village Hall	9:30-12:30 am
Thurs	10	Short Mat bowls	Village Hall	2.00 pm
Sun	13	Palm Sunday Benefice with Procession	Stock Gaylard	11.00 am
Mon	14	Snooker	Village Hall	7.30 pm
Tues	15	Badminton and Table Tennis	Village Hall	7.30 pm
Wed	16	Pilates / Pilates (Gentle) at 10.45am	Village Hall	9.25 am
Thurs	17	Beehive Café - Little Bees	Village Hall	9:30-12:30 am
Thurs	17	Short Mat bowls	Village Hall	2.00 pm
Thurs	17	Quiz Night	The Trooper	8.00 pm
Fri	18	Good Friday Hour at the Cross/Prayers and Meditations	St Peters	2.00 pm
Sat	19	Easter Eve Liturgy with Boniface	Stalbridge	8.00 pm
Sun	20	Easter Sunday Holy Communion	St Peters	11.00 am
Mon	21	Snooker	Village Hall	7.30 pm
Tues	22	Badminton and Table Tennis	Village Hall	7.30 pm
Wed	23	Pilates / Pilates (Gentle) at 10.45am	Village Hall	9.25 am
Thurs	24	Beehive Café - Little Bees	Village Hall	9:30-12:30 am
Thurs	24	Short Mat bowls	Village Hall	2.00 pm
Sun	27	Breakfast Church/Morning Worship	St Peters	11.00 am
Mon	28	Snooker	Village Hall	7.30 pm
Tues	29	Badminton and Table Tennis	Village Hall	7.30 pm
Wed	30	Pilates / Pilates (Gentle) at 10.45am	Village Hall	9.25 am

Village Diary - May 2025

Day	Date	Event	Venue	Time
Thurs	1	Beehive Café - Little Bees	Village Hall	9:30-12:30 am
Thurs	1	Short Mat bowls	Village Hall	2.00 pm
Sat	3	Plant Fair (see page 4)	Village Hall	2.00-5.00 pm
Mon	5	Snooker	Village Hall	7.30 pm
Tues	6	Badminton and Table Tennis	Village Hall	7.30 pm
Wed	7	Pilates / Pilates (Gentle) at 10.45am	Village Hall	9.25 am
Thurs	8	Beehive Café - Little Bees	Village Hall	9:30-12:30 am
Thurs	8	Short Mat bowls	Village Hall	2.00 pm
Sun	11	Holy Communion	St Peters	11.00 am
Mon	12	Snooker	Village Hall	7.30 pm
Tues	13	Badminton and Table Tennis	Village Hall	7.30 pm
Wed	14	Pilates / Pilates (Gentle) at 10.45am	Village Hall	9.25 am
Thurs	15	Beehive Café - Little Bees	Village Hall	9:30-12:30 am
Thurs	15	Short Mat bowls	Village Hall	2.00 pm
Thurs	15	Quiz Night	The Trooper	8.00 pm
Mon	19	Snooker	Village Hall	7.30 pm
Tues	20	Badminton and Table Tennis	Village Hall	7.30 pm
Wed	21	Pilates / Pilates (Gentle) at 10.45am	Village Hall	9.25 am
Thurs	22	Beehive Café - Little Bees	Village Hall	9:30-12:30 am
Thurs	22	Short Mat bowls	Village Hall	2.00 pm
Sun	25	Breakfast Church/Morning Worship	St Peters	11.00 am
Mon	26	Snooker	Village Hall	7.30 pm
Tues	27	Badminton and Table Tennis	Village Hall	7.30 pm
Wed	28	Pilates / Pilates (Gentle) at 10.45am	Village Hall	9.25 am
Thurs	29	Beehive Café - Little Bees	Village Hall	9.30-12.30 am
Thurs	29	Short Mat bowls	Village Hall	2.00 pm

Chuckles

Two things heard this week that amused us greatly:

Commenting on a lack-luster performance by an artist on stage; 'it had all the energy of a tired snail returning home from a funeral'.

And this observation: '*cursive writing* is what it looks like when the alphabet gets drunk.'

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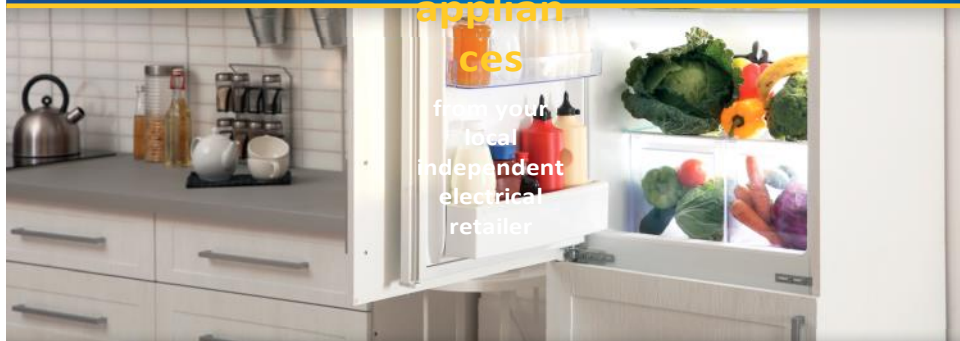
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