

The Stourton Caundler

February—March 2025

Issue 188





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'	Anna Oliver	362109
Sports Club Weekly Mon, Tues, Thurs	Neil Duke	07383866768
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

Hello Lovely Readers...we are in despair. How can we persuade you to become Lovely Writers? What inducements can we offer? A free holiday? Perhaps not. A promise of sunshine? On second thoughts - maybe the free holiday would be easier to arrange!

We really do need more articles, from more villagers, on virtually any topic that takes your fancy. The Treasured Object pieces have been an absolute joy, so more on that theme would be wonderful. We'd hoped to generate greater interest in the 'free publicity' offered to a burgeoning small business, in return for an article about how you got into whatever it is you're into. Please do consider this one if it fits your profile. How did you end up in Stourton Caundle? If you're new to the village, what are your impressions, thus far? What exotic trips have you taken in the past year or so? What exotic plans do you have for the forthcoming spring and summer? Have you recently taken up, or even abandoned, a new hobby or skill? Do you have a simple, tasty recipe that always works? Have you had a go at writing poetry? Please don't be shy...we really, REALLY need to hear from you. Remember too, that if you're someone who prefers to chat rather than write, we'd be happy to meet up, and listen to your stories and anecdotes. We could meet in The Trooper...over the very real inducement of a pint/whatever your tippie, or breakfast at The Beehive on a Thursday... We'd love your articles by **Sunday March 17th**. Please consider contributing something/ anything...and we'll see what we can do about the sunshine.

Thank you (and a huge **THANK YOU** to those people who have been responding; it's really appreciated).

The Eds

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

thecaundler@stourtoncaundle.org.uk

Please send content submissions by March 17, 2025

We made this!

LETTER FROM LEIGH

No nature notes from me this month as I'm afraid I have nothing to write. I have, since sometime in November been in Dorchester Hospital then the Yeatman and at present The Old Vicarage Care Home in Leigh, where, incidentally I had originally planned to remain until either I popped my clogs or my money ran out!

On another occasion, over 6 years ago now, I had decided to do the same thing. On that occasion shortly after Brian had died, the well-known and much loved village philosopher came to see me on the first morning, sat cross legged on the floor and said 'So what's all this nonsense about not going back to Goldsneys?' On that occasion I murmured feebly something about memories etc, to which he retorted, 'So will those memories not be with you wherever you go?' So, after a period of a few weeks of mature reflection and with my friend's words still ringing in my ears, I went back and didn't regret it. This time, it was a bit different. I don't think I had been really well for a few weeks before I was actually ill, and just felt that I couldn't cope with anything any more.

Had that particular gentleman been around on this occasion I'm sure he would have given me an equally good lecture, but alas he now has terrible problems of his own and I worked it out for myself. I think it took under a week, when I looked around my little room, and thought, 'is this it then?' I looked at the activities arranged, I'm sure, with skill, but they were for the elderly and I do not feel in the least elderly in spite of my 90th birthday creeping relentlessly towards me this year. I practised my mobility skills once or three times a day and they took me past many rooms where small, quiet bodies sat or lay immobile. I know there are two residents who are 102 years old, one of whom still plays the piano and paints beautifully, but I don't want to belong to a group where age will be my qualification from now on. I do not want to be enticed to eat in a group when my preference is to eat on my own in case I embarrass myself and others by choking. I do not want to join sing-alongs when I have completely lost any trace of singing voice I ever had, and I had no wish to join in with colouring or jigsaws, though these are obviously well thought out and pleasurable as well as necessary for many. One thing that I would have been interested in was a film about the history of Sturminster Newton but that didn't fit in with other things that were on my own schedule.

In short I am just too pig-headed to give up my independence just yet - if ever.

So I am going home after all. Just a few things to put in place - carers etc. - and hopefully I should be back where I belong, in the lovely village that I have been proud to call my home for over 19 years and to once again be amongst the marvellous people I am privileged to call my friends, by the end of the month.

I think I have probably painted a dismal picture of a care home, but I hasten to say that this one, along with hundreds up and down the country, is marvellous. It's just that I am not yet ready for it.

Please don't misunderstand me, this is a really lovely place. There are about 30 rooms, all set around at ground floor level in a large circle, so you can never really get lost whichever way you go. Carers, managers, administrative staff and chefs, gardeners and those who do the odd jobs, are all first class, although of course, when you have been here for a while, you do have favourites.

Each room looks onto a series of courtyards, some planted, others opening onto bright, sunny seating areas. Residents are encouraged to bring in bird feeders, boxes or tables if they want to, so there is plenty to watch. One lady of 100 has her little dog with her whilst another has her budgie in its cage. Residents are obviously treated as the individual that they have been all their lives and not just grouped together as one amorphous mass as is so often the case these days.

The gardens themselves have obviously been planned and planted by a real gardener who knows exactly what he/she is doing and loves doing it. I can see large rose beds, already pruned with their first winter pruning, containers of all shapes and sizes planted additionally with healthy looking wallflowers, whilst other, smaller ones contain a carefully pruned shrub. Shrubs overall seem to have been chosen with something to look at all year round and there are bulbs sprouting up everywhere. On a wide, natural grassy space edged by tall trees and backed by the countryside of Leigh. I'd like to bet that there will be masses of bulbs which will be a picture.

I will leave here with happy memories, I have come across some remarkable and endearing people. And the endless patience that the carers have will always remain with me. They never made me feel that anything I asked for, however trivial, was too much trouble.

But for me - I'm homeward bound, and by the end of January I now know!

Margaret Waddingham



Welcome Club Report

The Club finished the year with our annual Christmas Club lunch; again at the Halsey Arms. As usual the pub looked after us and gave us a great lunch despite Elsie hobbling around with a broken foot and young baby to look after. As usual the members were generous as ever in providing gifts for the raffle.

For our January meeting we had Bonny Sartin (Of the Yetties) to give us renditions of the First World War songs sung by the troops. Needless to say, the Officers and Warrant Officers were a favourite topic of derision through these harsh times. Many of the songs had new lyrics to popular tunes of the time so all the soldiers could sign along.

Sadly, we lost Phillip and Shirley Antell late last year. Both were great supporters of the Club.

Our next talk on the 21 February 2024 is by the Dorset Air Ambulance and all are welcome to attend. Apparently, they will not be bringing the Helicopter, at £3000 a trip you can understand why.

Don't forget the Club is open to all, young and old. We meet on the 3rd Wednesday of the month for a talk and tea, cake and sandwiches. So come and join us and meet new friends.

Rob Page

Chairman

Garden Notes February-March 2025

I feel 2025 has a good ring about it, do you think? Maybe and hopefully more sunshine for us all. Probably more challenges to face, especially with regards to our ever changing weather. But where there is a will there's a way! So brace yourselves for what's to come!

Before we get down to jobs, here's an excerpt by the well known naturalist Gilbert White from one of his journals dated 9th Jan 1769:

"Rooks resort to their nest-trees. Hepaticas, winter-aconite, wall-flowers, daisies, polyanthus, black Hellebores blow. Wheat looks well on the Downs" (Hampshire).

So here we go with jobs you might like to deal with in these coming days/weeks:

Hedges: Up to the end of Feb, I guess, you can prune native/ deciduous hedges. Right now, mid-Jan, I'm pruning a lot of my hedge at the back, as I realise some plants have got really leggy with all the growth just at the top! So I've been quite drastic and pruned some branches (several inches thick) back by half. Also I've thinned out the thickest parts.

Normally I've had it cut by now. But the advantage of leaving it so long is you can see what you're doing. In addition, remove any dead growth. Any minute now, the Snowdrops will be peeping through, I planted tiny clumps of them at the same time the hedge went in, they are a joy to see. Mental note: plant snowdrops at the base of your hedge!

Thinking about pruning; like my hedge, deciduous shrubs can have some attention too, again before the end of Feb. You never want one plant/shrub to dominate an area. Without you even noticing, they have doubled in size! 'Where do I start?' I hear you ask. Well, by taking out the biggest/oldest stem. So now you stand back... how does it look, the shape, is it pleasing to the eye? What you're aiming for is an open shape and reduced, by at least a third so it no longer looks too big for its space. You have to be bold, not shy! Once you get the confidence then move on to the next!

Any old Hellebore leaves should be gone by now as the flowers are up and out.

Snowdrops, mentioned above, can be lifted/divided once over; this is the best time to plant them.

Ornamental Grasses should be chopped back to the ground.

Have you done your "I'm taking over the world and strangling your gutters and drainpipes on the way" WISTERIA? Be firm! Yes you may lose the flowers for the first year but believe me it's worth keeping her in check!

Hostas: I must do mine! As soon as you see those fat buds peeping through; I'm guessing you've got yours in pots like me. Tip them out (I bet they're pot bound like mine!) and literally get an old sharp kitchen knife/pruning saw and chop through...oooooh, that reminds me.. I've got the most gorgeous new tool (from Sue for Christmas) that would be perfect for this job, it's like a big "dagger", one edge is serrated, very sharp, as I've discovered! It's from Nyawaki. Say no more; Monty D has the whole set!

Back to the hostas: renew soil; your own/John Innes No3/grit/a bit of bone meal etc.

March is usually when we prune our Buddleias back to a set of healthy looking buds/leaves.

Dogwoods too can have a third removed or all, or none! Hydrangeas can be deadheaded

and some old growth removed, or left etc, according to which variety you have.

Elders, particularly the purple form can be pruned down, so too the Cotinus.

Shrub/bush roses can have their final prune.

Group 3 Clematis (the toughest of them all) can be pruned to a foot

What of our Perennials; the backbone of our gardens? Well I expect you've already chopped yours back! Did you divide/move the ones you'd said you'd deal with? No, me neither! But it's not too late (oh these Boots reading glasses are failing me!) Just make sure, if it's dry (really? Will it ever be dry again?) to water.

Gardeners' Question Time says "get you stakes in now"!

Oh there's a billion more things to do, but the eyes say 'enough'!

Go forth and immerse yourselves in your garden; love and nurture it!

Happy Days!!

Your Garden Guru



Garden Club Report

December On Wednesday 11th December, the Garden Club meeting in the Village Hall, which started as usual with members chatting and drinking tea or coffee, and, on this occasion, eating mince pies instead of biscuits, featured a talk by Steve Fry from Castle Gardens Group about 'Sweet Plants and Sugar Sources.' Beautifully illustrated with photographs the talk ranged over very many plants containing various types of sugars which appeal to humans and other animals of all types. Some plants (both wild and cultivated) once commonly used as food sources, have largely disappeared from our diets these days (perhaps relatively few people now eat dandelion leaves, or drink nettle tea), but it was interesting to learn that some other parts of plants commonly grown, are also edible such as the growing tips of pumpkins before the fruit develops!

January - Annual Supper The Garden Club held its annual supper on Wednesday 8 January, with some forty five members and guests in attendance. A choice of hot dishes and salads was available, provided by committee members, followed by the usual enormous selection of puddings, contributed by members.

The success of the evening, as always, rested on the enormous efforts of the committee members and helpers who had worked hard to ensure everybody was well fed, whilst also washing the huge piles of plates and cutlery. However, special mention must also be made of the various club members who produced the puddings and supplied prizes for the raffle; to David Jeanes, Janie Harris and other members, who organised and ran the raffle, which raised £220 pounds for club funds; and to Win and Neil Gillard, who yet again organised and ran the bar.

'Filthy Fingers' & 'Broken Nails'

VILLAGE HALL UPDATE



Roof Fundraising – As you might expect the period over Christmas has been a bit quiet from a fundraising point of view, but still lots going on in the village for worthy causes and fun.

Some donations have still been coming in from various sources. Many thanks to Tim Villiers for his donation and from several beneficiaries of his furniture downsizing. Thanks also to Linda Walters who has made several donations over the year from the sale of her fruits and jams. And to the ongoing regular Table Tennis nights and monthly Trooper Pub Quiz as well as Angling for Farthings folk night. Plus more personal and anonymous donations.

It all adds up, and the total raised is now approaching **£62,000**

Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) - As mentioned in previous Stourton Caundlers, the village hall charity has now changed its structure and as of 1st January 2025 is now fully operational in its new format. Whilst this change will have no impact on the day to day operation of the hall, it does mean that there is now the opportunity for anyone who is interested to become a member of the village hall and to vote at meetings on decisions about its future.

We currently have 18 members but the trustees are keen that anyone else who wants to become involved does so. If you would like to become a member please email the secretary Pete Bull on petebull14142@gmail.com

Events - What a year 2024 was for the Village Hall Roof Fund events. We totally smashed any expectations that we had. So a huge Thank You to all those who helped out in all the many forms. Be it cake making, event ideas, raffle/auction donations, giving your time to help and supporting them by turning up on the day.

Looking forward to 2025 we are looking at putting on a Village Treasure Hunt over the Easter Holidays and the Village Fayre will be taking place in early Summer. Dates to be confirmed.

If anyone would like to be involved or to host, run or manage an event themselves do get in touch with Ness or anyone on the committee for support or to bounce ideas around.

Here's to another year ahead of raising money for the Village Hall Roof and having fun at the same time.

Who to contact – Anyone on the committee will be pleased to help with any questions, donations or help and ideas. Please contact Pete Bull (Secretary) on the above email, or Debbie Pritchett (Chairperson at the Trooper), Paul Reynolds (Treasurer), Rob Page (Bookings and Caretaker), Ness Boal (Events), or Keith Lindsay (Vice Chair and Grants).

Recycling, Rubbish, Food & Garden Waste

Due to recent changes to collection days for some parts of the village by Dorset Council, we will no longer be providing a weekly calendar for Rubbish and Recycling bins.

Please put out all bins/containers by 6am on collection day. Recycling and Rubbish are collected in alternate weeks, and Food waste every week.

Most houses in the village have their waste collected on a **Friday** – 7th Recycling, 14th Rubbish, 21st Recycling, 28th Rubbish (except for Rowden Mill Lane and Caundle Lane which are the other way round) - **but from 1st February households** from Jubilee Oak on Purse Caundle and Rue Lanes (post-codes 2JJ, 2JH, 2LB - who have received a letter to this effect) will have their collections on a **Thursday** - 6th Rubbish, 13th Recycling, 20th Rubbish, 28th Recycling. **These dates are the same for both February and March for everyone!**

Garden waste is collected from most households on the same day as rubbish, except that for those in Cat Lane and Rowden Mill Lane, it is on the Tuesday preceding this.

You can download a calendar of days/dates for your own address/post code from the Dorset Council website (www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk and go to 'check your bin day'), or, if you do not use the internet, contact the Council (01305 221000) and ask them to send you one.

Dorset & Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Service 'Unplug to Unwind'

Leaving small electrical devices on charge overnight has been the cause of multiple house fires in recent years. Only large appliances such as fridges are designed to be left switched on all the time, so ensuring that everything else is unplugged before you go to bed is a simple routine that could protect your home from fire.

To help reduce the risk of a fire in your home, take these simple steps:

- Make sure an electrical appliance has a British or European safety mark when you buy it. Only buy your electrical chargers from a reputable source.
- Never leave items on charge when you are sleeping or when you are not at home.
- Don't overload sockets.
- Regularly check for frayed or worn cables and wires.
- Buy your electrical chargers from a reputable source.

Register your appliances to receive notification of safety alerts or product recalls at www.registermyappliance.org.uk

More information about the Unplug To Unwind campaign can be found on the DWFRS website www.dwfire.org.uk/unplug-to-unwind/

St. Peter's Church Stourton Caundle

Notice of Preparation of New Electoral Roll 2025

The Parish Church is required to compile a new Church Electoral Roll this year. If you would like to be included on the new roll, please obtain a form for completion from Polly Hedges (Electoral Roll Officer), to be returned to her by 20 April 2025. Every person wishing to be included on the new Electoral Roll, (including those on the existing roll) is invited to apply.

Inclusion on the Electoral Roll gives you the opportunity to take part in the Annual Parochial Church Meeting and to stand for the Parochial Church Council.



THE CHURCH
OF ENGLAND

NOTICE OF PREPARATION OF NEW ROLL

DIOCESE OF

Salisbury

PARISH OF

Stourton Caundle

Notice is given that under the Church Representation Rules a new Church Electoral Roll* is being prepared. Every person who wishes to have his or her name entered on the new Roll, whether it is entered on the present Roll or not, is requested to apply for enrolment not later than:

20 April 2025

The new Roll will take effect on 26 April 2025

The new Roll will be published by the Parochial Church Council [Posted in the Church Porch] for at least 14 days and a copy of the Roll will be available for inspection on a reasonable request being made to the Council.

Under the Church Representation Rules, a lay person is entitled to have his or her name entered on the roll, if the person –

- (a) is baptised,
- (b) is aged 16 or over, and
- (c) has made one of the following three declarations and duly applied for enrolment.

The first declaration is that the person is a member of the Church of England or of a Church in communion with it and is resident in the parish.

The second declaration is that the person is a member of the Church of England or of a Church in communion with it, is not resident in the parish, but has habitually attended public worship in the parish during the preceding six months.

The third declaration is that the person is a member in good standing of a Church which is not in communion with the Church of England but subscribes to the doctrine of the Holy Trinity and is also a member of the Church of England and has habitually attended public worship in the parish during the preceding six months.

Application Forms for enrolment can be obtained from the Church Electoral Roll Officer. In order to be entitled to attend the annual parochial church meeting and to take part in its proceedings, you must return the Application Form for enrolment by the earlier of the dates given above.

Any error discovered in the roll should at once be reported to the Church Electoral Roll Officer.

Film Night For Lent in the Village Hall

13th of March Chocclat

20th March The Shack

27th March The Way

3rd April The Two Popes

10th April The Last Temptation of Christ.

All starting at 7pm

**Admission Free, any donations for the village
hall roof are welcome.**



Coffee, Tea and popcorn available.

Bring a cushion and a friend

Run by St Peter's Church

All welcome

Uncle John

Uncle John was always a very definite character, and very sociable among his chosen friends. He was also a talented sportsman, good enough to have played cricket for Dorset, a very good shot, and a keen fly fisherman and bowls player in his later years. He'd hunted with the BV and Miss Guest's Hounds and played a mean game of billiards and snooker. As a farmer, he was limited by the size and nature of Church Farm – all blue clay and wet – but he enjoyed his pigs and milked (of all improbable breeds) South Devons, a beef breed that did produce high quality milk, although not a lot of it. He grew wheat and barley, and kept himself up to date with new methods and varieties of crop.

In his latter years he used to claim that he was the oldest combine driver in Dorset, and maybe he was – he certainly carried on driving the combine until he was well into his eighties. On one occasion, however, he did get caught out. I'd set up a five gallon cask of cider at the farm for he and I to take from while we were combining, as it's a great way to kill your thirst, as long as you don't have more than a sip or two at a time. Unbeknown to myself, whoever was driving the grain in from the field would also take Uncle's bottle for a refill every now and then. We started cutting out Mews Hill, a 53 acre field with one dead straight hedge that was 700 yards long. Uncle always insisted on leading, I followed as we did the first cut around the headland. Part way down the long hedge, Uncle's combine began a gentle arc away from the hedge and out into the field. Putting my machine out of gear, I ran to his combine, by now sailing through a sea of barley and convinced he must have collapsed (or worse) at the wheel. Climbing up the steps to the drivers platform I was in time to see him waking up from a cider-induced stupor wondering where on earth he was. After that, he was eager to keep going to cover up his error, but it's difficult to conceal that sort of thing and we had a good laugh at his expense. On another occasion, some years earlier, we were in Plumley ground cutting wheat. Lunchtime came and Denis arrived with a trailer to empty both machines and to take us home to lunch. Having collected me, we caught up with Uncle John, who descended from his combine (he always refused to have a combine with a cab – he preferred all the dust and barley hies down his neck) and told Denis "I don't know what my brother would do if I wasn't here to drive this combine". Denis replied "Don't 'ee worry – by next year we'll have forgotten all about 'ee". A salutary remark, but sadly by the next year Denis had died of cancer and Uncle was still driving.

Some time after his wife, my Auntie Doreen had died, he became friendly with Dot, who'd also lost her partner. She had a small bungalow on her son's farm at Henstridge Marsh, and they joined several coach tours around the country (his sister, Auntie Joy, also went on some of these and was able to report on the development of the relationship – "they shared the same double room!!" Uncle's response: "well, it's cheaper than two singles"). Eventually, he moved in with her and, after some time (and much to my Mother's excitement) he bought her a ring. Did this mean a wedding was imminent? All was resolved one day when I finally caught the Phantom Cider Stealer. Every now and then, I'd find a barrel with the top off or loose and a bit of cider missing. I didn't mind the cider being taken, but leaving the barrel open to the air spoils the lot in a very short time. One day, I saw his car parked up by the cider house. Creeping quietly in, I saw Uncle bent over the barrel in the process of syphoning out a gallon from a barrel. Tip toeing up behind him, I called out "hello Uncle!". He jumped like a startled hare, and for the only time in my life I had him at a disadvantage. I knew this, and once we'd settled up the cider business – "take what you want, but please

tighten down the tops on the barrel afterwards" – I thought I'd have a little fun:

"Here, Mum tells me you've bought Dot a ring!"

"No need to get excited, it's only to thank her for doing my washing" (not an enviable task at any time)

"Well, you do know the whole district's talking about you two, up there in that little bungalow – we all know there's only one bedroom, and I know you aren't sleeping on the settee"

(Uncle, sadly) "They can talk all they like; I know there isn't much sap left in the tree!"

If nothing else, it says something for him that he was still capable of stirring up that sort of gossip when he was well into his eighties.

John Waltham



VILLAGE CHRISTMAS QUIZ

30 November 2024

Always great fun and a brilliant evening, the 2024 Village Christmas Quiz in aid of St Peter's Church proved to be no exception. Canon Richard Hancock opened the evening in the Village Hall with dazzle and glitter before introducing our faithful quiz masters of many years standing, Richard and Brenda Newcombe from Sherborne u3a, who tested us all with another six rounds of seasonally related and varied topics, all carefully pre-meditated and well-balanced. In addition, we had to tax our brains with two lists of cryptic questions on Dorset Place Names and Birds – some answers blindingly obvious and others highly baffling, only to become blindingly obvious when the answer was given!

The event, as usual, was a sell out with 108 participants divided into 18 teams of six. Most of the questions came into the category of you either know it or you don't, but for the "don't knows" heads were huddled round tables and heated whispering discussions took place before a hopeful wild guess was written down.

The ambience heated up as the evening wore on as answer sheets were exchanged and marked as groans of despair at wrong answers, or shouts of glee if correct, emanated from the punters. Even louder groans were heard as some teams managed to play their joker (double points) on their lowest scoring round (guess what our team did!). The event was seamlessly organised and coordinated by De Lord as in previous years. A busy Rob Page behind the bar kept us well-oiled, whilst in the kitchen Rachel Page, Anna Oliver, Vinny Taylor, Janie Harris and De Lord toiled to provide us with a generous ploughman's supper using local produce. And again Sue Simon made delicious chocolates before jetting off to Dubai!

After the mid-evening supper break and more rounds of questions and whilst our quiz masters did the final tally, the raffle was drawn by Canon Richard. Was it divine intervention or the hand of God? Call it what you will, for the first prize was won by someone very close indeed to Canon Richard, and two more prizes went to our two church wardens! Other notable dignitaries on our PCC, past and present, also held a winning

ticket!! It was unsurprising therefore that the atmosphere in the village hall became ever more animated!

The winning team were Cat Lane Irregulars, followed up by Handel's Organ Works. Famous Five and Old Spice equalled third. Very well done teams, and we'll know who to sit near to next year!

The evening is more of a community event than a fundraiser, but the welcome sum of £1259 was raised for St Peter's Church so heartfelt thanks to De Lord and her willing team, those who donated raffle prizes and, of course, the participants. One hundred and eight people and the indefatigable helpers ventured very happily homewards after such a successful evening.

Stella Woodward

The Silver Spoon A Treasured Object

About ten years ago when my widowed mother moved to a care home, my brother and I and our two spouses were left to sell her flat and sort out her belongings. This took several visits and we started on the kitchen, leaving a few basic kitchen items to make coffee and a snack during the clearing out process.

When the flat sale went through we made one last visit to clean up. I distinctly remember pulling a kitchen drawer right out and was about to tip the contents into a large black bin bag when my eye caught sight of an old silver spoon that had been wedged at the back. It was dull and tarnished and barely recognisable. My memory immediately flashed back many decades as I picked it up. I had the vision of my father using that very spoon to stir sugar in a large bone china tea cup. I could visualise his hands, his skin darker than mine, his fingers strong and agile, with the tip of the middle finger on his left hand scored off in some accident. I could picture the hairs on his hands and still recall the length of the time he stirred his sugar, wearing down one edge of the spoon over the years.

As a family, we all gave up sugar when I was in my teens and no doubt the spoon, its use now redundant, had languished at the back of a drawer ever since. But on closer inspection the spoon held secrets to which the answer will never be known. Read on!

Some of you may know that I sing and play guitar and The Silver Spoon is one of the songs I have written.



Clearing out your house and opening a drawer
 Full of old cutlery, when suddenly I saw
 The silver spoon I thought lost long ago
 In the drawer all those years, and I didn't know

(Chorus)

*Into my memory came my father's hands
 Dipping the spoon in the sugar bowl and
 Stirring his tea in his bone china cup
 A strong sweet brew that he loved to sup*

The silver spoon was tarnished now
 Worn on one side from stirring sugar for hours
 The engraved inscription, faded by wear
 My father's initials – I W R

On the back of the spoon where the hallmarks are
 I could make out a date, a year from his birth
 A first birthday gift, it must well have been
 It says February 2nd, 1917

But I asked myself was my memory playing tricks
 For he gave up sugar at the age of 46
 And the spoon was hidden for all that time
 And yet its memory was, still on my mind

I've polished it up and although worn and old
 And the mystery of its origin I'll never know
 It brings back the past from decades long gone
 And for my father and the spoon, I wrote this song

One hundred years on
 For my father and the spoon, I wrote this song
 A hundred years on

Three Trees

Years ago, when at university, I had a classmate who could often be found outside the Dining Hall of our campus hugging a tree when the demands of higher education became too much. She would stand for long minutes on end, arms wrapped around the trunk, eyes closed and her cheek pressed against the rough bark. During these dalliances between girl and tree, students would give a wide berth to the scene – either not wanting to intrude on the intimacy of the moment or, more likely, not wanting to catch whatever form of madness afflicted the girl.

I once asked her why she did this. She told me she drew comfort and strength from the tree. It calmed and centred her. In fact, she claimed the tree embraced her back and even spoke to her. It seemed rude to pry too deeply into specifics of their private conversations, so I dropped the subject. I think this was the one and only time I ever spoke to the girl yet, after all these many years, she still often comes to mind – as much for her choice in coping mechanisms as for her ... courage (?) in practising it so openly in the unforgiving setting of a heavily trafficked pathway in the heart of a university campus.

I have always had a great fondness for trees. I don't claim this as a distinction of my character or a quirk of personality. I expect most people like trees. At least I've never met anyone who expressed open hostility to them—except, perhaps, lumberjacks. But, looking back on every stage of my life, there are specific trees that stick in my memory – trees with which I had some kind of bond that lingers still and allows me to fondly conjure up a clear picture of each of these trees in my mind.

Upon moving to Stourton Caundle, I wasn't looking for trees with which to form relationships. But it wasn't long before three particular trees set up home in my heart and will likely remain.

The first is a tree in our own back garden. Within days of moving in we could see this tree was struggling. Disease or age had stripped patches of bark from one side of the trunk and, as a result, the canopy of branches above was in a sorry state. We quickly enlisted a tree surgeon to come and offer advice. While I admire trees greatly, I don't know much about them. Hardly anything at all. So, one of the first things I asked the surgeon was the species of our tree - since I now owned it, I felt it only polite to know from which family it came. He gazed speculatively at the tree, rubbed his chin and said hesitantly 'walnut?'. It was said with all the conviction of a man trying to remember his wedding anniversary. When his suggestion to 'treat' the patient consisted of cutting back the dead branches and 'let's see how she looks in the spring', I decided his claim to be a tree surgeon was likely fraudulent.

I have since decided this tree is a sycamore – though this is an opinion formed merely to impress my wife (which it failed to do) and lacks any basis in science or in-depth research. In the year since its treatment, the tree has shown little improvement and I look at it every day with a slight pain of worry in my heart. Our garden would look awfully naked without it and I would feel a failure if it died under our ownership.

The second tree stands at the top of the pasture across from our house, a hundred yards up the road toward Purse Caundle. I've taken to referring to it as 'our noble tree' – thus taking ownership of the tree, though it's not ours, and bestowing on it a nobility it hasn't earned aside from simply doing what trees do – grow upright. This oak (yet another guess) has the classic tree profile as would appear in a marketing logo or a child's drawing. It stands apart

and alone at the upward crest of the pasture so, from our vantage, the entire tree, from trunk to crown, stands proud on the horizon with green pasture in front and, the broad sky behind.

I admire this tree as much for its classic perfection and strength as for its ability to stir me when I look upon it every day. Its presence on our horizon elevates my soul in a way I can't explain. I've never been closer to this tree than our kitchen window or our back patio, but my daily life would be poorer were it not there.

The third tree is neither noble or stately. It is not a tree that demands admiration. It is a bit of a clown, if anything. I see this tree every time we drive to Sherborne by way of Bishop's Caundle. It stands at the top of the hill just in front of The Elms and amuses me whenever we pass it. It is some variety of fir about fifty feet tall and stands straight at erect until, near its pinnacle, the trunk wavers off at an angle as if, after decades of growing toward the sun, it has changed its mind and plotted a course for Cornwall. On one of our early drives when we moved here, I commented on this tree to my wife and she said, 'It drives me crazy. Every time I see it I want to reach up and *'doink'*— gesturing with her finger as if righting a picture on the wall.

I well know my wife's emotional reliance on right angles and true perpendicular. She is greatly troubled by things out of alignment or purposefully askew. She would say this tree is 'poorly presented' – it has no sense of 'design'. I know, every time we pass The Elms, though she is seemingly at peace next to me, she is seething inside at the crooked insult of this tree. Like me, this fir seems to enjoy annoying my wife just for the sport of it.

For centuries, the Japanese have engaged in the practice of *shinrin-yoku*, or 'forest bathing'. This is walking in the forest while mindfully engaging with nature, allowing all the senses to soak up and commune with one's surroundings. (Like many Japanese innovations, forest bathing has been exported to the West and now one can enjoy 'guided experiences' in forest bathing even in Britain.) Studies have suggested the practice boosts the immune system, improves mental well-being and lowers blood-pressure. (Skeptics have argued it is the walking, and not the forest, that produces these benefits.) All the dog-walkers that can be found on the lanes surrounding our village may be practising a form of *shinrin-yoku* and reaping these benefits—if they are engaging with their surroundings and not simply dodging traffic.

Maybe the tree-hugging girl from my university days was on to something and wasn't as batty as some of us believed. There is no arguing she took relief from her tree and 'mindfully engaging' with it in times of stress. I sometimes wonder if a helpful 'treatment' for our ailing sycamore (?) might be daily hugs. Just to let it know we care. And, who knows, it might do me some good as well. It certainly wouldn't hurt either of us.

What I do know is these three trees, among the many thousands around us, give something unique to me that wasn't sought or invited, but has become important and vital. And I know they will continue to enrich my days here and, if ever I move on from this place, like trees from my past, these trees will come with me wherever I go.

Jem Solak

Village Hall '100' Club Monthly Draw Results

Drawn at the Beehive Cafe on 12th December 2024:

First Prize:	£35.00	No. 15	Albon Harris
Second Prize:	£30.00	No. 52	Vanessa Boal
Third Prize:	£25.00	No. 251	Kate Duke

Drawn at the Beehive Cafe on 16th January 2025:

First Prize:	£35.00	No. 379	Mike Taylor
Second Prize:	£30.00	No. 309	Jane Yandell
Third Prize:	£25.00	No. 348	Monica Tite

The next 2 Draws will be on 13th February and 13th March at the Beehive Cafe.

Anna Oliver 01963 362109

An Introduction to Fusing Glass

I think the thing I enjoy most about working with glass is the way it combines science, creativity, and craftsmanship. In essence, it involves joining pieces of glass together by heating them in a kiln to temperatures where they become soft enough to bond or melt into each other. There is also an element of unpredictability: have the different elements combined to form the designs I planned? Do the colours combine well and complement each other?

Fusing glass relies on controlled heating and cooling cycles. The process involves several key steps. The first step involves deciding on what to make, and for me, this is driven by how many craft shows I've booked to sell at during the year, and the volumes of people due to attend them. Functional items include coasters, plates, and bowls. More decorative items include jewellery, Christmas decorations, tealight holders, suncatchers, tiles and wall artworks.

The next step is designing, cutting the glass and layering. This involves cutting sheets of different colours of glass into desired shapes and arranging them into attractive designs. Compatibility of glass is crucial; only glasses with the same coefficient of expansion (COE) can be fused together successfully. The cut pieces are then layered on a base sheet to create the desired effect, and additional elements such as frit (crushed glass), stringers (thin rods of glass), and dichroic glass (a reflective, metallic-coated glass) added for texture and colour. I also sometimes include metal inclusions such as silver foil and pewter as they add interesting design elements. I've even recently been experimenting with adding luminous powder to coasters so they glow in the dark to allow you to see where to place your water glass at night!

Then, firing. The assembled combinations are placed in a kiln and heated to specific

temperatures, typically between 760°C and 800°C, depending on the desired outcome. Key firing techniques include full fuse, where the glass melts completely to form a smooth, flat surface; and tack fuse, where the glass partially fuses, retaining some texture and dimension. Glass heated in a kiln will flow to a thickness of 6mm so this can affect the temperature it is fired at.

If, for example, I'm making a bowl or a suncatcher, I need to change the shape of the glass sheet by slumping. This is where the glass is reheated and shaped over or into ceramic moulds to create three-dimensional forms.



Finally, after the fusing or slumping steps, the glass is cooled slowly in a process called annealing to prevent stress and cracking. A typical firing from start to finish takes in the region of 18 to 24 hours.

So, to conclude: glass fusing combines technical precision with artistic freedom. It's a medium where creativity knows no bounds. Whether you prefer minimalist designs or vibrant, layered compositions, glass offers endless possibilities. Don't just take my word for it: this Spring I will be running small taster sessions for anyone who

would like to have a go for themselves. Please get in touch if you are interested:

sue@suepalmer-simmons.com

Sue Palmer-Simmons, SPS Glass



Village Golf

Our November competition saw our first attempt at playing a 'Medal' competition, where all shots count. In theory it should favour the more consistent golfers amongst us! Teams were randomly selected. Luckily we were blessed with some dry weather, little wind and there was a rumour that the sun actually came out (briefly). Despite the unpredictable weather, the course was in excellent condition. An abundance of autumn leaves did make finding the ball, a little difficult at times, whether on the fairways, the rough or even the greens!

Our inaugural medal competition finished with joint



champions, congratulations to Vic Christopher and Pete Blundell who both finished with net 36. The team competition was decided on the total of the best two scores from each group. The winners, by a good margin, were 'Goody's Boys' with a score of 74. Congratulations to Simon, Vic, Pete and Roger and November's Des Austin Challenge, closest to the pin on the 6th, was won by Marti Bond.

For our Christmas competition we were lucky with the weather, little wind and a reasonable temperature.



However conditions proved difficult, particularly on the greens and consequently scores were a little on the low side. On the bright side there was a fine parade of Christmas jumpers and the odd Christmas hat!

Top of the Christmas fashion parade was Pete Blundell with a fine



jumper featuring a Christmas tree, accessorised nicely with a complimentary hat. The winning team, with 35 points were the 'Wrongsins' featuring Rob Mitchell, Ron Curtis and Roger Paull. There was a close competition for second place with the 'Postmen' edging the 'Nameless Four' by just a point. The 'Three Unwise Men' are still waiting for their star to rise!



The Star on the top of our Christmas golfing tree for 2024, with bragging rights for the festive period, is Roger Paull with 14 points. Congratulations!

Thanks to Dave for being the organising genius and Terry for presenting the trophies. For anyone who would like to join us, we play 9.00am the third Sunday of each month at Folke Golf Club. Experience or ability are not necessary, we have our own handicap system, Roger's contact details are inside the front cover.

Lawrie Yandell



Christmas Carol Sing

Hardy folks gathered outside the pub on the 21st December for Carols led by the Reverend Richard Handcock. St Peters Church provided a Sausage sizzle for the village children who decorated lanterns to process down to the pub from the Village Hall. The weather, somewhat blustery but dry and helped by mulled wine generously provided by Ray Foot and mince pies provided by the Beehive Cafe, added to a great start to Christmas with fine singing, culminating in an enthusiastic rendition of the 'Twelve Days of Christmas'. Thanks to Debbie and John for letting us invade their courtyard and Rachel, Polly and Tanya for sorting the Lanterns and refreshments.



A collection raised £370 in aid of the Air Ambulance and thanks to all who supported this charity.

Rob Page

Reflections On and In a Country Churchyard

In our "redundant" churchyard, surrounding our church of St Peter's, are a few gravestones with legible inscriptions. Two of the more readable have recently become more indistinct and are worth recording. The oldest, just by the South porch, rises little more than a foot above the grass. The letters A N D O are curved around the top (that may be short for Anno Domini) and underneath them is the date 1657.

Beneath the date we can see

"LIETH THE" and under that "BODY OF". Beneath that "BODY OF WIFE...." and under that "OF JOHN COBBE" the grass and soil rise up to cover the rest of the stone. Presumably it was John Cobbe who had died in 1657, 368 years ago. In the national context Charles I was executed in 1649; Cromwell, refusing parliament's offer to crown him king, remained as Lord Protector; John Cobbe had missed Cromwell's death in 1659 and Charles 2nd's coronation in 1660.

In "Stourton Caundle, a history of a Dorset village" (published in 1974) its authors, GWL Fernandes and AEG Blades, explain why the gravestone is so buried and the church and surrounding land is so much lower than the cemetery: "due to the importation of one or more fresh layers of soil sufficient to provide additional burial space" (p28). They suggest this was done about a hundred years after John Cobbe's burial. Two later gravestones,

presumably rescued from this importation of soil, are set in the North wall in moulded surrounds. The most legible contains a striking tribute to John Haskoll Junior. It probably reads:

In Memory
of John Haskoll Junior
who was an affectionate
Relation a sincere Friend
A kind Master a good
Neighbour and Honest Man
He Died July the 2 1751

The man so good Benevolent and
Lies Blended here with Common Clay Dead
Tis but the mortal Part the Soul Divine
With bright Angelick Forms widower Since



Here also Lieth the Remains of
John Haskoll Senior who Dyed
the 17 of July 1757 Aged 77
His Practice shows the temper of his
Mind
Good to the Poor a Friend to all
Mankind

HERE also Lieth ye Body of BARTLETT
HASKOLL
who Dyed the 22 November 1757



The Haskolls were " landed gentry class" (p50) and lived opposite the church in a house that disappeared when Dalton Haskoll Serrell (died 1901) built Haddon Lodge in 1861.

Haddon Lodge became GWL Fernandes' home in 1920.

It was not until 1874 that the new cemetery site by the village hall was consecrated to relieve the lack of space for graves round the church.

A further monument of interest in the churchyard lies at an angle under the venerable yew tree. It is the base of a cross "probably one of those ordered to be destroyed by act of parliament in 1643 as a 'monument of superstition or idolatry' " (p 30). Part of a shaft and a stone cross, probably originally from this base, are in the church at the rear of the nave.

Fernandes and Blades add in their final paragraph on the cemetery:

"More recently in 1925, a war memorial in the form of a granite cross was erected....The site for this was donated partly by Miss A Serrell

and partly by Mr E Harris and this addition opens up and greatly improves the view of the church from the road." (p30).

In the year of John Haskoll Junior's death the poet Thomas Grey was inspired to write his poem "Elegy in a Country Churchyard". This long beautiful poem reflecting on human mortality begins:

"The curfew tolls the knell of parting day....

Beneath those rugged elms, that yew tree's shade

Where heaves the turf in many a mould'ring heap

Each in his narrow cell for ever laid,

The rude forefathers of the hamlet sleep...."

Finally, our curfew bell was the striking church clock, which is nearly 300 years old and made by John Biddlecombe, a Stourton Caundle blacksmith. It had no face until 1900 and no hands until 1978 when a very talented team of locals rebuilt and refurbished it, dedicating their efforts in commemoration of the silver jubilee of HM Queen Elizabeth.

H Dike.

Alexander Duman (1802-70) was a French playwright and novelist best known for the literary classics *The Count of Monte Cristo* and *The Three Musketeers*.

Dumas was approached by a group of men asking for contributions toward the funeral of a man who had died in dire financial circumstances. Dumas asked whether the deceased had been a member of the artistic community in Paris. The men told him, while he was not an active member of the artist's community, he did move 'in and among us. He was the district bailiff.'

Dumas asked how much it would cost to bury the man and was told twenty-five francs.

Dumas handed the men a wad of notes. 'Here is fifty francs. Go bury two baliffs.'

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Village Diary - February 2025

Day	Date	Event	Venue	Time
Sat	1	Jam & Jesus Breakfast Church	St Peters	9.00 am
Mon	3	Snooker	Village Hall	7.30 pm
Tues	4	Badminton and Table Tennis	Village Hall	7.30 pm
Wed	5	Pilates / Pilates (Gentle) at 10.45am	Village Hall	9.25 am
Thurs	6	Beehive Café - Little Bees	Village Hall	9:30-12:30 am
Thurs	6	Short Mat bowls	Village Hall	2.00 pm
Sun	9	Holy Communion	St Peters	11.00 am
Mon	10	Snooker	Village Hall	7.30 pm
Tues	11	Badminton and Table Tennis	Village Hall	7.30 pm
Wed	12	Pilates / Pilates (Gentle) at 10.45am	Village Hall	9.25 am
Thurs	13	Beehive Café - Little Bees	Village Hall	9:30-12:30 am
Thurs	13	Short Mat bowls	Village Hall	2.00 pm
Mon	17	Snooker	Village Hall	7.30 pm
Tues	18	Badminton and Table Tennis	Village Hall	7.30 pm
Wed	19	Pilates / Pilates (Gentle) at 10.45am	Village Hall	9.25 am
Wed	19	Quiz Night	The Trooper	8.00 pm
Thurs	20	Beehive Café - Little Bees	Village Hall	9:30-12:30 am
Thurs	20	Short Mat bowls	Village Hall	2.00 pm
Sun	23	Breakfast Church / Morning Worship	St Peters	11.00 am
Mon	24	Snooker	Village Hall	7.30 pm
Tues	25	Badminton and Table Tennis	Village Hall	7.30 pm
Wed	26	Pilates / Pilates (Gentle) at 10.45am	Village Hall	9.25 am
Thurs	27	Beehive Café - Little Bees	Village Hall	9:30-12:30 am
Thurs	27	Short Mat bowls	Village Hall	2.00 pm

We NEED your HELP!

Your **'Stourton Caudler'** – the **Village Magazine** - continues to be managed and produced by a very small team, and we really could do with some more **HELP!** The additional assistance does not need to be onerous (it is just a matter of sharing the load!) So we would love a couple of hours help with administrative and/or creative activities for each issue. If this appeals to you please contact one of the team – details on page 3 of the magazine. The Team

Village Diary - March 2025

Day	Date	Event	Venue	Time
Sat	1	Jam & Jesus Breakfast Church	St Peters	9.00 am
Mon	3	Snooker	Village Hall	7.30 pm
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Wed	5	Pilates / Pilates (Gentle) at 10.45am	Village Hall	9.25 am
Wed	5	Ash Wednesday / Holy Communion with Ashing	St Peters	7.00 pm
Thurs	6	Beehive Café - Little Bees	Village Hall	9:30-12:30 am
Thurs	6	Short Mat bowls	Village Hall	2.00 pm
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Wed	26	Pilates / Pilates (Gentle) at 10.45am	Village Hall	9.25 am
Thurs	27	Beehive Café - Little Bees	Village Hall	9:30-12:30 am
Thurs	27	Short Mat bowls	Village Hall	2.00 pm
Sun	30	Mothering Sunday Service	St Peters	11.00 am
Mon	31	Snooker	Village Hall	7.30 pm

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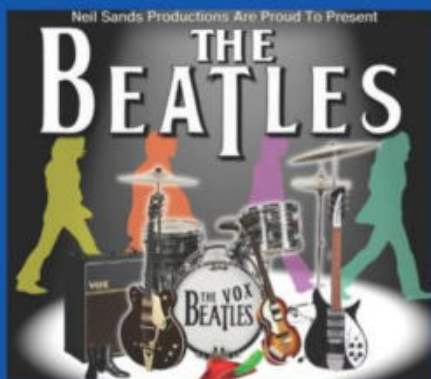
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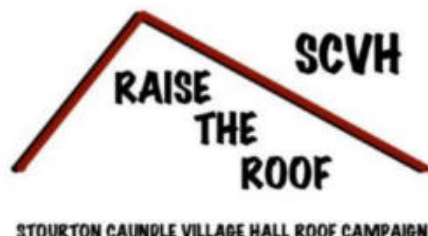
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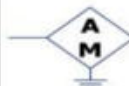
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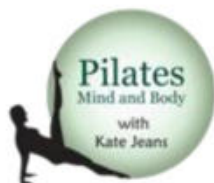
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