



CHURCH SERVICES FOR DECEMBER



Services at St Mary's Hardington and St Roch Pendomer

Following the success of our outdoor Harvest Thanksgiving, we are planning a Benefice Carol Service (following government guidelines, weather and Covid 19 permitting) in the Community Field, North Lane, at 3 p.m. on Sunday 13th December. A collection will be taken for Crisis. Please contact Sheila Carpenter 862339 or Daphne Creed 862363 if you intend coming.

St. Mary's continues to be open daily between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. for private prayer and reflection.

We don't know, as yet, whether there will be a service on Christmas Day, but watch out for notices about what may be organised here or within the Benefice.

St Roch is open at all times for private prayer.

Zoom services continue every Sunday at 9.45am. If you would like to join us please contact Sheila Carpenter on 862339.

Wishing everyone a healthy and Happy Christmas and New Year

DECEMBER 20TH LAST DATE FOR JANUARY MESSENGER

AROUND THE VILLAGE

CONGRATULATIONS: Angela and Richard Brooks welcomed a new grandson, Charlie Richard, born to William and his wife Sarah in September, a brother for Johnnie. Helen and Allen Parrott are pleased with the arrival of a new grandson, Alexander, first child for Katie and her husband Sam. Congratulations and best wishes to them all.

WELCOME: This month we welcome Bruce and Gill to Japonica Cottage and Nigel and Sue Fowler who have moved into Swallows Dip; both properties are in the High Street. We hope that you will be very happy here in Hardington.

GET WELL: We send good wishes to the following who, have been in hospital or feeling unwell recently, Tony Taylor, Phil Mills and Brad Ellis.

THANKS: The Messenger relies entirely on your generosity and we thank those who have donated to the funds this month. Messenger Team

GOODBYE & GOODLUCK: After many years in the village three families are moving on in the next few weeks. Nicky and Colin Marshall are moving to West Coker, Rick and Sally Maunder to Somerton and Fiona and her daughter Carys to Devon. We wish them all well in their new ventures.

SHOE BOXES

Thank you to everyone who packed a shoebox with gifts to be delivered to boys and girls around the world. In the midst of a worldwide pandemic, the needs are greater than ever before. Many children are scared, and their families are concerned. In many poverty-stricken countries, families have been left destitute by the economic shutdown. Let's hope our shoeboxes bring a little joy at Christmas. We have sent 45 boxes from around the benefice so thank you again. Daphne Creed

FOOD BANK

I have received a letter from Mat Callaghan – Operations Manager of Lord's Larder Food Bank thanking the village in choosing to support the work of the food bank. "Already this year, up to the beginning of November, 2020 the Lord's Larder Food Bank has helped 7,792 people in need with emergency food parcels covering towns and villages in South Somerset and North West Dorset, an area including Yeovil, Martock, Crewkerne, Ilminster, Somerton, Henstridge and Templecombe, working with agencies who request and then deliver the emergency supplies to their clients. Your donations will make a real difference to help meet the continued demand for food parcels in this lockdown and into 2021 . Daphne Creed

VILLAGE HALL EVENTS

In the November draw, 1st prize went to Elizabeth Brown and 2nd prize to Elaine Gilmore. The VH committee has made the decision that, to avoid spreading the Covid 19 virus by the handling of application forms and cash payments, it will not be running the 100 Club in 2021. Many thanks to all who have supported this fundraiser in the past, and, hopefully, when life gets back to normal, we will start up again.

SCOUTS AND GUIDES CHRISTMAS POST

West Coker Scouts and Guides regret that they will not be providing a local Christmas post this year due to Covid 19. The Groups express their thanks to all the loyal supporters and wish everyone a safe, healthy and happy Christmas.

CAROL SINGING

The Hardington Players would like to go carol singing around the village before Christmas. At the moment, plans can only be provisional and will depend on government guidelines and the weather. Social distancing would be observed. If we go ahead, it will be in the middle of the week beginning 14th December. We would walk from the top of the High Street, and down to and along Moor Lane. We would collect for the Yeovil Food Bank so we hope villagers would support this. More information will be put on the community Facebook page and also in the shop window nearer the time.

Elaine Peters

NATIONAL CENSUS 2021

Households across the UK will soon be asked to take part in Census 2021, which will provide a snapshot of modern society. The census is a once-in-a-decade survey that gives us the most accurate estimate of all the people and households in England and Wales. It has been carried out every decade since 1801, with the exception of 1941. It will be the first run predominantly online, with households receiving a letter with a unique access code, allowing them to complete the questionnaire on their computers, phones or tablets. "A successful census will ensure everyone from local government to charities can put services and funding in the places where they are most needed," Iain Bell, deputy national statistician at the Office for National Statistics, said. "This could mean things like doctors' surgeries, schools and new transport routes. That's why it is so important everyone takes part and we have made it easier for people to do so online on any device, with help and paper questionnaires for those that need them." Census day will be on March 21, but households across the country will receive letters with online codes allowing them to take part from early March. The census will include questions about your sex, age, work, health, education, household size and ethnicity. And, for the first time, there will be a question asking people whether they have served in the armed forces, as well as voluntary questions for those aged 16 and over on sexual orientation and gender identity. Results will be available within 12 months, although personal records will be locked away for 100 years, kept safe for future generations. For more information, visit [census.gov.uk](https://www.census.gov.uk).

HARDINGTON & PENDOMER WI

Our November meeting once again took place on Zoom. Although numbers attending are down on our usual meetings in the village hall, more ladies are logging on successfully to our meetings. Kylie Gallagher, a community fundraiser from Children's Hospices South West, gave an uplifting talk about the work of this wonderful facility. They provide hospice care for children with life-limiting conditions and their whole family across the South West. Charlton Farm in North Somerset is our closest hospice. In the main they provide respite care, the chance for families to get away from it all, but they also offer emergency and palliative care and end of life care in a peaceful and comfortable setting. Despite the sad nature of the work, the hospice came across as a joyful and uplifting place much valued by its young patients and their families. Unfortunately, the hospices themselves are currently closed for respite care during this pandemic, but continue to provide much needed end of life care and support to parents, siblings and the extended family as required. Our next meeting in December will be by Zoom, and we are hoping to hold a Christmas quiz. We look forward to seeing even more members on line.

Despite restrictions, the WI continues to function. The Somerset County Federation of Women's Institutes held its annual meeting by Zoom and over 250 ladies attended to listen to two excellent speakers. Tom Heap of Countryfile fame, and Mary-Jess, who won a major singing competition in China whilst she was studying there. We were all treated to a beautifully sung rendition of Jerusalem from what looked like her bathroom! SCFWI has also been organising regular Zoom meetings for members with a range of inspirational and informative speakers such as the Yorkshire Shepherdess. As part of a Somerset initiative, our WI has also donated a shoebox full of gifts, which will be given to a young person staying in Taunton YMCA over the Christmas period. We are also hoping that the restrictions will allow members to enjoy a socially distanced Christmas lunch at the Royal Oak. Our WI celebrates its 80 birthday in 2021 and we look forward to our future together – be it virtually or real!

THE PARISH CLERK WRITES...

The November Meeting...

The Parish Council discussed a planning application to raise the roof-ridge height further, and remove the dormer windows, from previously approved plans for an extension at Orchard Cottage, Moor Lane. There were no objections.

Those wondering what has happened to the planning application for two new houses at the Mandeville Arms site may be interested to know that decision making on applications for all new dwellings across much of Somerset has been put on hold. Natural England have raised concerns that increasing phosphate pollution is causing significant unfavourable effects to the Somerset Levels and the surrounding catchment area. This will affect any un-determined planning application that may give rise to additional phosphates including new dwellings, annexes, tourism accommodation, gypsy sites, commercial developments, agricultural developments, etc. Before making a decision on these developments an appropriate assessment will need to be carried out and a mitigation plan put in place if necessary. Ecological advice is currently being sought but the delay is likely to have a significant impact on the building industry, businesses and residents across much of Somerset.

The Mandeville Arm's listing on SSDC's "Asset of Community Value" Register is due to expire in February. This was previously applied for by members of the community. The PC resolved to submit a new application form to request the registration is renewed once it expires. An SSDC officer has visited the Mandeville Arms and confirmed that no work has been done that relates to the still undecided applications.

The signs at the Community Field have been updated to confirm that the play equipment can still be used during this current lockdown, as long as COVID safety measures such as social distancing and the use of hand sanitiser are observed.

I'm sure all the dog-owners out there will be pleased to hear the Parish Council have installed a new dog poo bin near the lower entrance of the Nature Reserve!

The next scheduled Parish Council meeting will be at 7.30 pm on the 19th January, 2021 by video conference. Public attendance is welcome and they can speak for a limited amount of time at the start. The agenda for the forthcoming meeting and minutes of past meetings can be found a few days beforehand on the village website www.hardington.net. You can contact me at hardingtonclerk@rocketmail.com, tel: 07545 554145 or in writing at Grove House, Pendomer, Somerset, BA22 9PH.

Nancy Chapman, Parish Clerk

The Nightingales in Hardington Moor in May 25 years ago sang so loudly that we could not sleep at night. Returning this year for the first time since we left in 1959 I haven't so far heard a Nightingale.

I came for the first time on an October day in 1949, specification in hand to look at an olde-worlde detached cottage that had been advertised in the Western Gazette. I stood on top of Primrose Hill while the Sun flooded the golden valley.

Reaching the bottom of the hill I looked around. It was afternoon. The pub (the Royal Oak) was shut. I found the village shop (Springfield Stores) and asked the pleasant country lady who kept it where the cottage was. I also bought myself a pipe and an ounce of tobacco. Saint Bruno I think it was and cost 11 1/2d. Before I left the village that day I have bitten through the stem of the pipe. Not in anger or frustration. Simply through habit. I suppose I hated smoking. Before I finally left Hardington I'd managed to give it up. I had been living with my wife and two baby boys in a bungalow outside London. The walls had begun to crack; the other side of the railway a council estate had begun to develop. Father-in-law had promised to buy us a cottage in the country if we could find one. Hadn't I been granted an Atlantic board for literature?

Mrs Taylor at the shop directed me to the cottage at the end of a blind lane in that part of Hardington, which was called the Moor. Farther out is the Marsh, and on the hill (Wimborough Hill) is the village proper, Hardington Mandeville. But the oldest part of the village is called Lyatts and was the seat of King Alfred.

Rose Cottage (or Moorland) lay there sleeping like a long furry mole. The thatch was rough, but seemed sound. The rooms were low, oak beamed. It was owned by two charming and extremely business like ladies, who had furbished it with warming pans and sporting prints. There was an orchard, and a little stream (The Chinnock Brook) almost encircled the property.

I was enchanted and wrote to father-in-law. He came down and was impressed by the businesslike acumen of the two ladies. A deal was struck and the cottage changed hands; was rented to us for £1 a week (or was it 30 shillings?) On one occasion the cheque I wrote out for the rent was returned "refer to drawer", as was the cheque I gave Mrs Taylor for our groceries. This is something I now look back on with shame, but we were very poor, and I had to learn the hard way the value of money.

Research into village archives revealed something of the cottage history. A weaver from the continent once lived there, perhaps a Delamont (an old village name) a Huguenot. We named our home Weavers cottage. *(to be continued)*

My family moved to Weavers' Cottage in 1950, when I was 18 months old. We moved away in 1959, but the cottage was let, and we moved back as a family in 1976. My father Maurice was a poet and writer, and I found this when searching for one of his poems.

Robin Carpenter

HARDINGTON WILDLIFE

Wow! What an exciting bird record. Rose and Derek Richards have recorded a great white Egret in their garden lake! No doubt as to its authenticity as it's bigger than a heron and stands about 3 foot tall. It is a new bird for the British list as two nests have been found in the Somerset levels and I expect the bird was a fledgling looking for new territory. A few reports of red kites have also come from the Hardington Moor area. It would be nice to see them established in Pen Wood. They do little harm and their main food is carrion.

The BBC is saying that due to COVID-19 and lockdown, birds and animals are becoming more tolerant of humans. There is less traffic noise and people are quieter and more tolerant. I certainly find that putting out bird food brings tits and robins flitting round my head while pheasants peck the ground like tame chickens.

I must congratulate the BBC on their wildlife programs, and their concern about global warming. Country file, David Attenborough and many others are worth watching. The general opinion is that although COVID-19 is a terrible problem and will probably result in the death of 1% of world population, it will be nothing compared to failing to tackle global warming, when the deaths would be nearer to very much higher. It is suggested that scrapping the building of a new railway between London and Birmingham, costing hundreds of millions of pounds and destroying many acres of valuable countryside, and putting the money into the environment would be a sensible start. And bring back the beavers. There are now colonies established in all four South West counties and they improve the environment and stop flooding. Watch this space!

Mike Bickerton

MISSING CAT, AGAIN!!!

Has anyone seen our large friendly ginger cat? He is 6 years old, is micro-chipped, but is a wanderer. This time went on a walkabout on 11 October, and at the time of writing is still absent. In the past when he returns he always looks well fed and in good condition, so maybe he's adopted another family or farm buildings, and comes back when he feels ready! If you have an occasional visitor, and wonder where he goes when he leaves you, please let us know, in case it is our Tigger. He is due his 3-monthly medications and a vet inspection soon.

Thanks, Annie and Neil Dyer 01935 863706

AND FINALLY: Items for next month's Messenger can be emailed to the team at: hardingtonmessenger@rocketmail.com. Please send your contribution as an **attachment** to an email in a Microsoft word (.doc or .docx) document, preferably in Calibri 16, in a **straightforward paragraph**. We are only able to print in black and white so unfortunately we cannot print photos.



What's on at The Royal Oak...

We'd like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who has supported us over the last year, and particularly since the start of the Covid-19 pandemic. The continual support of the village has certainly helped us through some difficult and uncertain times.

At the time of writing we are still unsure of what December will bring but we hope to be serving you in one way or another. We will be posting opening times, menus etc on our Facebook page, on the Hardington and Pendomer Facebook group, and through our email newsletter, so keep your eyes peeled.

CHRISTMAS PUDDINGS

One thing we are sure of is that you can once again get your hands on our famous homemade Christmas puddings! These are great as Christmas presents or to enjoy at home, so let us know if you'd like one!

GIFT VOUCHERS

Looking for a special Christmas gift? The Royal Oak offers gift vouchers, which you can purchase for any amount of your choice. Our vouchers are valid for a whole year and can be spent on both food and drink.