



Ombersley & Doverdale Parish Magazine

March 2021



This on-line edition supports the printed version.

Please see the printed issue for full advertisements.
A list of advertisers plus their contact details is at the end of this
on-line issue.

RECTOR'S THOUGHTS

Here we are in February and we are in lockdown once again. Things feel a little different from our first experience of this restraint upon our freedom, don't you think? In March of last year, we had lots of energy for dealing with all the practical challenges that a way of life none of us had ever experienced before were throwing at us. We were determined to maintain as much ordinary life as we possibly could. There was even a feeling that this was a bit of an adventure.

Tremendous efforts were made to make sure that vulnerable people were being looked after, that those who we felt were making a special effort on behalf of the rest of us were being given special support, especially those in the National Health Service, that as much as we could, we would support our schools and we were determined to keep as much of our church life going as we could, making use of technologies that few of us had even heard of just a few days before it all began. And I think that in large measure we succeeded. Of course, we were aided by one of the loveliest springs that any of us can remember. And we even had a few months in which we were able to return to something like normality.

And then the second wave hit us and this time it was the middle of winter and all the time we were hearing news about people we knew and cared about who were seriously ill and who were dying. And we were weary.

One thing was giving us new hope was the news that a vaccination programme was going to begin. How proud we can be that our National Health Service is delivering the vaccine more effectively, more speedily and to more people than any other health service in the world. I know from personal experience that one of the reasons for this is because its staff are pushing themselves to the limit of their strength running daily vaccination clinics over and above their normal duties and they were already pretty demanding.

I feel so very proud of what has been achieved. Often it has been said that our country is in decline, but I think that what we are witnessing even now is that there are still great reserves of moral strength and public virtue in our country.

Furthermore, this is not only the old country that we grew up in, but many who have only been in our country for a relatively short time are displaying these qualities. We are watching a new country that is being built upon the foundation of what the old country stood upon, the foundation of servant leadership that is perhaps our country's greatest quality, a foundation built by centuries of Christian faith and

service. This foundation still runs through our Health Service, in Education, in the services provided by Local Government, in the many voluntary services that add so much to our national life and in many local businesses as well. This foundation remains strong. We have much to be thankful for.

Stephen Winter Rector

St Andrew's News: www.st-andrews.church

Well.....this could be a short paragraph this month!

I am sure I have not been alone in starting conversations with 'What's your news?' to be met with a chuckle and a surprisingly long conversation about the little things we are actually doing and how nice it has been to hibernate. As you have probably noticed the Church has only been open a couple of days a week, less when it snowed, and all our services have been on Zoom. However, work on the windows is still progressing with scaffolding now up on the west windows ready for the glass to be removed for cleaning and repair. The remaining east window could be finished by the end of this month if we are lucky. There are photographs on the Church website where you can see what has been done. Photographs of the west windows show how much damage there is to be dealt with.

Spring is gradually coming closer and a hint of spring cleaning in the air has had me looking at some old photographs and cuttings in the vestry (now cleared of scaffolding). There are some of Ombersley School at the fête when it was still at the old Rectory, and others with Mr Crump in the wedding field. There is also a record of the 30 ladies who made the kneelers and pew runners with photographs taken from their exhibition at the Three Choirs Festival in Worcester....but...the names and photographs are not together! We are going to leave them out on display at the back of the church, with paper and pens. Please pop in and see if you can help identify who's who; it would be such a shame to lose bits of our history while there is still someone who can identify them.

Our 'Open the Book Group' have so far managed one distanced zoom 'Assembly' for Ombersley School, telling the story of the three wise men. A very strange experience dressing up alone in your own home and trying to

synchronise the zigging and zagging of the Wise Men on their camels was an 'interesting' experience! We did hear one little voice exclaim "Oh good it's the fun one", so we must be doing something right. We also managed to record the story so the school could send it out to children still at home; we hope they enjoyed it to.

At the time of writing we are still unsure what will be happening with Church services in the building, however there will always be a Zoom service which anyone is welcome to join. The meeting numbers will be either ID 537-046-9477 or ID 845-168-9869. The passwords change regularly so please ask Nick Wright 07968 531216, Andy Horn 620259 or Fiona Davies 621176.

Mothering Sunday

"There's no way to be a perfect mother and a million ways to be a good one."
~ Jill Churchill

Mothers' Day will be on March 14th this year. Last year it was at the start of our first lockdown! It feels sad that for two years in a row we are unable to get together and thank mothers, and those motherly people who have supported us through our lives. This year will inevitably include thinking of those to whom we have said goodbye, and which makes it even more poignant. We sincerely hope we can have a moment together, even if it is outside, but this is not a given.

Our idea this year to help us celebrate all our 'Motherly' people is to tie ribbons in beautiful spring colours on the railings outside the church with messages written on the 'tails'. Florist ribbon is probably best to cope with the rain and for those who don't have any, we shall have some lengths available either in the lychgate or at the back of the church. Help us to create a beautiful "Thank you."

Holy Week and Easter

This is another unknown and will be different again this year, but we shall find a way to celebrate this special time of the Christian calendar. Please keep an eye on the website and for posters around the village. Remember Easter isn't just 'a day' so there will be time to make this a special event.

PRAYING THE PARISH MARCH 2021-JANUARY 2022

PRAYING THE PARISH

If you have a particular need or things to be grateful for, please let us know:

Rev Stephen Winter 07773 760899 mail@stephenwinter.net

Angie Randle 01905 620753 angierandle@hotmail.com

or James Homer 01299 851637 ajfhomer@btinternet.com [lay reader with pastoral responsibility for the Worcestershire Severn Parishes]

Areas for March:

Sunday 7th March – Racks Lane, Chapel Lane, Longheadland

Sunday 14th March – Uphampton, Northampton, Lineholt, Malvern View, Abberley View

Sunday 21st March – Doverdale, St Mary's Church, Sytchampton, Sytchampton School

Sunday 28th March – Those in our community who work in the NHS



If you would like a place of quiet to pray, or think, or just rest, the church is currently open on Wednesdays and Sundays during the day – using the main door



OMBERSLEY
MEMORIAL
VILLAGE HALL

Community Events in 2021

- Saturday 3rd April - Family Easter Egg Trail
- Saturday 26th June – Veteran, Vintage and Classic Car Show
- Friday 20th August – Gin Tasting Evening
- Thursday 23rd September – Fashion Show
- Saturday 16th October – French Themed Evening Meal
- Saturday 27th November – Christmas Fayre & Father Christmas

Put the dates in your diary and check our website and Facebook page for updates and details



@OmbersleyMemHall

Visit www.ombersleymemorialhall.co.uk to see what is on offer

Contact us: bookings@ombersleymemorialhall.co.uk

07936 467390

Do you have a fire insurance plaque on your property? These identification marks were displayed on properties in the C18th and C19th to indicate they were insured against fire before municipal [fire services](#) were formed. OHG are researching the distribution and history of these marks within the parish. Please contact Geoff Holder if you have one on your house or know of any hidden from public view. ohg@gsho.uk

From the Archives of the Ombersley Parish Council Minutes

THE TECHNICAL EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Evening entertainment before the advent of television, and an early youth training initiative in Ombersley

At the quarterly meeting of the Parish Council at Ombersley School on 11th October 1901, a proposal was made and unanimously agreed upon.

"that a small committee of the council be formed to co-operate with the technical education authorities for the purposes of providing lectures etc. on subjects hereafter to be named"

A sub-committee was formed and met regularly organising lecture courses, all of which were apparently well attended and received. They began in December 1901 with *'Manure and feeding stuffs'* followed by lectures on *'Fruit and vegetable growing, including tomatoes'*, *'Dairy classes'* and *'Poultry keeping'*.

In addition, at the sub-committee meeting on 21st January 1902, the members moved that *'Application be made to Worcester Union of Clubs and Institutes for the establishment of a gardening institution centre at Ombersley'*. This would receive some grant funding. Adverts were placed for an instructor and for boys who might be interested. A tutor was selected and out of 18 applicants, 16 boys were offered places. The ground was prepared and a shed erected for tools.

Each boy paid 1 shilling rent a year, collected on 1st May, but kept the produce they grew. If they failed to attend or maintain their plot, then they forfeited the shilling. Any surplus plots were rented to the instructor to utilise at a rent of seven shillings and sixpence. This rental money was used to fund prizes for the boys. The money was given to those boys with the best attendance. In 1905, and for some years thereafter, the prize money

was generously supplemented by Mr Jones of The Parsonage on Parsonage Lane, who took a keen interest in the project and gave eight shillings and sixpence, increasing to ten shillings and sixpence from 1908 as prizes for the best plots. You may recall from a previous parish magazine article that Mr James Arthur Jones was the owner of Abberley Hall, but as his wife disliked the house, they resided at The Parsonage.

In the Parish Council minutes for March 1909 it was agreed that the report by the H.M. Inspector on Ombersley Instruction garden should be entered: *“The plots were well kept and the boys took a keen interest in the work. The value of the instruction would be increased if each boy kept a note book and entered the work done on his plot during the various stages, the state of the weather, and the date of appearance of the crop. The Register should be kept in the tool shed so that it may always be available for inspection. Only six students were eligible for grants under the Regulations for technical schools as the remainder were still attending the day schools.”*

The garden education appears to have continued, with sixteen boys taking up instruction and working plots each year until the outbreak of World War 1, when references to the scheme cease.

The records do not reveal where the educational plots were in the village. Does anyone know? One possibility mentioned the plots as being adjacent to Ombersley School. Does anybody have a copy of a boy's notebook?



New website launched
www.ombersleymemorialhall.co.uk

We are pleased to announce that Ombersley Memorial Village Hall has received funding from the National Lottery Community Fund to create an exciting new website.

There is a new online booking form, details of all future events and lots of information about hiring our elegant hall.

Visit **www.ombersleymemorialhall.co.uk** to see what is on offer

Follow us on Facebook **@OmbersleyMemHall**

Contact us: **bookings@omersleymemorialhall.co.uk**
07936 467390

Please note: the hall is temporarily closed due to Covid-19 but we are still taking bookings

Ombersley and Doverdale Parish Council: March update

Ombersley Medical Centre

On behalf of the residents of the parish, Ombersley and Doverdale Parish Council would like to place on record its grateful thanks to everyone involved in the current vaccine roll out at Ombersley Medical Centre.

TOAD

Following the public consultation (regulation 14) which ended in November, the fifty responses from yourselves and statutory consulted have been analysed. The draft has been amended where appropriate in accordance with professional advice. The newly completed draft will be put before the Parish Council together with other necessary documents outlining the consultation process that has been undertaken. Provided the Parish Council agrees, the draft will be subtitled to Wychavon.

A further public consultation will be organised by Wychavon and you will again have a chance to make comments before an independent scrutineer checks the document to see if it is fit to proceed to a community referendum. Time scales are rather fluid due to the pandemic but we are hopeful to be at that stage by the summer.

The Weighbridge

Two Councillors have met with a volunteer surveyor at the weighbridge to assess its condition. It is thought that some of the timbers around the footplate are rotten in parts and some of the timbers supporting the roof tiles probably have woodworm. The Parish Council is now awaiting approval for a written quotation for a condition survey by specialists who are recognised by lottery heritage funding. This will be placed on record for when a decision is made as to the next stage.

Spitfire Homes

The Parish Council considered its comments on this application at an Extraordinary Meeting of the Council held by Zoom on 26th January 2021. There were fifteen local residents in attendance, a number of whom have responded to the consultation. The full summary of this meeting can be found on the Parish Council website.

Memorial Gates

By the time this addition of the magazine is published, it is hoped that the sandstone pillars will have been erected at the Main Road entrance to the Memorial Field and that the gates will have been ordered ready for installation in April.

Note: the names and contact details of Parish Councillors are available on the Parish Council website.

A New Cover for the Parish Magazine

We hope you like the new cover, which was chosen by the editorial team from a range of options. We have to thank our treasurer, Ralph Seymour, for masterminding the task and liaising with Greg Thombs at Vernon Print. Our thanks also go to Barrie Fischer who provided the photographs. Sue Collier has written a short piece about the history of the Weighbridge hut, which features on one of the photographs.

The Weighbridge Hut in Ombersley

The weighbridge hut, as featured on the new cover of the magazine, is the small 20th Century black and white building situated to the north east of the Ombersley roundabout. The hut used to house the official and measuring equipment for the operation of a public weighbridge. Originally, the hut stood in what is now the garden of Cresswells, the house to the north west side of the roundabout, next door to what was a garage run by Mr Rea.

The hut and weighbridge were moved to its present, less hazardous position, when the road junction was altered and the roundabout installed in the mid 1930s. The corner by which it now stands was the former site of a village post office and 'The Old Cross' public house, which were both demolished. The weighbridge was finally closed in 1977 having run at a loss for some time. The weighing mechanism was removed and the resultant pit in front of the hut filled in during 1979.

One of only two surviving weighbridge offices in the county of Worcestershire, the hut has been placed on the Historic environment Record and is an iconic feature of Ombersley village. The County Council own the hut and part of the site, and the Parish Council own the remainder. The hut has been used as a store since its closure. The trough in front of the hut was donated by Lord Sandys and the benches on the site were gifts. One came from the Ombersley Women's Institute and the other from the British Legion to commemorate the golden jubilee of the local branch. The 'plague stone' trough is also situated on the site.

The Parish Council is currently looking into the possibility of renovating the hut and re-landscaping the site with the County Council's consent, but will need to seek grant funding to do so. (See Parish Council news)

Sue Collier

Public Zoom Meeting



“Current archaeological digs in Worcester and Worcestershire”

Rob Hedge (The Hive Archaeology Dept.)

Thursday 25th March at 7pm

The meeting is free of charge but please register with David Collier (drdcollier@gmail.com) by March 23rd if you wish to participate.

Update on the Covid Vaccination Programme

At Ombersley Medical Centre, the team have been working with other local practices to deliver the Covid-19 vaccinations since the middle of December. Alongside running all our usual services, by the end of January we have been able to deliver thousands (7241) of vaccines both to patients and local staff from health and social care. We are incredibly proud of the diligence and hard work of all our staff who have been working additional hours on top of their usual roles to allow us to deliver the vaccines quickly. We are also very grateful to the wonderful community volunteers who have helped too, including some young people whose studies have been disrupted by Covid-19. We couldn't have done it without you! Roll out of the vaccination programme will continue across the county and you will be contacted directly by the practice when your cohort is being vaccinated. Once again, thank you all. Stay safe!



Woodbine Willie by Howard Robinson

Thus, it was that he went to study at Trinity College in Dublin where, in 1904, he gained a degree in Classics and Divinity.

Geoffrey obviously had a calling to enter the priesthood because he then went to Ripon Clergy College to train and become ordained a priest.

In 1908 he became a curate at St Andrew's Church in a poor area of Rugby. In 1912, he then returned to Leeds to help his ailing father with his work back in Quarry Hill for two years until 1914.

This was a momentous year for the young priest because not only did he get married, but his father also died. And so, he moved to take up the living as a vicar in yet another poor area, this time around the parish of St Paul's in Worcester, east of City Walls Road.

Geoffrey Anketell Studdert Kennedy, a.k.a. Woodbine Willie, was born in Leeds to Irish parents, the seventh of nine children, in 1883. His father was an Irish Anglican priest, the vicar of St Mary's Church, in a poor area known as Quarry Hill.

Geoffrey would have known very well what it was like to be involved with the poorer members of the community since this was the calling of his father, namely to work amongst and minister to them.

Geoffrey went to Leeds Grammar School. Despite having been born and brought up in Yorkshire, Geoffrey always maintained that he was an Irishman.



No sooner had he arrived than **WW I** started. So, what does he do but volunteer to join up as an army chaplain on the Western Front. He goes to France in 1915 and is immediately promoted to the rank of Captain.

He quickly gained a reputation for being the sort of man who didn't flinch from going into dangerous places in order to help the fighting men. He would go into **No Man's Land** with the stretcher bearers and offer comfort and succor to the injured and dying as well as **Woodbine** cigarettes; hence gaining the nickname **Woodbine Willie**.

He was even awarded the Military Cross at Messines Ridge with the following citation: *'For conspicuous gallantry and devotion to duty. He showed the greatest courage and disregard for his own safety attending the wounded under heavy fire. He searched shell-holes for our own & enemy wounded assisting them to the dressing station; his cheerfulness and endurance had a splendid effect upon all ranks in the front line trenches.'*

During much of the war he supported the military effort enthusiastically, even to the point of giving morale boosting speeches about the usefulness of the bayonet, as well as many memorable down-to-earth sermons with his booming voice.

Yet, he became totally disillusioned by war as is evident in at least one of his poems entitled **Waste** ... see overleaf. His collection of some 105 poems can be found in **The Unutterable Beauty** ... well worth perusing.

After the war he returned to St Paul's in Worcester for a few years before, following a short spell at St Martins-in-the-Fields, being put in charge of St Edmund's Church in Lombard St, London, as well as serving as a Royal Chaplain. He went on numerous lecture tours until, in 1929, he died partly from exhaustion and partly from a smoking related disease; he himself was a heavy smoker. After the Dean of Westminster refused his burial in Westminster Abbey ... for being a "socialist", his funeral was held in Worcester Cathedral and he was buried over the river in the cemetery at St John's. A truly amazing man; so full of conviction & example by action.



WOODBINE WILLIE



They gave me this name like their nature,
Compacted of laughter and tears;
A sweet that was born
of the bitter,
A joke that was torn from the years.
Their name! Let me hear it - the symbol
Of unpaid – unpayable debt,
v For the men to whom I owed God's Peace,
I put off with a cigarette.

INDIFFERENCE

When Jesus came to Golgotha, they
hanged Him on a tree;
They drove great nails through hands
and feet, and made a Calvary;
They crowned Him with a crown of
thorns; red were His wounds & deep
For those were crude & cruel days,
and human flesh was cheap.
When Jesus came to Birmingham,
they simply passed Him by;
They never hurt a hair
of Him, they only let Him die;
For men had grown more tender,
and they would not give Him pain;
They only just passed down the
street, and left Him in the rain.

WASTE

Waste of Muscle, waste of Brain,
Waste of Patience, waste of Pain;
Waste of Manhood, waste of
Health,
Waste of Beauty, waste of
Wealth;
Waste of Blood, waste of Tears,
Waste of Youth's most
precious years;
Waste of ways the Saints have
trod,
Waste of Glory, waste of God ---

Ombersley School News: February 2021

Since the start of 2021, Ombersley School has been open every day for children of key workers. Children are taught in their class 'bubbles' by their own teachers to keep them safe. Teachers are also setting home learning for all the children who are unable to attend school and sending daily videos of themselves to keep the children motivated and keep spirits up. The children have also been enjoying a lot of outdoor learning such as science, forest school, rugby and football.

The Pre- School has been open to all children and they have enjoyed lots of exciting indoor and outdoor activities.

The whole school took part in the 'BIG Winter Watch' and really enjoyed the activities including Bird watching, making bird food and creative art activities. We also carried out special activities to promote 'Children's Mental Health Week' which we felt was paramount for all the children at this time more than ever. We had a very generous gift from the Library Services of books and coffee for all keyworker families.

We have really missed having all our children in school, but it has been lovely to see all the amazing work and activities that they have been carrying out at home. We are so proud of the children and their families for the dedication and commitment whilst they have been away from school. We can't wait until we are all back together again as the Happy Family, we have always been proud of.

Stay Safe everyone!

Magazine Subscriptions

Payment for 2021 is now due. Please put the money due in an envelope and post through the letterbox of your distributor. If you are unable to do this, please have the money ready for collection by your distributor when current Covid restrictions are lifted

COMMUNITY LITTER

My Litter Journey

#LITTER
HEROES
AMBASSADORS

My name is Karen Blanchfield and I am an ambassador for 'Keep Britain Tidy Litter Heroes' and a community scout leader. My litter picking journey started back in 2018 when my scout troop arranged to litter pick Burlish Top nature reserve. We collected a total of 18 bags of litter in just two hours. This shocked me and from that moment I decided I was going to play a part in keeping Britain tidy so I joined a local litter picking group. Like many people, I was litter blind, but after only one litter pick I could see litter everywhere, every day! Since 2018, I have been busy litter picking with Droitwich Spa litter squad. I adopted my street with Wychavon council and have volunteered many hours educating children on how litter impacts our environment. My opinion on litter is that we all need to join together to make a difference to where we live, and I would rather council funds were spent on health, education and sustainability.

Lockdown Exercise

Since the first lockdown, I have enjoyed my daily dog walk adventure exploring the local areas around where I live. We are blessed to have so many beautiful views along our country lanes and footpaths. Unfortunately, we also have litter spoiling these areas where wildlife flourishes. Over the years I have found litter dating back to 1974 and recently I have found litter dated 1988 embedded in bushes along local lanes. Winter is a great time to litter hunt as the bushes are awaiting spring growth.



Collection 8th & 9th February
2021

Adopt a Street is a great initiative orchestrated with Wychavon council and we can all help improve the surrounding areas where we live. I see a common pattern with litter, especially 'food-on-the-go' containers. During lockdown there has been a rise in this type of litter. When you commit to adopting a street with Wychavon council, they will provide you with the equipment that enables you to litter pick safely. You can arrange for the bags to be collected or leave them in your own black bin. As a community litter picker, it is lovely to meet like-minded individuals who share the passion to keep our streets and lanes clean.



Collected in a local field in January 2021 a 1987 coke can, the ripples went out of production in 1985.

The sigma around litter is still incredibly old fashioned, but I am pleased to say litter picking is becoming more accepted. Keep Britain Tidy Ambassadors are working nationally in their communities to encourage and change behaviours around litter. One area that I am delighted where this sigma is changing is in schools where children that pick-up litter are now rewarded instead of using this activity as a punishment. Education will change future behaviours around littering. Getting key messages across to our younger generation is particularly important so they grow up to become environmentally aware of the damage that litter can cause globally. Carrying out anti-litter education litter pick sessions in schools is vital for future change, but as we know, education also starts at home. Litter picking is a great feel-good activity for the family that offers rewarding outdoor exercise that we are all craving during this lockdown pandemic. If everyone took care of their local property boundaries imagine what we could achieve collectively! Should you wish to know more about how to get involved around your area, contact 'adopt a street' at Wychavon.gov.uk

Karen Blanchfield, Litter Heroes Ambassador Keep Britain Tidy.

* For "Sigma" above please read "Stigma"

THE PRIVILEGE OF SPONSORSHIP

At least 26 years ago, when attending a church in Redditch, I heard of a small charity (To Kenya With Love [TKWL]) which supports 'street children'. The charity was developing a primary school for them in Kisumu – the 3rd largest city in Kenya on the shores of Lake Victoria. I got involved and sponsored one child, which in a few years became 2. Over the years I received updates on the children, letters from them, their school reports as well as updates on the work of the charity. As the children went through secondary school they determined their futures. Maurine went to train as a hairdresser and no longer needed my support, while Sam went to university and I continued to support him through this stage of education. While he was studying Rob and I had the first of our trips to Kenya and thanks to the charity and our travel agent were able to meet Sam and spend the day with him in Kisumu. This sealed a friendship (not least between Rob and Sam with a mutual interest in football!), which has continued to the present day. In 2014 we were very privileged to return to attend Sam's wedding to Monica – what an experience. Our abiding memory is of dancing all the time – the only 'still' moment was during the formalities of the legal ceremony!! Next came the news of

a baby on the way and Justin Ethan was born in July 2016. In February 2019 Lakeisha Jenny arrived. Sam and Monica live in Nairobi, both have had aspirational jobs and are determined to do well for their family. Face Book posts show that they enjoy life and give the children plenty of fun experiences. However, the pandemic has not made it easy for them: work is precarious, and they have found it difficult to always know where the money for the rent is coming from, but, in Sam's words, 'we trust in God and he provides'. Meanwhile they have continued their links with Kisumu and Sam is in the process of becoming a trustee while also acting as a mentor to the children currently in the school. During the pandemic, the school has had to close, so the focus of TKWL has been to ensure that food and any other necessary supplies reaches the families and children they support. If you are interested to know more of TKWL's work, please follow this link <http://www.tkwl.org.uk/>

Jenny Batelen



The Churchyard Snowdrops 2021

We search for signs of Spring in this sad year
the snowdrop heads are poking through the ground
Their promise of good hope will soon appear.

Good news the vaccinations are now here
but Covid thwarts and makes us all housebound
We search for signs of Spring in this sad year.

When will we really see the end of fear
and desperation? We can't move around
Their promise of good hope must soon appear.

So many sit alone with no-one near
while Christmas presents still wait to be found
We search for signs of Spring in this sad year.

We slip our masks on tight over our ears
and with careful distance exercise around
Their promise of good hope is nearly here.
The Churchyard's snowdrops are now in our sphere
and their fresh joyous hope leaves us spellbound
Enjoy those pearly drops of Spring this year
At last the promise of good hope is here.

© Claire Gathercole January 2021



**Come along to our Family
Easter Egg Trail
Saturday 3rd April 2pm**

Starting and finishing at Ombersley Memorial Village Hall, the trail for clues will stretch from the Medical Centre down as far as the Cricket Ground.

Entry will be free to families with something sweet for the children at the end of the trail.

Our Tea Shop will be open and there will be a prize draw at 4 p.m.

Please check social media ('Ombersley Memorial Village Hall' & 'All About Ombersley') and the April Parish Magazine for the latest updates regarding COVID 19



Sytchampton School News: February 2021

READY, STEADY, GROW – enjoying the journey together!

Be Respectful
Be Kind
Be Honest
Be Determined
Believe!



Remote Learning

This year has certainly been an incredible learning opportunity for all of us as we get to grips with online learning and all the technology that comes with it!

Our staff, pupils and parents have shown true resilience and determination as they've grappled with online learning platforms, resources and team meetings! Currently, 97% of our pupils are engaging with our online learning offer and we would like to

say a huge thank you to all of the parents, carers and families who have been trying to juggle working from home, managing other siblings and supporting their children with their home schooling. It has been far from easy, but our school community, as always, has pulled together. As a result, we are confident that when we all return to school, we will be able to move forward quickly and plug any gaps.

Critical Worker and Vulnerable Pupils

Currently, Sytchampton are caring for 30% of our school population in school as well as delivering remote learning for the remaining pupils. The vast majority of the pupils in school are children of Critical Workers. Our staff have been working in school on a rota basis to support these pupils as well as providing Wrap Around Care. We would like to thank them for their dedication and hard work as this has been an anxious time for us all.



Children's Mental Health Week

At Sytchampton, we place a high value on wellbeing for all of our Community. We have a wellbeing lead practitioner, who is also our mental health first aider. She leads a small group of Wellbeing Champions in each year group who support other pupils and she has even created a 'Help Yourself Board' in the staffroom which is always well stocked with chocolate! We understand, that mental health is a key issue as a result of the latest lockdown, so during the week 1st - 7th



February, we celebrated National Children's Mental Health Week, the theme for which was 'Express Yourself.' Children were encouraged to engage with creative activities as a way of soothing anxieties and building self-worth. As part of the week, we also joined a national assembly on mental health, took part in yoga and meditative PE activities and on Friday we dressed to express ourselves

THE PARISH OF ST. MARY, DOVERDALE

CHURCHWARDEN:	Mr.R.Coppini	Tel: 620963
LICENSED LAY READER:	Mr.Richard Jeynes	Tel: 620441
TREASURER:	Mr.D.Hawkins	Tel: 620059
SECRETARY PCC:	Mr.G.Crow	Tel: 772850
Sidesmen:	Mrs V. Harris, Mr. C. Harris, Mr G.Crow, Mrs S.Crow, Mr J.Chapman, Mrs A.Chapman, Mrs W.Hawkins, Mrs S.Rees	
Organists:	Mrs L.Moyse, Mr D.Terry	

PEW POINTS

CLEANING ROTA

March:- Sue Crow, Valerie Harris, Wendy Hawkins

FUTURE SERVICES

At the time of this magazine going to press, lockdown restrictions still apply to church worship. However, we remain hopeful that we may see the return of some church services in our Benefice in the near future.

During the lockdown, Sunday services have continued to be held via Zoom. The Zoom ID and Passcodes are likely to change fairly regularly; if you do not receive the Weekly Message with the service information, please contact Nick Wright for important updates on all future services (contact details on page 1).

MORNING PRAYER

Each week-day morning at 9.15a.m., Revd. Stephen Winter holds a short Morning Prayer service via Zoom. If you would like to join, please use Meeting ID-845-168-9869 and the protected Password. Please check with either Stephen (mail@stephenwinter.net) or with the on-line message from Nick Wright for Password updates.

Ombersley History Group

A few interesting snippets about Ombersley: First published on-line in May 2020

Ombersley (or Ambresledge as it was then) is mentioned in The Domesday Book of 1086. It was one of the 20% largest communities recorded, with 30 villagers, 12 smallholders, 2 priests and 12 others.

In the Middle Ages, the woods around the village were infested with wolves and Henry 2nd, in about 1200, employed an official "Wolf Hunter".

The oldest building in the village is probably what is now "the kitchen shop". This may have been built originally as "The Priests House" when the Abbot of Evesham appointed a Vicar to the village in 1327. The Kings Arms pub dates back to 1411, although may have been a drinking establishment well before that. Both it and the Crown and Sandys pub (built in the 1600s) reflect the strong Royalist connections with the Sandys family. The Cross Keys pub opened in 1830 and may be the only original surviving "beer shop" in the area. The name "The Cross Keys" refers to the religious symbol of St Peter, one of the Disciples who was the first leader of Jesus's followers following his death. In 1848, Thomas May a

fruiterer or fruit grower, was allowed to convert a room in his cottage into a small bar. The Fruiterers Arms remains in the May family to this day. A microbrewery known as The Canon Royall used to produce "Arrowhead" brew there, which was a guest ale in the House of Commons in 2006.

Another political connection for Ombersley is Senator Hilary Clinton, whose eight times great grandfather Thomas Cottrell was married in Ombersley in 1678.

The English Civil War was a difficult time for families with divided loyalties. Samuel Sandys commanded a troop of Royalists at the initial conflict at Powick Bridge, whilst his cousin Edwin, was the deputy commander of the Roundheads. Edwin died from injuries received that day and is buried in Worcester Cathedral. Samuel Sandys went on to further glory during the conflict, but was captured during the final Battle of the war at Worcester (see article by Howard Robinson). Imprisoned, he lost all his land holdings. However, during the restoration, he regained his land and position as an MP. Ombersley has celebrated Oak Apple Day ever since – until the 1960s.

Life in Ombersley was dangerous in the late 18th century: an

association of concerned locals was created in 1791. From the Articles of Association, published in 1817: "Whereas the many and frequent robberies and other disorders that happen in the Parish of Ombersley, have induced the inhabitants to enter into an association for the preservation of good order". A local tax or tithe was levelled on each householder to pay for "the preservation of good order, for the detecting apprehending and prosecuting, at their joint expense, all felons and rogues, of every denomination and description, committing depredations upon any or either persons or properties"

By 1814, the Church building was in a parlous and unsafe condition. An Act of Parliament was passed allowing for the demolition of the Church and the building of a new Church and a Poor House. The Marchioness of Downshire agreed to cover the cost of the new building subject to her keeping the old Chancel as a family mausoleum and the rate payers of the parish paying her £7000 in instalments until the new Church was completed in 1829. The incumbent, a Rev. Sockett, appointed by the Marchioness, objected to his paying this rate on his glebe properties. The disagreement with his parishioners was so severe that eventually both sides approached a QC for his legal

position. The outcome was that he decided it was too much in the balance for him to decide and that it should be put to a jury. A decision for which he charged 5 guineas! The glebe properties in dispute may have eventually formed the Church Houses Trust – a charity which exists to this day.

The eldest son of William Gladstone, the Victorian Prime Minister was also called William (1840-1892). He represented East Worcestershire as a MP for five years. During that time, he wrote a hymn tune called "Ombersley". This is a typically Victorian, rather worthy and high-minded tune. It is hoped that the Ombersley Handbell Ringers will play an arrangement of this at one of our meetings.

In more modern times, an interesting conflict might have happened during World War 2. There is a local legend that Hitler had identified Ombersley Court, with its prime central location, as the HQ for the German Army if Operation Sea Lion, his plans for the invasion of Britain, had succeeded. If the invasion happened, the British Government was to be relocated to Croome Court and the Royal family moved to Madresfield Court. Ombersley Court is about equidistant between them!

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