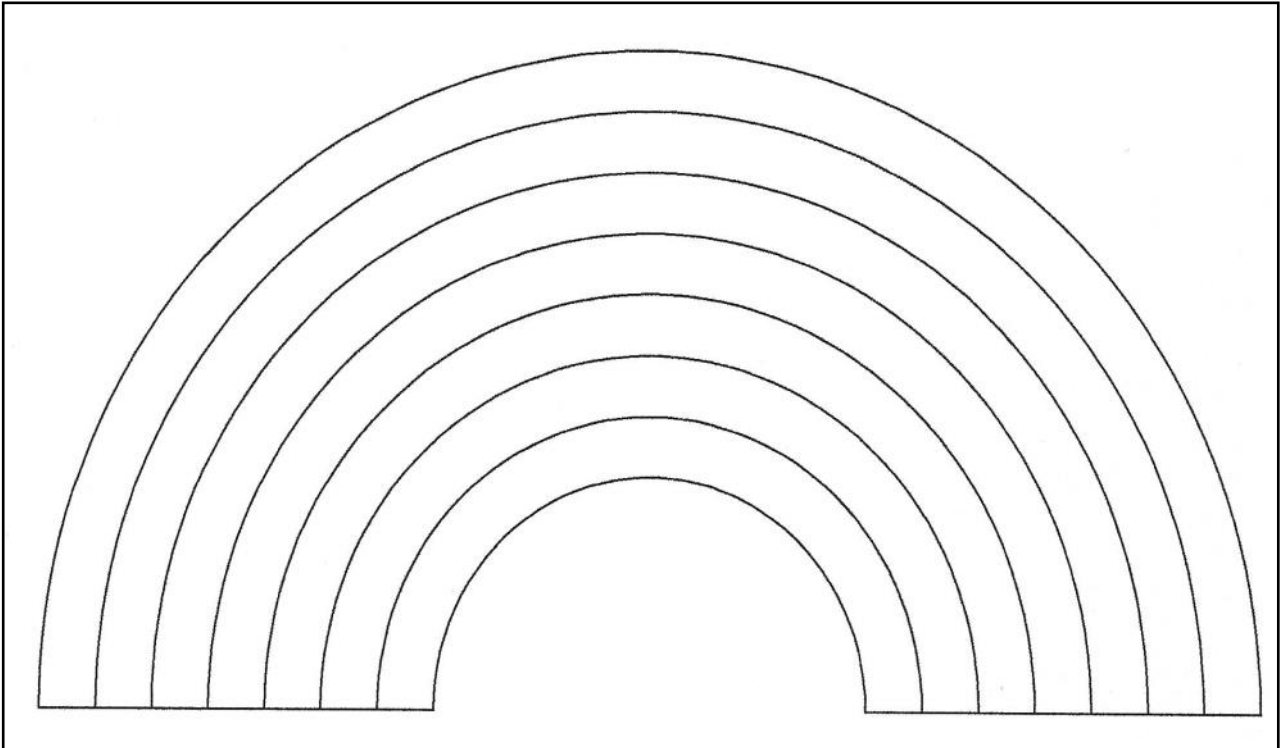


ROUNDABOUT

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red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo, violet

(colour sequence starting on the outside and working inwards)

or, if it helps: **Richard Of York Gave Battle In Vain**

An unusual cover for Roundabout to reflect the unusual time we live in.

Young folk may like to colour in the rainbow above — a popular pastime at present.

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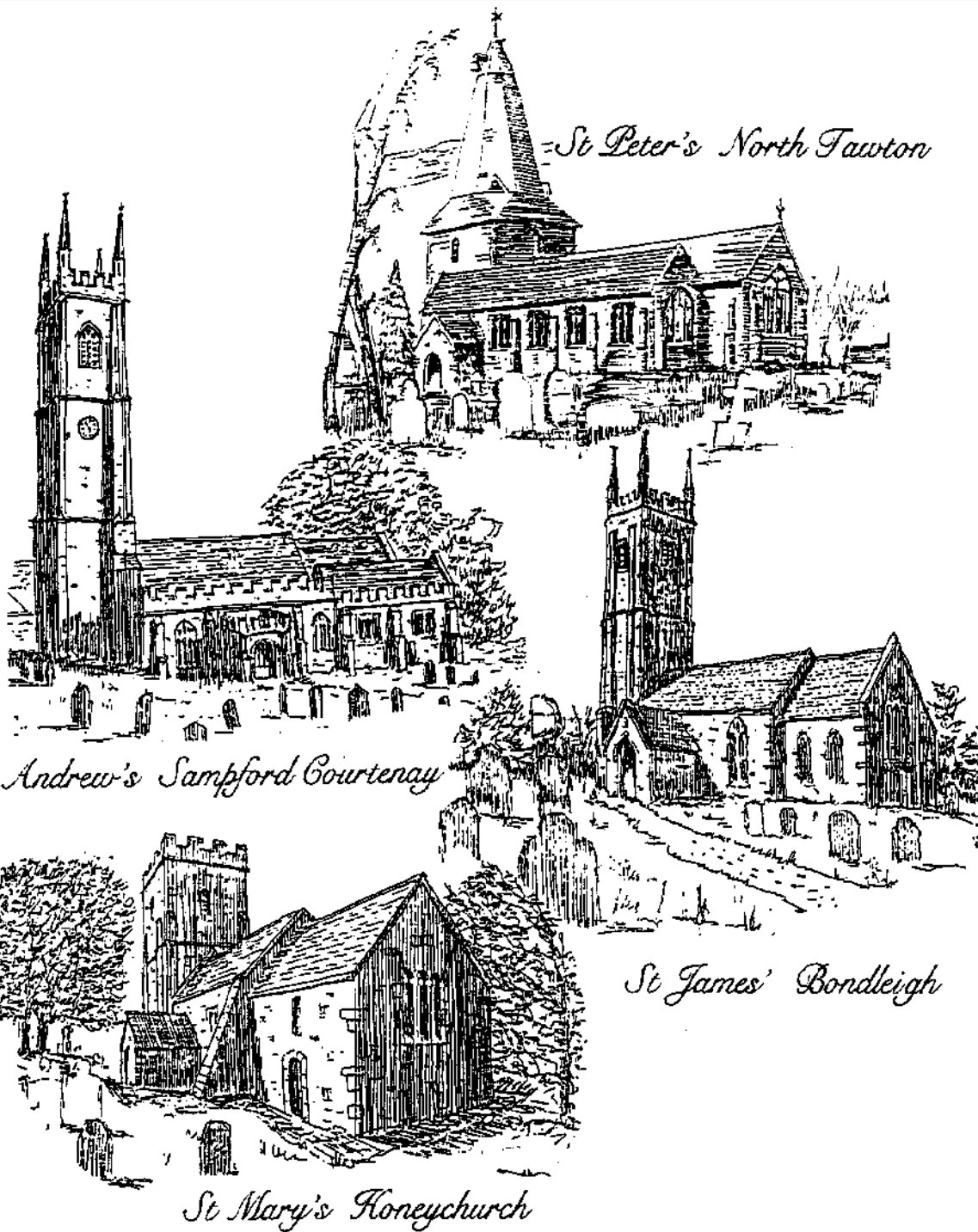
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From The Rectory

We will meet again, hopefully

As I write this over the Easter weekend, we are nearing the end of the initial three weeks of government restrictions due to coronavirus. As a natural optimist, I am inclined to think that some of them may begin to be eased shortly, perhaps towards the end of April, and I could find statistics to back up my point. The pessimists amongst us would disagree, and they would also draw on expert data to make their case too. In the end, none of us really knows. Different temperaments will always select differently from the truth. What we all want is indisputable signs of hope – an olive branch and a rainbow.

The Bishop of Exeter recently spoke of the difference between hope and optimism. It was on one of the many live-streamed church services that have become the new normal for Christian worship in these days. We have been doing the same here. See stpetersnorthtawton.org.uk for loads of online resources and videos. He said, to be optimistic is to have a natural sunny disposition in the face of adversity, always looking on the bright side of life. To have hope, though, is to meet the trials of life from a totally different place, a place much deeper and more grounded than our mere temperament.

I am reminded of the biblical story of Noah and the Flood. It wasn't out of mere optimism that Noah built the Ark and filled it with family and many animals. It was out of resolute trust and obedience to God's promise, that despite the devastation of the flood, he and his cargo would be spared. For forty days he looked to the horizon for some sign of hope. He sent out a raven but it kept flying back empty-beaked. I'm sure the pessimists on board said to Noah, "I told you so." But when the dove returned, it brought an olive branch, and the optimists would have clapped their hands and beaten their saucepans. It took a few more weeks until the earth was dry, and when God promised not to flood the earth again, he set the rainbow in the sky as a sign of his promise. Ever since, the rainbow has been a sign of hope. For pessimists and optimists alike, it has been great to see them hanging in windows around our community during this crisis.

Coronavirus has punctured a hole below the water-line in nearly every aspect of life. Even here in the countryside, where you can walk up a lane on your daily exercise and seemingly leave the cares of the world behind, as soon as you meet someone else on the road reality bites again. You say a cheery hello, and maybe stop for a brief chat, but then you pass by on the other side at least two meters apart. It feels totally unnatural. It is as though we have entered a parallel world, which looks like the world we know, except it has lots of strange new sights and rituals. It's a world where we dance suspiciously around one another, keeping our distance, daring not to let out an innocent cough. It's a world where the elderly are forced into voluntary house arrest, children are educated at home, and the Prime Minister has been hospitalised. It's a world where the government has forbidden marriage ceremonies, and the Church of England has closed its door to

Sunday worship. It's a world of facemasks, FaceTime and furlough. Grandparents cannot see grandchildren; you cannot sun-bathe in a park, and you feel like a criminal driving to Bow Co-op for milk rather than waiting in the queue outside Spar. Unnecessary journey? Yes – it probably was. It's a strange world.

I am not doubting the necessity of all the restrictions on public life at the moment. This virus has tragically cost thousands of lives in this country already, and we must do everything to stop it by being good neighbours in our community, and giving maximum support to all key workers and the NHS. But as soon as it is reasonably safe to do so, for freedom's sake, we need to get our old world back again. I want to give someone a hug again who is not a member of my household. I want to see lovers marry each other again. I want to walk the aisles of Tesco without being told to stand behind a yellow line. I want to drive where I want to drive, and worship where I want to worship. I want to see my parents face to face without feeling like I'm endangering them. That's the human world, and I want it back ASAP.

This is where optimism needs to give way to hope. Optimism says we will get our old world back again soon. Pessimism says that's months away. Hope comes from a different place, a place that draws its strength from whatever underlying belief system we hold dear. For some that belief system will be hard to discern or may even be absent entirely. If that is you, then maybe corona's challenge for you is to think a lot more seriously about life and faith from now on. For me, and for many believers in Christ, it reinforces the Christian worldview that we hold dear, that even in adversity there is always hope. For we believe in an Easter Saviour for whom not even death was the end.

The Queen concluded her recent address to the nation with the moving words, *we will meet again*. Undoubtedly, she was calling on us all to summon some of that wartime spirit that is so foundational for people of her generation, by longing for and working towards that day when we will be able to freely meet again. One assumes she will never address the nation like that again, save a few more Christmas messages (we hope). But perhaps, as she surely nears the end of her life, she was also referring to the great meeting beyond this world of which she herself is certain because of her hope in Christ. As crisis rages across the world in a manner it has never done so in her reign or in any of our life-times, we would do well to consider where our hopes lies; not our optimism or our pessimism, but our hope for this life and for the life to come. We will meet again.

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Editorial for May 2020

In the past eight years, Hilary and I have not felt there was a need for a "Roundabout" editorial, but now, in the present exceptional circumstances, we do feel an editorial is needed. First, we offer an apology. When we sent the April edition to our printer, we had not expected that events would move so fast that by the time it came back to us, some of our deliverers would feel unable to make their usual door to door visits to post it through your letter-box. We apologise to those of you who did not receive a copy. You will understand that many of our loyal deliverers are (like your editors!) in the age range regarded as "at risk", quite apart from any underlying health problems they may have. This is a moment to thank them for going out month by month to deliver "Roundabout" to your homes. Thank you to them all!

They are about to have a holiday from their delivery duties and we look forward to the time when it will be safe for them to resume their normal service to us all.

Therefore, this edition and those we anticipate producing for the foreseeable future will not make use of our established volunteer system for delivery.

Instead, we are asking you to collect a copy from one of a three of local "drop-off" points arranged with our printer. You might include it during a healthy daily walk recommended by government health advisers. The copies will be found in cardboard boxes from which you can help yourself at

North Tawton:	under cover on the top step of the Town Hall.
Bondleigh:	in the porch of St. James's Church.
Sampford Courtenay:	in the porch of St. Andrew's Church (copies also may be delivered by healthy daily walkers)
Honeychurch:	Copies will be brought to Honeychurch from Sampford Courtenay by a walker taking the permitted healthy daily walk.

Remember, "Roundabout" can be found also on our website:

www.norhtawtonroundabout.com

and it can be accessed as well as on links via the websites of the North Tawton Town Council and the Sampford Courtenay Village Council.

We know not everyone is able to reach "Roundabout" online and many who can prefer to be able to leaf through it as a printed booklet. That is one reason why we intend to continue printing. If you have a neighbour who cannot access the website and cannot leave home, perhaps you will consider collecting a copy for him or her? To take a copy for such a neighbour would be one kindly way of keeping that neighbour in touch with the local world outside their home at a time when personal visits are discouraged. It can become all too easy for such a neighbour to feel isolated. Looking to the future: we are told that on the same day we are due to send this edition of "Roundabout" to the printer, the government will be reviewing the coronavirus regulations. We are anticipating those regulations will remain in place and that future "Roundabout" editions will be distributed through the "drop-off" system.

If the regulations are tightened still further, we may have to think again, but we hope this will not happen. You will know that much of this edition would normally have told you about coffee mornings, society meetings and many other social gatherings. That space has been filled instead with articles by local residents. We hope they will give you a flavour of how life has changed for us all over the past few weeks. It will be a great help to us if other readers feel able to contribute for future editions. Details of how you have kept yourself busy; pastimes you have found which perhaps you have not had time for previously; how your household has managed the frustrations of being confined to your home and garden: how children have managed home education; how working from home has proved easier than anticipated (or not); how the weeds of west Devon are finding themselves under a more severe attack than in recent years; or even an article on a subject in which you have a particular interest you would like to share. Thank you to those who already have sent articles not published in this edition. We have "banked" them for the future, so please keep them coming as we wait for normal life to return for us all. Pray heaven it will not be too long.

Hilary and Richard. contact at:
nt.roundabout@gmail.com

Roundabout

is published for the community on behalf of the four parish churches of North Tawton, Sampford Courtenay, Bondleigh and Honeychurch.

Opinions expressed by contributors are their own and are not necessarily endorsed by the Vicar, by the PCC, members of the four churches, or by the Editors.

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Dear Residents,

Our news this month is dominated by coronavirus related issues, as are all our lives at the moment. If you want to help others, please continue to look out for your neighbours. If you need help – please put the big red **H** in your window for non-emergency assistance. Alternatively, ring one of the numbers on our second leaflet, or just ring me at the council office, 01837 880121 (diverted to another number when the office is unoccupied.)

If we can't give direct help, we have contacts at West Devon council who have many sources of assistance – between us we can put you in touch with the right person or agency.

Here is a list of things that have changed due to the current emergency:

North Tawton Neighbourhood Plan Referendum – this has been deferred to May 2021 in line with local government elections.

North Tawton Annual Town Meeting – new legislation states that this meeting does not have to be held this year, and it is therefore cancelled – we hope to be able to hold the meeting as usual in May 2021.

North Tawton Town Council Annual Meeting – again, new legislation allows for changes. At its meeting on Tuesday 14th April the Council will decide how to proceed with reference to election of Chair of the Council etc. - the minutes of the meeting will be published on our website and noticeboard, and I will also advise you of the Council's decision in the next Roundabout.

North Tawton Town Council Meetings – new legislation means meetings can be held remotely using appropriate technology – our meeting on 14.3.20 will be held in this way. The public can still join meetings, see the agenda (website, noticeboard or NTTC facebook page) for information on how this works and who to contact. Minutes will be taken and published as usual; agendas will be kept to urgent items only.

Our current situation is stressful for all of us – and if we are alone at home it's hard to cope with worries and anxieties. If you need someone to talk to because you are anxious or depressed, here are some contact details for you:

Mental Health Matters – provides telephone help, advice and support. Open from 6pm to midnight every day including bank holidays – 07990 790920, or leave a message which will be responded to during opening hours.

Samaritans - available 24 hours a day 365 days a year by phone (free), email, text and post. They offer a supportive conversation around mental health issues including stress caused by isolation, financial and employment issues and alcohol and drug dependency. They also offer a call back and follow up calls:

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Talkworks – NHS Service, formerly known as DAS (Depression & Anxiety Service)

Telephone 0300 555 3344, alternatively look online (www.talkworks.dpt.nhs.uk/nhs-mental-health-support) where you can self-refer for help.

Further advice and links to these organisations, and other useful advice, is on our website – northtawtotowncouncil.gov.uk. If you just want someone to speak to in the first instance, contact me at the council office (see first paragraph) and I can put you in touch with someone just for a friendly chat.

On behalf of everyone at NTTC – the office is closed but we're still here working on your behalf, and we send good wishes to you and yours. We thank all of you, residents and businesses alike, for what you are all doing for each other. Keep safe everyone.

Sarah Say, Clerk to NTTC

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North Tawton Afternoon W.I.

Ramblings of a North Tawton W.I. Member

'Help yourself to a home-made Jaffa cake' – don't mind if I do. 'Would you prefer some home-made apricot flapjack?' – ooohhh that sounds nice. 'How about a home-made lemon Ricciarelli?' – well you're just showing off now and nobody likes a show off.

A certain North Tawton W.I. member woke up on Wednesday 1st April and had an idea. And that's a worry in itself. She thought it was quite a good idea at that point. How about making a cake a day for April and sending the recipe, and a photo, to all our members? Is she now solely responsible for the shortage of flour? And what about husband's waistline? She had an idea about that too. (Was that two ideas in one day? Hold the front page.) What about a sweepstake? How about if I measure husband's girth on April 1st and then invite all our members to guess the final measurement on April 30th? I could do it as a fundraiser. £1 per guess. Husband wasn't quite as enthusiastic as I was.

Talking of husband. A couple of weeks ago he came home 'for a bit o' dinner' (we don't do lunch) and announced that he was 'self-oscillating' – going around in circles. So, being a bit of a sceptic, I felt I had to ask him if that was his own material or had he nicked the line from another source. To which he replied, in a rather hurt and crestfallen manner, 'it's all mine – I just made it up'. Seeing an opportunity for sharing husband's interesting little foibles with the wider world, I immediately texted dear ol' Fitz on Radio Devon and within a few minutes husband's 'original' material was wafting from radio speakers all over Devon. Husband was tickled pink. Still is actually. In fact, I'm now getting a little bored with not just the repeats on the TV, but with husband reminding me of his (fleeting) moment of fame.

With our W.I. meetings, events and activities all on hold we are finding alternative ways of staying in touch. Various quizzes are flying through the ether and a call went out last week for a knitting pattern for a rainbow. In typical W.I. spirit Maria rose to the challenge and designed a pattern herself. Now that's clever. And it's beautiful. It even has a little white cloud at each end. I know that somewhere in this house is one of those zip up cases containing all the popular sizes of knitting needles. A present from great aunt Marjorie back in the 70's. She could obviously see something in me that has yet to be discovered. Great aunt Marjorie could turn her hand to lots of clever things. She could knit and crochet, bake and decorate wedding cakes, make dresses (I remember seeing a variety of 'crimplene' frocks in our family photographs) and she could do 'tating'. The family milk jug would sport a beautifully tatted cover, embellished with beads and a tiny cup and saucer in the centre. She also had a crush on the man who drove a lorry in the Yorkie advert.

And finally – I apologise. If you've read this far then maybe you were hoping for a virtual report from a virtual speaker. Well you got that wrong didn't you? Ann Widdecombe is on hold (I can hear you sniggering at the back – stop it) as are all our other diverse and interesting speakers. There's only one thing for it. Oven on, get set.....Bake.

Sue Knott

North Tawton Vegetable Group

A vegetable group has been started for the people of North Tawton and the surrounding area.

The group is being conducted through a group WhatsApp.

Its purposes are to:

- Enable 'members' to swap or give away extra plants or seeds they may have
- Obtain advice and guidance on issues you may have
- Give recommendations on planting times and seed quality

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Covid-19 and Toilet Rolls – a Personal View

I've thought long and hard about it, but I still can't get my head around the burning question: Why toilet rolls? *For a cough?* Tena pads I could understand, but toilet rolls remain a mystery to me. (My son-in-law says that it's because every time someone coughs everyone within earshot suddenly needs to use one (not quite the words he used), but surely we're not supposed to be in earshot of one another anyway?)

The fact is that none of us have had any practice for how to behave in a real crisis. As a nation we've had it cushy for far too long*. I've heard people say 'We can do this – after all, we came through two world wars.' No we didn't. None of us came through WW1, or indeed the 'flu epidemic of 1918-19 which killed more people than the war itself. Almost all those of us who lived through WW2 will have been children at the time, and not really aware of what it took our parents' generation to 'come through.' For myself, I remember rationing, and the fact that the 1950s were pretty dire for a youngster (no teenagers then), at least until Bill Hayley came along (Who he? Try Google). And I remember Izal lavatory paper, which was pretty much like medicated greaseproof paper. But none of these were major problems, and I went on to benefit from a society (yes, there was such a thing then) which offered free university education, full employment, general social cohesion and easily available mortgages – even if the interest rate did reach 17% for a time. Things have not by any means been so easy for my children's generation, but still the current Covid-19 pandemic is the first event in 75 years one could really call a national crisis.

And the thing about a crisis is that there is no way of knowing how things will turn out. Huge amounts of money have been invented to try to keep the economy on life support, which may or may not succeed. Huge numbers of small businesses may collapse, but others may thrive. One thing we are learning from the bumbling efforts of centralized authority is that trying to organize things from the top down is much too clumsy. We need to rediscover our ability to improvise, to organize ourselves from the grass roots up, to think creatively – all skills we will need in plenty in the coming months (and years).

Another thing we're going to need to do is to come together to challenge selfishness when we see it. Most people see the need to share limited resources in difficult circumstances, but some don't. We need to be prepared – and this isn't terribly British – to tell people to their faces when they are taking more than their fair share. When I was growing up in the boring 50s there were things you simply didn't do because you would feel ashamed to do them (dropping litter, for one). Perhaps there is room to bring back shame as a way of motivating people if they can't be persuaded any other way.

Martin Olsson

*I am very aware that over the last 60 or 70 years many people *individually* have had difficult lives, as have some communities, but as a nation we have had very little to complain about.

Footnote

In my researches into possible alternatives to toilet roll, I discovered that the ancient Greeks used ceramic disks (pessoi) to clean themselves – disks which were sometimes inscribed with the names of the user's enemies. (Food for thought there, I feel.) I also found this extract from Joan Jones' *The History of Izal*, posted on 7th March 2016 on the Stumperlowe Social Club website: 'During the Second World War, Izal produced sheets of toilet paper overprinted with cartoon illustrations of Adolf Hitler, which were popular with customers but frowned upon by the government because 'it wasn't really the British thing to do.'" Was our government a tad out of touch even then?

Lockdown family life

We're a North Tawton household of seven – mum, dad, three teenagers and two family hounds.

Right now, our eldest son should be studying at university in Bristol, whilst the other two should be at school and college. Instead, thanks to Coronavirus, they're all back home.

As someone who's used to working from home, I haven't found the lockdown transition too problematic in a logistical sense. However, with three teens now permanently ensconced in front of their screens, the 'battle for bandwidth' in our household has resulted in increasingly erratic and unreliable daily Skype calls to my work colleagues!

(continued on Page 34)

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Reflection

Four candles slowly burned.
The ambiance was so soft, one could almost hear them talking...

The first candle said;

"I am Peace!"

"The world is full of anger and fighting, Nobody can keep me lit."

Then the flame of Peace went out completely.

The second candle said;

"I am Faith!"

"I am no longer indispensable. It doesn't make sense that I stay lit a moment longer".

Just then a breeze softly blew Faith's flame.

Sadly, the third candle began to speak;

"I am Love!"

"People don't understand my importance, so they simply put me aside.

They even forget to love those who are nearest to them".

And waiting no longer, Love's flame went out.

Suddenly...

A child entered the room and saw the three unit candles.

"Why aren't you burning? You're supposed to stay lit till the end."

Saying this, the child began to cry.

Then the fourth candle answered;

"Don't be afraid, I am Hope!"

"While I am still burning, we can re-light the other candles".

With shining eyes, the child took the candle of Hope and lit the other candles.

The greatest of these is Love...

...but the flame of Hope should never go out of your life!

With Hope, each of us can live with Peace, Faith and Love.

Prayer

Dear God. You are my light and my salvation,

You are my Hope.

Help me be an instrument of your love,

And cause your light to shine on others through me. Amen.

Rev'd Rita Bullworthy



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Ashridge Events

Ashridge Wood Fair - Saturday 27th, June, 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Autumn Pop-Up Restaurant - Saturday 5th, September, Tickets Available Soon.

Christmas Fayre - Saturday 28th, November, 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.

ROUNABOUT DEADLINE:

Community News, Articles, and Events are published (free of charge) in any edition, but must be received by the Editors no later than the 13th of the month before publication.

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MEMORIES OF NORTH TAWTON'S SECOND WORLD WAR

As we approach the 75th anniversary of VE Day, now is a good time to recall what life was actually like for the residents of North Tawton during the last war. I interviewed several people as well as dipping into archive material for a short book I wrote back in 2012, and have selected some of the memories recorded there to share with readers during another time of crisis and apprehension.

Obviously most folk in the town during the early 1940s would have been concerned about the welfare of loved ones doing service across the globe (dozens of men from the town were on active service, with eleven paying the ultimate sacrifice). Everyone in North Tawton would have experienced rationing and other restrictions to their everyday lives (something we can easily empathise with during this dark time). For many people I spoke to back in 2012, the biggest change was undoubtedly the presence of unfamiliar faces around the town during these war years. Most respondents were children at the time and recalled the arrival of a few dozen evacuees from London and other cities. These were either 'unofficial' evacuees (many of whom were city children staying with relatives in the area) or 'official' evacuees, mostly from London (the largest wave of these was in June 1940). North Tawton's school got around the problem of accommodating all these children by staggering the times local children and the newcomers used the classrooms (the London children were taken by their teachers on long country walks, if the weather permitted it). Although some of these evacuees grew homesick and returned home, others liked their new, rural, lifestyle. Londoner Sheila Shannon stayed with her siblings in Devonshire House, Essington (today's surgery) for most of the war and enjoyed "scrumping apples or peas, making dens in bushes and picking the first snowdrops and primroses". However, it would be the River Taw and the little shingle beach under Blackclapper Bridge (where they learned to swim) which remained her "gateway to happiness". Local youngsters usually got on well with the newcomers and Peter Fewings recalled playing sport and introducing these 'London lads' to the rural pursuit of rabbit-hunting.

The new 'army' of Land Girls' (there were more than a dozen of them in North Tawton) were billeted with local families at an early stage of the war. These young women were involved in a range of tasks, including harvesting, threshing, driving tractors and milking cows. Respondents like Enid Westlake recalled their high profile presence in the town, where they enjoyed cider in the White Hart pub and dancing in the Town Hall, where their favourite number and dance was the 'Jitterbug'. ("they brought a bit of New York to us down in Devon!") Even more colourful visitors to the town were the hundreds of American troops who, in late 1943, were billeted for several months in places like the Methodist chapel, Burton Hall, the Ring O'Bells pub, the Lakeway Congregationalist Church, as well as in local houses. David Bale remembers the day they arrived and how local children went to Lakeway Church where they distributed chocolate and candy, as one G.I. played the mandolin. He was fascinated by their jeeps which "roared past the De Bathe crossroads at all times of the day". Jack Gregory remembers watching the G.I.s carousing in a Fore Street 'night-club' (a former church building which had reopened as a cafe/bar).

Other 'exciting' newcomers to the town during the war period included prisoners of war, many of whom worked on local farms. There was a POW camp near Whiddon Down, and several German and Italian prisoners were seen in the area. The late Jean Shields recalled how one German prisoner was a diligent worker on her family farm at the crossroads, and how he joined them for Christmas dinner (indeed, Franz Heinoffer kept in touch with Jean after the war, making several returns to see her in North Tawton). Other familiar sights in the town in these wartime years were the men of the Home Guard (some 30-40 of them). Under the command of local head teacher Captain Heard ('our own Captain Mainwaring') the Home Guards' post was at Wildridge on Boucher's Hill. They carried out various duties in the area, including guarding railway bridges and tunnels, and manning checkpoints at the bridge at the far end of Fore Street. Here, they blocked the bridge with a horse-drawn fire engine and they then asked passers-by, mostly their neighbours, to identify themselves! Jack Gregory was a member of the Guard, and recalls they had "pretty basic" equipment, although a few members had access to rifles or double-barrelled handguns. They used to train on Sunday mornings in the grounds of Devonshire House, where in a tragic accident, one Guard was partially blinded. Several interviewees remembered the sense of excitement and relief everyone felt when war in Europe came to an end. David Bale found out as he cycled home from school one day in May 1945, and looked forward to VE Day, which meant "a day off school, a bonfire in the park and much merriment and supping of cider". Crowds, stretching from the far end of Fore Street to the corner of Exeter Street, thronged around the Clock Tower, and later locals enjoyed festivities in the Town Hall.

Alan Francis Parkinson

NORTH TAWTON ENVIRONMENTAL TRUST

We had to cancel the Tree Planting Weekend because of the Corona virus restrictions. However, some members and volunteers who live within walking distance have been taking it in turns to go up to the field and plant some trees for their daily exercise and we have managed to get all 420 trees planted, plus a few extra that have been donated.

A huge thank you to all of you who have helped both with planting and providing weed suppressing material. Thank you also to Richard Knott for mowing the planting areas for us beforehand which made the job much easier. We hope the coming summer will bring a mixture of sunshine and a bit of rain as well to keep all the young trees growing happily.

If you would like to join the Trust in future work please contact ntenvirotrust@gmail.com

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News from Sampford Courtenay Parish Council

Full minutes can be viewed on our website www.sampfordcourtenay-pc.gov.uk where any useful links are live. Plus check out our new [FACEBOOK](#) Page. Like and Share to help us spread S.C.P.C. news.

SEAMOOR LOTTO – Sampford Courtenay Parish Council has registered as one of the charities which will benefit from the new Lotto run by W.D.B.C.. If you have not bought your ticket yet, please sign up at <https://www.seamoorlotto.co.uk/support/sampford-courtenay-parish-council>

Notes for May Roundabout

- 1) SCPC, under the Chair Michele Wilson, was very quick to set up an Incident Management Team, in which Volunteers around the parish endeavoured to leaflet every house in the parish with a Covid 19 Newsletter and a Request For Assistance for parishioners who felt they may need help to shop or collect medicines in the coming weeks.
- 2) Following this initial leaflet drop a band of over 30 volunteers regularly collect shopping and make contact with over 40 parishioners who have returned Request for Assistance forms + other neighbours who may not have registered a need for help at the moment.
- 3) A range of VIRTUAL get togethers has been arranged using the much publicised Zoom App – so far there have been Coffee & Chat 3 times a week; Yoga 3 times a week; Ready Steady Cook; Paper Rose Making Demonstration and a Saturday Quiz. Please check our Website for more details – you do not have to live in the village to take part.
- 4) Plant Swap – a stall has been set up in the Square for parishioners to swap excess seedlings or plants.
- 5) Website – our website has a Coronavirus page on which up-to-date government and health advice is listed. Please take a look and sign up at the bottom of any page to receive emails containing advice or news of more fun Virtual activities.
- 6) NALC has advised all councils that they are now allowed and advised to hold Virtual meetings – so the AGM and monthly meeting on May 5th will still be open for the public to attend – but they will have to do so virtually. Log in details will be on our Website with the Agenda.
- 7) **KEEP SAFE** – we hope that we will soon all be able to get together again, but until then please heed the advice on social distancing and stay safe.

Please contact SCPC Clerk – Marion Pratt at SCPCclerk@aol.com or on 01837 82285 if you would like to raise any issues.

Even better, come along to a meeting. Next meeting: **VIRTUAL MEETING 5th May**



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The Treacle Mines of England

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Treacle mines are rare and appear in just five regions of England: Yorkshire, Lancashire, Kent and the West Country.

Having a treacle mine in your town was a huge benefit to the inhabitants. The folk living in these areas were particularly healthy, especially the miners themselves. It was noted in 1816 when visiting a Devon village:

"This place I found to be a fair and healthy place, the women and children well fed and happy. Most menfolk were at work upon the land but that evening in the excellent Wyndham Arms I was surpassingly surprised to see many men brown of hue. On enquiry I determined that these were miners of Treacle and what a jolly crew they turned out to be. That night I retired to my bed thanking our maker that there was at least one happy parish in the land."

Black unrefined treacle forms from fossilised beds of sugar cane rather like oil or peat and has a tendency to seep and rise to the surface of the ground. This run-off is useless, but what makes the regions mentioned above unique is that the treacle is surrounded by a layer of non-porous rock that keeps it contained.

Treacle mining goes back to pre-Roman times; in fact there was a healthy trade between England and Rome via Roman-occupied Gaul. In fact, it was the main reason why the Romans wanted to conquer the unbearably cold and harsh British Isles. Why else would they want to take over an island that was uninhabitable to them? A floor mosaic from AD 77 was unearthed depicting treacle mining and refining.

Demand was so high, that any new sites had to be kept secret. The site of the mine in Bondleigh is so closely-guarded that only a very few individuals know the location and those that are told have to have been born and bred within the Parish.

There has been no significant treacle mining in Britain since the nineteenth century because industry had made sugar and its by-products cheap and accessible. However, it was on its last-legs already; most of the mines were completely dry and no new sites were found. The last working mine eventually closed in the 1930s during the Great Depression. There are no plans to excavate any of mines and it is a shame; it would be great if we could draw attention to this almost forgotten part of our food history.

Caroline Stokes

(Editors: A most interesting and mysterious article: where was the fifth area of England? Should we all take to eating treacle to become happy? Are there inhabitants of Bondleigh who can reveal another secret of which we hear tell: the Bondleigh to North Tawton canal?)

Is it possible in the 19th century treacle barrels were floated to North Tawton on barges to be sent by rail to the canning factories of Tate and Lyle? - long after the Romans had left, of course.)

Sampford Courtenay Parish Website:

<http://www.sampfordcourtenay-pc.gov.uk/>

The website is managed by **Julie Carpenter**
who can be contacted on
juliec2911@hotmail.co.uk
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admin@sampfordcourtenay-pc.gov.uk
or by phone:
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SAMPFORD COURTENAY VILLAGE HALL FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Unfortunately, due to coronavirus, many previously advertised events have been cancelled or postponed.

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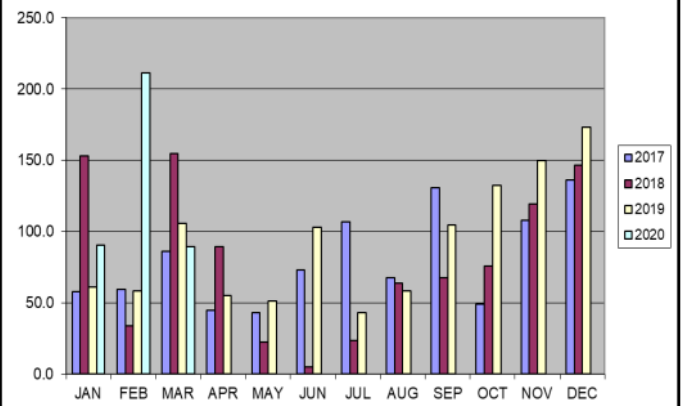
Bondleigh Rainfall

March is the month when everything changed and not only the weather! It rained until the 18th and then just stopped. In that time, I measured 89.2 mm..

This compares to 105.8mm last year when it also stopped raining on the 18th, leaving the rest of the month dry. Is this the beginning of a dry Spring? Probably not, but we have only had 2.4mm in the last 3 weeks. I hear people saying 'we could do with a shower of rain!'

On the right please see the annual rainfall chart for the past three and a half years compared month by month.

Danny Semorad



The MegaCorona Wordsearch

D R E T S A E O G S D N E I R F G N I S S I M
 A B E S S E N T I A L T R A V E L F Y T E S O
 I S X I L F T E N F R E H T A E W E C I N I E
 L A E Y T A C O R O N A V I R U S O N X Q R L
 Y J R L H U S V R A G N I L O O H C S E M O H
 E B O G F Z H G O O D N E I G H B O U R S B V
 X O P E U I W E A Q H E E M I T E C A F F V F
 E R X N W M S Q U A R A N T I N E S E V O L G
 R I M T R I E O H S C R E K R O W Y E K U V V
 C N F E Q S C N L Q N W O D K C O L G R Y S X
 I G V Y L C F K T A D G K S A M E C A F D J J
 S G W E I R D G S S T N E L A G N I T H G I N
 E E N I C C A V H H B I N E W S N M T Y I C N
 T S O C I A L D I S T A N C I N G O S V E N G
 R A I N B O W S W A B Q D G F H N O S H N Y W
 A L C K K G R G A R D E N I N G V Z J X G F Z

Find the following words in the puzzle.

Words are hidden ↑ ↓ → ← and ↘ .

ARGUMENTS

BORING

BORIS

CORONAVIRUS

DAILYEXERCISE

EASTER

ESSENTIALTRAVEL

FACEMASK

FACETIME

GARDENING

GLOVES

GOODNEIGHBOURS

HOMESCHOOLING

JOEWICKS

KEYWORKER

LOCKDOWN

MISSINGFRIENDS

NETFLIX

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From Sampford Courtenay

As news is sparse, I've been asked to write about how coronavirus is affecting us here at Lower Trecott. In order to do that I think I also have to write firstly about how my own health and Malcolm's health, is affecting us here. In 2001 we set up our 4 Star, award-winning B&B with great success and, were we still in the business, although we'd have missed the income caused by the present situation, I think the break from making beds, cleaning bathrooms and cooking breakfasts would have been welcomed. I would then have had time to devote to the garden, raising flowers and vegetables to grow in the greenhouses and poly tunnel – all part of the great plan – the dream. But in 2009 I was diagnosed with Parkinson's disease, a progressive and incurable disease caused by the brain's inability to make Dopamine. This can manifest itself in tremor, which, thankfully, I do not yet have to any great degree, muscular rigidity, stiffness and slowness of movement. I managed to keep going until 3rd October 2015 when our last guests came from Melbourne for three nights. I gave up singing in the Okehampton Choral Society and the church choir, as I couldn't stand for long and the music was too heavy to hold. Next to go was my driver's licence. So already I was becoming dependent on Malcolm to take me food shopping, to the hairdressers, the chiropodist, reflexology, the tractor club and the bee club and Shirley, Barbara and Sarah to the Flower Club, W.I., Town & Country Ladies, skittles and anywhere else I wanted to go! As time has gone by my walking has deteriorated and I experience bouts of 'freezing' when I come to a halt and can't lift my feet – particularly humiliating when crossing the road – and I'm prone to losing my balance and falling. So the walking stick has been superseded by a 4 wheel push-along trolley and the trolley by an electric scooter.

Although the scooter comes in 5 pieces, it is heavy for Malcolm to lift in and out of the car, after losing his strength following his hospital stay with pneumonia in 2017 but it means I can do the shopping and enjoy a coffee and toasted tea cake once in a while – my special treat! Well, that was once upon a time.

At the time of writing it's only two weeks ago that all this started to kick off and already it seems like months. First to be cancelled was the bell ringers' coffee morning, although we managed a Lent Lunch of soup and cheese at Pauline Houben's. Mothering Sunday followed but not until after putting a special arrangement of daffodils on the altar for our Mothers who have died. Then it was the W.I. Coffee Morning, due to be held in Hatherleigh, the meeting to plan the Autumn Produce and Flower Show, Be Still, all church services, and the performance by the Exbourne Choir, which I was particularly looking forward to. Malcolm, as Churchwarden, was then summoned to lock the Church, and that key took a lot of finding. Some WD40 will be needed before we can make a grand entrance. So, I think we've got the picture now. Being in the 'over-70's' group we are observing self-isolation. We're not to go out and no-one can come in, so the scooter is already redundant. Malcolm has ewes in his village field due to lamb right now, but the bees have been inspected and all is well. Today he has finally got round to ordering his vegetable seed and, in the absence of my paid helpers, he has to take more responsibility for me and help me out with tasks I find too difficult. I'm supposed to have his full attention from 9 a.m. for an hour. So far he's helped change the sheets on three beds – left over from Christmas – and helped sort out the utility room. He washes up and makes tea and coffee – and a hot cross bun if I remember to thaw them out! I find it very difficult to cook a 'proper' meal and he quietly tolerates ready-meals, whilst looking forward to a burst of energy on my part which will result in roast potatoes! We're both missing our cleaner Karen, gardeners Anita, Graham and Tim, ironer Amanda, Claire who does our feet, (I'll have to have a go with Malcolm's but I'm not sure he can do mine!) Gina at reflexology and Teresa at E-Clips (what will our hair look like when it grows?) And then there's all those wonderful helpers organised by SCPC who are doing our shopping and collecting prescriptions from the Medical centre, neighbours Helen, Linda and Paul and Mike and Julie who keep an eye on the sheep and our resident Doctor, Jane.

We've taken to exercise with the Green Goddess at Breakfast, to follow Sunday Worship and Songs of Praise on the TV and Rita's Be Still notes and to join with Nick and Rita in their broadcast from St. Peter's. I have discovered some unfinished cross stitch, which I started 20 years ago – having trouble threading the needle – and I've just bought a Smart 'phone for the first time and spent three days tearing my hair out to set it up, with the help of family on What's App. But I'm getting the hang of it and have joined the youngsters glued to the screen!

Nicky Craig

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Update from Okehampton Library

Following the temporary closure of Okehampton Library and all Devon Libraries we would like to take the opportunity to let you know that although our buildings may be closed, the Library Service is very much open. Our library staff are working from home to promote and support our digital library, create new online content and provide the important service of keeping in contact with our library customers.

We are available via email at okehampton.library@librariesunlimited.org.uk

Devon Libraries have also suspended the Devon Mobile Library Service in line with the physical building closures. They have also suspended the Home Library Service in Devon, and are encouraging the volunteers to phone their readers regularly to have a social chat and to check in.

Devon Online Library Services

Renew your library items and review your account via our website www.devonlibraries.org.uk. If you do not have online access you can renew your books by phoning 0345 155 1001. All items are being renewed for three months and overdue charges have been suspended.

Please can we request that library customers hold onto books, CDs and DVDs and return them when we re-open. As mentioned above, there will be no fines and we will keep renewing issues until further notice.

During this time, online reservations will be unavailable. If you have already placed an online reservation, please note this will not be satisfied until 17th June 2020 at the earliest due to the system closure.

eBooks, eAudiobooks, eMagazines you can access for free using your library card. We have plenty on offer, particularly if you are needing to keep busy at this time. www.devonlibraries.org.uk/web/arena/ebooks

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Once you have completed the online joining form, you will be given a temporary [UNREG] number which will enable you to access our digital library immediately. As and when our library re-opens we will process all temporary memberships registered during this closure period and we will issue a library card to you.

Online Events - libraries are hosting regular live events every day on social media and online so please join us. There is a wide selection of online events such as Language Cafés, Zoom Daily Chat, Reading Groups, Lego Clubs, Coding Clubs and much more...

<https://www.devonlibraries.org.uk/web/arena>

Libraries Unlimited are offering daily Bounce & Rhyme and Storytime session.

Ancestry Library Edition - Access to Ancestry Library Edition has been temporarily extended to Devon Library members at home, courtesy of ProQuest and its partner Ancestry. Home access will be available until the end of April and will be re-evaluated monthly as needed. To access Ancestry, you need to be logged in to the Devon Libraries website with your borrower card number and PIN, you will then be able to see the special 'Ancestry Library Edition' link and start your family history research.

Follow us on Facebook at Okehampton Library where we will be hosting various events, activities and groups. Keep in touch and receive up to date information.

Updates are also being posted on our websites, so please keep checking for the latest news in your area:

<https://www.librariesunlimited.org.uk/news/coronavirus-library-service-update/>

<https://www.devonlibraries.org.uk/web/arena>

<https://www.torbaylibraries.org.uk/web/arena/home>

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May 17th / 24th Cath Pettifer
May 31st Trish Peters

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May 3rd Frances Brookes
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May 17th Mary Fry
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Plans rudely interrupted by a pandemic

As I cleared out my fridge in my rented apartment in Valencia on Monday 16th March, I did not know how long I'd be going away for but what I did know is that I did not want to be under "this house arrest" any longer and I hoped I'd be with my family in Devon that evening.

We'd been acutely aware of corona virus in Spain, following its viral movement in Italy and as the outbreaks spread, the number of cases in Valencia at the beginning of March was similar to Bristol. However, things were ramping up in Madrid, more people were contaminated and the week of the 9th March was to see the country change from "business as usual" to complete lockdown.

It was a sudden change - on the 10th of March, at one moment, we were enjoying lunch at a restaurant in the Albufera next to the rice fields, among lemon trees, in the sun, with only the hint of awareness that we were enjoying borrowed time!! The next, we heard that public gatherings and schools were closed in Spain. That same day I was informed I could no longer teach "Business English" at Iberdrola (Spain's energy company who have offices in Madrid, Bilbao & Valencia). Suddenly, people cancelled work trips. When Valencia's big annual two week celebration, Las Fallas (€500 million for Spanish tourism) was postponed to August, I knew things were getting serious.

Meanwhile in the U.K., my food business, Artisan Provender www.artisanprovender.com which I run remotely, was suffering as tastings were being cancelled on a daily basis...(understandably) and smaller food companies I worked with were putting their tasting and promotion campaigns on hold.

On Friday the 13th March, (ironically!) the Spanish prime minister, Pedro Sanchez, announced lockdown - we could only leave our houses for food and emergencies.

On the Saturday morning, with the beach closed, bars closed, the supermarkets in pandemonium, everyone was showing a strange wariness towards each other, alien from the usual exuberant, friendly Spaniards. The charm of the place was difficult to remember! I suddenly felt all I wanted was to be with my family and age old friends in the U.K. !!!

Positive advice and proactive support from friends spurred me into thinking I could still come back to the U.K. safely, so I looked for flights online - but overnight they were fully booked. There were no flights direct from the relatively unscathed Valencia; the only flights available went via Madrid & took over twelve hours!! I was marooned!

On Sunday, I checked the flights, still nothing; I was going to have to phone the British embassy on Monday. Then, my mother heard that Ryan Air had put on more flights to Bristol direct from Valencia. She was right, I could see it, but for some reason I couldn't book from Spain, time was of the essence and I contacted a friend in the U.K. who quickly booked it - I had the ticket! But would the flight be cancelled like I'd heard so many had been?

I arranged with my parents that I would live in quarantine in half of the house - I hired a car - (Dettol'd before and after!) It was a military operation but as long as the flight took off everything was in place!

There were very few people at Valencia airport as most of the flights were cancelled. Everyone obeyed the announcement of staying a metre apart from one another! An uncertain few hours followed as I waited with my one bag of Artisan Provender work and teaching books for our flight to be announced: finally it was!

The aeroplane was half empty. As we waited to take off, there was an announcement; a delay... half an hour, one hour, another half an hour and then...we were off !!!! I was on my way to Devon.

The two weeks of isolation that followed included a lot of speaking to food businesses here in the U.K., learning Spanish and lots of walks. Along with everyone else in the world, I do not know when I will return to my normal life in Valencia, but what I do know is that since I've been back in Devon, every morning I wake up feeling happy and incredibly grateful to know that I can walk outside, in the fields and the importance of family and friends feels very real.

Charlotte Hanks

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A Tale for our times?

In late August of 1665, a woollen merchant opened a bale of wool sent from London to the small village of Eyam in Derbyshire. London was experiencing an outbreak of bubonic plague, an outbreak we all learned about in our history lessons at school and which was ended by accident through the great fire of London in 1666. It is believed that the wool bale in Eyam contained fleas which carried the plague.

The woollen merchant in Eyam was dead within a week and other locals also died. In October, the Eyam death rate exceeded in one month the number who would normally have died there in a whole year. Through the following winter the normal death rate remained high enough for local families who could afford it to move away or send their children away to relatives. In May 1666, there were only two deaths thought to be caused by the plague. Yet in June the death rate rose alarmingly and, under the direction of the local parson, William Mompesson, the villagers, realising the plague was amongst them, made a series of remarkable decisions.

Because of the difficulty of burying so many dead, it was agreed that villagers would be responsible for burying the dead of their own family in their own land or garden. They agreed to close the local church and hold services in the open air and to keep a safe distance from each other of 12 feet (about 3.6 metres) whenever possible. Finally, and most remarkably, they agreed to prevent the spread of infection outside their community by observing a boundary around their village which they would not cross.

These were courageous and unselfish decisions, reactions to an infection which they did not understand or have the means to combat. They made their choices relying on the only medical knowledge they had: their own observations of the illness and how it had developed among them. The choice to isolate themselves was grounded in their Christian belief of duty to their neighbour: "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." (St. John's Gospel, Chapter 15, verse 13).

Clearly, William Mompesson and his predecessors (we'll come to one of them later) had done their work well. This community saw it as their duty to God to put the safety of their neighbours before their own.

It cost them dearly. Although some of them survived the plague, between June and November 1666, William Mompesson recorded that seventy-six families comprising three hundred and fifty people suffered from the plague. The Diocesan Registry in Lichfield records two hundred and fifty-nine plague deaths. One of them was Mompesson's wife, Catherine. Not in the best of health herself, she had accompanied him in his ministrations to the sick and she is buried in the churchyard, the only burial there from the period of the plague. To this day, a wreath of red flowers is placed on her tombstone on "Plague Sunday", the last Sunday in August.

Throughout the period of the plague, arrangements were made for food to be supplied from outside the village. Payment was made for this either by leaving money in a stream of running water to reduce the risk of infection or by leaving coins in holes carved into boundary stones filled with vinegar as a disinfectant.

There are some strange notes in this tale with resonances for us today. We, like the Eyam villagers, are keeping our distance from one another to avoid the risk of passing on infection. Whereas they withdrew within their village to keep the infection inside it, we withdraw within our homes to keep the infection outside. They had no reliable medicine to counter the infection and we are in the same position for the present, only hoping that research will provide one in time and meanwhile hoping that ventilators will be available in sufficient quantities for those who may need them. The Eyam sick were nursed by their own family members. We have become aware of the risks posed by infected patients to our NHS nursing staff and hope the protective measures for their own safety will prove more effective than Catherine Mompesson found in her efforts to support her husband in Eyam.

William Mompesson, as the Rector of the parish, is usually credited with being the moving spirit who led the Eyam community through this period, but that is only part of the story. If we consider a list of the Rectors of Eyam for the period leading up to the plague, we should see appointed:

1630	Shoreland Adams
1644	Thomas Stanley
1660	Shoreland Adams
1664	William Mompesson

We are looking at a period in England of political (and religious) upheaval. In what we like to take today as the English spirit of tolerance and understanding in matters political and religious, the period of 1640 to 1660 might be described as a mid-17th century "Brexit moment", even more prolonged than our recent experience and with even more open hostility. Between the king and parliament matters had reached such a disagreement that Civil War broke out over who should rule the country. Civil War seems misnamed. What could be more uncivil than setting out to kill your neighbour because his opinion is different from yours? Yet members of the same family took up arms on different sides. What could be more uncivil than being prepared to kill members of your own family for holding an opinion different from yours?

At the conclusion of hostilities, the defeated king was beheaded and the country was governed by parliament without a monarch for a period of eleven years. Such was the dissatisfaction with this "Commonwealth" that in 1660, the beheaded king's son was invited to return and the monarchy was restored. We have kept it ever since.

The effect of these national events is reflected in the list of Eyam's Rectors above. Shoreland Adams was removed from his post in 1644 and replaced by Thomas Stanley, a choice of the parliamentary Puritan persuasion. When the monarchy was re-established, it was the turn of Thomas Stanley to be turned out of the living and for Shoreland Adams to be re-established there. An Act of Uniformity in 1661 was followed by the reinstatement of the Book of Common Prayer in 1662. They made it impossible for a man of staunch Puritan principles, such as Thomas Stanley, to have any chance of serving as he had done for his congregation for 16 years at Eyam. Though deprived of his living, he continued to live in Eyam and, when the plague broke upon the village, the recently appointed (and much younger) William Mompesson turned to the older Thomas Stanley for help. Though the two men approached their faith from widely differing traditions and backgrounds, it is thought that by sinking their differences and agreeing to confront the common enemy of the plague, they were able to persuade the entire population they served to make common cause with them and maintain it over a

(continued on page 34)

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 4th Sunday 9.30 a.m. Parish Communion
 BCP
 5th Sunday 9.30 a.m. Parish Communion
 Common Worship

SERVICES at St. James' Church
Bondleigh

1st Sunday 9.30 a.m. Holy Communion
 3rd Sunday 9.30 a.m. Holy Communion

SERVICE at St. Mary's Church
Honeychurch

1st Sunday of the month at 3 p.m.
 Evensong and Holy Communion

Lakeway United Church
 North Tawton
Methodist / United Reformed

Circuit Minister Rev'd. Liz Singleton (52302)
 (Mob. 07450 676936)
 Elder & Secretary Mrs. Rose Dadds (82130)
 Asst. Secretary Mrs. Jean Boardman (82159)

Sunday Morning Worship at 11 a.m.
 (no 11 a.m. service on the third Sunday
 T.A.P. at 4 p.m.)

SERVICES at St. Peter's Church
North Tawton

1st Sunday 11 a.m. Morning Worship
 2nd Sunday 11 a.m. Informal Communion
 6.30 p.m. Evensong (Apr - Oct)
 3rd Sunday 11 a.m. All-age Worship
 4th Sunday Traditional Communion
 5th Sunday Informal Communion

Provision for children at all 11 a.m. services
 Sunday Club 1st, 2nd, 4th and 5th Sundays

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 Celia or Martin Olsson (82796)

North Street Chapel

Contacts: Mr. C. Milton 01837 82708 Mr. R. Sampson 07835 033062

	11 p.m.	6.30 p.m.
1 st Sunday	Special service	Bible Study
2 nd Sunday	Prayer & Communion	Tea & Talk
3 rd Sunday	Ministry	No service unless advertised otherwise
4 th Sunday	Prayer & Communion	DVD
5 th Sunday	Prayer & Communion	No service unless advertised otherwise

FROM THE REGISTERS

Funeral

Monday 6th April

Mary STEVENS (96)

Exeter Crematorium



A hymn for Pentecost or Whitsunday

Come, thou Holy spirit, come,
 And from thy celestial home
 Shed thy light and brilliancy.
 Father of the poor, draw near,
 Giver of all gifts, be here,
 Come, the soul's true radiancy.

Come, of comforters the best,
 Of the soul the sweetest guest,
 Come in toil refreshingly:
 Thou in labour rest most sweet,
 Thou art shadow from the heat,
 Comfort in adversity.

Translated from the Latin
 of Stephen Langton,
 Archbishop of Canterbury
 (1207—1228).

The food bank remains open at present and is vital for some. Please continue to remember those who need help via the Food Bank box in St. Peter's Church outer porch. It is accessible there during the day.

Thank you.

NORTH TAWTON TOWN HALL

Bookings: Annette 01837 880054

Secretary: Lin 01837 880031



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(continued from page 31)

period of six months.

That may be a thought we can hold in mind as we contemplate what may prove to be a similar period for us in 2020. (apologies to our Vicar for this pessimism!) The people of Eyam knew the plague of their day was among them already, that they would be surrounded by loss of loved ones and that they might lose their own lives. Yet they held their nerve. Maybe we can learn from their example.

And, as a further footnote, when the restored monarch of 1660 died and a new religious and political crisis loomed in 1688 (this time over whether a Roman Catholic could succeed to the throne of England) the crisis was resolved without any shedding of blood. Possibly the memory of the English Civil Wars of the 1640's was still fresh enough for that way of settling civil differences to be avoided this time?

We have avoided civil war since, but we have known plenty of civil disagreement. Our government is based on the right to express disagreement freely. In the face of a threat similar to that faced by William Mompesson and Thomas Stanley at Eyam in 1666, are there relevant lessons for us today in the way they sank their differences to meet a future which must have seemed very dark as they contemplated how to handle it? (That, Vicar, is my hope.)

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(continued from Page 13)

When not working from home, I would ordinarily be travelling to China and Hong Kong, where I am involved in designing exhibitions for museums and visitor attractions. In fact, this is the longest period of time I have been 'grounded' for about five years!

Having had daily conversations with my Chinese colleagues throughout the emerging (and now, thankfully, receding) Coronavirus crisis in China, I feel like I have already experienced the whole lockdown process, vicariously!

What I am able to report, from our own experience of lockdown so far, is that the concept of social distancing seems to come very naturally to teenagers – we barely see ours unless a) they want food or b) we turn off the WiFi!

Actually, this is a little unfair, as we have intentionally sought opportunities for family social interaction through watching movies together, sharing our once-a-day exercise outings and playing table top games (and we're not talking Monopoly here, but all sorts of modern card games and board games that we've introduced to the family over the last couple of years).

Aside from the obvious frustrations of not being able to meet up with loved ones or enjoy various community social events and gatherings, the biggest challenge I (dad) have found is that I'm unable to head to the coast for a surf or up onto the moor for a dog walk or mountain bike expedition. That said, enforced **local** exercise means more time spent purposefully exploring the huge network of lanes and paths around North Tawton (avoiding touching gates as much as possible!). If you're able, during this period of lockdown, I challenge you to seek out some views that you've not discovered before – it is very rewarding and reminds you what a beautiful place we're fortunate to live in.

I (mum) am still working the occasional day at a local Primary School so I'm finding I have a little more time on my hands. I'm not really needed for home schooling – the kids are all perfectly able to motivate themselves and need no assistance (phew!) I am finding myself doing some DIY jobs that have been on the list for some time, plus I'm spending quite a bit of time in the garden. Myself and our daughter are enjoying more time to bake – she even made pain au chocolate this week – I was most impressed!

As spring unfolds in all its beauty and diversity, we're filled with hope and confidence, that despite the anxieties and frustrations of the moment, we'll get through this and emerge stronger and maybe even a little bit more compassionate as a community.

*Matt and Jo Jones
(with help from their family and dogs!)*

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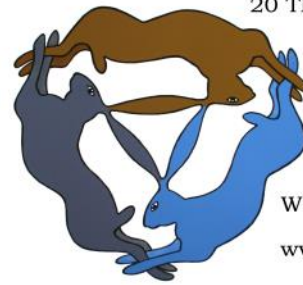
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