



Megs Rimmer

IPTON TIMES

322

August &
September 2024

Tipton Times was started in 1969 and is produced and distributed to local households every two months by volunteers. Costs are met from voluntary contributions
TT advertising is free and limited to local non-profit organisations and charities, with a once per year opportunity for businesses in our delivery area



**BIG TIPTON
WEEKEND -
BIG SUCCESS!**

**HAVE A GO
AT SOFTBALL
CRICKET -
SIGN UP NOW!**

**HELP NEEDED -
BECOME A
HALL TRUSTEE**

**TIPTON FETE
NOON ON
MONDAY
26TH AUGUST**

COPY DEADLINE

For 323, October & November 2024

Wednesday, 18th September

(unless by arrangement)

CONTRIBUTIONS VIA YOUR BANK TO:

The Tipton Times Fund

Sort Code: 30-94-36 A/c No: 01720384

tiptontimes2020@gmail.com

Follow us:

Twitter - <https://twitter.com/TiptonTimes>

Facebook - <https://www.facebook.com/TiptonStJohnVillageNews>

Contact details for village organisations and societies are available at

<https://www.tiptontimes.org.uk/>

Editors:

David Birch 07929 822940 3 Tipton Lodge, Tipton St John, EX10 0AW

Anne Sadler; Judith Taylor

Treasurer:

Andrew Sadler

Proofreader/Printers:

Barbara Pugh; Janet Croud; Pauline Belton

Distribution and General Production:

Jenny Arthur; Anne Bareford; John & Pauline Belton; Janet Croud; Jenny Dorrington;

Jem & Wendy Gillham; Michelle Grover; John Harding; Alan Hayslep; Kyle Hayes;

Martin & Janet Jenkins; Ann Knight; Nicky Knight; Katherine Lilley; Gill & Allen Marks;

Shân Merritt; Ann Moore; Nigel Morgan; Jan Passmore; Barbara & Tony Pugh;

Anne Reid; Vanda Reynolds; Sarah & Stephen Rosser; Maggie Rule;

Chris & Janet Schofield; Alison & David Stevens; Megan Watton; Denise Wightman

Andy Wiltshire and family

COVER PHOTOGRAPH:

Bubble fun at the Tipton Big Weekend

Photo: Paul Taylor

We welcome letters and contributions but reserve the right to edit and amend such offerings. Views expressed within each article are the author's own.

Editorial

First of all, many congratulations are due to Mark Rigden, the Playing Field team and the team of helpers for their organisation of the Tipton Big Weekend - it really was a superb effort. Together with the annual 10K and fun run, it created something which will live long in the memory and hopefully provide a foretaste of similar events to come. Jemma Wiltshire and Mo Mylne have developed and sustained Jo Earlam's original vision for the run and deserve huge thanks for all they've achieved over the years: here's hoping that there will be successors willing to take on responsibility for this in future.

There was much in our last issue about the proposals to move our primary school away from the village. Thanks to the huge efforts of the TASC group, whose efforts created awareness and mobilised local opinion, the decision has been deferred until September largely as a result of the overwhelming response to the consultation in favour of finding a suitable site in Tipton. Read the school article on page 16 and Jess Bailey's and Jan Aherne's pieces on pages 22 and 23 for more details.

There is still much to look forward to this summer, as you will discover in the following pages. The annual church fete (see page 4) and the cricket club's 50th anniversary celebrations should be well worth attending!

Please also note John Belton's appeal for Community Hall trustees on page 14. Our village would not be what it is without its churches, clubs and community groups. Thank you to everyone who values them but all of them would welcome more support

The Editors

Contents			
Church Diary	30	Readers	18
Church Draw	11	Recipe Corner	23
Church Fete	4	RSPB	26
Cllr Jessica Bailey	22	School	16
Cllr Janice Aherne	23	Table Tennis	19
Community Hall Report	14	Tennis	12
Cricket	13	Thought for the Times	11
Eager Beavers	20	Tipton Ladies Group	12
Garden News	21	TIPPS	5
Letter to the Editor	27	Tipton Past	28
Nature Notes	6	Village Diary	31
OSM Council	24	VOSRA	15
Playing Field	7	Weather	25

Tipton Church Fete

12 noon on Bank Holiday Monday, 26th August

Our Village Fete will soon be here again, so please put the date in your diary, and we hope to see you all on 26th August. The Fete will be held on Tipton School field in the centre of the village and admission remains at only **£2 per adult (free for children)** and there is ample free parking. Live music will again be provided by our popular local musicians, Chris and Vanda (a.k.a. Wonky Buzzard), and there will be games and activities for children. Barbecue lunches and teas will be served, and there will be the usual wide range of stalls (including homemade cakes and produce, books, crafts, jewellery, bric-a-brac, jigsaws, games and toys, plants, etc.), games and competitions, and the lucky winners of the Grand Draw (for which tickets will be sold on the day if you have not got yours yet) will be announced.

We should be grateful if you would now let us have items for sale on our stalls, including good quality books (paperbacks only, please), bric-a-brac (saleable items only and in good working order, where applicable), jewellery (decent quality, and no pierced earrings, please), toys, games and jigsaws and bottles for the bottle stall/tombola. If possible, please leave bric-a-brac at Pippins (at the top of Barton Orchard on the right), paperback books by the garage at 6 Barton Orchard (opposite Pippins), and all other items by the front door at St. Mary's, at the top of Hayne Close. We would also welcome donations of plants (please leave outside the church from 21st August onwards) and cakes and home produce (at Tipton School field on the morning of the Fete).

We expect to hold a short church service on the morning of Sunday 25th August before we spend a couple of hours getting everything ready for Monday, with stalls etc. to be set up on Monday morning ready for opening at 12 noon.

There are always lots of jobs to be done, both beforehand and on the day, including putting up signs and posters, taking items to the site, setting up tents and gazebos, preparing the site, helping with car parking, stalls, games and refreshments, baking cakes etc. etc. There is something for all ages and abilities and it is an enjoyable way to get involved in village activities and make new friends in the area, so I should be very pleased to hear from you if you would like to be involved.

All offers of help will be gratefully received and, if you would like to help on the day, to put on some entertainment, run a stall of your own (our village fete is an ideal opportunity to promote local clubs and charities) or participate in any other way - and if you have any queries or suggestions, please contact me, Mike Smith, on 01404 812542.

I look forward to seeing you all at what I hope will be another successful and enjoyable Village Fete.

Mike Smith, Fete Chairman

Jemma and Mo ...

By now, the many volunteers who helped with the 10K run will have had a message of thanks from the organisers, Mo and Jemma.

They now deserve our thanks.

They are standing down after six years of very hard work, organising the entire event.

They have worked tirelessly to ensure the run is a great success year-on-year. There is not room on this page to list all the tasks involved in making sure the event goes ahead safely and smoothly.

Well done, Mo and Jemma!

Maggie Bowley

TIPPS

We held our open workshop on the afternoon of Saturday 21st July. Never having hosted an event such as this before it was difficult to plan exactly what we would do, so we decided we would 'go with the flow' and it worked out really well. We started the afternoon by welcoming everyone with tea, cake and a chat. We had scrapbooks from previous productions and various other things about our group on display for everyone to look at. We had thought we might work towards performing two excerpts but decided to just stage the scene from *Pygmalion*.



Those taking part chose their own costumes and which part they would like to play.

I am delighted to say we have recruited three new members, one of whom took on directing the scene. It turned out she had plenty of previous experience and she was fantastic, as were all those who took on a role - one of the ladies had never previously done anything on stage.

The afternoon was also boosted considerably by the presence of professional actor James Pellow who not only joined the amateurs and played the part of Higgins but went on stage to be 'interviewed' by Janet Farrow - and gave us a very interesting and amusing insight in to how repertory theatre works.

After the performance we held our AGM. Attendance was a bit lower than usual as several of those that came for the afternoon couldn't stay for the evening and some of our core membership had previous engagements but there were enough of us there to have a little party afterwards to enjoy our bring and share supper!

The Committee remains largely unchanged, only two members had come to the end of their term, one of whom was re-elected and the other, namely Joyce Pomeroy, stood down due to other commitments. Joyce was thanked for all her help in the two years she has been with us.

We have cast our autumn play *Miranda* by Peter Blackmore, directed by Janet Farrow. With half term being so late this year, performance dates will **31st October, 1st November** and on **Saturday 2nd November**, instead of an evening performance there will be a matinee at 2pm.



Yvonne Kellett



NATURE NOTES

I'm still trying to figure out whether we have had some warm and sunny summer weather, or are we still waiting for it to arrive? We appear to be stuck in perpetual autumn at present, with cool and damp conditions. We could all do with a good dose of solar energy at the moment!

Also looking for a solar boost will be the common lizard, sometimes known as the Viviparous Lizard. Viviparous simply means she retains fertilised eggs inside her body until they are almost ready to hatch. This helps to keep the eggs warm. When the time is right she lays the eggs, and within seconds the young lizards hatch out. Common lizards have an amazing way to escape

capture from predators. If caught by the tail, they simply snap it off at a joint near the base, leaving the predator holding just the tail. The lizard can grow a new tail ... if it lives long enough!

A flower which has been sending up flowery spires is wall pennywort. Throughout the first part of the year you might notice the leaves which grow in crevices in stony banks, rock walls or anywhere similar where they can take hold. I have seen some quite strange habitats in which it has made itself



at home! The round leaves have a navel like depression in the centre, hence the genus 'Umbilicus'. In May, the plant starts to send up spikes of pale flowers which, through the summer, can grow up to ten inches in height.

It has also been pleasing to see poppies growing in some of our local fields. These flowers are often known as corn or field poppies, not because of the environment in which they establish themselves, but because they are notable as an agricultural weed. They have the ability to flower and self-seed themselves before crops are harvested, thus ensuring their constant survival. Another name for the poppy regarding the above is red weed.



If you are wondering where all the small garden birds have gone, fear not! Some are probably still close at hand. Once birds have completed their breeding for the year, they start to moult into fresh new feathers. Completing a moult of all feathers takes several weeks. During this period birds look rather scruffy, and while they are moulting their wing feathers, they are less able to escape predators. During this time, they conceal themselves as much as possible to avoid predators and territory disputes. It's easy to get the impression that they've disappeared. Also, in late summer a bounty of natural food becomes available as grain, berries and fruit ripen. Many birds abandon their nesting areas and move to where the most food is. In areas where farmland is nearby house sparrows, starlings and many finches move out to fields to feast on the abundance of grain before it is harvested and on the spilt grain after the harvest.

And as summer will eventually slip into true autumn by the time of the next composition, one of the many fungi of note, one that you may smell before you see, is the stinkhorn. Follow your nose to seek out this species in the woodlands where it thrives. The rancid smell attracts flies which feed on the sticky tip and carry off the fungus's spores to a new location.

A rather more attractive species is the edible giant puff ball which can be found, if you are lucky, littering permanent pastures by the dozen. This species grows to an enormous size and eventually dies to yield its many spores when it is ruptured, maybe by a passing cow!

That's it ... 'til next time !

Geoff Pinn gjpinn@tiscali.co.uk



Tipton St John Playing Field

Wow where do I start? What a crazy few months leading up to Tipton Big Weekend.

Firstly, I would like to say a gigantic heart-felt thankyou to everybody that helped out and made it an extra special weekend. On a personal note, I would like to thank my family and friends for all their hard work, especially Janice Aherne, Mo & Ken Mylne and Garry & Chiara Broom - I'm extremely grateful for all their help. Also, a huge thank you to all our judges, Frankie and Michelle from the Golden Lion, Lydia Baker from Willow Photography and Ottery Vets and not forgetting Sidmouth Air Cadets.



It was great to see Tipton cricket club putting up the batting nets and encouraging people to have a bowl or bat, the football club bringing out a goal and doing free kick challenges and the tennis club giving us the opportunity to have a go at pickleball.

Historically this was an annual event which was always well received by everyone and so it was lovely to see that community spirit once again. Thank you to everybody that attended.



The tug of war was a massive hit which saw the east of the village take on the west of the village, who won in spectacular style.



The dog show was a great hit with lots of local entries. On Saturday evening we were extremely lucky to have the Adders play for us (fronted by Tipton's very own Roger Hunt). If you get a chance, they are definitely worth seeing. It was lovely to see everyone enjoying the music and having a dance.

On Sunday we hosted a traditional village fayre: this was well supported by local crafters, artists the Tipton school PTFA and Otters carnival club - even Punch and Judy paid us a visit and not forgetting the incredible performances by Devon Dance and Ottery Tai Kwon Do club.

We will be holding a similar event next year so please do contact me with any ideas and support for next year's event. The next event will be a cricket tournament organised by the cricket club (I'm sure David Birch will fill you in with the details in the cricket club article). More events are planned for this year but will be confirmed at a later date.



Please keep using and enjoying the Playing Field!

Mark Rigden (Chairman)
rigden58@btinternet.com

The life of a ... CIVIL ENGINEER

This story of my civil engineering career is inspired by a return visit to Llysfron Reservoir in Pembrokeshire half a century after my first job as a site engineer constructing a concrete dam; and it may be of interest to inform the younger generation who are embarking on career choices. Civil engineers plan, design, construct, and maintain the infrastructure our daily lives depend on: roads, railways, airports, ports, water and energy; and civil engineering is defined in its 1828 Royal Charter as *"The art of directing the great sources of power in Nature for the use and convenience of Man"*. I graduated from Imperial College London in 1970, and became a chartered member of the Institution of Civil Engineers, and later the Chartered Institution of Water and Environmental Management as my career focused on water supply and wastewater services.

Early years after graduation were aimed at practical experience in construction and design roles with contractors and consulting engineers, and I enjoyed overseas assignments in Mauritius (two years), Bahrain (one year), Abu Dhabi and Somalia (six months each), as well as working in Pembrokeshire, South London, Cheshire and Merseyside. Mid-career was spent with two water companies, first North West Water (now United Utilities) and then South West Water for a combined sixteen years, undertaking technical and financial evaluation of water supply and wastewater projects for capital investment programmes. Master plans for river water quality and flood alleviation schemes were also prepared until responsibility for these functions transferred to a new National Rivers Authority (a forerunner of the Environment Agency).



Llysfron Dam, Pembrokeshire

My position with South West Water disappeared in a company restructuring and, for the final 15 years of my career, I was a consulting engineer based in Exeter and advised on international and UK projects in a roughly 50:50 split. One major element was assisting water companies in Eastern Europe to transition following collapse of communist governments in 1989-91, and many visits to Albania, Romania and Bulgaria were enjoyed. India, Italy, Kenya, Nigeria and Abu Dhabi were also visited. Another activity was preparing bids for consultancy services, and trips to the EU in Brussels were made for interviews. In periods between international assignments, I was seconded for extended periods of up to two years to United Utilities and South West Water to prepare 5-year business plans which are submitted to the regulator Ofwat for approval of price increases for customers. Four business plans with combined capital investment value over £15 billion were completed. Another secondment role for six months was to Plymouth City Council to prepare an asset management plan for roads and other transport infrastructure.

Returning to the start of my career as a site engineer on Llysfron dam, my tasks involved setting-out the construction works with a theodolite and surveyor's level, in accordance with design drawings and specifications, and organising manpower, equipment and materials. The next site job was constructing a section of the M53 motorway in Cheshire, which was marked by a national building workers strike (1972) with lines of pickets controlled by police patrolling the route to the site office.

Further construction experience was gained as a supervising engineer for a power station and irrigation schemes in Somalia and Abu Dhabi. An interesting aspect of civil engineering are the two contrasting roles at construction stage where one team of engineers is employed to organise construction, and another team is employed to supervise the contractor on behalf of a client to check technical compliance, report progress and financials, and assist problem resolution. The scope of supervision work has reduced over time as self-certification by contractors has increased, nevertheless, it continues to be an important role of a civil engineer.

The next stage of my career changed to design work and I joined a design office of consulting engineers based in the Cunard Building on Liverpool waterfront, and commuted to work by Mersey ferry for two years. A wide range of design skills was learned, mostly on water supply and wastewater schemes, including treatment works which are complex installations with physical, biological and chemical treatment processes, pumping stations, pipelines and ancillary buildings. There are also processes for recycling the by-products of sewage treatment, with waste gases used to generate heat and electricity, and waste liquors and solids treated and applied as agricultural fertiliser. One large sewage treatment works was for Jurong in Singapore, which sadly was never visited and the closest I came, ten years after completing design work, was an aerial view when landing in Singapore for a stopover after a trekking holiday to hilltribe villages in Thailand.

For my first overseas assignment I was very fortunate to be asked to go to Mauritius, initially for three months to prepare a master plan for water supply and hydroelectric schemes across the whole island, and followed by a second term of two years to develop designs for implementation of the master plan. In the intervening period, I was a design engineer in Bahrain working on water networks supplied from a desalination plant.

Many new cultures were experienced during the four years lived overseas in my mid-twenties. Arab Islamic culture and its male dominance was encountered in Bahrain and Abu Dhabi, and a communist regime was endured in Somalia where foreigners were closely monitored, photography was banned, and my house in Mogadishu was burgled, with a suspicion it was not a simple crime since very little was stolen. An all-female labour force on a power station construction site was another unique experience. Apartheid in South Africa was also uncomfortable to experience during a vacation visit from Mauritius. Several other countries were visited, taking advantage of detours between assignments, and these included India, Lebanon, Oman, Qatar, Egypt, Turkey, Kenya and Zambia.

Mauritius was a special place to live with its diverse mix of Creole, Indian (Hindu, Buddhist and Muslim) and Chinese cultures plus a significant French community, and seldom did a month pass without a festival celebrated by one or more communities. The only downside was cyclones, and storm Gervaise in 1975 exceeded 170 mph and caused loss of life and great destruction. I played hockey for the Dodo Club and 'international' matches were played against the neighbouring French overseas department island of Réunion, and Gallic hospitality in a tropical environment was always greatly anticipated. Hiking to the mountain summits of Mauritius was a regular pastime, and another conquest was an active volcano on Réunion, Piton de la Fournaise. Twenty years later, Mauritius attracted me back for a third time with my wife Val on our honeymoon, after we married in South Africa.



Pieter Both, Mauritius

After overseas assignments, I sought to apply my design and project management skills to whole life management of assets and broader problem-solving, and I joined North West Water to evaluate capital projects to improve service levels and environmental compliance, remedy operational problems and increase efficiency. Concept design options and cost estimates were prepared to establish recommended solutions. Many projects involved refurbishing and upgrading Victorian-age infrastructure, often at scenic locations in North Wales, Pennines, Peak District and Lake District. Another major group of schemes comprised interceptor sewers and first-time treatment of sewage discharges to alleviate pollution of the Mersey Estuary; and I enjoyed flights in a helicopter skimming at low level to trace plumes of dye injected into sewage outfalls to test dispersion patterns. A different activity was negotiating the sale of a redundant water treatment works to a Finnish paper-making company building a new factory near Chester.

A second role at North West Water was operations manager of Cheshire district water supply, serving half a million population and large industrial complexes including chemicals and pharmaceuticals manufacturing. One incident remembered was utilising my very first mobile phone, which was carried in its own briefcase with a spare battery, to summon the fire service and a vet to rescue two cows fallen into a chamber at the head of a borehole. Both animals were not seriously injured. From North West Water, I joined South West Water as project appraisal manager and supervised a multi-disciplinary team to develop annual programmes of water and wastewater projects. The highest profile initiative was improvements to bathing water quality at more than 100 coastal sites in Devon and Cornwall.

The move to South West Water coincided with privatisation of the water industry and the switch from public to private ownership was very informative for my later career as a consultant on projects in Eastern Europe. Many of these projects were funded by the World Bank or EU, and involved assessing operational performance of water companies, setting targets for service level improvements, preparing and conducting tenders for international bidding, and finalising a contract with a preferred bidder. Privatisation of Tirana Water Company in Albania was carried out in partnership with management consultants KPMG based in Milan and a legal firm based in New York. Progress of this project was interrupted by civil war (1997) caused by collapse of Albania's economy and government due to pyramid selling schemes, and the World Bank withdrew support. The Italian government stepped in with funding and it restarted with a change of scope from privatisation to a technical assistance contract, and bidding restricted to Italian companies but, fortunately, English was retained as the contract language.

Other overseas projects included advising on privatisation of Sofia Water Company, Bulgaria; upgrading a district heating system for Oradea, Romania, utilising geothermal energy; improvements to customer metering and billing systems for water services of Mumbai, India; sewage treatment for Naples, in partnership with Italian consulting engineers; a new town for expansion of Abuja, capital city of Nigeria; and a land reclamation project in Abu Dhabi. Last but not least, was an upgrade of Nairobi Airport, Kenya, where an unexpected discovery on electrical control equipment in a pumping station was a nameplate stamped 'Ottermill Switchgear, Ottery St Mary, England'.

Looking back, the variety of work was immensely satisfying and every project was unique in some way due to either its technical content, the team of people involved or its location. Civil engineers will always be in demand since the world is constantly changing and, if anyone, male or female, is thinking of pursuing a career in this direction, then I wish you well and I am sure it will be rewarding and fulfilling.

David Boyle (da.boyle@btinternet.com)

Church News

We notice there are a number of *For Sale* signs round the village at this time and even one or two that say *Sold* so we'd like to extend a very warm welcome to all our newcomers as you settle in our community - please be assured that the church is here for all and we pray that you will find it a comfort and blessing to you, both as a building but more importantly as the body of believers in Jesus Christ who worship here. We look forward to meeting you soon! In each edition of Tipton Times you will find the church calendar near the back of the magazine giving you the pattern of services. Tipton and Venn Ottery churches are part of a wider Mission Community covering the Otter Vale. We have a Mission Community website (ottervalechurches.org/) on which you'll find links to our local churches where you will find a weekly notice sheet keeping you up to date with what is happening, along with a monthly prayer diary.

RECENT SERVICES

Thank you to all who came to our two special services on 30th June - especially if you made it to both! In the morning, we celebrated the work of the O6 Youthwork Project and heard that, while there is funding for this vital work for the next school year, there is no certainty for the following one. If you want to see this work continue visit the O6 website at theo6.org.uk to see how you can donate. In the evening, we had a great turnout for our Evening Worship at Venn Ottery - our first service there since Christmas. Thank you to Ruth and Haylor Lass who came over from Newton Poppleford to play the organ and help lead our singing and to all who prepared the church so beautifully with flowers from their gardens. The cream tea beforehand was a big help in tempting folk away from the football!

CAFÉ CHURCH

Our popular Café Church gatherings continue on **18th August**, when we'll be thinking about Jesus as the Bread of Life - and **15th September** when we will be celebrating harvest. This meeting is held in the Community Hall with doors opening at 10.30am for coffee, pastries and chat with a short time of informal worship starting around 11am. There will be something for all of us, young, old and in-between, to enjoy so do come along and make some new friends.

COFFEE MORNINGS

I should also mention that on the **first Saturday of each month** we have our church coffee morning from **10am -12 noon** in the hall - do pop in and say hello - it's all very sociable and there are always cakes and other treats to buy. The next one is on **3rd August** but note **we don't have one in September** as we will still be recovering from the Fete!

HARVEST

The **Café Church harvest celebration** on **15th September** will be followed by a bring-and-share lunch in the hall. Do come and join us for some fun **from 11:45 onwards** - or simply stay with us after Café Church! Look out for more details on our weekly news-sheet (ottervalechurches.org/churches/tipton-st-john-church/tipton-st-john-and-venn-ottery-notices/) nearer the time. We also celebrate harvest at Venn Ottery on 1st September when there will be an evening service at 6pm. Later in September, on Sunday 22nd, there will be a harvest communion in Tipton Church at 9.30am - even if you can't get to the services do find time to pop into our churches around this time as they are always beautifully decorated. We will be holding our usual collection of packaged food items for St Petrock's at these services or feel free to drop donations round to my house - St Mary's, Hayne Close - between 9th and 30th September. St Petrock's is a homeless charity doing great work in and around Exeter. The list of items needed this year will be posted soon on their website at <https://stpetrocks.org.uk/give-help/>. We'll also put it up on the church facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/tiptonstjohnchurch/>) and on the church noticeboard.

FETE

Our big summer event is our annual Church Fete on the August bank holiday - please see the separate article and advert from our Fete Chairman, Mike Smith, elsewhere in this edition.

HOMEGROUP

Our homegroup is now taking a break over the summer and aiming to restart on **3rd October**.

CHURCH IS OPEN

Some of you may have heard that the donations boxes in both Tipton Church and Venn Ottery Church have been vandalised though we have no way of knowing how much money, if any, has been taken. Our policy on keeping the churches open, however, remains unchanged so that all can enjoy access to our beautiful buildings and find sanctuary there if they need somewhere peaceful to pray or reflect.

If you have any questions about what's happening in your church do please call or email me anytime.

David Williamson, Licensed Lay Minister, Otter Vale Mission Community
Tel. 01404 812493 Email davidhwililliamson@btinternet.com

Thought for the Times

Will everyone go to heaven when they die?

Questions do not get much bigger than that. This is a question to which all of us should be seeking an answer.

The idea that everyone will ultimately go to heaven is sometimes called 'universalism'. This reminds me of something else universal that we experienced a few weeks ago - universal suffrage. On 4th July we all had the opportunity to take part in the general election. I can say 'all' because we enjoy in this country the right of every man and woman to take part by voting.

At one time the electorate was a small fraction of the total population. In the earliest days of democracy it was a few wealthy men who could vote. Bit by bit the right to vote was extended across the male population, and then, famously, the suffragettes fought for women's suffrage.

Universal suffrage was achieved at a high cost. Some of those suffragettes at the beginning of the Twentieth Century made costly self-sacrifices to gain this right for later generations.

It is universal because the gift of voting is given to everyone. But having been given that gift, we had to do something. We had to register, and then, when election day came, we had to turn up and vote. It is universal, it is free, but when it came to it, only about 60% of people across the country actually cast a vote. I am pleased to say it was a bit higher here, but still a long way short of 100%.

There are many people, men and women, for whom the right to vote has been won for them in the past by those who fought a costly battle, but exercised their freewill and chose not to vote. You can argue that the right not to vote is also a gift. I would not want to live under a regime that forced me to vote whether I wanted to or not. But if I choose not to vote, I exclude myself from something that is supposed to be universal.

So what about heaven? Heaven is God's space. To be in heaven is to be with the Lord. It is a place of continuous worship. It is earth and heaven united in a perfect paradise. It is a garden city paved with gold. All these imagines point to something wonderful and eternal.

The good news given to us in the words of the Bible is that access to God's kingdom of heaven is universal. The right to take part and enter was won for us by Jesus Christ many years ago. When Jesus died on the cross, he paid a huge personal cost. He suffered physically, mentally and spiritually. It was a high price to pay, but he paid it willingly, because it meant that all people could be included. It was universal.

But as with voting, when it comes to God's kingdom of heaven, we have a choice.

If you asked the Electoral Commission about the way to vote, they would tell you, "The way is to register, to turn up at the polling station and put your mark on the paper."

Jesus' friend Thomas once asked him about the way to heaven, what Jesus called "my Father's house". Jesus told him, "I am the way."

We find the way to eternal life in God's kingdom of heaven by putting our faith in Jesus and choosing to follow him. He has done all the hard work of achieving universal salvation; we have to choose whether or not we want it.

So does everyone go to heaven when they die? God's desire is for all people to be saved. Because he loves us, Christ died for all; but because of that same love, he will not force us into heaven against our will. Sadly, some may decide that they would rather not spend eternity in God's presence.

I hope and pray that you will choose to join in and make that choice now, and not to put it off.

Mark

Post Script:

Any analogy can be pushed only so far. I am very conscious that what I have written here does not work for children. We do not qualify to vote until we are adults. That is absolutely NOT the case when it comes to God's kingdom. In fact, the complete opposite is true. Jesus once said to adults, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these." Matthew 19:14

Rev Mark Ward 01404 814282
revmarkward@btinternet.com
www.facebook.com/revmarkward

Friends of St John and St Gregory Club

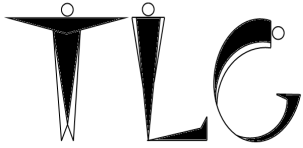
1st Caroline Poultney (47)	£30,
2nd John Belton (1)	£20
3rd June Humphries (46)	£15

This was the first draw of our new year and numbers for all previous subscribers were included but a few have not paid their subscriptions yet, so, if we don't receive them by the September draw we will assume you no longer wish to be included. As always we have lost a few subscribers and have only gained one new one so far - so if you don't belong, please consider joining in to help our local churches with their maintenance and improvements

Contact 01404 812040 for more information.

Ann Knight





Otters, coming to a river near you

July's meeting welcomed Stephen Powles, a retired vet from Tiverton. He gave us an entertaining talk about the otters near his home in the Dart Valley, complete with wonderful film clips of the otters which he had filmed over time.



Photo: Geoff Pinn

His favourite otter was Hammer Scar so named after a hammer-shaped scar. Stephen spent many hours sitting on the riverbank at night using a head torch to observe the otters. They were so used to him they carried about their business, ignoring him.

Otter facts included size - approximately 120cm long (including tail) and weight 7-12 kg. They have a lifespan of up to 10 years but most live about five as many are run over by cars. Otters have good hearing, eyesight and sense of smell. Their whiskers help them to track down their prey in murky water. They eat small fish from the head down! Otters were hunted for their coats in the past as they have very thick warm coats having 50,000 hairs per square cm whereas humans have 100,000 on their whole head! Webbed feet help them to swim faster and their tail also helps them power through the water. The gestation period is about 9 weeks, they can have several litters a year.

An otter's diet includes trout, salmon, frogs and toads, eels, bullheads, ducklings and crayfish. We were amazed to hear that they need to eat one kilogram of fish per day.

Otters were in decline during the 1950s to 1970s due to hunting and the use of chemicals on the land which seeped into rivers. Otter hunting was banned in 1978 and the banning of harsh chemicals has resulted in cleaner rivers, so the otter population is now increasing. In fact the majority of the Tipton Ladies present had seen an otter.

Stephen's photographs and short clips added to our enjoyment of the evening.

Our next meeting is on **Monday 16th September at 7:30pm**. New members are always welcome.

Anne Bareford



Tipton Tennis Club

Did you watch Wimbledon? Two of our members did such a good job supporting Cam Norrie that he picked them out during his interview, and the video went viral on the BBC! Well done Rutter boys!

Closer to home there has been plenty of action on our own courts, sometimes despite the weather. The ladies team are having a storming season, having won 9 out of 12 matches so far. Strangely they have won more than any other team, but are only 4th in the table (since it is number of sets won which determines the points) with 2 matches to play so it is all to play for ... good luck ladies! I am afraid the men are not doing quite so well. The A team have lost a lot of games to the weather but have won half their matches so with games in hand plenty of opportunity to move up the table. The B's unfortunately have not won a match yet despite some sterling performances and hard-fought sets, but they have had lots of fun which is what matters the most.

We had lots of fun during the Tipton Big Weekend too when we invited lots of people onto the courts to play some fun target tennis on one court, while coach Ray ran an introduction to Pickleball on the other court. If you would like to give us a try, playing more standard tennis, come along to our regular club night on a Wednesday from 6pm - any standard welcome.

Membership details are all on our website at <https://clubspark.lta.org.uk/TiptonStJohnTennisClub>

Coaching: We have two club coaches who both offer individual or small group coaching. Unfortunately, we are not able to offer regular junior coaching at the moment but hope to reintroduce this in the future. If you would like to arrange coaching please contact Eddy Kerr direct at edward.kerr14@yahoo.co.uk or use the club email.

The club is always keen to encourage young people into sport so, when we were recently approached by Tipton School asking if they might be able to use the courts to introduce children to tennis, we were keen to support them. We offered the school a trial one-hour session during the summer term which was very successful, so have now agreed that they can use the courts for an hour a week in the first part of the autumn term, before half term. This will be for tennis activities only and will be booked in the court booking system so members will know when the courts are not available.

We look forward to seeing you on court.

Ken Mylne (Chair - contact tiptontennisclub@gmail.com)

Tipton St John Cricket Club

The club's fortunes have gone from strength to strength in our 50th anniversary year, with 18 out of 25 matches so far won. Quite apart from winning, the best feature of the season is the team spirit and enjoyment that our skipper Dave Thayre has promoted. Win or lose, all our matches have been played in a friendly and competitive spirit. One indicator of this is the fact that at no point in the season so far have we been short of players: a real change from a few years ago and a healthy sign that friendly village cricket is alive and well.



It has been particularly pleasing to see some younger players feature frequently this season. Amelia Tolley and Sam Stone are now established regulars, with their highlight of the season so far sharing a 75 run stand against Whimble. Brendan and Arthur Coles, both Devon Junior players, have also made their marks by becoming the youngest players to record half centuries for the club with scores of 72 and 53 respectively.



Our annual tour to Cornwall was a great success, producing a rare full house of three wins in three matches. We are fortunate to have a settled programme of friendly but very different clubs who make us extremely welcome each year. Next year's tour has already been pencilled in for the beginning of June 2025.

Tipton CC on tour, here pictured at Nancledra Hillbillies CC

We are now looking forward to celebrating our anniversary in style with a **festival of cricket** - a series of matches at the end of August against some distinguished touring opponents: Incogniti CC, one of the oldest nomadic clubs in the country, Boffins CC (founded at the famous Bletchley Park, home of the WW2 codebreakers) and Oxfordshire-based old friends Ascott-under-Wychwood CC.

On Sunday 25th of the August Bank Holiday weekend we are hosting a family-friendly mixed-age softball cricket tournament. No experience or ability in cricket is needed - this will be a fun opportunity to get involved in softball cricket. Each team should include at least 2 under 14s and two ladies. The event starts at 11am and there will be a barbecue throughout the day. More details can be found on the back cover of this edition.

Please do come and support this event and all our remaining matches which are listed here.

We look forward to seeing you there!

August	Sunday	4th	Coaver Gerries	Home	1pm
	Tuesday	6th	Bakers	Home	6pm
	Sunday	11th	Stokeinteignhead	Home	1pm
	Thursday	15th	Basingstoke & North Hants	Home	1pm
	Sunday	18th	Woodbury & Newton St Cyres	Home	1pm
	Thursday	22nd	Incogniti	Home	1pm
	Saturday	24th	Boffins	Home	1pm
	Sunday	25th	50th Anniversary Funday	Home	11am
	Tuesday	27th	Ascott-Under-Wychwood	Home	1pm
Sept	Sunday	1st	Whimble	Away	1pm
	Sunday	8th	Met Office	Home	1pm
	Sunday	15th	Ottery St Mary	Home	1pm
	Sunday	22nd	South Brent	Home	1pm
	Sunday	29th	Heads & Tails	Home	1pm

David Birch

Chair

Tipton St John CC

Website: <https://www.pitchero.com/clubs/tiptonstjohn/>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/TiptonStJohnCC>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100057807483472>

Tipton St John Community Hall Trust

Chairman's report to the AGM 26th June 2024

It's been another busy year for the Hall but the major achievement in terms of maintaining the building fabric was having the timber floor replaced in the main hall in August which had been on hold for several years awaiting a decision on the move of the school to a new site. The Trustees decided that the project shouldn't be delayed any longer and everyone seems to be delighted with the result.

One event we did not plan was major flash flooding in May which caused much damage and heartache in the village and included leaving behind a thick layer of silt all over the car park after the water had subsided. As usual, a group of willing volunteers turned up the next morning to help with the clearance.

Our social events included another season of Sunday Quiz Nights during the Autumn/Winter months (often with a full house), and also an occasional Film Night. The younger members of our local community were not forgotten with a Creature Safari party which took place in September.

In addition, two special events were organized during the year when Tony Harris returned in November with his entertaining theme of the History of Pantomime, giving many of the audience the opportunity to dress up, and in March we hosted the Country and Western band 'Lonesome Saddles' which was well-attended and included a two-course supper.

Regular and one-off bookings for the hall were very busy as usual and it's been good to welcome Café Church on a Sunday morning once a month which has proved to be popular particularly for those who find it difficult to climb the steep slope up to the church.

The Community Hall would not run so efficiently without the help of our two support staff so we are very grateful to have Geoff Pinn to keep the premises clean and tidy and to Pauline Belton who handles all the bookings and deals with the many enquiries from people wanting to hire our facilities.

For the last few years we have frequently had to mop up rain dripping down on both sides of the entrance doors into the main hall, with attempts by several different contractors to locate the cause and carry out repairs without success. However, at last it seems we have a result and our thanks go to Geoff Hulley for the time and effort he gave to finding a solution to this problem.

In addition to Geoff, I would like to thank my other Trustee colleagues Brian Rice, Andrew Sadler, Neil Bray, Kyle Hayes and Sue Hulley for all their help and commitment in different ways and also to Paul Kinson and Allen Marks who continue to assist us with the grass cutting which is much appreciated.

As is usually the case, we continue to be short of trustees and we hope to be more successful in finding potential new recruits in the near future to help spread the heavy responsibility of managing this much-loved asset for the benefit of the local community.

John Belton (Chairman)



YOUR COMMUNITY HALL NEEDS YOU!

The Hall is a much-loved building in the centre of the village and is used extensively for various groups and organisations as well as for one-off hires.

It is managed by a small group of trustees who are in urgent need of several new volunteers to help share the responsibilities for overseeing the upkeep and daily operation of this attractive venue.

If you are interested in finding out more about this opportunity to help provide a valued service to the local community (without any obligation), please contact me or any of the other Trustees named towards the end of my annual report above.

Thank you

John Belton (Chairman)



Venn Ottery and Southerton Residents Association

CREAM TEA ON THE GREEN

On the 30th June VOSRA held a Cream Tea on the Green in aid of St Gregory's Church Bell Fund. We were blessed with beautiful weather, sunshine galore. We had great support from our members and the local community. Sixty cream teas were served by Stephanie Kinson, Ann Knight and Karen Ross which was very much appreciated by the VOSRA Committee. A big thanks to all those who donated scones, jam and scrummy cakes.

We raised a total of £310 which included a number of donations for the Church Bell Fund.

A very big thank you to you all for your support.



VIGILANT NOTICE

Sad to say that St Gregory's Church Donation Box was broken into on the 9th July. It was discovered by Judith Taylor when she went to lock up the church. There would not have been much cash in the box as it had recently been emptied. This is the second theft at the church this year. Previously two brass vases were stolen from the altar and the altar rail damaged.

Please be vigilant at all times to protect yours and our local property.

Sad to say, also, that the glass of the Venn Ottery Notice Board has been damaged. Howard Hughes, Bowhayes Farm has taped up the glass and reported the matter to Newton Poppleford Parish Council.

FLOOD PREVENTION UPDATE

Replacement of inadequate culvert plan is on schedule.

Engineers at Devon County Council confirmed on the 15th July that a contractor has been appointed to commence works to replace the inadequate culvert under the Lynch Head Road at Venn Ottery. The new culvert will be a larger 0.6/0.5 meter self-scouring culvert between the open culvert and the perched ditch east of Lynch Head Road. Following further drilling studies and a contractor site visit on the 11th July, work is on schedule to commence on 27th August. The road between Venn Ottery and Newton Poppleford will be closed for up to 6 weeks with diversions in place. There will also be some alteration to the kerb at Venn Ottery crossroad junction to direct water into the drains and culvert. These measures should substantially reduce flood risks to residents of Venn Ottery at Barton Mews.

CONTACT DETAILS

If you wish to contact VOSRA on any matters please see details below:

Chair - Andy Finch

Mobile - 0790365625

Email - andy.finch1511@icloud.com

Treasurer - Jan Alden

Mobile - 07377 785809

Email - janicepalden@gmail.com

VOSRA Committee

Andy, Chris, Jan, Denise, Herbie, Malcolm and Adrian



Fight the fear and conquer the coals!

Do you have the fortitude to *brave the blaze* and walk on hot coals for Hospiscare?

With the heat beneath your feet, this challenge will test your courage and determination!

Are you looking for your next challenge or bucket list adventure? Then why not conquer your fears and impress your peers while helping your local hospice to raise vital funds for people facing life-limiting illnesses? This thrilling challenge will take place on **Thursday 17 October 2024**, at Winslade Park, Clyst St Mary, Exeter. It is open to anyone aged 18 and over and is suitable for all fitness levels. Our experienced firewalk trainers will guide you through the process and teach you the techniques to conquer the coals safely. You'll learn how to focus your mind, channel your energy, and overcome self-doubt.

Sign up to Hospiscare's Firewalk challenge today for an unforgettable experience!

£30 entry fee and £200 suggested sponsorship.

www.hospiscare.co.uk/firewalk



TIPTON ST JOHN PRIMARY SCHOOL

It has been a busy term at Tipton St John Primary School. Hopefully you had the opportunity to walk pass the school to admire the finished pieces from our Art Week. A big thank you to Coco, Maureen Hawkridge and team - all part of the Sidmouth Art Hub who kindly donated their time and resources to make it such a success. Some of our work is going to be displayed on the side of the Sidmouth Swimming Pool building so look out for this in the Autumn!



We are also looking forward to a special day celebrating the history of the school - from its Victorian beginnings to the present day. We are hoping to produce a piece of Art from this to display outside school.

Oak Class enjoyed a very successful residential to PGL in Torquay, and the weather was kind to us which makes such a difference. Kings Sports leaders have visited to do a fun orienteering activity with the children on the Playing Field.

Discussions regarding the potential relocation of the school have continued. In May/June the Governors led an informal public consultation to gather views on a

Devon County Council proposal to relocate the school to Thorne Farm in Ottery St Mary. This was a non-statutory process, but one which the Governors chose to undertake to ensure the voices of everyone in the community could be heard. Thank you to everyone who took part in this process. It served its purpose and provided the governors with some really useful information.

Following the consultation, Governors met to discuss the responses and have deferred the decision about whether to move to a DCC formal consultation until the autumn term. The Governors are now seeking further information from Devon County Council to ensure all options of a new school site in Tipton St John village have been fully explored and costed. The decision on a site for the school lies with Devon County Council and the Governors continue to work tirelessly to secure the best option for our local children's futures.



Pete Button, Head of School
Amanda Fulford Executive Head, Otter Valley Federation
Tel: 812943 admin@tipton-stjohn.devon.sch.uk

Tipton School History Day

We ended the term with a wonderful celebration of the history of our school. We all came dressed up in clothes representing different eras of the school's past. Hazel Class came in present day clothes. Maple were colourful sixties kids. Willow were conscientiously carrying gas masks over their plain wartime outfits while Oak were dressed as Victorian urchins. There will soon be a brand new mural below the upper site commemorating this special day.

It was lovely to have several members of the community visiting to share memories and photos. Many children in Willow told me this was their favourite part of the day.

Here are excerpts from some of the imaginary letters home that the 'evacuees' of Willow Class wrote.



Dear Mother,

I was devastated to leave you at the station in London. I really miss you. However, my friends made it all right. We played a few games like hide and seek. It cheered up the younger ones a lot.

A few hours later the whistle went. I soon realized it was because we had arrived in the country. Out of the window we saw great big rolling hills and vast Meadows ...

Dear Father and Mother,

I hope you are not missing me too much. As I walked onto the train, I was wondering where I was going to stay. I sat next to my friends and chatted to them for entertainment. We talked about who we

would like to stay with until we saw fields and hills. We were all excited and some of us were standing up staring out of the window. Once we arrived, we all rushed out and stared at the surrounding view.

We all walked to where we were going to stay until I was the only one left. I was taken to a small house on the edge of the village. We knocked and a man who looked to be in his 30's or 40's opened the door. He said he worked on a farm and I could help him. I felt excited as I had never seen a farm before ...



Dear Mother and Father,

I felt as depressed as a homeless man when I left you at Paddington. After a couple of minutes, I calmed down and looked out of the window, thinking about the host family I was going to meet.

My friends started talking about who they were going to live with. Suddenly, my stomach began rumbling like an earthquake. I ate my tomatoes and one of my sandwiches so I could save the rest for later.

When the train pulled up at Tipton station, a woman walked up to me and two more people followed after her. "Hello!" they exclaimed. The woman held my hand and introduced everybody to me. The lady was called Mrs Demonet, the man was Mr Demonet and the four

year old girl was called Violet.

When we got to their villa, they told me to make myself at home whilst they unpacked my suitcase in my new bedroom ...

Thank you to Annabelle, Reuben and Harrison

Claire Martin



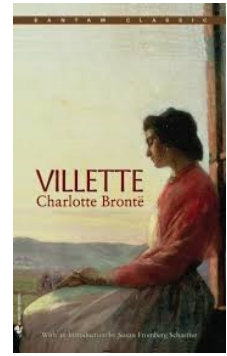


Tipton Readers

Villette by Charlotte Bronte

Well, I chose this from the huge library list in an attempt to add in a classic. Another member of the group also chose it.

Charlotte Bronte was born in 1816 and died in 1855. She was the daughter of an Irish clergyman Patrick Bronte and Maria Branwell (died 1821). She had four sisters and one brother and two of the sisters died of



TB in childhood. They had a very strict and a reputedly cruel father. They lived in poor conditions - their Aunt Elizabeth came to help out with the children on the death of her mother. She started writing at the age of thirteen and, along with her brother, published a poetry book. In 1842 Charlotte and Emily travelled to Brussels and became teachers in a girls boarding school. On the death of their Aunt Elizabeth they returned to Haworth and tried to open a school for girls, an unsuccessful venture. Emily married in 1854 but died within the year. Charlotte returned to Brussels in 1843, was homesick, desperately lonely and fell in love with a married man. She returned to Haworth and eventually married the curate.

Charlotte wrote *The Professor* (*Villette* is a rework of this unsuccessful novel), *Jane Eyre* and *Shirley*. She drew on her time and experiences in Brussels for her first novel, *The Professor* and thus *Villette*. Many parallels can be seen between the themes and her life.

Lucy Snowe is the main character who, at fourteen is staying at the home of her godmother Mrs Bretton. (We do not know the circumstances which led to her living there but Lucy does not appear to have any living relatives). Also in residence are John Graham Bretton (the teenage son called Graham by the family) and a young visitor, Paulina Home (who is called Polly) aged six. Polly's mother has recently died and her father is recommended by doctors to travel to improve his spirits. Polly is a serious little girl and is described as 'unlike normal children'. Whilst there Polly becomes devoted to Graham.

Lucy leaves Mrs Bretton's home, years pass and we next find her as a carer for a rheumatic crippled lady, Miss Marchmont. Lucy feels content with her quiet, frugal lifestyle. One stormy night Miss Marchmont tells her sad love story of thirty years ago. She resolves to treat Lucy better and leave her provided for; she believes she will be reunited with her lover on her death. The next morning, Lucy finds Miss Marchmont has died in the night. Once again Lucy is homeless, she travels to London and decides to go to Brussels despite speaking very little French. On board she meets Ginevra Fanshawe who tells her that the directress (Madame Beck) of her boarding school in Villette needs a *bonne* for her children. Travel-weary, she reaches Villette, is hired to mind the three children and, in time, to teach English as well. Dr John, a handsome English doctor, is a regular visitor to the school. Lucy realises that Dr John is Graham! Ginevra and Dr John become involved.

Well, from here on the story is filled with coincidences, twists and turns ... all 500 pages!!

It transpires that Polly is now a wealthy heiress, Ginevra is her coquettish cousin and John and Polly fall in love. Lucy becomes friendly to a colleague, the irascible, autocratic and confrontational Professeur M. Paul Emmanuel. He is devoutly catholic and she is devoutly protestant. Eventually they put their differences aside and fall in love. All is not well, as Madame Beck, priest Pere Silas and the relatives of M. Paul's long-dead fiancée plot to separate them. Paul is sent to Guadeloupe to oversee a plantation there. Before leaving he sets Lucy up in a small school in the hope that when he returns they can marry. In the midst of this there are hints of ghostly nuns and pranks.

You are left hanging on the last page: "M. Emmanuel was away 3 years. Reader, they were the happiest three years of my life" Many ships were wrecked by big storms which hit the route back from the West Indies. The suggestion is that his ship went down BUT you could imagine a happy ending if you can!

The conclusion of our group (with one exception) that this was a very, unnecessarily-wordy novel, with a weak story line. Most of us struggled to read it and were even bored with it. We wouldn't recommend it unless someone wanted a challenge!

We scored it 5\10.

Jenny Parkin

White Teeth by Zadie Smith

White Teeth, a debut novel written by the British author Zadie Smith, is a vibrant portrait of multicultural London spanning a period from the mid-1970s until the late 1990s (give or take a few excursions into the more distant past) told through the stories of three ethnically diverse families.

Zadie Smith began writing while at Cambridge and at the age of twenty-one she submitted some eighty pages to an agent. A frenzied bidding war ensued, and the book eventually was sold to Hamish Hamilton. Smith took several more years to complete the novel and, in the year 2000, it was published to rave reviews, going on to win numerous prestigious literary awards for a first novel. The book was adapted for television in 2002.

White Teeth is long - over 500 pages - and the plot is crammed with details, backstories, jokes and asides which add to its charm, or make it impenetrable, depending on the reader's viewpoint. I must admit this is my second attempt to read the novel.

Set in the working-class suburb of Willesden in Northwest London where Smith grew up, White Teeth chronicles the later lives of two wartime friends brought together by their bad luck and questionable soldiering. Archie Jones is a down on his luck, a white Englishman whose failed suicide attempt opens the novel, and Samad Iqbal is a Bangladeshi Muslim who struggles to fit into British society. Archie is given a second lease of life when he meets and marries Clara, a beautiful, albeit tooth-challenged, Jamaican, half his age, who is fleeing an oppressive, religious mother. Samad, in spite of looking like Omar Sharif, is a downtrodden waiter in a West End curry house who is obsessed by the history of his great-grandfather Magal Pande, who allegedly fired the first shot of the Indian Mutiny in 1857 (and missed). Samad has an arranged marriage with the fiery Alsana. (He has to wait for her to be born first).

Alsana and Clara form a careful friendship. Alsana's twin boys Millat and Magid and Clara's daughter Irie occupy a no man's land between the history and culture of their parents and modern multicultural London. They struggle to find their identities. Samad demands too much of his sons and pays a calamitous price. He packs Magid back home to be educated, but the son returns eight years later with a pukka English accent and strong atheism. Millat begins as a superstud and troublemaker and ends up joining a fundamentalist Muslim group, KEVIN. Irie falls out with her mother and goes to live with her grandmother and her grandmother's lodger (a former boyfriend of her mother) who are fanatical Jehovah's Witnesses.

Smith thickens the cross-cultural stew by introducing a third family into the narrative. Irie and Millat are befriended by the white, middle class Chalfens, who typify a distinctive strain of North London liberal trendiness. Marcus Chalfen is a university lecturer and scientist, developing a controversial experiment in rodent genetics called FutureMouse. Joyce Chalfen adopts the wayward Millat as her pet cause and fails to notice that her eldest son, Joshua, is an animal rights activist plotting violent retribution on his pioneering father.

This is a sprawling, densely-plotted novel. Along the way, themes such as race relations, religious extremism, immigration and the ethics of genetic engineering are explored. The characters read as authentic if not memorable. The believable dialogue and the humour save a sometimes meandering story line. The finale ties up the narrative satisfactorily.

The group did not love this novel. We were in general agreement about scoring it (5/10). Although we enjoyed some parts of the story and recognised the quality of the writing we felt that, typically for a first novel, it would have benefitted from a good prune-down. Some found the swear dialogue off-putting. I wonder what response this novel would have if written today? In this novel Zadie Smith fearlessly pokes fun at different religions, races and special interest groups in a way that might not now be acceptable.

Elizabeth Williams



Table Tennis is good for you!

We are a friendly group of mostly 'average' players and would like to extend a welcome to anyone (over 18) who would like to play for enjoyment even if you haven't picked up a bat for decades. We meet on the 2nd and 4th Mondays of the month in the Community Hall from 7.30 - 9.30pm and, after a Summer break, the first dates of the new season will be:

September 9th and 23rd

We usually play doubles on the two tables and pay **£2.50** per session which includes tea or coffee.

For further information, please contact **John & Pauline Belton** (01404 813431)



TIPTON St JOHN

CLEANING UP EAST DEVON

I am writing this article sitting outside in my garden on one of the sunniest days we have had for a very long time. I can feel the breeze, see the perfectly blue sky and it seems that all is well in the world. I feel truly lucky to live in such a beautiful part of the country and more importantly, to have the day off for once.

Indeed, this morning, my husband and I were discussing the fact that

typically I would probably be working when it's such a nice day and people would be coming in to the hospital saying what the weather was like outside and what a shame we're all indoors!

So, at last I have the opportunity to enjoy the lovely sunshine and contemplate the benefits of being outside - a chance to sit and relax, to 'switch off' and appreciate nature at its best.

Except, unfortunately, it isn't that straight forward.

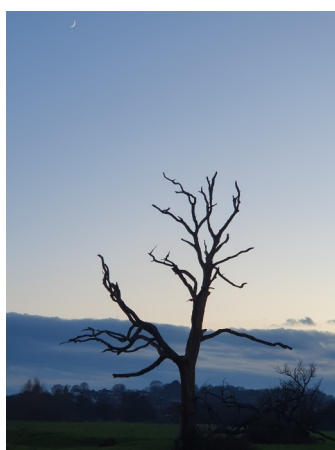
EagerBeaversTSJ is an environmental community group and as such, whenever possible, I try to spend as much time as I can promoting and supporting nature. However, having spent time recently at the community garden and beside the river pulling balsam, I have noticed that there appear to be significantly fewer bees and pollinators this year. Suggestions have been that this may be due to the very wet spring, but I



have to admit that I am very concerned about the long-term implications and if this is truly just a 'blip' or a more concrete example of climate change. There are fewer migratory birds, too, I haven't seen a hedgehog for a couple of years now and yes, the weather patterns seem to be more and more chaotic throughout the world. It's all very well saying these things, but as a nurse if I have a problem, more often my manager would say "So what are YOU going to do about it?"

We all need to be more aware and more proactive about the effects our actions are having on our environment. If we can take ownership of what is happening right now and try to slow down the process, there may be some hope that

nature could recover. I am not trying to preach, however the outcome of just ignoring this reality is terrifying. Statistics show that species are in significant decline, many are on the verge of extinction.



My message is simple. Please, please, please think about the everyday things that YOU can do to make a difference for the better. Don't use pesticides, they are killing beneficial insects and also predators further up the food chain. Do put a gap in your fence for the hedgehogs to allow them access into your garden (they will eat the slugs and snails which is far better than any chemical). Add water to your garden if possible, it can be something as small as a shallow dish (or a pond if you prefer) and watch the wildlife come to bathe, drink and lay their eggs. Put up bird boxes. Leave areas of the garden wild to encourage the invertebrates and the fungi to thrive. Plant a tree. Anything you can do is better than nothing and collectively the effect would be considerable. Maybe then,

(maybe), it will be easier to sit outside and relax. For then we will see the mammals, birds, insects and plants thriving because of our actions, and not dying as a result of them.

We are EagerBeaversTSJ, find us on Facebook or on our new website. Join our email list EagerBeaversTSJ@hotmail.com or our WhatsApp group. Thank you.

Lisette Johnson



Garden News - Completing the trilogy ...

In the past I've had a wonderful visit to Number 1 and 2 Tipton Lodge but tucked round the corner is Number 3 and if you walk up the lane an extremely neat and tidy array of plants meets your eye which made me think that there were delights beyond that if I could ask David for a visit.



Every time I pop my Tipton Times bag back through his door I linger to look at the display of citrus fruits nestled in the greenhouse. Lemons and little oranges, which make good marmalade, ripen nicely here. At this time of year there are also tomatoes, in particular St Marzano plum tomatoes which he puts in the freezer for use throughout the year. I agree with David that having a supply in the freezer is wonderful to bring a taste of summer in the depths of winter.



David and Madeleine moved to the house in 1997 and there were remains of cloches and cold frames in the old kitchen garden. Here you are in the servants' quarters and, as such, close to workshops and possibly a dairy which would have supplied the main house. A wisteria climbs up the wall here but it has not flowered this year which is strange. Incidentally, I have heard from another gardener nearby that their wisteria has completely turned its toes up and leaves have fallen off and it is looking pretty dead. I hope this hasn't happened to David's since my visit. It is odd how some plants suffer some years. I'm glad to say the one at Dolberries is looking good except we've had to take it off the wall to paint the house this week. I hope it won't mind!

Back to David's garden though and what used to be a cricket and football pitch of grass when their boys were younger is now becoming an orchard - I think you need just four fruit trees to call it an orchard. Here he has planted plum, cherry and pear trees which are looking good and hopefully will produce some delicious fruit.

An area in the lawn which is an old tree stump is really attractive with ferns which have just arrived and two geraniums and a Ceanothus rambling naturally over the wood. It could fashionably be called a small Stumpery such as is seen in many new modern gardens.

Then we turn towards the back of the garden where the latest addition is. A new patio and walled area which catches the morning sun and a wonderful 'hot ' border gradually getting cooler as the bed edges away from the patio. This really has echoes of Gertrude Jekyll. David is very good at plant names and I furiously wrote as many as I could down ... *Helianthemum*



in a range of hot colours and a beautiful Geum which is a fiery red double variety. Later *Zauschneria* (Californian Fuchsia) come up to add to the fiery colours. There is also a deep red *Astrantia* which came from Rosemoor. A pretty pink *Cistus* fills the back of the patio and an unusual exotic coloured *Osteospermum*. As I said the colours then tend to cool down into blues and purples as the border runs under the trees. It really is so effective and a joy to see. Another garden to open if we manage a Gardens Open in the village next year (as mentioned in the last Tipton Times)?

Thank you David for a lovely walk round and I hope others enjoy reading about your garden and view the pictures on line as they look so much better in colour.

Alison Stevens

Jess Bailey Independent Devon County Councillor, Otter Valley Ward

I recently wrote to Richard Foord to congratulate him on his election success in becoming our new MP. I also called on him to back the campaign to keep the school in Tipton. You will recall that the previous MP had decided earlier this year that the only place for Tipton School was at Thorne Farm, Ottery St Mary.

Following on from my letter I then met with Richard Foord MP, Amanda Fulford Executive Headteacher and Daphne Sherwood School Governor on 16th July.



It felt like a really positive meeting and now we need Devon County Council to reset its approach.

In my view DCC should be focusing on which of the sites in Tipton is the preferred site and be taking steps to obtain the land - and should be disregarding the site at Thorne Farm.

Just because Ottery St Mary Primary School is over capacity (there is a Planned Admission Number of 420 pupils with 429 pupils on roll) does not mean that the funding for Tipton's school should be diverted to build a second primary school in Ottery St Mary.

The public consultation, which closed on 19th June and was carried out by the school, showed just how strongly people are opposed to the Thorne Farm proposal with an overwhelming opposition to the school relocating to Ottery St Mary. The responses included a petition with nearly 1000 signatures which is a really impressive number and reflects the strength of feeling. As the Devon County Councillor I submitted my strong objection to the proposal to build Tipton School at Thorne Farm, a full copy of which can be seen on my facebook page.

It is also worth noting that East Devon District Council's local plan is progressing towards formal inspection in 2025 and DCC in its consultation response at the start of 2023 asked that EDDC allocate a site for the school IN Tipton St John. It would be completely inconsistent to pursue Thorne Farm Ottery St Mary.

I will continue to do all that I can to keep Tipton School in Tipton as your Devon County Councillor and keep you informed.

Cllr Jess Bailey
01404 814056
email jessica.bailey@devon.gov.uk

Sundial Care Home is thrilled to discover that their regular guest and beloved therapy llama, Harry, has been shortlisted for the BBC Make a Difference Award in the animal category. 12-year-old therapy llama Harry and his brother George have been regular visitors to Sundial and have recently made quite a name for themselves.



Previously rescued from dire conditions, Harry and George now live with Maggie Jee, owner and Managing Director of Llamas4Good CIC, a non-profit community interest company in Sidmouth. Despite his rough start in life, therapy llama Harry has provided solace and companionship for Sundial - and his love for cuddles, a rarity for llamas, has made him a favourite among the family members.

Recently, Harry's contributions were showcased when Jo Loosemore from BBC Radio Devon visited Sundial Care Home during their annual Care Home Open Day to see Harry at work. Jo witnessed firsthand his remarkable demeanour and the happiness he brings to everyone he interacts with. Notably, Jo was impressed that Harry was able to walk around freely up and down the hallways which delighted family members who were unable to make it to the lounge.

Elizabeth Thompson, Manager at Sundial

Therapy llama, pictured with Sue Kensdale, former TT collator

Councillor Janice Aherne Ottery St Mary Town Councillor, Tipton St John Ward

In the last edition (June/July 24) of Tipton Times my Co-Councillor for Tipton Ward, Matt Williamson, gave a detailed account of Who's Who on the Ottery Town Council and their specific designated areas of interest.

My focus recently has been on the future of Tipton St. John C of E Primary School within the village. Following the Governors' consultation on relocating the school to Thorne Farm, Ottery St. Mary, I can report that following the TASC Group [Tipton Action for School & Community] and local public opinion, the Governing Board have agreed to defer making a decision to move to a formal consultation on the Thorne Farm site, until the next Full Board Meeting on the 8th September.

They have stated that they are keen to explore all options/sites to keep the school in the village and are formally writing to Devon County Council to request clarification on costs, suitability and investment the Council are able to commit to the project. Recently Sundial Care Home has expressed an interest in making available part of their land, that already partially borders the top school, for a new school building.

The TASC group and particularly Emily and Nikki have put a lot of hard work into researching the pros and cons of a school relocation and produced a very thorough report highlighting the values of keeping Tipton School, in Tipton, that was presented to the Governors.

Finally, a big well done to Mark Rigden, Chair of the Playing Fields Association and his helpers for putting on a splendid Tipton Big Weekend on the 13th and 14th July. We look forward to next year's event!

Please feel free to contact Matt or myself if you have any concerns we may be able to help with.



CLlr Janice Aherne
07508 308569
janice.aherne@otterystmary-tc.gov.uk

CLlr Matt Williamson
0784 0237161
mattwilliamson@otterystmary-tc.gov.uk

Recipe Corner

CAULIFLOWER CHEESE WITH JALAPEÑO PEPPERS

We tried this and it knocks the socks off of the regular, stodgy cauliflower cheese! It is juicy and creamy, with a nice kick from the jalapeño peppers. A lovely, easy midweek meal! Can be served with steamed greens or a leafy salad. Also see the tips below. SERVES 2

INGREDIENTS

½ medium cauliflower
1 tbsp. olive oil
70g full fat cream cheese
1 tbsp. Dijon mustard
1 ½ tbsp. milk
60g grated cheddar
30g jalapeño peppers, roughly chopped
2 tbsp. toasted flaked almonds (approx. 35g)

METHOD

Preheat the oven to 200° C/ Fan 180° C/ Gas 6

Chop the cauliflower stalks and florets into small chunks. Place in a medium baking dish and toss with the olive oil. Season with salt and freshly ground black pepper and roast in the oven for 15 minutes.

Meanwhile, in a small bowl, mix together the cream cheese, mustard, milk and half of the cheddar. Remove the dish from the oven and stir in the cream cheese mixture. Scatter the jalapeños all over, along with the remaining grated cheese. Season with a little more salt and lots of freshly ground black pepper and return to the oven for a further 10 – 15 minutes until golden and bubbling.

Garnish with the flaked almonds to serve.



TIPS: For non-vegetarians, this dish can be served with chopped ham, bacon or chorizo in it too!

Enjoy!

Jenny Pinn

(Recipe courtesy of The Fast 800 Keto recipe book by Dr Clare Bailey - and Dr Michael Mosley, whose advice has helped many people to change their lives for the better. RIP.)

Report of Annual Town Council Meeting 1st July 2024



OTTERY ST MARY
TOWN COUNCIL

An extraordinary Full Council meeting will be held at 7pm on Tuesday 6th August 2024 at the Station Hub to discuss the proposals on land at Strawberry Lane.

The Planning Committee, ELDC Committee, Operations Committee and Strategy Committee have met this month. Copies of the agendas and minutes from these meetings can be found on the Council website.

The Council resolved that the new Neighbourhood Plan needs to prioritise clean energy in the following areas: 1. Council properties 2. New development 3. Upgrading existing property including those in the Conservation area. The Council will focus on improving energy efficiency wherever possible and should focus on the Climate Emergency in a meaningful way. The ELDC Committee will consider what the Town Council can do to improve consistency of appearance in town and implement a minimum standard of buildings, shop fronts and homes in the town.

The Council appointed PATAS as their internal auditor for 2024/25.

The Council continues to monitor the situation regarding the Governor Consultation on a proposal to transfer Tipton St John Church of England Primary School to Thorne Farm, Ottery St Mary.

The Council has written to the Acting Chief Superintendent and Crime Commissioner to request that a second PCSO is allocated to the area.

The Council decided not to renew the rain gauges in Ottery St Mary and Tipton St John.

The Council has commissioned a new publication that includes a town map and blue plaque map. The publication is now available free of charge in local shops, restaurants, pubs and the library. This supports the digital Visit Ottery St Mary website, providing residents and visitors with information and events in our wonderful town. If any businesses would like copies of the publication please contact the Council.

The Council reiterated that only people attending the Station Community Hub or customers of RIO should be parking in the Station car park. The car park will be locked outside of RIO opening hours unless a booking has been made for the Station.

Cllr Johns will ask the veterans whether they require any Council support for any commemorative events next year.

Future Full Council meeting dates:

Monday 5 th August 2024	Council Offices
Tuesday 6 th August 2024	Station Community Hub, Mill Street – Extraordinary Full Council meeting to discuss the proposals of land at Strawberry Lane
Monday 2 nd September 2024	Tipton St John Community Hall
Monday 7 th October 2024	Council Offices

Useful dates:

Citizens Advice at Council Offices every Tuesday from 9.30am until 11.30am (subject to volunteer availability) or telephone 01395 265070

DCC Highways Surgery on Thursday 25th July from 10.15am - 12.00

The Town Council Offices are open from 10am until 1pm Monday to Friday. To phone or email the council, see our contact details below. You can keep up to date by following our Facebook page or looking at our website where you can view agendas and minutes for all Council and Committee Meetings, together with news and updates.

Please note that all Council meetings are open to the public and the agendas are displayed on the Council website and on noticeboards in Ottery St Mary, Alfington, Gosford and Tipton St John.

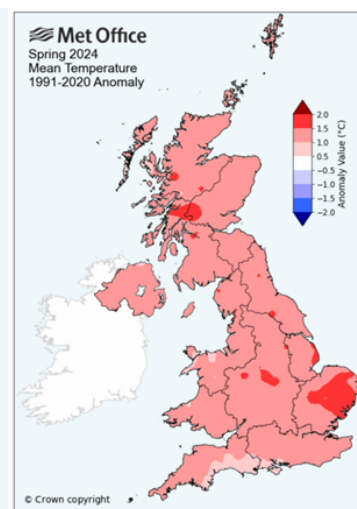
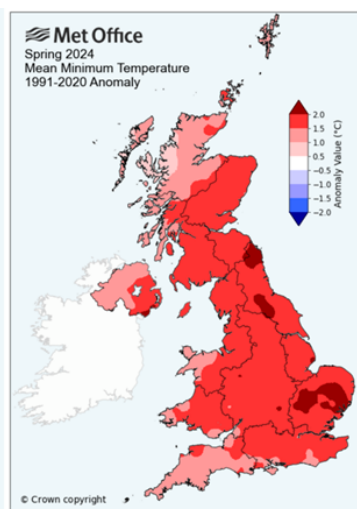
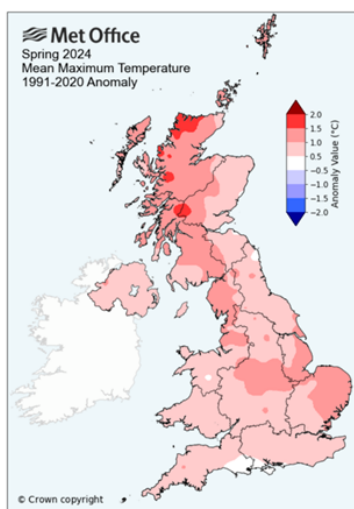
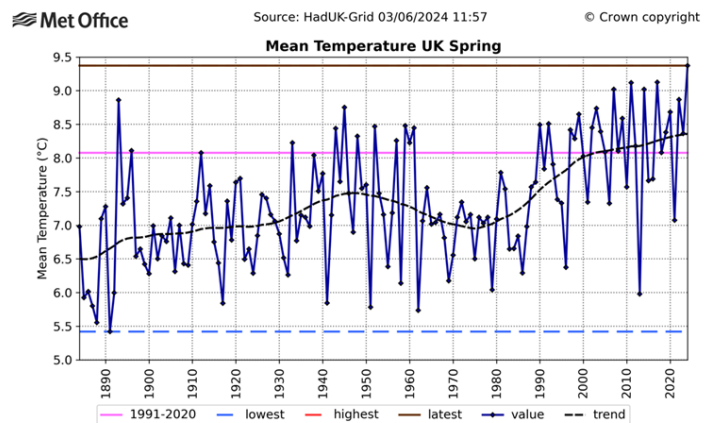
Kerry Kennell
Town Clerk

Ottery St Mary Town Council
Tel: 01404 812252
Email: admin@otterystmary-tc.gov.uk
Website: www.otterystmary-tc.gov.uk

Tipton Times Weather report

Hasn't it been a miserable cold, wet, spring and early summer? Actually, no, it hasn't! It has certainly been wet and it was cloudy with well-below average sunshine, but it wasn't cold. In fact, believe it or not, the UK has just had its warmest spring on record, as you can see in the graph opposite. May was a whole degree Celsius warmer than the previous record. Admittedly, Tipton wasn't quite as warm as that - the UK average was pushed up a lot by exceptionally warm temperatures in Scotland where some areas were over 3 degrees above average in May. Nevertheless, the whole UK was warmer than average for the spring and England also had its warmest spring on record. So why didn't it feel like it?

The charts below help to tell the story. If you are looking at them in black and white, I can assure you that ALL the non-white shading is pink to dark red, the top part of the key scale. The right hand plot is the mean (average) temperatures, but the middle one is the night-time minimum temperatures and you can see that it



was the nights that were particularly warm. Daytime maxima in the left plot were also warmer than normal but by much less, and of course it is day-time temperatures that give us much more of

a feel for warmth. Having said that, there were quite a few nights where we were sleeping with the windows wide open to try to cool the room down.

I am sure you know that clear sky nights are always much colder than cloudy nights. During the night when the sun is not warming the surface, the ground cools by radiating heat out into the night sky as infrared radiation. When the sky is clear that heat goes straight out to space and the ground cools rapidly, in turn cooling the air near the surface so we get cold. But when it is cloudy the cloud absorbs the infrared radiation or reflects some of it straight back down - the heat that is absorbed warms the cloud which in turns radiates a lot of that heat back towards the surface. So the cloud acts as a lovely thermal blanket, greatly reducing that night-time cooling. As I mentioned at the beginning, this spring was unusually cloudy which is a large part of why the night-time temperatures were so warm, also pushing up the averages.

Of course, the other big cause of the warmth is the long-term warming trend caused by climate change. I write about this a lot so I won't dwell on it here, but it is all too evident in the first graph above. The biggest change in UK spring temperatures came between the late '80s and 2000. Before that the average was fairly steady just above 7 Celsius right back to the early 20th Century, but since then it has jumped to over 8 Celsius. The pink line at around 8.1C is the 30-year average between 1991-2020 which is what is used as the climate "normal" for calculating above or below normal. If we were comparing this year's temperatures with the 1960's when I was born, for example, they would look even more dramatically warm. If the recent trend continues, as unfortunately it is expected to, then when we get into the 2030's we will be using an even higher "normal" averaged between 2001 and 2030.

Now, let's hope for a bit less cloud and rain so it FEELS warmer for the next few weeks as the schools close for the holidays.

Ken Mylne

RSPB Aylesbeare Common



I hope the wet start to summer is not causing too much dismay. As of mid-June, the weather still seems to be shaking itself out of winter. It will surely seem retrospectively refreshing in a few months when we are all caught up in the British pastime of complaining about the heat.

We have been lucky during our recent surveys to observe some wonderful birds and reptiles. Some familiar faces. We have seen Dartford Warblers scratching out their jagged tunes, Linnets cheerily chirping overhead, Yellowhammers belting out their iconic sweet rising notes and Stonechats clinking a pebble to summer. We have also been greeted by some interesting birds on passage such as a male Wheatear standing proud on the gorse and a wood warbler singing his song which recalls a spinning coin. Reed bunting have also been seen and heard at our ponds in the middle of Aylesbeare Common. Years ago they were a familiar sight and here's hoping they were the

vanguard for a new generation. All these birds can be heard during the day, but to tide us over until dawn, the nightjars are churring the evenings away. We have also come across two thirds of our native reptiles. Grass snakes, common lizards, slow worms and adder have all been spotted; but smooth snakes are also doing well.

The presence of all these beautiful birds competing through music to raise a clutch of strong songsters is wonderfully complemented by the adders sulking around in the heather. This reminds us though, that it really is very helpful to ensure that when



Dartford Warbler taken by Tim Burdock

you enjoy the commons with your four-legged friends, it's best to keep them on a lead. This is not just to prevent birds abandoning nests in fear (or not creating a nest at all), but to avoid any encounters with snakes. As somebody who was recently hissed at, even though I was looking at the ground, I can safely say they are not obvious until very close, especially the brown females.

In terms of work, it's been a busy start to June. We have been actively fencing. The fence around Manor Common is up and running thanks to the dedication of Gary and our hard-working mid-week volunteers. We are repairing the posts and rail around the main gate into Venn Ottery Common, which had rotted and risked falling over. Other tasks included moving our ponies off for their holidays in the lovely Blackdown hills (lucky guys). Over the summer from late June, Aylesbeare and Harpford commons will be grazed by cattle, putting in the relief shift and helping to graze the common more effectively.

Lastly, we are finalising our plans for Heath week! The last week of July will be devoted to public engagements events that take place across the Pebblebed. Events will be run by ourselves, as well as Devon Wildlife Trust and the Pebblebed Heaths Conservation Trust. As for the RSPB, we will be running our popular Bats Moths and Nightjars evening. It is an amazing opportunity to anybody wishing to see which creatures stir when we are asleep and a reminder that nature is ceaseless in its activity, filling every bit in time with productivity. Other events including pond dipping, which is excellent for kids and adults who retain their sense of wonder, and a new "Heath Hunt." This curated walk will allow people to compete to find and identify our various heathland flora and fauna while learning the history and ecological importance of our heaths. If you are not the competitive sort, then feel free to use our beautiful print outs to start off on a wildlife ID quest. Trust me, when you start identifying wildlife it makes every trip outside the house so much richer.

Tom Whyte

Otter Rail and River Run picture gallery



Photos by Paul Taylor of **Colin Densham**, overall winner



Mike Leworthy, local winner



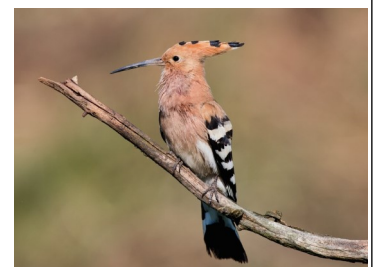
LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Nature Notes

I was so interested to read that a Hoopoe bird had visited Hayne Close.

Probably over twenty years ago, while living at 7 Hayne Close, I thought I heard a Hoopoe but I dismissed it as a figment of my imagination, as I just didn't think it was possible. I was very familiar with the call as we had visited friends in South Africa several times and the birds were always in the garden of their farm.

Thank you for proving that I was wrong to dismiss what I had heard.



Ann Thomson

Tipton Past

At first sight this looks like another lovely old school photograph, but this one is slightly different - look closely. We all love a bit of detective work and that was how this picture made me feel, looking at the clues and finding out more.

The date of this photograph is written on a board, it says 1923. The



children seem to be in their Sunday best, with bows, flowers and the teacher even has her smart hat on. The date gives us a clue; the school opened in 1843 so this was an anniversary year, 1923 was their 80th year. The headmistress in this year would have been Elizabeth Mary Channon and this was her last photo as headmistress, as she retired later that year. So, the flowers in the photograph could be to celebrate the 80th school anniversary or Elizabeth Channon's retirement or possibly both.

I felt as though we had learnt a lot about this photograph already. Then this was shared on Facebook - Tipton St John Memories - and amazingly Julie Blanchford recognised some of the children in the picture, soon we even had names for these young (yet old) faces.

We learnt that sitting in the front of the picture holding the chalk board is Florence Wood, next to her are her two younger sisters, Hazel and Daisy. They were 3 of a family of 11 children living in Station Road, Tipton St John, with their parents Samuel and Alice. Samuel worked as a Platelayer inspecting and maintaining the railway line. These three girls grew up in Tipton and today some of their family still live here in the village.

Florence or Flossie as she was known by her family, married William Gosling and had a son named Edward who unfortunately died in his 30's. Flossie is seen here in this familiar photograph taken when after the floods of 1969 Prince Philip visited the village and spoke to Flo on her doorstep - a doorstep which, so I hear, was always scrubbed immaculately clean. Hazel married James Rutherford and moved to Newton Poppleford. They had two girls, Janet and Mary and a boy named Alec. Tragically Mary was knocked off her bicycle and killed.



That leaves Daisy. I had come across Daisy before in a newspaper article, also from 1923 where a young girl, (Daisy) the youngest daughter of Samuel Wood, had fallen into the stream and needed to be rescued. Daisy made a full recovery and went on to later marry Richard Digger Ebdon. Digger was himself a local celebrity who played football semi-professionally for Exeter City. They lived at Combe crossroads with their daughter Joyce. Joyce also went to Tipton school and later married Peter Blanchford. Their children and grandchildren also attended the school. Isn't that amazing! So, together we learnt quite a bit from that 100 year old photograph.

Judith Taylor

St Gregory's Church, Venn Ottery

On 30th June, Venn Ottery and Southerton Residents' Association (VOSRA) arranged some delicious cream teas on Venn Ottery Green in aid of maintaining our three Church bells, the oldest of which was cast in the 15th century.

It was pleasing to see so many enjoying the teas, the social occasion and staying for the Songs of Praise service which followed in the beautifully, and lovingly, decorated Church. Much effort went into making the whole event a success and as residents, we can be very grateful. As a longstanding Venn Ottery resident I'd like to record my gratitude to everyone involved.

It is heartening when local people show they care about St Gregory's, our small Christian Church. I sometimes say that **it's all we've got in Venn Ottery** - other than the post box! The Church, thought to have been part of our community since soon after the Norman Conquest, is the most sacred place we have in this tiny village. I see a forgotten past when this building, dedicated to God, was at the centre of village life. Throughout the history of over nine centuries, our predecessors maintained it and came here to worship, to pray and to receive the Holy Sacraments. They even rebuilt the main body of the Church, taking the labours of 102 years after the Venn Ottery fire of c.1780. This had destroyed the structure, with its thatched roof, and only the existing red stone tower was left standing on its reputedly-Saxon foundations.

So, after all that has gone before us, will we - in our own generations - let it cease to be a place in which to worship God, to pray for our people and to receive God's blessings? It is good that, after the consequences of Covid, some services are now being held in the Church again and that we shall have our **Harvest Service there on Sunday, 1st September**. When, at this time of harvest thanksgiving, we sing *All good gifts around us /Are sent from heaven above*, we could remember too with thanks that our Church is also a gift - a blessing - from God himself.

If we want to keep it as our Church, we must support it, we must use it as a Church - hardly a profound thought, but an important truth to grasp and act on. The psalmist wrote: *I was glad when they said unto me, /Let us go into the house of the Lord;* (Ps.122:1 KJB). There have been times too when our hearts have been warmed and we have been so "glad" to be in God's house that it has been filled to capacity. With our local population, **we could quite easily fill it again, with standing room only** and not just for Christmas Carol services. Let's visualise that scene, pray for it and do our part. Will not all of heaven be glad with us? Over twenty years ago we had a service in which some of us could choose the hymns. I chose one, written by William Bullock (1798-1874), for the consecration of a church he built as a missionary to Newfoundland. The first verse is:

*We love the place, O God,
Wherein Thine honour dwells;
The joy of Thine abode
All earthly joy excels.*

Maybe the words of the psalmist, and of this hymn, each echo for our tiny Church what our forebears have felt down through the centuries and what we feel today.



Perhaps whenever we hear the bells of St Gregory's ring out through our village, they will speak of the faithfulness of our forefathers, saying that this very special, sacred place in our midst, which we inherited from them, we now hold on a no-less-sacred trust for our successors.

Above all, may the ring of those trinity of bells, and the presence of our Church, always remind us that whatever comes our way, collectively or individually, *Almighty* God - Father, Son and Holy Spirit - is present with us and that in the difficult times He will see us through. God "is able to do so much more than we can ever ask for or even think of": (Eph 3:20 GNB). Let's remember Him and give Him glory.

Ken Field

CHURCH CALENDAR FOR AUGUST & SEPTEMBER 2024

Everyone is welcome to join us at any of our services or events

AUGUST

SATURDAY	3 rd	10.00 am	Coffee Morning and produce stall.	Community Hall
SUNDAY	4 th	10.00 am 10.30 am	Holy Communion Holy Communion	N.Pop O.S.M.
SUNDAY	11 th	11.00 am	Holy Communion	T.S.J
SUNDAY	18 th	10.30 am (for 11.00 am)	Café Church	Community Hall
SUNDAY	25 th	9.30 am	Holy Communion followed by preparation for the Fete	School Field.
MONDAY	26 th	Noon	Church Fete	School Field

SEPTEMBER

SUNDAY	1 st	10.00 am 10.30 am 6.00 pm	Holy Communion Holy Communion Harvest Festival	N.Pop O.S.M. V.O.
SATURDAY	7 th	10.00 am	Coffee Morning and produce stall.	Community Hall
SUNDAY	8 th	11.00 am	Morning Service with Baptism	T.S.J
SUNDAY	15 th	10.30 am (for 11.00 am)	Harvest Café Church followed by Bring & Share lunch	Community Hall
SUNDAY	22 nd	9.30 am	Harvest Holy Communion	T.S.J
SUNDAY	29 th	11.00 am	Morning Worship	T.S.J

OCTOBER

SATURDAY	5 th	10.00 am	Coffee Morning and produce stall.	Community Hall
SUNDAY	6 th	10.00 am 10.30 am	Holy Communion Holy Communion	N.Pop O.S.M.

ON LINE SERVICES

In addition to the live services and events listed above, an online Service of Worship takes place at 9.30 a.m. on the following Sundays: **4th & 18th August and 1st & 15th September.**

For details our Vicar Mark Ward (revmarkward@btinternet.com) or the PCC Secretary Alison Stevens (tiptonpcc@gmail.com).

CHURCH FETE

BANK HOLIDAY MONDAY 26th AUGUST
SCHOOL FIELD at NOON

Stalls Barbeque Lunches Cream Teas Grand Draw

Diary Dates - August and September

All dates correct at the time of publication.

August

25th Aug	11am	Softball Cricket Tournament, Playing Fields	back cover
26th Aug	12 noon	Tipton Church Fete, School Field	P4

September

9th Sept	7.30pm	Table Tennis, Community Hall	P19
16th Sept	7.30pm	Tipton Ladies Group, Community Hall	P12
23rd Sept	7.30pm	Table Tennis, Community Hall	P19

October

6th Oct	7pm	Quiz Night, Community Hall	back cover
---------	-----	----------------------------	------------

Otter St Mary Heritage Society and Museum - registered charity CIO no. 1179598

Our Museum remains open for the summer season to the end of September on Thursdays and Fridays from 10.30am to 4pm and on Saturdays from 11am to 3pm. Please come and visit but check on our website before doing so just in case there are any last minute changes to opening times. The website address is www.otteryheritage.org.uk. There's plenty to see and an exhibition by our youngest member all about the history of Pixie Day which took place this year on Saturday 22nd June.

Our monthly members' talks take place at The Institute, Yonder St., Ottery St Mary EX11 1HD on the 3rd Tuesday of the month. Guests are welcome at £3 payable at the door. Please check our website for any changes, but the schedule is as follows:

August - no meeting

Tuesday 17th September (8pm at The Institute after the AGM for members at 7.30pm)

The Golden Age of Piracy presented by Mike Rendell

"Piracy is often seen in very different lights - we are appalled by pirates off the coast of Somalia but we happily go to the cinema to see films such as the Pirates of the Caribbean franchise - because they feature pirates who were, well, British. So that made it alright!"

His talk looks at the final flourish of piracy in the 1720s, after a vast treasure fleet had sunk off the Florida coast in a hurricane in 1715, sparking a salvage race which continues to this day ...

All enquiries, including membership (£20 single, £27.50 joint), stewarding and participation in archiving to

Lynda Murlewski, Hon. Secretary: otteryheritage@gmail.com

OPERA NIGHTS

at The Royal British Legion, West Hill

Opera Nights, on the big screen at the Royal British Legion, are informal and free of charge. The bar will be open at 7.00pm and there is a short introduction to the work at 7.20pm. The Opera commences at 7.30pm with an interval, when the bar will again be open.

If the operas are given in the original language there are subtitles.

Thursday 26th September: Johann Strauss' "Die Fledermaus"

We start the season with this bubbling production from Covent Garden conducted by Plácido Domingo with Kiri Te Kanawa, Hermann Prey and Benjamin Luxon, and some big surprises in the cabaret scene!

Thursday 24th October Mozart's "Don Giovanni". From the Metropolitan Opera, New York. This acclaimed Zeffirelli production, with Bryn Terfel, Renee Fleming and Ferruccio Furlanetto, is conducted by James Levine.

Further information from opconpeterclarke@gmail.com



In aid of Tipton and Venn Ottery
Churches

TIPTON FETE

in Tipton School field

MONDAY

26th AUGUST

starting at

12 noon



Admission £2.00, Children free
**Barbecue Lunches
& Delicious Teas**

*Stalls, Games, Music and
Grand Draw*

Community Hall

QUIZ NIGHTS ARE BACK!
(teams of up to 6)

**Sundays 6th October
and 10th November
at 7pm**

£4 per head (pay by cash or card)

BYO food, drinks, and glasses

Book your table in advance by contacting
John & Pauline Belton

01404 813431 thebeltons@talk21.com

THE SHANTY MEN
**Saturday 16th November at
7.30pm**

An exciting evening of musical
entertainment including a fish and chip
supper. **£20 per head** (further details in
the next edition)



Calling all families, village clubs and organisations

Come and help your local cricket club celebrate its
50th anniversary and take part in our mixed age
softball cricket tournament
on

Sunday 25th August from 11am

Get a team together of 8 players, which must include at least 2 under 14s and 2 ladies.
No experience or equipment needed: this is just for fun although there will be prizes and a
prestigious trophy for the winners!

Entry: £10 per team

Barbecue and refreshments available

To enter, email or phone David Birch:
birch_david@outlook.com; 07929 822940

