



2023
ISSUE 80

CHALGRAVE NEWS

Celebrating Chalgrave

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Day/Date	Event	Location	Time
Third Tuesday of each month	Parish Council Meeting	Memorial Hall	7.30 pm
Second Tuesday of each month	WI	Memorial Hall	8.00 pm
Fourth Wednesday each month	Pop-Up tea room	Memorial Hall	11-1
17 December	FATHER CHRISTMAS FLOAT	Hockliffe	
21 December	FATHER CHRISTMAS	Chalgrave	

Thank you to Jane Spiers for the cover photo

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thechalgravenews@gmail.com / 07927 144090

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Please send your contributions to: thechalgravenews@gmail.com

The Chalgrave News team produces the Chalgrave News in good faith and we do all we can to ensure that no offence is caused to any individual or organisation. We also reserve the right not to publish articles and contributions submitted to us if they do not comply with our policy.

A note from the editorial team

In this edition:

- ◆ Councillor Harvey Greenwood reports after his meeting with the Deputy Commissioner, Ian Dalgarno.
- ◆ Ken delves into a little history of Chalgrave.
- ◆ Sports Club have lots to report.

Also the jottings from our wonderful regular contributors, not forgetting the ingenious Aunt Agnes getting into another pickle, but pleased to note that our magazine was not to blame—this time!

When you read this Christmas will almost be upon us and the days will be getting longer again.

A Very Happy Christmas and best Wishes for 2024 from us all.



Chairman of the Parish Council

There has been a lot of concern about lorries going through our Parish. The Parish Council does not have the powers to stop lorries going through our villages. However, we can try to control the number that do. The villages of Tebworth and Wingfield are in a 30mph and weight limit zone. The weight limit is 7.5 tonnes – except for access. If I know the company, I have called them and asked their drivers to avoid our villages - Soilex and Donoghue have agreed.



In the meantime, we have agreed with Central Beds Planning and Highways that the preferred route from traffic to and from the Tebworth Solar Farm will be the A5/B5120/Chalgrave Road.

We are still insisting that the developers of Ivy Farm Barns Plot 2 should use the wooden cladding agreed in the original planning application. We have got Andrew Selous involved in this matter.

Work continues on paths, stiles and bridges in the Parish. CBC have new contractors and are aware of what still needs to be done. We have a small team in our Parish who continue to monitor pathways and will clear paths when needed.

The yellow lines have been repainted on the corner of Wingfield and Toddington roads. They are there to stop cars being parked on the corner restricting the view for drivers turning into Wingfield Road. There is also a white line on the corner of St. Marys Close to remind drivers not to park there as it obstructs traffic using Wingfield Road.

We welcome two new members of the Parish Council - Jane Spiers from Tebworth and Vicky Hydes from Wingfield.

You are welcome to attend our Council meetings. They are usually on the third Tuesday of the month but check with our Clerk in case there is a change. The minutes of our meetings are displayed on the notice boards and on our website.

Phil Parry
Chair



View from The House

The three policing issues which my constituents have raised with me, the most over the last month have been dangerous illegal motorcyclists, shoplifting often accompanied with threats to shop-workers, and the danger and distress caused by car meets which lead to illegal drag racing along many of our roads. On the police response to dangerous motorcyclists, I sought clarification from the police minister that Bedfordshire Police are able to pursue the riders and I note that the Chief Constable has made this clear to all of his officers.



I am horrified about the impact of shoplifting on shopkeepers and their staff and will be visiting a local Co-op this week to see what more can be done to prevent these thefts from our shops. The car meet dates seem to be announced every month and I have asked the police to get ahead of the curve to keep our roads safe and to enable residents to sleep.

I was very encouraged by my visit to Priory Gardens GP surgery where they have taken on four more GPs as well as being a training practice for medical students, paramedics pharmacists and nurses. This is a really good way for a surgery to attract and retain primary care staff. They are also the first GP practice locally to have GP assistants to handle a lot of the administration, which enables GPs to have more time with patients. GP assistants have also been shown to help the retention of GPs. I was also very encouraged to learn about the introduction of micro suction to remove earwax across the constituency.

The primary care networks are also now employing social prescribers, and I had the pleasure to sit with one based in the Citizens Advice Bureau, who was helping local people with a lot of the underlying reasons why people have gone to see their GP in the first place. This is an exciting and important initiative, which I am delighted to see being rolled out.

It was wonderful to be able to visit Houghton Regis, Weatherfield Academy in Dunstable, and Heathwood Lower School in Leighton Buzzard. I am always humbled when I go into schools by the dedication of the

View from The House

teachers and all the staff to do their very best for all of the children in their care and we are very fortunate to have so many brilliant schools locally.

It was also very good to be able to visit Elm Lodge care home and to see the dementia awareness training they do as well as seeing the dementia outreach which Morrisons in Houghton Regis also do. It was also very good to see the great progress being made on the Kingsland leisure centre, funded from government levelling up money. I also met with council officers to talk about proposals for traffic relief in Hockliffe and how we can make the A505 safer.

When I visited the Dunstable Royal Mail sorting office I learnt of their plans to employ an additional 18 staff, but I'm still waiting to learn what the comparable number is for the Leighton Buzzard sorting office.



Andrew Selous MP for South West Bedfordshire

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Andrew Selous Member of Parliament for SW Bedfordshire

Andrew's contact details are:

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Tel: 0207 2198134

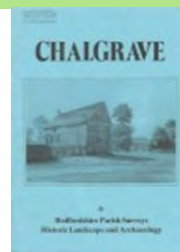
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Or to see him

tel: 01582 662821 or email tracey.farrugia@parliament.uk

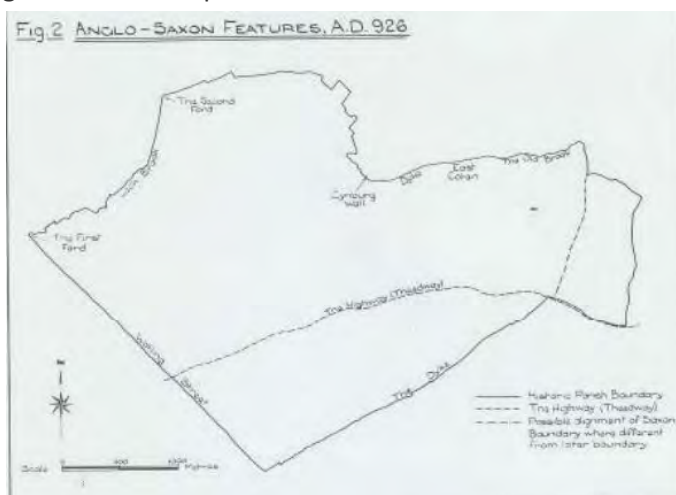
HISTORY OF CHAGRAVE

The Chalgrave Survey was produced by Stephen R Coleman, archivist and Central Beds Council, in 1986 and is produced in full on the Chalgrave PC website <https://chalgrave-pc.gov.uk/>



Newer residents to the Parish can find many interesting facts about the parish going back to the charter of AD926 in which “King Aethelstan granted the estate to a certain Ealdred”. For example, the Theedway, known locally, as the Gypsy track, is probably of Prehistoric origins and was a long-distance trade route, probably a salt way linking, via the Icknield way with the salterns along the East Anglian fen edges. It is now defined as a “BOAT” [Byway open to all traffic] although is very muddy and impassable to all bar walker, riders and off-road vehicles. It crosses the Chalgrave boundary from Charlton and Sundon down to Featherbed Lane. It then originally continued along the Tebworth road and down footpath 14 down to the other old route, the Roman Watling street, and on to Eggington and beyond.

I mention this now because you may also be interested in a new publication “ They came to the crossroads” as well as mentioning the Theedway, It is mainly about Dunstable and Watling street where some of our older villages can remember farmers herding cattle and sheep from Tebworth down the A5 to the train station.



For further info contact Ken Green on 874107 or kentebworth@gmail.com

Parish Council at the annual Police Chief Commissioner's meeting

On the 11th October, Councillor Phil Parry and I had the pleasure to represent Chalgrave on behalf of the Parish Council at the annual Police Chief Commissioner's meeting to discuss local issues within our community and how the police could better support our parish.

The meeting was headed by the Deputy Commissioner, Ian Dalgarno, along with other police men and women from the Bedfordshire Police department. Ian expressed his interest in attending local meetings and therefore we will be inviting him to join one of our upcoming Parish Council meetings in order to express our concerns for local issues such as fly tipping, hare coursing and other pressing matters to see how these could be addressed.

Some key points taken from the meeting are that, overall, crime is down in Central Bedfordshire; however demand is higher. The service received an additional 5,000+ phone calls in the past year with 32% of them being deemed immediate response calls. However, of those calls, 40% were then deemed non-urgent and would therefore have been better handled by the 101 service. Bedfordshire police now has 1456 officers serving within their force which is the highest number they have ever had at their disposal. This is down to an influx of young people wishing to serve their community and join the police service. A potential downside to this is that we have an incredibly young police force, one of the youngest in the country in fact. This means that constables patrolling the streets who, in bygone years, would have had 10+ years' experience have now only had 2-3 years in the force. Although this could be seen as a negative, the younger officers do of course have all the necessary training and knowledge to perform their roles to the highest standard. The biggest takeaway from this should be the bright future the force has with such a high intake of new and keen officers who will work their way up the ranks and within ten years we will have a larger and more experienced force than in previous years.

Our service, as it serves a smaller area, is unfortunately funded as a rural* police service even though we do have two large towns (Bedford and Luton) which is an issue that certainly restricts Bedfordshire Police. However, a local investor felt the service needed to provide better support to farming communities and villages, much like those within the parish of Chalgrave, and generously invested £50,000 into a dedicated rural crime team. This incredible contribution now means that Bedfordshire Police Service has 9 dedicated constables fighting rural crime who are better equipped with new kit such as offroad motorbikes and drones to help with

their policing.

Another future service they will be implementing is their new 101 web chat service. Rather than having to contact the call handler via the phone, residents will be able to contact the service via the Bedfordshire Police service website and speak to the call handler directly to express their concerns regarding non-urgent issues within their community. This new service will mean they can handle a higher volume of calls with the chat handler being able to take up to 7 calls at once rather than just the one using conventional methods. This should hopefully provide a much faster and more efficient service.

The meeting provided a beneficial insight into the workings of the police force within the county and how they're trying to better their service.

If you have any queries or issues you'd like to raise when Chalgrave Parish Council meets with Ian Dalgarno then please contact me via my email harvey.greenwood@chalgrave-pc.gov.uk in order to make your voice heard.

Councillor Harvey Greenwood, Police Liaison, Chalgrave Parish Council

**The term 'rural' in this context refers to the fact that Bedfordshire is a small county which is majority countryside unlike larger and more densely populated counties. The 'Rural Crime Unit' is a dedicated team within our police service to fighting crime in the countryside.*



Chalgrave Sports Club

Sadly, we had to cancel at the last minute our Quiz Night on the 8th of October because of electrical problems with the Memorial Hall.



So much work had gone in to preparing for this great event.

The Hall has now been shut for a month which meant that we had to cancel both the Saturday and Monday yoga classes. This was a bit of disaster as attendance for both classes were increasing and we were drawing people from outside of Chalgrave.

However, by the time you read this, the Yoga will be back up and running on Saturday morning at 11.00 and Monday evening at 7.00. The classes are one hour and cost £3 for CSC members and £5 for non-members.

We have rescheduled our fabulous Quiz Night for the 20th April.

MAD (Mile a Day) Challenge continues with 30+ plus members still going.

Unfortunately, I missed a day because of a bout of Covid. I am still continuing but won't get my gold medal! As well as the Dinner and Drinks Social evening on the 28th December in The Plough, we are also planning a medal ceremony in early January to recognise all those that have taken part in the MAD Challenge.

We support and promote the Local Parkrun at Houghton Hall Park.



Chalgrave Sports Club

The event takes place every single week at 9:00 on a Saturday morning, and CSC usually try and attend once a month (usually on the first Saturday of the month) to meet up and socialise before (from 08:30 onwards) and after the 5k run/walk. You are very welcome to join us to run, walk or both.

We have a Golf Day organised for the 28th December at Caddington Golf Club 10.00 start. The cost will be £30 which includes breakfast and prizes. It's a great day out – and caters for all levels (and I mean all levels). If you want to join us please contact Paul Levy, any member of the Sports Club or go to our website -

www.chalgravesportsclub.co.uk

Well done to CSC member Libby Gatward who has just completed a 74k/46 mile cycling sportive up and down the hills of the Peak District.



Libby (second from the left) and her veterinary student colleagues belong to the Nottingham University cycling club. The route included some pretty steep 17% climbs (to put that in context, the double hill up from the A5 Hockliffe into Tebworth is about 7-8%) with over 4,400 ft of climbing from start to finish in total. Despite some early mechanical issues Libby completed the arduous route in about 5 hours, which included bike repair and hydration stops.

If you want to join the club annual membership only costs £10 - you get discounted entry into CSC events and activities, 10% discount at SportsShoes.com and regular newsletters. New members also get a CSC water bottle.



So, the dates for your diary –

Thursday 28th December Golf Day

Thursday 28th December Dinner and Drinks Social Evening – The Plough

Saturday 20th April 2024 Quiz Night - fun night plus fish and chip supper

Phil Parry



Meeting Update

In **September** Pauline Roby ran a singing workshop for us. We did a warmup, learnt some new songs that we sang in rounds and explored singing in different voices and pitches.

In **October** we had a talk from Sue Mitchell from Birds of Bray. She brought along four magnificent owls and we had the chance to interact with one of them.



Future Meetings

We meet on the second Tuesday of the month at 8pm in Chalgrave Memorial Hall, Wingfield Road, Tebworth, LU7 9QQ. We typically have a number of additional outings and events throughout the year.





Date	Event
Tue-14-Nov-23	Suffragette Talk
Sat-09-Dec-23	Brick Lane Music Hall in London – Jungle Bells Show and Dinner
Tue-12-Dec-23	Christmas Crafts
Tue-09-Jan-24	A celebrant and the changing face of life ceremonies
Tue-13-Feb-24	Decluttering: Where to Start and the Benefits.
Tue-12-Mar-24	Belly Dancing workshop
Tue-09-Apr-24	Answers in the dark- grief, sleep and dreams
Tue-14-May– 24	AGM and hedgehog talk
Tue-11-Jun-24	Walk
Tue-09-Jul-24	Tales from the Auction Room
Tue-10-Sep-24	Indoor Kurling
Tue-08-Oct-24	Eyes on the spies
Tue-12-Nov-24	One of Our Own - the wartime story of Victor Ekins
Tue-10-Dec-24	Christmas Crafts

Debbie Parry—Chalgrave WI President
Debbie.helen.parry@outlook.com Tel 07770 543797



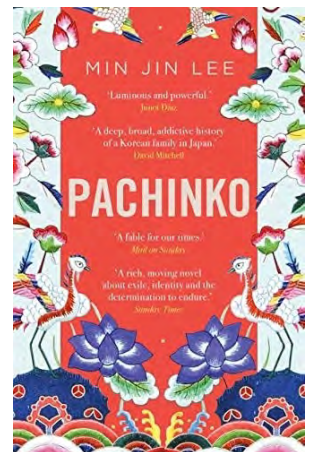
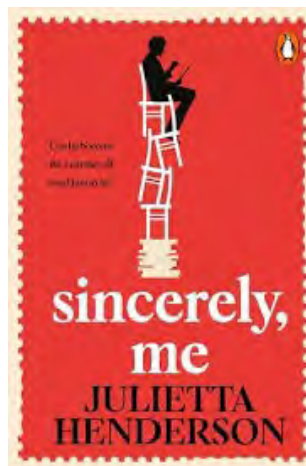
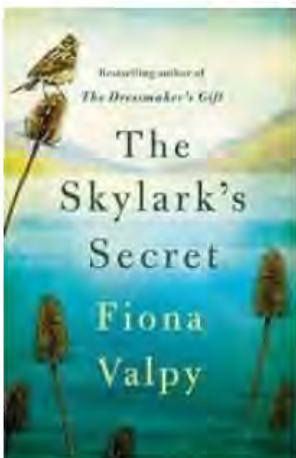
CHALGRAVE WI Book Club

The WI book group meets on the fourth Thursday of the month, at 7.30pm. There are currently 12 of us and we meet in each other's houses, or at The Plough in Wingfield. Currently we have 12 members and take it in turns to choose the books we read, covering all genres and tastes. Not everyone always finishes the book by the meeting date but the rule is to be prepared for spoilers, if you've not got to the end in time.

In August we read **The Sky Larks Secret** by **Fiona Valpy**

Game keeper's daughter Flora's remote highland village finds itself the base for the Royal Navy's Arctic convoys and life in her close-knit community changes forever. The laird's son falls in love with Flora, and as tensions build in their disrupted home, any chance of their happiness seems doomed. Decades later, Flora's daughter, is forced to return to the village and to the tiny cottage where she grew up. Now back, with a daughter of her own, Lexie learns that her mother—and the hostile-seeming village itself—have long been hiding secrets that make her question everything she thought she knew. As she pieces together the fragments of her parents' story, Lexie discovers the courageous, devastating sacrifices made in her name.

A good book with a few unrealistic parts.





CHALGRAVE WI Book Club

In September we read *Sincerely Me* by Julietta Henderson

An uplifting and heart-warming novel about a family reunited, second chances and the power of forgiveness. Danny is the definition of a man who 'could do better'. He drinks more than he should, currently lives in his best friend's garden shed - and he hasn't spoken to his sister in 16 years.

Wolfie is the daughter of Danny's estranged sister, Lou. She's never met her uncle, but her mother is struggling. So when Wolfie sees Danny's picture in the paper, she sets out to find him. Within a week, Danny goes from being responsibility-free to a big brother, an uncle and an unwitting existential 'guru' to some very lost souls. This took a while to get going but, and seemed confusing at the beginning, but was a good read by the end.

In October we read *Pachinko* by Min Jin Lee

In the early 1900s, teenaged Sunja falls for a wealthy stranger, at the seashore near her home in Korea. He promises her the world, but when she discovers she is pregnant—and that her lover is married—she refuses to be bought. Instead, she accepts an offer of marriage from a gentle, sickly minister passing through on his way to Japan. But her decision to abandon her home, and to reject her son's powerful father, sets off a dramatic saga that will echo down through the generations. A story of love, sacrifice, ambition, and loyalty. This was a really long book that should have been much shorter.

It was interesting to find out about life in Korea and Japan at that time and we did enjoy it.

If you are interested in joining the WI book group please contact Sue (sue.watling@hotmail.com) You do need to be a member of Chalgrave WI to join this group

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SCAN ME



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www.chalgravesportsclub.co.uk

[chalgravesportsclub](https://www.facebook.com/chalgravesportsclub)

Ho Ho Ho

What is every parent's favourite Christmas song?

· Silent Night!

· How did Joseph and Mary weigh baby Jesus at birth?

· They had a weigh in the manger.

· What's the difference between the Christmas alphabet and the ordinary alphabet?

· The Christmas alphabet has Noel!

· What do you get when you cross a snowman with a vampire?

· Frostbite.

· What is Santa's dog's name?
Santa paws

· What is green, covered in Christmas lights and Christmas bulbs, and goes ribbit?

· A mistle-toad.

· Why did the scarecrow get a big Christmas bonus?

· Because he was out-standing in his field.

· What do they sing at a snowman's birthday party?

· Freeze a jolly good fellow!

· What do you call a reindeer ghost?

· Cari-boo!

Chalgrave Church News

The autumn leaves are falling and so are the conkers all around the church yard. The seasons are changing quickly now. Thank you to everyone who has helped to maintain the church and the church grounds this year.

One of our biggest concerns this year has been the restoration of a Chancel Beam which had rotted on one end, with virtually nothing attaching it to the wall. Restoration to that chancel beam is now complete and looks great – but getting to this stage has taken several years and has been a big concern. Our attention now turns to the beam above the pulpit, in the nave, which is currently being supported by a scaffolding pole as it also seems to be wasting away at one end. We are anxiously keeping an eye on some cracks in the adjoining walls which have appeared. The application for approval of the work is currently with the Diocese Advisory Committee. Further investigation of other beams in church will be needed in due course to make sure they are not suffering from the bug & rot which caused the damage to the chancel beam.

Our weekly Sunday services continue.. although, during the restoration work in the Chancel, we met in the Lady Chapel instead of the main body of the church. Chalgrave Church was decorated beautifully with fresh fruit, vegetables, tinned and packaged food and many beautiful flowers for the Harvest Service on 1 October. Invitations to the service were sent out to local farmers and to local food providing businesses so we could offer our thanks and prayers for their hard work. Thank you to everyone who helped to decorate the church, and to everyone who made contributions. The fresh produce, tins and packaged foods were distributed between the local foodbank and some local families. The needs faced by the foodbank this year are so much greater, so thank you for your contributions. On Saturday evening, before the harvest services, we enjoyed a Benefice Harvest Supper in the Wilkinson Hall. The food was delicious and a good time was had by all.

The Pop-Up Tea Room continues to be very popular and you now need to get there early to find a parking space! The food has earned a wonderful reputation, with over 40 people attending in September to enjoy the cakes, soup and savouries. It is such a special connection opportunity for village folks to get together and there is happy chat over a cuppa, with books and goods for sale too.



Chalgrave Church News

Other church activities continue during the week. Linda leads a weekly assembly at the lower school (Nigel often goes too) and they have also been invited into the middle and lower schools for the school Harvest celebrations, for Remembrance services, and in December both schools plan to visit Toddington Church for their Christmas Carol services. Messy Church for younger children is held monthly at Wilkinson Hall and the Youth Group, led by Rebecca, takes place 2 or 3 times a month at Wilkinson Hall. New members are warmly invited.

Our Christmas services are listed over page.



Chalgrave Church Services & Dates for your Diary

Looking ahead towards Christmas here is a list of some of our events:

Sunday services continue at 9:30am weekly

December 8,9,10th - Toddington Christmas Tree Festival

December 13th - Christmas Pop Up Tea Room

December 16th - Carols by Candlelight Service, Chalgrave Church at 6pm.

December 24 - Christmas Eve - Crib Service, Chalgrave Church at 2.30pm

December 24 - Christmas Eve - Midnight Mass 11:15pm

There will be morning Benefice services at 10am at Toddington Church on Sunday

December 24th and 11am on Sunday **December 31st**

(No morning services at Chalgrave church).

We warmly invite you to come and join us. Do please get in touch, if we can help or support in any way, or with any prayer requests you may have.

Rev Linda (Contact 07715 603557 revdchalgrave@gmail.com)

Sandy Ryan (Contact 01525874748 Sandra-ryan@sky.com)

We are always excited and happy to share your photographs, so if you have any pictures and/or stories to share about our wonderful parish, please send to

thechalgravenews@gmail.com





Stunning photos by
Julia Marsh
from last winter.



A Christmas Ghost Story

I love a ghost story, especially at Christmas and especially in an old house. There's something about the long dark evenings, an open fire casting shadows on the wall and the wind in the trees outside that can be just a little bit unsettling. These days, the old house is calm and still but, many years ago, it was a different story. Back in the 1980s when we first moved in, the Old Post Office and General Stores, as it was then known, had a bit of a reputation. Everyone knew it was haunted by The Grey Lady.

I was sceptical. Most of these stories were told late at night in the Queens Head after a few spirits of a different kind and, after we moved in, everything was fine.... For a while.

On a few occasions I thought I caught something out of the corner of my eye but when I looked, nothing was there. There were strange sounds too; a lifted latch on a door that was closed; footsteps on the stairs when no one was there; a creaking floorboard from the empty room above.

I managed to explain everything away. Until...

It was a humid night and, pregnant with my second child, I was overheated and uncomfortable in bed. The nursery was not yet prepared and a double bed was made up ready for visitors with fresh bedding in the middle room.

I made my way there and soon fell asleep. I have no idea what time it was when I began to stir and felt what seemed to be an icy cold hand gripping my ankle. I lay there for a while, petrified, trying to work out if I was awake or asleep.

The cold hand remained.

After what seemed like a very long time, without opening my eyes, I got up and felt my way along the corridor back to my own room, where, after a while, I fell back to sleep. But, when I woke up the next day, the icy cold feeling was still there and stayed there for most of the day. The memory is still very clear all these years later.

There were plenty more inexplicable events in the years that followed (they'll probably pop up in future Christmas editions of the Chalgrave News) and they eventually led me to get the house cleansed by a good friend who was into all that kind of stuff.

I must admit, as we moved from room to room with a smudge stick, bell and candle, I thought it was all just a little bit bonkers... But it worked and these days I'm please to say I can confirm for sure that The Grey Lady has definitely left the building!

If you have any ghost stories, please do share them with the Chalgrave News team on thechalgravenews@gmail.com

Frances Masters



Chalgrave Memorial Hall

Like everyone else, the Memorial Hall Committee has felt the recent surge in inflation and the cost of heating and maintaining the hall has gone up with everything else.

Following a recent routine check, we became aware of some serious electrical issues in the hall and as a result we had to close the hall at short notice in order to get them remedied.

We sincerely apologise to all those who had their bookings cancelled at short notice, and we are now confident that the hall electrics are fit for the future.

You have probably noticed that the playground equipment has now been removed. Many thanks to Roger Fenwick for his hard work doing this. A replacement for the playground will be some way into the future, as it is only realistically possible with a significant external grant, such as the National Lottery Fund. In the meantime if anyone has any suggestions as to how they would like to see the space used, please get in touch with the co-chairs of the Memorial hall Committee by e-mail.



John Wojdyla john.wojdyla@btinternet.com

William Randell
will.randell.wr@gmail.com

By the time you read this, we will have held our first fundraising table-top sale.

Any suggestions for future events you would like to see are always welcome.

If you are interested in supporting the Memorial Hall, please contact us.

Helpers/volunteers are always welcome.



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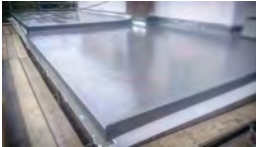
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WILD CHALGRAVE INVADERS

We are all familiar with the sight of muntjac deer running around the countryside. They are not native to the UK and were introduced in the 19th century by the then Duke of Bedford as ornamental 'pets' for the Woburn Park estate. Sometime around the beginning of the 20th century some escaped or were released and since then their numbers have increased rapidly. You might think they are relatively harmless unless they get into your garden and eat everything but they are the cause of thousands of road accidents each year (one estimate in 2012 put the figure at 40,000). They have no natural predators in the UK and their overgrazing prevents woodland regeneration and has a knock-on effect on other wildlife.



Many non-native species have been introduced to the UK over the years, often with negative effects. Japanese knotweed, rhododendron and Himalayan balsam for example were all introduced as ornamental plants and have since become pests. They can colonise vast areas, out-competing the local flora and are difficult to eradicate. A more recent arrival is the box tree moth. A native of East Asia it arrived in the UK in 2007 and has since spread rapidly. If you're a gardener who grows box bushes you will know just how fast its caterpillars can defoliate a plant



WILD CHALGRAVE INVADERS

although the adult moth is quite pretty.

The Asian hornet is a more worrying recent arrival. First seen in France in 2004 it has now spread across mainland Europe. Since 2016 there have been one or two sightings a year in the UK but in 2023 there have already been 22 confirmed reports and there are fears it may have become established in the country. This would be bad news for our native honeybees, solitary bees and wasps all of which the Asian hornet predated. Honeybees are particularly at risk as the hornets don't even have to hunt them – they just wait outside the hive and catch them as they go in and out and then dismember them and eat them. They are smaller than our native hornets and have orange faces, yellow-tipped legs and a darker body. The aim is still to keep them out of the UK so if you spot one make sure you report it.



Alien species are an increasing worldwide problem. Global trade and travel are largely responsible and climate change means that many species that previously wouldn't have survived a British winter may now flourish. One of the biggest worries for the future is the possible arrival of vector-borne diseases – those spread by insects such as mosquitos and ticks. Up until the 1800s malaria was relatively common in Britain, particularly in low-lying wetland areas such as the Fens and was referred to as marsh-fever or ague. Land drainage and improved housing helped to eradicate it but now there are fears that malaria could return. Scientists in southern England have been monitoring invasive mosquito species and testing them for the presence of malaria and other diseases. Zika, dengue and West Nile virus are just some of the diseases that are spread by mosquitos. So far they haven't been found!

Janet Day

HOW DOES YOUR GARDEN GROW?

Evergreen Plants

At this time of year, after all the leaves have fallen, the garden can look a bit sparse. Evergreen plants add structure, in winter they really come to the fore. They can be used as a backdrop to borders, clipped into formal shapes and hedges. They provide shelter from the sun and wind, and valuable cover for wildlife.



Taxus Baccata *Summergold*



Picea Globosa



Pinus Strobus *Pendula*

Conifers – these come in a variety of leaf shapes and colours.

When choosing a Conifer, be sure to check their growth rate and ultimate size. You don't want to be introducing a monster that will take over your garden.

Some cultivars are very slow growing.

Ivies – these also come in a wide variety of forms. They provide important cover and nesting sites for small birds (Robin, Wren, Sparrow). Most flower late Autumn/Early Winter, so their flowers and berries are an important food source at a lean time of year for wildlife.



Hedera Helix *Ivalace*



Hedera Helix *Goldheart*



Hedera Helix flowers

HOW DOES YOUR GARDEN GROW?

Other evergreens to consider:



Sarcococca (Christmas Box)
small leaved, strongly scented flowers in Winter, followed by berries.

Osmanthus – small leaved, strongly scented white flowers in Spring.



Daphne – strongly scented flowers in late Winter/early Spring.

Clematis Armandii – Large leaved climber, scented white flowers in late Winter/early Spring



Cotoneaster – white/pink flowers in Spring followed by red/orange or yellow berries (depending on cultivar)

I haven't mentioned **Buxus** (common Box), which a few years ago would have been top of my list, but a new pest, Box Tree Moth caterpillars have decimated most of the Box in my garden, it's arrival probably due to climate change.

Enjoy your gardening, the new shoots of growth will soon be visible. Spring is just round the corner.

John Wojdyla



Aunt Agnes

*Well Hello Once Again Dear Readers.
As I am sure all of you will know, life on a Caribbean island can occasionally become quite boring.*

It is now many years since I decided to retire from my home in Chalgrave Parish and buy myself a luxury 8 bedroomed beach front house with sand, sea and sexagenarian like minded friends.

I must admit there are a few things I do miss - rain, snow, gales, storms, cold, ice, paying tax and many more.

Note - I am so sorry the previous sentence should have read 'there are a few things I do not miss'



You see how easy it is to create typing errors and this is no more clearly demonstrated than by my once again having to apologise to a resident of the Parish, who I will call Mr X.

Mr Twitter, sorry, Mr X, wrote to me stating that his wife wanted to organize a local charity collection for the forthcoming Puppy Day Appeal and wondered if I could give her some tips on how to organize this.

I must admit that I had never heard of a Puppy Day Appeal but assumed it must be a local charity.

I suppose that I should have become suspicious when Mr X also told me that the puppies had to have some way of being attached to the donators coat once purchased, but who am I to know what goes on in Chalgrave Parish these days, so I did not query or ask Mr X to clarify this point.

My advice was, in my opinion, given in good faith and in no way deserved the level of abuse that came later from Mr X and his wife.

Aunt Agnes continued

I suggested that to start with his wife would need to obtain a supply of puppies together with an equal number of baby slings. Then a collecting tin and jackets with the charity name clearly written on them.

Yes, I must admit that I did forget to inform you to obtain legal permission to hold a collection but do I have to do everything for some people?

I was very pleased to learn that the puppy day collection went extremely well and many residents of the parish were to be seen walking around with their puppies held in baby slings.

I was sad to learn that financially the collection turned out to be a disaster due to the enormous cost of buying both the puppies and baby slings and that you are now heavily in debt with no monies available to put towards your planned Christmas.

Also, on your other point in your more recent email, I am afraid that I will not be able to appear at your forthcoming court appearance where you are charged with several offences including, not applying for a licence, not registering a new charity, obtaining monies by fraudulent means, cruelty to animals, improper use of baby slings and lastly bankruptcy. I do however give you permission to use this letter if you think it will help your defence.

*My last piece of advice to you Mr X, is to give the keys of your typewriter a good clean as the letter 'O' is printing as the letter 'U' which has led to this unfortunate confusion! To all my readers, have a very Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.
Aunty Agnes*



Rocky Road Devon Christmas pudding

from Chris McDonagh AKA cider Lil a previous
Tebworth resident now living in Devon



Ingredients

175g unsalted butter
50g golden syrup
250g Irresistible Dark Chocolate with Orange, roughly chopped
200g glacé cherries
250g Free From digestive biscuits, finely crushed
175g sultanas
175g dried apricots, roughly chopped
75g walnuts, roughly chopped
50g mini pink and white marshmallows
75g white chocolate, roughly chopped
A couple of fresh bay leaves to decorate (optional)



Method

Line the base and sides of a 1.4 litre pudding basin with a double layer of cling film.

Place the butter, golden syrup and chocolate into a large bowl set over a pan of simmering water and stir until melted, smooth and glossy. Remove from the heat and allow to stand for 10 minutes to cool slightly.

Set aside a few cherries for decoration, then stir the remainder into the chocolate mixture along with the biscuits, sultanas, apricots, walnuts and marshmallows. Stir until it's well combined and all the ingredients are coated in chocolate. Spoon into the prepared pudding basin and press down well. Chill for at least 3 hours or until ready to use.

Place a serving plate over the base of the basin and turn over to release the cake. Remove the bowl and discard the cling film.

Place the white chocolate in a small bowl set over a small pan of simmering water and stir until melted. Allow to cool for 10 minutes before pouring on top of the pudding allowing some to dribble down the sides. Arrange the reserved glacé cherries and bay leaves on top and leave for 10 minutes to set.

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6pm – 11pm*	£11.50 per hour	£23.00 per hour	£32.00 per hour
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6pm – 12 midnight*	£145	£290	£330
SATURDAY			
9am – 6pm	£13 per hour	£26 per hour	£30 per hour
6pm – 12 midnight*	£160	£320	£340
SUNDAY			
10am – 10pm*	£13 per hour	£26 per hour	£32 per hour
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USEFUL CONTACTS

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Chairman	Phil Parry	07831 605600	phil.parry@chalgrave-pc.gov.uk
Councillors	Ken Green	874107	Ken.green@chalgrave-pc.gov.uk
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Ward Cllr	Mark Versallion	03003 008555	Mark.versallion@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk
MP	Andrew Selous	01582 662821	selousa@parliament.uk
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Tennis Club	Roger Fenwick	07814 598309	
Chalgrave WI	Debbie Parry	07770 543797	Debbie.helen.parry@outlook.com
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