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December 2024



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TemeTalk

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A community going forward with God

December 2024

Published by the churches of the
Teme Valley South Group
and delivered free to every household

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www.temevalleysouth.org.uk

Items for inclusion should be
sent to Sandra Griffiths
by the 18th of the preceding month
and will be included subject to space

Dear Readers

I wonder, what is your favourite thing about Christmas? Is it munching warmed mince pies? Is it sparkling lights in windows and around our Christmas trees? Is it snuggling down in front of your favourite seasonal film? Is it presents? Maybe it is gathering with friends and family, playing games and eating rather more than you should, but enjoying it anyway. Firstly, one of the joys of Christmas for me is to sing carols and to belt out the descant thinking no one is listening. Christmas can be a wonderful time of year and there are many events and gatherings in our communities to celebrate and make the most of at this special time.

But Christmas can also be a difficult time of year when we remember those who are not with us for whatever reason. Maybe we are unable to put on the spread we would like, due to limited funds. We are also aware that this year sees ongoing conflict in areas of the world; 'peace on earth' proclaimed by the angels at that first Christmas day feels a way off currently.

In truth, Christmas is a time of many contradictions, as is the build-up to the big day itself. And so we come to the second thing I love about Christmas ... it's the getting there. I love to journey through the season of Advent symbolically lighting candles as we count down the Sundays to the anniversary of the birth of Christ. Figures of Mary and Joseph and the donkey will travel across our communities through the month; there are special meditations and it all begins with Advent prayer and a candle lit service. Join us in the journey this Advent.

At midnight on Christmas Eve, a newborn cry pierces through the contradictions and mixed emotions of the season and calls us all to experience God's gift of pure love afresh. This gift of Jesus is simple without being simplistic and a baby born in the backwater of an ancient Empire 2000 years ago still calls us today.

Wishing you a peaceful and joy-filled Christmas and many blessings in 2025.

Rev'd Julia

Thanks to John Curtis for this month's cover photograph of part of the east window at Rochford church, designed by William Morris and Edward Burne Jones – an outstanding example of the very best stained glass of the Victorian period

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We look forward to hearing from you



Teme Valley South Contacts

Priest-in-charge: Julia Curtis 01886 853286

Assistant Curate: Jen Jones 07749 977821

LLM Reader: Pete Thorp 07917 783159

Retired clergy: Robert Barlow, Sally Jones

Churchwardens

Eastham: Celia Adams 01584 781258

Rochford: Ann Prosser 01584 781317

Stoke Bliss & Kyre:

Hanleys: Ed Yarnold 07930 882728

Stanford: Alexandra Winnington 07891 346783

Pastoral Team

Ann Prosser 01584 781317

Jenny Barbé 01584 781298

Mel Williams 01584 781284

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Village Hall Bookings

Stoke Bliss & Kyre

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stokeblisskyrevillagehall@gmail.com

Rochford – Ann Prosser, 01584 781317

Eastham – Helen Matravers, 07580 158673

Hanley – Judy Bayliss, 01886 853813

Stanford – Catherine Mawby, 07831 303792

stanfordwithorletonvillagehall@gmail.com

Harriett Baldwin MP

Member of Parliament for West Worcestershire

Harriett Baldwin MP can help constituents with a wide range of issues.

To contact Harriett, please write to her at the House of Commons, email harriett.baldwin.mp@parliament.uk or call her constituency office on **01684 585 165**.

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Parish news

From the Registers

Interment of ashes

Our sympathy and prayers are with the family and friends of David John Hughes, whose ashes were interred at St Michael's, Rochford on 1st November.

Held in God's love. May he rest in peace in a place he loved.

Teme Valley Tots

Our Tots group continues to meet on Fridays from 10.30am to 12 noon at Rochford village hall. Our last session of 2024 is on 20th December. We wish all our tots and helpers a very happy Christmas – we'll see you on 10th January. For more information do contact Tina on tinaslord@gmail.com.

Just 3 Meditations

If you would like the chance to experience peace and quiet during the build up to Christmas, then this is for you.

On 10th, 11th and 12th December at Hanley William Church from 7.30 to 8.30pm we will be offering an hour of guided meditation led by Rev'd Robert Barlow. No previous knowledge of meditation is needed.

Come to one or all three. No need to book.

Wassailing

A repeat of the popular event of bacon butties and blessing the orchard for next year's apple harvest. Meet at Rochford village hall at 9.30am on Sunday 29th December for bacon rolls and then on to Parsonage Farm for the outdoor blessing and wassail service. This is a short walk across the fields. There is very limited parking at the farm so please contact Pete Thorp or Andrew Barbé if you need a space.

Rev'd Julia

Meet a new member of the team

I am happy to say that I have joined the TVS team as parish administrator. I look forward to supporting Julia and the team in the future.

I have lived in Rochford for 25 years with my husband Mark and it has been a very happy place to live and bring up my two children, Chloe and Fraser.

Many thanks and with best wishes,

Jo Evans

assistanttvspcc@gmail.com

TemeTalk

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Deadline for the January/February issue is
6th January

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Rochford 49 Club

*Congratulations to this month's
£25 winners!*

Wednesday winners

23rd October	No 47	Tina Lord
30th October	No 7	Roger Ayres
6th November	No 17	Not sold
13th November	No 17	Not sold

Saturday winners

19th October	No 25	Jan Winter
26th October	No 13	Robin Dean
2nd November	No 34	Rob Perrin
9th November	No 18	Not sold
16th November	No 41	Not sold

There are still plenty of numbers available – why not join in? It's just £1 per draw and the profits are split between Rochford church and the village hall – plus you get two chances each week to win £25!

Remember, you must be in it to win it!
Ring Gill Smith on
07815 030050

Deadline for the next issue is 6th January
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Teme Valley Tote

November's prize draw, the seventh in this series, was decided when Rev'd Julia Curtis rolled the dice on 1st November to select the set of random numbers and the starting point. Prizewinners are:

£50 – **David Evington** of Stanford (No 455)
£30 – **William Austin** of Lindridge (No 191)
£20 – **Lesley Dean** of Stanford (No 488)

You can still take part in this year's series of monthly draws by contacting Robin Dean at robin.c.dean@gmail.com or call 01886 853295.

The Filling Station

There will be no meeting in December so our next meeting is on Thursday 16th January at Eastham Memorial Hall at 7.15 for a 7.30pm start. Our speaker will be Eric Stirrup, one of the founder members of the Filling Station in Tenbury, and we look forward to hearing his message to us.

We look forward to your joining us for this evening of fellowship, worship, teaching and refreshments. If you are not on our mailing list and would like further information or details about our meetings please contact me on kate.harley6@gmail.com.



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Rochford News

As we come to the end of yet another year, many thanks go to all those who are actively involved in our village communities and help with and support our wide range of village events. We thank those who contribute to, support and deliver this magazine together with our cooks, flower arrangers, cleaners, grass cutters etc. You all do a great job. If anyone would like to be involved in helping arrange village activities, we would love to hear from you as our committee has lost a few members over recent years. Please contact Ann or Andrew.

Neighbourhood lunch

Christmas lunch is on 17th December with raffle proceeds going to Kyrebrook Day Centre. Next year's dates for sit down and takeaway neighbourhood lunches are 28th January, 25th February, 25th March, 29th April, 27th May and 24th June. Booking for lunches is essential and takeaways should be collected between 12.30 and 1pm. Please book with Ann on 01584 781317 at least the previous week.

Rochford Quiz

Thanks to everyone who helped with and participated in Rochford Quiz in November. Thanks to your support and generosity the event raised over £400 for village hall funds. A sell out night and many thanks to Bob, the quizmaster, who as ever provided an entertaining, informative and challenging set of questions.

Village Christmas lunch and carol service

Sunday 22nd December, 12.30pm at Rochford village hall. A great start to the Christmas festivities with a full three-course Christmas lunch with wine and crackers. This is always popular and is just £15 per head, under 12s half-price and under 5s free. All are welcome but please book your place to avoid disappointment.

Everyone is welcome to our warm church, beautifully decorated for Christmas to celebrate the festive season with a traditional carol service at 3.30pm followed by tea or coffee and mince pies.

Churchyard tidy up

I still haven't managed to arrange a working party to help tidy up and maintain the churchyard – trim trees, edge paths, paint railings, etc. So please look for notifications on the parish WhatsApp group.

Midnight Mass

On Christmas Eve at 11.30pm at Rochford church. Everyone is welcome to this uplifting service when we greet Christmas Day.

Wassailing Café Church

Wassailing café church is on Sunday 29th December, a great way to finish the year by getting together at 9.30 in the village hall, for bacon rolls, toast, tea and coffee and then on to the orchard at Parsonage Farm for the wassailing bit with mulled cider. All welcome but if you can let Ann know you are coming that would be helpful.

Welcome

to Christian and Marie at Mole End and Micky and Jess at Park Gate, who have recently moved into Rochford. We hope you will enjoy living here and make the most of everything this community has to offer.

Contacts

Ann on 01584 781317, Andrew on 07809 658484 or through the parish WhatsApp group

If you would like to be added to the parish WhatsApp group to keep you up to date with all the village happenings, please send me your mobile number.

Andrew Barbé



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Stoke Bliss and Kyre

Village hall news

Many thanks to all who have booked their places for our Christmas lunch. We are delighted to say that at the time of writing the event is full. In the unlikely event of cancellations you may try SBKVillage-Hall@gmail.com.

Many thanks to everyone who has supported us in the last year. Early next year we will hold our annual AGM for anyone in our community who wants to find out more about what we do and/or help with the running of the hall. All profit from events is used to maintain the facilities and operating costs.

Quiz 2025

After Christmas we resume events with a joint pub/social night and quiz night on 31st January. More details in the January/February issue of TemeTalk.

Social & pub nights will continue on the last Friday of each month.

Social & Pub Night and Quiz Night

Friday 31st January

Stoke Bliss & Kyre Village Hall

Please book food in advance at SBKVillage-Hall@gmail.com



Thursday 12th December

at Stoke Bliss & Kyre Village Hall

12.30pm welcome, lunch served at 1pm

Two courses plus refreshments

To book: 07396 813137 or sbklunch@gmail.com

We look forward to seeing you

TemeTalk deadline 6th January

Stoke Bliss and Kyre churchwarden and treasurer

Many thanks to everyone for your support with our quest to fill the churchwarden vacancy. We are very pleased to announce that Jeremy Wyatt has kindly offered his support with this role. He will be known as churchwarden designate until the formal Diocesan churchwarden applications and declarations take place next year.

Assistant Curate Rev'd Jen said "It is wonderful to have someone who is willing to support and walk alongside us in our deeply rural ministry".

We continue to seek an additional treasurer for our two lovely churches of St Peter, Stoke Bliss and St Mary, Kyre Wyard. We are looking for someone who can spare a few hours each month to oversee the church accounts and attend quarterly area church committee meetings.

For more information, please contact Rev'd Jen on 07749 977821 or via tvscurate@gmail.com.

Meet the new churchwarden

Having recently taken up the role of churchwarden designate for Saint Peter's at Stoke Bliss, I am delighted to introduce myself to the wider parish and community. My name is Jeremy and I moved to Stoke Bliss with my husband Trevor at the end of April, relocating from the Isle of Wight where I ran an events company for thirty years. Now with time and energy to spare, we are both keen to be involved with our local community.

Earlier this summer, whilst sitting in the sunshine in the churchyard at Saint Peter's, a chance conversation with the Rev'd Jen Jones highlighted an opportunity to use my previous business experience to help with the care and management of Saint Peter's and also with Saint Mary's at Kyre. I am looking forward to meeting and getting to know many of you over the coming months.

For more information, please contact Rev'd Jen on 07749 977821 or via tvscurate@gmail.com.

Jeremy Wyatt

Yoga class

at Stoke Bliss & Kyre Village Hall

Tuesday mornings from 10 to 11am

Please contact Karen on 07789 913425

Eastham Jottings

Church flowers and cleaning

December – Christmas team

January – Adrian and Joanna Worsley

February – Stuart and Josie Ward

Thanks to everyone who has helped on the rota this year. Merry Christmas to you all.

Eastham Coffee Morning

Please come to the December coffee morning on 4th December at 10.30am at Eastham Memorial Hall and enjoy a coffee and a chat. Merry Christmas to everyone who has arranged and attended coffee mornings this year. Special thanks to Helen Matravers for preparing the room in advance and to everyone on the rota. If you would like to be on the rota for 2025 please contact Celia Adams on 01584 791258.

The rota for 2025 is:

8th January – team effort

5th February – Helen Matravers

Thanks to Becky Evans of Tenbury Transport for her presentation last month. If you would like to volunteer to drive a car/bus or book one of the 16 seater buses please ring Becky on 01584 810491.

Christmas Wreaths

Come along to a wreath making class on Thursday 5th December from 7 to 9pm at Eastham Memorial Hall. A vast selection of fresh and dried foliage to choose from. £25 per person to include a festive drink and nibble.

The class is run by Lucy Lawson, who is new to Eastham. Call her on 07855 132894 or see more details at www.wildbylucylawson.co.uk.

Activities at Eastham Memorial Hall

- Pilates, Tuesdays 1pm and 2.15pm. Contact Sue on 07974 343609, sue579@icloud.com for details or a taster session. **Last session Tuesday 10th December, back on Tuesday 7th January.**
- Yoga, ring Zoe on 07962 981456 or see www.zedyoga.co.uk. Wednesdays at 10am. **Last session Wednesday 11th December, back on Wednesday 15th January.**
- Zumba Gold, Lucia on 07709 301030, lu.500@live.co.uk. Wednesdays at 12 noon, just turn up. **Last session Wednesday 18th December, back on Wednesday 8th January.**
- Kung Fu, Adam on 07720 643524, for youngsters on Saturdays at 9.30am on request.

Christmas Market

There will be a Christmas market at Eastham Memorial Hall on Sunday 1st December, with indoor and outdoor stalls, a cash bar and hot food.

Come along and see Father Christmas, arriving at 2.30pm. He will have presents for children under 12. There will be a free children's craft room all day. The Ludlow Male Voice Choir will sing carols around the Christmas tree from 3pm with the light switch on at 4pm.

The grand Christmas raffle with lots of prizes will be drawn at 4.15, proceeds to Air Ambulance

Christmas Pub Night

Pub night will be on Friday 20th December at 7pm at Eastham Memorial Hall. Watch out for the usual banner. Merry Christmas to everyone who has helped and attended during the year.

The Filling Station at Eastham Memorial Hall

There is no meeting in December; the next one is on Thursday 16th January. Merry Christmas to all the organisers and attendees. We love having you at Eastham!

Christmas at Eastham Church

Come along to the service on Christmas morning at 10am to welcome Christmas Day, followed by mulled wine. Merry Christmas to everyone who has contributed to St Peter and St Paul's church in 2024.

Eastham Memorial Hall

Thanks to everyone who has helped and attended during the year. Merry Christmas to everyone. A special thank you to Helen Matravers for everything she does.

Crochet classes for beginners

Thursdays 9th, 16th and 23rd January from 6.30 to 9pm at Eastham Memorial Hall. Starter pack with hook and three colours and stitch markers. For further details please contact Sarah on 07527 576530.

Memorial Hall extension

The store was finished on 8th November. Thanks to everyone involved. Come and see the extension at the Christmas Market on Sunday 1st December. Photographs in next month's TemeTalk.

Celia Adams

Hanley Happenings

Macmillan Coffee Day

Thanks to late donations the Macmillan Coffee Day has now raised £236. Well done to Carole and everyone involved!

Family Christmas bingo

Come and join us on Sunday 22nd December, at 3pm – eyes down at 3.30. Hamper prizes, stand up, sit down and bonus ball! Tea and cake. No bar so please bring your own festive tippie. Cash only.

Pudding night

On Saturday 18th January at 7pm. Bring a home-made or shop bought pudding to share. Prize for the best pudding, to be judged by Mr Ed Yarnold himself! Entry £2.50, small cheese board £5, pop-up bar. Please book with Lex on 07471 192649.

Geoffrey Bunyan

Geoffrey Bunyan of Hanley House Farm, Hanley William died on 5th November 2024. He had been in poor health for some time. His funeral is due to take place on Monday 2nd December at 1.30 at Kidderminster Crematorium.

Geoffrey is survived by his wife Angela, daughter Maxine and grandchildren Ben and Zoe.



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Days out in south Herefordshire

I'm continuing my exploration of the church at Peterchurch as it has an interesting history. Dating from the twelfth century, it is a very large church for the size of the village. More recently a village hub has been incorporated into the building where refreshments can be obtained on two or three days a week.

There is an ancient stone altar which has survived over the centuries. The 13th century tower with its ring of six bells was built with very thick walls, the only original access being a door some ten feet up on the outside wall! It is thought that this was for defence as the Welsh Celts were on one side of the valley and the Normans on the other. Now things have calmed down a little, a new door has been constructed on the ground floor.

Historically the church had a very high steeple but after many centuries it was thought to be dangerous and in the 1940s two thirds of it were taken down. In the 1970s the remainder was also removed. A new stone spire was not viable so they managed to obtain and erect a fibreglass copy of the original, complete with gilded weathercock. The 240 foot crane used in the installation was the biggest in Europe at the time. Currently the spire looks a little odd but it is slowly weathering to match the rest of the building.

Next month: the cider and perry trail.

Ed Yarnold

Bell Lane's post box

Tracy Stuart-Allen has been in touch with Royal Mail about the post box in Bell Lane. The post rotted and it fell down. It was removed and Royal Mail have no plans to replace it.

The complaint was passed to the Postal Review Panel who confirm that the box will not be replaced, but point out that mail can be handed to the postman at the door, providing it has the correct postage.

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November – a time to remember

November is a time to remember those who fought for our country in both World Wars and gave their lives for our today. The Festival of Remembrance on television was a heartfelt presentation of so many people's bravery and loss.

My own grandfather was given command of the 11th Battalion East Lancashire Regiment in March 1915. The injuries he suffered in the terrible battle at Serre contributed to his death and to the deaths of a number of soldiers who had served with him.

I went to three Remembrance services in Accrington this year. It is not my first time but serves to perpetuate the memory of a terrible battle when hundreds of the East Lancs regiment died, many of them from Accrington, leaving it depleted of men for a generation. My late brother, Rory MacColl, made a film about this day and the Accrington Pals during the First World War and it was shown on Remembrance Day at the Accrington Stanley football stadium. I was very proud to be there.

I am pleased to say that Stanford was represented at Eastham; a wreath was laid from Stanford and the names of the fallen were read out.

Services in Stanford

Sunday 1st December

Holy Communion at 10am

Advent service: Darkness to Light with choir at 4pm, followed by refreshments

Sunday 5th January

Holy Communion at 10am

Knitwear sale

About 50 people came to the knitwear sale on Saturday 9th November in Stanford village hall, which was very encouraging for Nick and Jean Brown who have been selling their knitwear here for a number of years. Shoppers have reported how pleased they were with their selection of jumpers, cardigans, woolly hats and I even heard a brocade jacket mentioned! Thank you to Robin Dean for organising the sale which raised £123 after expenses for St Mary's Church.

Tenbury food bank

If you would like to make a donation, the box will be at St Mary's Church on Sunday 1st December in the morning, and during the Christmas Tree Festival on 7th and 8th December.

ACC committee

The ACC committee of St Mary's church is very sorry to be losing Tracey Dewis who has resigned as our much valued treasurer. We would like to thank Tracey for all her help since 2019 with treasury matters at St Mary's. We wish her the best of luck in the future.

Christmas Tree Festival

This will take place on Saturday 7th December from 10am to 5pm and on Sunday 8th December from 10am to 4pm at St Mary's church. The Rev'd Canon Mark Badger, Archdeacon of Worcester, will be visiting the Festival on Saturday and judging the trees at 3pm. Carol singing at 4pm on the Saturday. Refreshments will be served on both days. If you would like to join the team on 6th December and decorate a tree, please contact John Curtis by email at johncurtis@gmail.com.

Christmas Eve

Carol singing at St Mary's church at 5 pm. Mulled wine and mince pies.

Church flowers

Flowers for December – Sarah Burgoyne

Wishing you all a happy Christmas.

Alexandra Winnington

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Journeying through Advent in TVS and in Clifton, Lower Sapey (Harpley) and the Shelsleys

December in our churches and communities is always a month full of fun, Christmas excitement and carol services. It is easy to lose sight of the season of Advent and a conscious preparation and anticipation of the arrival of Jesus in the stable. So I thought it would be helpful to gather our Advent offering.

This year we will be travelling through Advent in the following ways:

Morning Prayer at 9am daily during Advent, Tuesday to Saturday inclusive on Zoom. Contact Rev'd Julia for the link.

Compline at 7pm daily during Advent, Monday to Saturday inclusive on Zoom. Contact Rev'd Julia for the link.

Travelling Posadas

Clifton – coordinated by Rev'd Jen Denniston
TVS – coordinated by Jeremy Wyatt

Holy Communion service at St Andrew, Shelsley Walsh on 18th December at 10.30am will host the Diocesan Posada.

We will mark the **four Sundays of Advent** in December with Holy Communion as follows:

- 1st December, Advent 1 – Holy Communion with hymns at St Mary, Stanford at 10am
- 8th December, Advent 2 – Holy Communion

with music at St Peter, Stoke Bliss at 10am

- 15th December, Advent 3 – Holy Communion, Said at St Peter & St Paul, Eastham at 8.30am
- 22nd December, Advent 4 – Holy Communion, Said at St Kenelm, Clifton at 10.30am

Special Events and Services

1st December, Advent Sunday

Morning Prayer for Advent at St Kenelm, Clifton at 10.30am

Darkness to Light Service to begin Advent with Relishing Rural Music Choir at Stanford at 4pm

Just 3 Meditations

Three evenings of Advent meditations led by Rev'd Robert Barlow. See page 12.

Rev'd Julia



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Teme Valley Tote needs your help!

Robin Dean has been administering the Teme Valley Tote for the past 14 years. During this time the Tote has grown from 255 subscribers to 450. It raises £4,500 each year, which, after deduction of £1,200 in annual prize money, means the Tote is able to donate £3,300 to churches in Teme Valley North as well as Eatham, Stoke Bliss and Stanford. Robin has administered the Tote completely voluntarily and has developed a simple spreadsheet system to record subscriptions and prizewinners etc. None of this would be possible without the assistance of the seven local area co-ordinators who collect the subscriptions each year.

Robin would now like to hand over the reins of the Teme Valley Tote to a new administrator, so if you, or anyone you know, might be interested in taking this on, please contact Robin on 01886 853295 or by email at robin.c.dean@gmail.com to discuss your interest, with no obligation.

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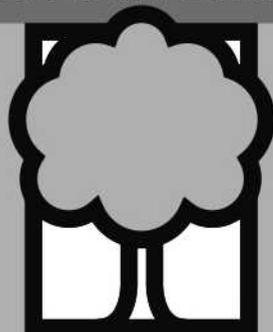


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From the editor

Once again it's time to thank everyone who has helped to produce TemeTalk in 2024 and to make it another successful year for us.

Firstly, many thanks to the people who contribute regular or occasional pieces for the magazine. Without you there would be no TemeTalk.

Thanks to all of you who deliver the magazine to every house in the seven parishes, up hill and down dale in wind and rain, in hail or snow or in the baking heat (or warm drizzle) of summer.

We also wouldn't have a magazine without our advertisers, so thanks to you too.

Thanks to Orphans Press in Leominster and especially to Gary for all his help. And of course to Brian Griffiths who collects the magazines from Leominster every month.

Last but not least, thanks to you, our readers, for your support. A very merry Christmas and a happy New Year to you all.

Sandra



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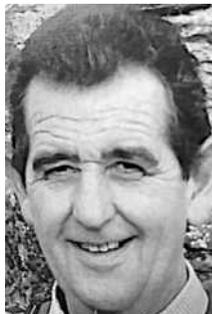
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Barry Gutteridge

9th June 1943 to 17th October 2024



Barry was the oldest son of a large family born and raised in a mining community on the Leicestershire/Derbyshire border. On leaving school, Barry took up employment down the pit where he worked for eight years. He then applied to join the police force in Hereford-shire where the interviewing

panel could see past his lack of academic qualifications, spotting his potential as good police material. Thus began a long and successful career in the police force.

Barry moved to Eastham in 1985 where he and Liz made Barn Cottage, New Road their home. Barry retired as Detective Superintendent with West Mercia Police and in 1994 he and Liz bought ten pedigree Texel ewes and started the "Eastham" flock. Within two years they had their first champion. Barry was on Eastham parish council and a great supporter of the village, notoriously telling the press in May 2016 why Eastham Bridge had collapsed – as only Barry could.

Barry's funeral took place on Friday 15th November with standing room only at Wyre Forest crematorium. Donations were made to Acorns Children's Hospice and Little Princess Trust (Wigs for Kids). The service was conducted by the Rev'd Mark Townsend and was followed by a reception at Wharton Park Golf and Country Club.

Keith Lucas

1937 to 2024



On 14th November, a beautiful sunny autumn day, friends and neighbours of Keith and Janice from Eastham joined a large congregation at Rushock church to celebrate Keith's life. Son Stuart presented a carefully prepared eulogy – Keith was born in Solihull and did National Service in Cyprus, he and Janice met at a jazz club and married in 1964, they had two sons, Duncan and Stuart. They lived in Lichfield and then in Rushock before moving to Eastham in 2001.

Keith had a great love for making and maintaining mechanical things. He served an apprenticeship with a toolmaker and worked with the same firm for 35 years. He spent many hours in his shed at the top of the garden: a major project was rebuilding his Vincent 500 motorbike and this culminated in participating in the Millennium Rally on the Isle of Man. Keith was also a keen climber and made some good friends through this hobby. Donations received in his memory were given to the Snowdonia Society. Steam trains and train spotting were among Keith's other interests and he was a volunteer at the Severn Valley railway. Keith and Janice always supported activities in Eastham and Keith was fête treasurer for several years.

Following the burial, the family had arranged an excellent lunch at Hampton Lovatt village hall and we were able to meet their grandchildren and wider family.

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TemeTalk deadlines

The first issue of TemeTalk in 2025 will be a joint January/February issue. The deadline is 6th January. The deadline for the March issue is 18th February.

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adjective: having the taste or smell of garlic or onion

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Pumpkin pie and cider – a Canadian Thanksgiving

I had forgotten what a learning curve foreign travel could be. Ireland and Majorca we visit often and love. But two weeks in Canada, with a couple of days in Washington DC on the way home, proved most educational.

There was a time when airports meant excitement. No longer. But the *Love Actually* moments of hugging loved ones in joy and then in the sorrow of parting hold fast.

Seeing our son's new family home in the leafy suburbs of Toronto was a joy. They can walk everywhere – to school, to grandparents and family, to the city. And there are fabulous walks nearby including the 40-acre Don Valley Brick Works Park carved out during one of Toronto's ice ages.

I got teased for being delighted to see a jet black squirrel – I soon learned that they are as prevalent as our grey ones. I never got to see the pesky raccoon which kept digging up the newly laid lawn.

When we arrived in Meaford on Georgian Bay for Thanksgiving, some 110 miles north of Toronto, we were greeted by the Aurora Borealis. A dazzling display of green, red, yellow and purple lights were dancing in mesmerizing swathes across the wide sky, reflected in the lake below.

Meaford is known as the apple growing capital of Canada so, being from Tenbury Wells, 'The Town in the Orchard', I always feel an affinity there. While we picked apples for 'cider'-making on Thanksgiving Day, I saw my first little chipmunk

in the wild. But, alas, I failed to see the poorly porcupine and its mate (like raccoons, they can carry rabies) and I also missed an eagle diving for fish in the lake. How I wished I had eyes in the back of my head!

Thanksgiving was long. In the morning, the young folk made a scarecrow for the farm gates. Then the fruit we had picked was pushed through an old rudimentary press with everyone having a go. At lunch this huge family (unlike mine; I have one cousin!) was fed generous plates of chilli and chips and afterwards sat around a bonfire and chatted or played endless games with the kids. I watched fascinated as little birds dive bombed the withering sunflower heads for seeds. At 5pm the feast commenced and later I tried my first pumpkin pie. Not for me!

Finally I spent two nights in Vienna, Virginia, not far from Dulles Airport in Washington DC, to see dear friends we have known for 40 years. Here I learned of white-tailed deer and saw stunning red cardinal birds and unusual little woodpeckers. We visited DePaul's Urban Farm's huge display of pumpkins and gourds of all sizes and colours. The heaviest pumpkin in the world was 2,749lbs in Minnesota last year! What, I asked an assistant, did she do with the leftovers? There were very few, she said and they were donated to farms and to the zoo where they are a favourite of elephants.

Averil Opperman



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The joys of travelling – wrong terminal, wrong queue

There was no “*Love Actually* moment of hugging loved ones in joy”, described in Averil’s article on page 19, when the Boss and I arrived in Newark, New Jersey, last week. While our son was queuing in his enormous truck to get to the passenger pick-up area at Terminal B (“the United flights from London *always* land at Terminal B”) we were waiting at Terminal C. By the time we managed to contact him and he fought the horrendous traffic to get to us, there was just time for him to grab our bags and bundle us into the truck while the cars behind him hooted furiously.

We had just endured a very bumpy eight-hour flight from Heathrow and had, as usual, joined the wrong queue at immigration. Ten or eleven people sailed through the booth next to us. We waited as a woman at our booth seemed to be having a long conversation with the official, turning away and then turning back to say something else. It was just like shopping in Tenbury. The next man also took a very long time to be allowed in to the USA, and when we reached the baggage hall our bags were standing alone in the middle of the floor, like children whose parents have forgotten to pick them up from school.

Our return flight ten days later left at 10 o’clock at night so our son persuaded us that we could leave his house at 8 o’clock and still be in plenty of time. More horrendous traffic at the airport – and then we once again joined the wrong queue at security and watched the minutes tick by as more and more people were called from an adjoining queue to go in front of us. We eventually fought our way through and made it to the gate in time.

After another very bumpy flight, we only circled central London twice and landed early at Heathrow but spent ten minutes apparently cruising around the airport looking for a gate. At immigration, guess what? We joined the wrong queue again. The woman in front of us at the e-gate couldn’t work out which way up to put her passport and then had to be told to take her glasses off.

And once again our bags were sitting sadly by themselves on the floor. What terrible parents!

SG

PS We did get our Love Actually moment at Heathrow – our good friend Janet was waiting for us with big hugs and kisses, ready to scoop us up and take us home.

Mrs Best’s 200,000th customer!



Mrs Best & Co at Mill Farm Country Retail is thrilled to have celebrated a major milestone this month – her 200,000th customer, Ann-Marie Faloon of Buckridge! To mark the occasion, a special gift hamper was presented to Ann-Marie who said that the surprise made her day. Mrs Best said she couldn’t think of a more deserving customer. She would like to extend heartfelt thanks to the local community for all their support which has made this milestone possible.



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“A memorable year – I can’t stop smiling”

Seventeen intrepid walkers spent five days at the end of October trekking the historic Camino de Santiago (the Way of St James), ending at the awe-inspiring Cathedral of Santiago de Compostella, to raise funds for St Michael’s Hospice in Hereford. Among them was Audrey Thacker from Wolferlow, who decided to take part in the challenge “to do something special” in her 70th year.

Audrey says “Walking the Camino was an amazing and life changing experience for me. I would like to thank everyone, friends and family, for their kind donations and messages of support which gave me so much encouragement to keep putting one foot in front of the other, day after day.

“The camaraderie of my wonderful new friends on the Camino was truly unbelievable. Thanks to them for being with me all the way and for the laughter and tears of joy and lovely mem-

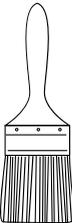


ories we shared.”

She added, “My total fundraising has just topped £5,000 – this is a very memorable year for me and I can’t stop smiling”.

So far this wonderful group has raised over £55,000 for St Michael’s Hospice. They not only took part in a challenge which they’ll remember for ever, but their incredible fundraising will be keenly felt at the Hospice.

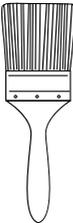
Our photograph shows Audrey on her way into Santiago with the cathedral behind her.



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Teme Valley Wildlife

As the nights are drawing in, I am less aware of the frantic efforts of grey squirrels busy breaking open the spiny cases of sweet chestnuts and burying their treasure in my lawn. They have the luxury of tree-stump dining tables to sit at in our nearby wood, but my lane, drive and the paths around the house are littered with discarded chestnut cases. Their paws must be thoroughly scratched in tackling such hostile food containers. Perhaps surprisingly, few other animals take an interest in such free fare, the squirrels' main rival in storing them up for winter being the jay. It is therefore no surprise that these beautiful birds have also been visiting my garden lately.



The sweet chestnut tree, with long, glossy serrated leaves and grey, swirling fissured bark, is not native to Britain. It is thought to have been introduced by the Romans. They were quick to realise its nutritious qualities and mixed the nuts with polenta to create a staple food for their marching

armies. Unusually for nuts, chestnuts are low in fat and protein and high in starch. Although not much used as a food-stuff in Britain, owing to the small size of those produced here, they often get a seasonal outing at Christmas. In other countries they are more highly prized, and marrons glacé, a French delicacy in which they are simmered in vanilla syrup, was devised for the delectation of King Louis IV. Here in Britain, they are sometimes used in stuffings for roast meat and I've seen them suggested in combination with Brussel sprouts but cannot claim to have ever tried it.

Sweet chestnut trees grow large and are related to both oaks and beeches. Like them, they are long-lived and veteran specimens can boast to be 500 years old. Around here, ancient examples can be found in the park at Croft Castle. They were often planted in deer parks, in the erroneous belief that deer liked to eat them. Male and female

Continued on page 24



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Continued from page 23

flowers form as attractive long pale-yellow tassels in spring. Some insects are attracted to them and almost to eat the pollen.

Chestnuts ripen through October and when the seed cases open, three glossy nuts are revealed snuggled deep inside. Nuts grown in the trees' native home range of Italy and the Balkans are large and it is these that you may find roasted at Christmas markets. But back to the shortening days and the cheery prospect of an open fire. In the former days of cast-iron grates, those of a romantic disposition might line up a row of chestnuts on their top bar and assign each one the name of an admirer. As the nuts exploded with the heat, if one should jump into a lap it would name a future sweetheart – but all that jumped into the fire and were burned up there would be lost for ever.

Happy Christmas!

There is no Teme Valley Wildlife meeting in December. The next meeting will be at 7.30pm on Thursday 10th January at Stoke Bliss and Kyre Village Hall. Everyone is very welcome to our next meeting and it is just £3 on the door.

Stephanie Mocroft

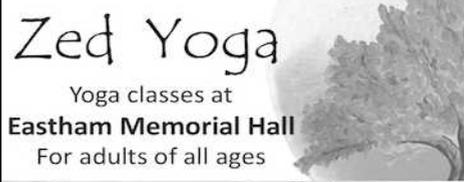
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TemeTalk deadline 6th January



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Rock Bridge Club

Every Sunday at 7pm
at Rock Village Hall
New members welcome
Phone 07854 951330

Bowling

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@ Brimfield and Little Hereford
Bowling Club
Call Josie Ward on 01584 881435

Tenbury Transport Trust

Patron Angela Brinton, Deputy Lord Lieutenant of Worcestershire (Rtd)

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Do you need to travel somewhere? Shopping, medical appointments, visiting friends?

Are you struggling to use public transport?

Or perhaps you don't have access to public transport?

Then we may be able to help

Established as a charity in 2014, Tenbury Transport Trust aims to meet the transport needs **of all ages and abilities** in Tenbury Wells and the surrounding area. We use cars and **wheelchair accessible mini buses** and provide a safe door-to-door service.

It costs just £10 per person per year to become a member so give us a ring today on

01584 810491

Our office is at 34 Teme Street, Tenbury Wells, WR15 8AA

We are open Monday to Friday from 9am to 1pm

email admin@tttrust.org.uk website www.tttrust.org.uk Follow us on Facebook

If you would like to become part of this amazing organisation as a volunteer please get in touch on 01584 810491

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Samaritans

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Tenbury & District Carers Support Group

meets on the 4th Wednesday of every
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What's on in Teme Valley South

December

1st	Sunday	Christmas market, Eastham Memorial Hall, 10.30am
4th	Wednesday	Eastham Coffee Morning, Eastham Memorial Hall, 10.30am
5th	Thursday	Christmas Wreath Making, Eastham Memorial Hall, 7pm
7th	Saturday	Christmas Tree Festival, St Mary's, Stanford, 10am, Carol Singing 4pm
8th	Sunday	Christmas Tree Festival, St Mary's, Stanford, 10am
10th-12th		Just 3 Meditations, Hanley William Church, 7.30pm
12th	Thursday	Stoke Bliss & Kyre Neighbourhood Lunch, Village Hall, 12.30pm
15th	Sunday	Christmas Lunch, Stoke Bliss & Kyre Village Hall, 12.30pm
17th	Tuesday	Rochford Neighbourhood Lunch, Rochford Village Hall, 12.30pm
20th	Friday	Christmas Pub Night, Eastham Memorial Hall, 7pm
22nd	Sunday	Rochford Village Christmas Lunch, Rochford Village Hall, 12.30pm Family Christmas Bingo, Hanley Village Hall, 3pm

January

8th	Wednesday	Eastham Coffee Morning, Eastham Memorial Hall, 10.30am
9th	Thursday	Stoke Bliss & Kyre Neighbourhood Lunch, Village Hall, 12.30pm Crochet Class, Eastham Memorial Hall, 6.30pm
18th	Saturday	Pudding Night, Hanley Village Hall, 7pm
28th	Tuesday	Rochford Neighbourhood Lunch, Rochford Village Hall, 12.30pm
31st	Friday	Pub, Social & Quiz Night, Stoke Bliss & Kyre Village Hall

February

5th	Wednesday	Eastham Coffee Morning, Eastham Memorial Hall, 10.30am
13th	Thursday	Stoke Bliss & Kyre Neighbourhood Lunch, Village Hall, 12.30pm
25th	Tuesday	Rochford Neighbourhood Lunch, Rochford Village Hall, 12.30pm

**Send items for inclusion to Sandra Griffiths by 18th of the previous month
telephone 07482 482629 or email ronsmum@icloud.com**



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Services

December 2024/January 2025

Daily prayer continues at 9am and 7pm on Zoom, contact Rev Julia if you would like to join us. The blessings group meets regularly and is co-ordinated by Richard Skerrett, who can be contacted on 01886 853099 for more details.

The Church of England has a pre-recorded weekly on-line service which can be found by searching 'Church of England Weekly Services' or accessed on their website www.churchofengland.org/more/media-centre/church-online/weekly-online-services

Services Schedule

Sunday 1st December

10.00am Stanford
4.00pm Stanford

Advent Sunday

Holy Communion with hymns
Advent Darkness to Light Service with
Relishing Rural Choir

Saturday 7th December

Stanford
4.00pm Stanford

Christmas Tree Festival
Christmas Tree Festival carols

Sunday 8th December

Stanford
10.00am Stoke Bliss

Christmas Tree Festival
Holy Communion

Sunday 15th December

8.30am Eastham
4.00pm Hanley Childe

Holy Communion
Nativity

Sunday 22nd December

12.30pm Rochford Village Hall
3.00pm Stoke Bliss
3.30pm Rochford

Christmas lunch
Carol Service with choir
Carol Service

Tuesday 24th December

10.00am Kyre
5.00pm Stanford
11.30pm Rochford

Christmas Eve

Holy Communion with harp
Carols
Midnight Mass with scratch choir

Sunday 25th December

10.00am Hanley William
10.00am Eastham

Christmas Day

Christmas Holy Communion
Family Service

Sunday 29th December

9.30am Rochford Village Hall

Café Church and Wassailing

Sunday 5th January

10.00am Stanford
4.00pm Stanford

Epiphany

Holy Communion and hymns
Evensong

Sunday 12th January

10.00am Hanley William

Holy Communion

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