

November 2020



We expect you have all been listening to different stories from individuals about the last year. These experiences range from the very sad to the uplifting but whatever comes across it will be one of the strangest years most of us have experienced in our lifetime. At least we have been isolated from Covid more than many have and our hope is that this may continue until such time as appropriate treatment is secured - presumably either a vaccine and/or suitable drugs.

Thanks to those forwarding articles as not much is happening at the moment of course. Readers will be the first to know as and when village events can occur. At least the trees are giving a good display with what looks to be a bumper year for acorns and where the hedges

remain uncut there does seem to be a large supply of berries. Several flocks of redwings have been spotted already and it used to be said that lots of berries and early flocks of redwings were a harbinger of a hard winter. However biologists would say this more likes to indicate a good spring for blossom - and with the chances of cold winters now on the decline we guess we are probably in for an average wet time. Let's hope we will not have too much rain this year and before we know it spring will be on the way.

Our next Bugle will cover December and January 2021.

Have a good month.

**Your editors,
Steve and Michael**

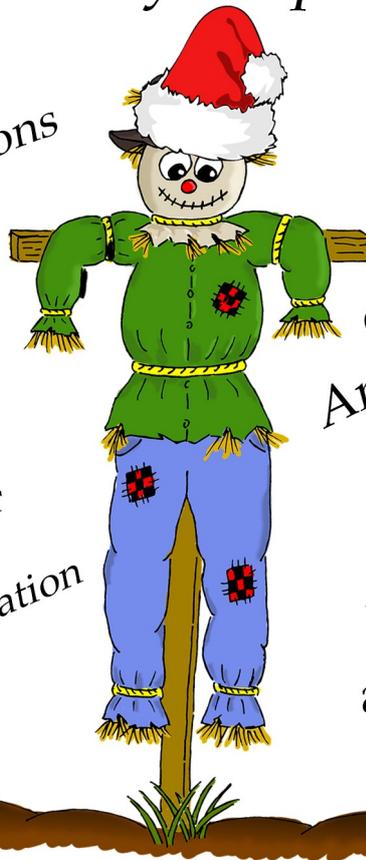


Bickleigh School Associations's Christmas Scarecrow in the Hedgerow

*The BSA invite you to join with us
and share some Christmas cheer*

*Build a Christmas themed Scarecrow
Name it & pop our School logo on it
Display it on your doorstep/drive
Send us your photos*

*Display your creations
1st - 31st Dec*



*Make this a
community event
Anyone and everyone's
welcome to take part*

*Send your photos to our
Facebook Page
Bickleigh School Association*

*Name template
available from the
BSA Facebook
page*

Make people smile. Merry Christmas

Bickleigh Benevolent Fund

Early in December the fund trustees meet to consider the applications for financial assistance from Bickleigh villagers. If anyone knows of a person or persons who are in need of help and with their permission, please let the Secretary know. Applications should be made in writing if possible. It is helpful if reasons are given for the need of assistance. This information will be held in strictest confidence.

The type of assistance considered most favourably are essentials of modern life i.e help with heating, lighting, transport, etc. Applications to be received by 1st December.

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Letter from the Rector

November is a month for memory and remembrance.

The month begins with All Saints' Day when we can look back on the lives of the almost countless men and women who have given themselves in many different ways to follow God's purpose. Through their example we can glimpse something more of God. And we can also feel united with them, as through the waters of baptism we are members of the same company of saints – the church.

Then follows All Souls' Day. This is a more intimate and personal time. A chance to remember those we have known and loved – who gave us life, love or nurtured us in our faith. A time to light a candle to show that we know their light still shines in our hearts.

The Sunday nearest the 11th is Remembrance Sunday. It will be the 8th this year – and sadly marked in a very different way. But, however we mark it, this is a time of national and individual memories, confronting issues of war and peace, loss and self-sacrifice and forgiveness. To some the rawness of loss of life and serious and life changing injury from conflict will be all too real. To others it will be a time to reflect with the names of long dead young men engraved on our war memorials.

For most religions the act of remembrance is foundational. For the Jewish people, the story retold down the generations is of the work of God in the liberation from bondage in Egypt to freedom in the Promised Land. It is a story that spoke to those in actual exile in long ago Babylon. But it also speaks to us today - of our hopes in our own 'exiles' – sometimes that may be the 'exile' of loneliness, despair, grief, depression or addiction. All of this is heightened this year with the 'exile' of living

through this pandemic. However tough and long that time in the 'wilderness' is, our Lord will never leave us and will always lead us home.

The central act of Christian worship, the Eucharist, is following a command from Jesus to 'do this', the sharing of bread and wine, in remembrance of Him. And through it we are drawn into His story and are assured of the gifts we receive from Him.

This time of remembrance comes at the end of the church year. It gives us a time to look back to all those who have influenced our faith and lives, whether from the distance of years and even centuries or more close at hand.

But the month ends with the Feast of Christ the King and it is on that that we should always remain focused. To the time when all will be revealed in the fullness of Christ's reign in majesty and the coming of His kingdom – when we will all, living and departed, come before the unknowable and unimaginable goodness and holiness of God.

This completes our church year that began with our hope of the coming Messiah. And again we are ready to live through the drama of the seasons – to hear, reflect and become part of those timeless stories of Christ's appearing to us on earth (the great story of Christmas) and the victory over death He won for the whole world (the great story of Easter).

As our ancient Scriptures tell us: 'Remember the long way that the Lord your God has led you'. (Deut 8.2)

Paul

Geography in Year 4

Over the last month, Class 4 have made two local trips as part of their Geography learning. One to explore the physical and human features in Bickleigh village, and the other to explore the features of the River Exe. Below are extracts from children's writing, focussing on the human features in Bickleigh and how they have changed over time:

"Thatched roofs are not always the best roof materials because they are expensive to get replaced and are a fire hazard as the thatch is very flammable. The oldest cottages had walls made of cob or stone. We noticed many houses had small wooden windows, because it would help to keep the heat in, and need less glass. We saw the old bakery cottage and where there used to be a Post Office, but it had to shut down because people would often go to supermarkets for convenience."

Mirabella Bosley.

"Garages weren't needed with the older cottages because 300 years ago, cars were not invented. There doesn't tend to be any phone boxes used anymore due to mobile phones, but they can be repurposed into a library, for example. We noticed solar panels on some houses, which allow us to convert the sun's energy into electricity. We walked to the old National School, which opened in 1841, but by 1960 there was a new school building due to increased population."

Finlay Hanby

On a beautiful day, Class 4 visited the River Exe and learned the terms to describe parts of the river, as well as observing its speed and features. They will continue their learning in class, resulting in a Design and Technology team project creating a model of a river's journey



Picture: Class 4 at the River Exe

Churchyard Conservation: Bird Box Update



We recently installed four bird boxes on trees in the churchyard as part of the effort to make the churchyard wildlife friendly, these bird boxes are also woodpecker proof to stop chicks and eggs being stolen.

Three out of four bird boxes have been used this year, which means that these boxes are making a difference to the local bird population. They have been cleaned out at this time because birds don't nest in October, and also to clear the pests and parasites out for next year's visitors. The other reason is to monitor how many boxes have been used and weather more boxes could be utilised by the birds.

There was also a dead chick in one of the boxes. There are lots of possible reasons the

chick died, but as reported on BBC Springwatch, there is an increasing death rate in chicks due to the lack of insects for food. There has been a recent study from Germany that concludes around 70% of bugs have declined over last few decades, if the bugs decline, there will be no fruit pollinated, no birds or bats. You can help to stop this decline by planting native wild flowers that provide lots of nectar, for example: field scabious, devils bit scabious, valerian, Michaelmas daisy, teasel and chives, there are also some non-native plants that are useful: buddleia and lavender, planting all of these will ensure that everything will be buzzing away with life and there will be more birds flying around.

Isaac Scaife (School House)

Well-being co-ordinator update

With further Covid 19 restrictions, we are still unable to reopen the Silverton Memory Cafe but are trying to keep in touch with all our visitors. We have a wide variety of jigsaws, from very easy, with large pieces, to the more difficult ones up to 500 pieces, to suit all abilities. We are happy to lend our puzzles to anyone who would like to borrow one or two.

I am offering home visits to anyone who has memory loss or dementia. I can give advice about the condition and where help can be found. I observe all the safety guidelines and am happy to meet outside if that is preferred. Caring for a person with dementia can be quite a challenging and difficult undertaking and I am happy to give confidential and practical advice, so do give me a call if you would like some support.

Our Carers group is going out for lunch again, in small groups of six people, so it is as safe as we can make it and it's great to see the Carers getting together and enjoying a break from their caring role. Our last meeting was at the lovely new Exe Valley Farm Shop Restaurant, where there was lots of room and a delicious menu.

If you are feeling isolated and lonely during this difficult time or have no local support and would like someone to talk to either on the telephone or with a safe visit, please do get in touch with me as I might be able to help.

Trish Jones - Wellbeing co-ordinator, friends of Wyndham House Surgery, 0748 437 7298, silverwellbeing@gmail.com

Dealing with The Black Stuff...

Robin Maynard of Bickleigh THE EXE VALLEY CHIMNEY SWEEP

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Salmon

Do you ever feel that you're like a salmon - swimming upstream whilst those around you appear to be having a much easier time floating downstream? You're trying to reach those 'breeding grounds' at the head of the river but it's taking all your efforts and you don't seem to be making much progress!

I see this on a regular basis in my work with CHAT where it's a real struggle for many people just to tread water and not slip backwards into a spiral of debt, hunger and potential homelessness. Thanks to the terrific support that CHAT receives from the local community they are able to offer such support to those in need and it's very heart-warming and gratifying to know that even in these troubled times, people can be so generous with their money and time and really make a difference to other people's lives.

And so back to the salmon. At the October meeting of the Parish Council, Philip Turnbull from the West Country Rivers Trust gave a presentation on the current situation in the river and the proposed alterations to be made to the weir at Bickleigh Bridge.

Many of us are aware of the sharp decline in salmon movements in recent years. Only 5% of the fish that go into the ocean are returning and up to 50% of young salmon are lost in the ocean which is why it is important that stocks are kept as high as possible in our rivers. A survey in 1990 indicated that in a high flow year 95% of salmon passed over Bickleigh Weir by each September, however, in more recent times only 2 fish had made it to the weir. There are 11 weirs on the River Exe and Philip showed us the cumulative impact of fish passing through, or attempting to pass through, a series of weirs.

As with many things in life, it's a question of 'survival of the fittest' with only a few fish being of the right size and with the right strength able to make it. A slopping weir is more of an obstacle to larger fish.

Bickleigh Bridge Weir has a low head with a long slope making it almost impossible for fish to pass through in periods of low water flow. One solution is to slightly raise part of the weir, which would then make it deeper at that point, enabling the fish to pass through. The second option is to create a Technical Fish Pass for the fish to bypass the weir.

So as with CHAT, a helping hand at the right time can make all the difference! Once planning permission has been given, it is hoped to commence work in the summer of 2021.

Parish Council meetings will continue to be held on Zoom for the foreseeable future. The agenda for each meeting, which includes the Zoom access details, and minutes are published on the Bickleigh website and placed on the Parish Council Noticeboard each month. The next meeting is on Tuesday 10th November at 6:00 pm.

Clive



Submissions to the Bickleigh Bugle are very welcome!

**Email us at
bickleighbugle@outlook.com
by the 20th of the month**