



Christchurch Forest of Dean
St Mary the Virgin English Bicknor

A glass bowl filled with red and yellow apples sits on a wooden board. In the foreground, a bouquet of bright yellow sunflowers with dark brown centers is arranged on the same wooden board. The background is a lush green lawn.

Church and Community
News and Events

October 2020

40p

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Articles for the magazine should be sent to the Editor at **judithbrickwood33@gmail.com** no later than the **15th of the month**. Please include your name and contact details. *Please note new email address and deadline*

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The magazine is available in full colour at christchurchfod.org.uk where you will also find recordings of past Reflections , information about streamed services and much more

Dates for your Diary

6th and 20th October Church Discussion Group (p16)

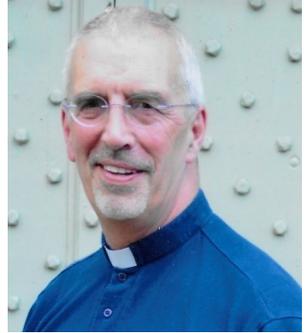
17th October Lunch English Bicknor Style (p17)

1st November All Souls (p20)

From the Vicarage:

So, just for minute or two, we thought... It's all over!

Go back to work, go back to school, open the pubs
and restaurants, get the shops working,
get back in the office, get on trains and buses.
Life is getting better. We have got through it!



I don't think it felt like that for those who had lost loved ones, had funerals with no friends, and often limited family to join in the grief and thanksgiving.

These are very frightening and uncertain times. In the middle of it, we have to deal with everything life throws at us. Illness, loneliness, treatment, frustration, and the list could go on.

How do we find something constant in such changing times?

I always feel myself drawn to the Psalms. We all know Psalm 23, so often read at funerals.

***'Even though I walk
through the darkest valley,^[1]
I will fear no evil,
for you are with me;
your rod and your staff,
they comfort me.'***

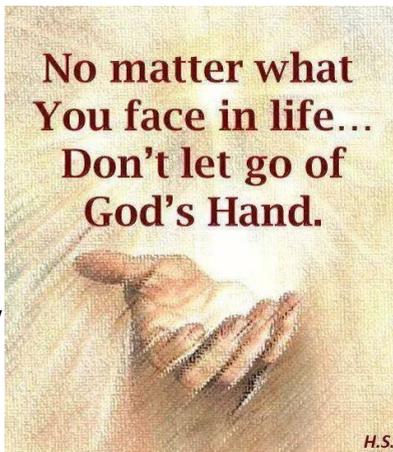
But there is another Psalm, which I think gives us hope at the hardest of times.

Psalm 46

***¹ God is our refuge and strength,
an ever-present help in trouble.
² Therefore we will not fear, though the earth give way
and the mountains fall into the heart of the sea,
³ though its waters roar and foam
and the mountains quake with their surging.^[2]***

Can we trust God at hard times such as these?
Is he here 'with us' as we struggle our way through so many things that we have no control over?

The promise given when Christ was born, was something unique. It was a promise of 'God with us'. Here, in the middle of our day to day lives, 'Emmanuel', from the Christmas story. The child born in Bethlehem is by our side in all we face and all we struggle with and he is **'our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble.'**



Tony Williams

***Rector of Christ Church Forest of Dean and
St Mary English Bicknor***

O Spirit of God,
Set at rest the crowded, hurrying conscious thoughts within our minds and hearts.
Let the peace and quiet of your presence take possession of us.
Help us to relax, to rest, to become open and receptive to you.
You know our inmost spirits, the hidden unconscious life within us, the forgotten memories of hurts and fears, the frustrated desires, the unresolved tensions and dilemmas.
Cleanse and sweeten the springs of our being that freedom, life and love may flow
Into both our conscious and hidden life.
Lord, we lie open before you, waiting for your healing, your peace and your word. Amen.

George Appleton.

Church Services for October 2020

St Mary's English Bicknor

4th Oct	17th Sunday after Trinity	9.30 a.m.	Holy Communion
11th Oct	18th Sunday after Trinity	9.30 a.m.	Matins
18th Oct	St Luke the Evangelist	9.30 a.m.	Holy Communion
25th Oct	Last Sunday after Trinity	9.30	Matins

On Thursday mornings at 11am there is a short service of Holy Communion followed by coffee in English Bicknor Village Hall.

Christchurch, Forest of Dean

4th Oct	17th Sunday after Trinity	11 a.m.	Morning Prayer
11th Oct	18th Sunday after Trinity	11 a.m.	Holy Communion
18th Oct	Luke the Evangelist	11 a.m.	Morning Worship
25th Oct	Last Sunday after Trinity	11 a.m.	Holy Communion

Please note : At the time of publishing this edition a decision regarding Evening Services at Christchurch had not been taken. Please keep an eye on the church notice board: on Facebook (if you use it) or on the church website www.christchurchfod.org.uk for up to date information.

Worshipping together!

It feels like things will never be back to the way they were, and perhaps that is true.

We can now meet in Churches for times of worship together, but it all feels quite different. The rules are simple.

Stay 2 meters apart and 'sanitise'.

Wear face coverings

We are not allowed to sing

No coffee and chat before or after the service.

However, we can meet together for a 'spoken service' with music and hymn lyrics to help us, along with a chance to listen to the Bible and to reflect together on our faith and God's love for us all.

Some of our services will be available to download for those who feel vulnerable and would rather not gather, and, we are able to 'Live Stream' some of them too.

There are lots of different options for you to come and worship together:

SUNDAYS:

9.30 a.m.: Traditional worship at St Mary the Virgin English Bicknor.

11.00 a.m. Morning Worship at Christchurch Forest of Dean

THURSDAY:

11.00AM: Short Communion Service in Bicknor Village Hall



Safe-distance services at Christchurch.



Prayers for October

O God, we thank you for this earth, our home; for the wide sky and the blessed sun, for the salt sea and the running water, for the everlasting hills and the never-resting winds, and the common grass underfoot.

We thank you for our senses by which we hear the songs of birds, and see the splendour of the summer fields, and taste of the autumn fruits, and rejoice in the feel of snow, and smell the breath of spring.

Grant us heart wide open to all this beauty; and save our souls from being so blind that we pass unseeing when even the common thorn bush is aflame with your glory, O God our creator, who lives and reigns for ever and ever. Amen.

Walter Rauschenbusch. 1861-1918.

O Lord God, my All in all, Life of my life and Spirit of my spirit, look in mercy upon me and so fill me with your Holy Spirit that my heart shall have no room for love of aught but you.

Sadhu Sundar Singh 1889-1929.

O make your way plain before my face. Support me this day under all the difficulties I shall meet with. I offer myself to you, O God, this day, to do in me, and with me, as to you seems most meet.

Thomas Wilson.

Christ is the key that opens all the hidden treasures of God's wisdom and knowledge.

Lord, you are to be blessed and praised;
all good things come from you:
you are in our words and in our thoughts, and in all we do. Amen.

St Teresa of Avila. 1515-1582.

Bless, O God, bless my weather-beaten soul.
Prayer of an old man, West Indies.



When you feel you must complain, SMILE.
Do not care if things seem grey.
Soon there will come a brighter day.
You will find that it will pay to SMILE.

From the Parish Records

Included this month are all those whom we have lost this spring and summer who will never be forgotten by their families and friends.

Ronald King (88)

24th March

Graveside Service and Burial at
Mile End Cemetery

Keith McKenna (87)

8th April

Forest of Dean Crematorium

Janet Meredith (80)

22nd April Graveside Service
and Burial at Christchurch
Churchyard

Lorraine Drew (71)

27th April

Forest of Dean Crematorium

Thelma Jean Pratt (86)

(known as Jean)

29th May

Forest of Dean Crematorium

Glenys Murnane (75)

21st August at Christchurch,
followed by cremation at
Forest of Dean crematorium

Sheila Blackwell (71)

7th September at

Forest of Dean Crematorium



Love is immortal, and death is only an horizon, and an horizon is nothing save the limit of our sight.

Rossiter W. Raymond (1840-1918)

Tribute

A remembrance to those we have lost

We have lost good friends and much-loved relatives during this difficult spring and summer. Below are tributes to Janet Meredith by two of her friends.

Our friend: Janet Meredith 1939-2020

Janet sadly died on April 1st 2020.

Janet was a very loyal and faithful member of our church for many years. Janet was christened, confirmed, joined the choir as a young girl, and married at Christchurch. She and Michael would have celebrated their Diamond Wedding this month.

Janet was Churchwarden for 22 years and on the cleaning and flower-arranging rotas. She selected hymns for the evening service and organised garden fetes, decorated the church for festivals and other events and baked many a lovely cake to raise funds for our church.

Janet, together with Mary Barkley, introduced the 'Songs of Praise' service which became very popular. She also took services when a vicar was unavailable.

She was an extremely hard-working member of our church.

Her faith carried her through all kinds of difficult situations. Never one to make a fuss, she would support other members of the church and never let a defeatist attitude take over.

She was a wonderful friend and is much missed.

Marie Dowle

Mary Barkley writes:

Janet was born in The Forest in November 1939. Her parents, Mr and Mrs Bert Adams lived near the top of Joyford Hill and after Janet married Michael Meredith, who had been living in Lydbrook, they had a house built next door to Janet's parents.

Michael and Janet were married in 1960 and later had two sons, David and Richard. Their sons joined their father in the family business and all three continue to work together as Michael is still involved in the business although now in his mid-eighties.

Janet's father died, but Janet continued caring for her mother until she decided to go into Hazelhurst Nursing Home. On her mothers' 100th birthday family and friends celebrated with her at English Bicknor Village Hall – a lovely tea party.

Janet became a Churchwarden with Jack Wilson and the church began to thrive with open days and special events which helped with the finances and increased membership. Upon Jack Wilsons' death she, and I, worked hard to further improve membership and finances. A big event was held in 2000 when the church was decorated and open for a while to inform the public of things going on the church and district over the last 100 years.

Vicars came and went and new people to the area joined the church which lessened the burden on Janet and Marie Dowle. As newer people joined the church the need for Janet's input became less and by this time she had herself become quite frail.

It was found she needed a new heart valve and had to go to Oxford for this operation.

She was always small in stature which made her operation difficult but valiantly Janet pulled through and was once again at home with Michael. Her work load now was mainly at home with her husband and with delightful grandchildren living next door.

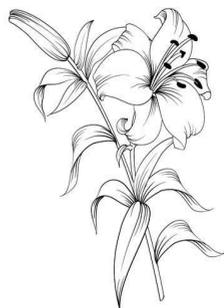
Janet improved and was able to shop and cook but sadly she took ill and was taken to Gloucester Hospital at the start of this dreadful Coronavirus shutdown.

We could not imagine how quickly that could take the life from her and a short funeral service at the Graveyard near to her parents' grave marked her going.

Janet is a huge loss for us all, especially for her husband Michael, her sons and her family. She was a good friend, a ready ear to listen and help with sensible advice : but there was silence from her when questioned about her own difficulties.

We have lost a lovely lady, a good personal friend who was gifted and generous, a huge loss to the church and to my life. We were good friends, now sadly missed

Mary Barkley



Parish of Christchurch, Forest of Dean

Notice of Annual Parochial Church Meeting

which will be held in

Christchurch Parish Church

on Sunday, the 11th day of October 2020, 11:45am

For election of parochial representatives of the laity as follows:

Deanery Synod representatives.

Parochial Church Council representatives.

Parish of Christchurch, Forest of Dean

Notice of Meeting for the Election of Churchwardens

which will be held in

Christchurch Parish Church

on Sunday, the 11th day of October 2020, 11:45am

This meeting may be attended by:

All persons whose names are entered on the church electoral roll of the parish and

All persons resident in the parish whose names are entered on a register of local government electors by reason of such residence

(In this notice, 'parish' means an ecclesiastical parish)

Election to the PCC

Members of the PCC serve for three years and there is the opportunity each year for new members to be elected. Churchwardens are re-elected every year.

If you, or someone you know, would like to stand for election please collect a form from church and return the completed form to church no later than 11 am on Sunday 11th October.

Nominees must be on the Electoral Roll for Christchurch

If you are nominating someone other than yourself please ensure that you have their agreement.

Christchurch is open from 10am to 12 noon Monday and Thursday and for the 11am service on Sunday.



Communion **Thursdays 11am English Bicknor Hall**

Each Thursday at 11am there is a short, simple service of Holy Communion in English Bicknor Village Hall

Parking is easy and on the level; access into the Hall is good and is wheelchair friendly.

Transport can be arranged with notice.

Coffee is currently not available and social distancing measures are in place.

Please just turn up and you will be most welcome. If you would like further information or transport please ring

Helen on 01594 860205



AT HOME

Another month gone by and we still cannot offer Messy Church sessions, so as it is coming up to Harvest here is a picture to colour.

When it's finished, why not put a copy of it on the Messy Church Facebook? @MessyChurchChristchurchEnglishBicknor



The **Forest Foodbank** is currently short of the following items:-

DOG FOOD

INSTANT MASH

SHAMPOO

CANNED POTATOES

SPONGE PUDDINGS

TINNED RICE PUDDING

The Food Bank is grateful for all your contributions which should be left in the usual places

Thank you

Church Discussion Group

Church Discussion Group meet on 1st and 3rd Tuesdays of the month at 7.15 for 7.30 pm at Christchurch.

We abide by Covid regulations.

Currently this means that we need to keep a register of attendees and their contact details for 21 days in line with Gov. Test and Trace requirements.

Hand gel will be provided, social distancing applies and masks are to be worn. Please bring your own Bible if you have one, otherwise we can loan you one to take home with you.

We will begin with coffee as usual but please bring your own as we aren't allowed to provide it, sorry!

Dates for Church Discussion Group
October 6th and 20th 7.15 at Christchurch Church

For more info, please contact me. Tel 01594 726144
fudgejacqueline@gmail.com

Jacqui Fudge

LET'S DO LUNCH
ENGLISH BICKNOR STYLE

Saturday 17th October
12.30pm

2 courses with coffee
£9.00

Strictly BOOKING only

As numbers are very limited due to compliance
with Government Guidance.

To BOOK and details of menu or concerns

Call Daphne Gwilliam 860259

Proceeds to Orchard Trust, Lydbrook



- The **name of the month of October** comes from the Latin “octō”, meaning “eight”, because in the Roman calendar October was the eighth month of the year. With the adding of January and February at the beginning of the calendar after the Julian calendar reform, October became the tenth month of the year, as we know it today.

- The Anglo-Saxons called October “**Wintirfylith**”, meaning “fullness of winter” because it had the first full moon of the winter season.
- Another fun fact about October is that, according to folklore, if the deer have a **gray coat** in this month you should expect a hard winter.
- The holiday of **Halloween**, celebrated in October, comes from “All Hallows’ Eve” or the night before “All Hallows” day (“All Saints” day) as in old English “hallow” means “to sanctify”.
- **Famous people born in October** include Angela Lansbury, Hillary Clinton, Bill Gates, Julia Roberts, Matt Damon, Kate Winslet, Julie Andrews, Hugh Jackman, Katy Perry, Alfred Nobel, Anne Rice, Arthur Miller, Auguste Lumière, Friedrich Nietzsche, Christopher Columbus, Johannes Vermeer, John Keats.
- The **birthstones** for October are the tourmaline and the opal. Tourmalines display a wide spectrum of colors, such as yellow, pink, blue, red, green, black or brown and they are believed to help you stay calm under pressure, bring peace and tranquility and defeat emotions like anger and jealousy. Opals exhibit different colors (green, white, yellow, blue, pink etc.) depending on the conditions under which they were created. Opal gemstones are believed to cure eye infections, strengthen memory, calm nerves and enhance creativity.
- The **traditional flower** of the month of October is the calendula, symbolizing comfort, healing, protection and grace.
- Special **holidays** in October include Halloween (October 31st), Columbus day (the second Monday of October), Yom Kippur, Diwali, International Peace Day (October 2nd).

A QUIET PLACE TO PRAY

If you would value a quiet place to be still and think of those you love or say a prayer, then there are lots of places available.

You could come to Christchurch Parish Church on Ross Road which is open for private prayer every Monday and Thursday from 10.00 -12.00.

Here, a candle can be lit for a loved one, or you can sit in peace and quiet with your own thoughts and prayers.

You could go and sit quietly in St Mary's Churchyard in English Bicknor.

This is genuinely tranquil and holy place with benches and ease of access.

You could go and sit quietly in the Community Orchard, not far from Berry Hill School.

Here you can enjoy our own special natural space in peace and quiet

Whatever you choose, make time for some quiet and stillness

This peaceful cloudscape was photographed by Adrian Griffin

ALL SOULS

A time when we remember our Loved ones who have left us.

Sunday November 1st 2020

2.00 – 5.00pm

ALL SOULS is a time when we have traditionally gathered to remember our loved ones sadly, this year, because of limited possible numbers in Church we have to have a different kind of event, which we hope will still help and enable those who have lost loved ones in recent years to meet and remember together. Our plan is to have Christchurch parish Church open from 2.00pm – 5.00pm on Sunday 1st November
In order to manage it well and ensure we all remain Covid Safe we will offer the following:

Music will be playing as you come to the Church.

Our plan is that, when you arrive, names and contact will be taken for Track and Trace. You will be able to sanitise your hands and put on your face covering.

Three families will be invited in at a time. (Please be patient as you wait).

You will be invited to go to one of the three 'candle stations', where you can recall your loved one and light a floating candle in their memory.

There will then be a short reading and a prayer to help our reflection and remembering.



After this, you will be invited, as a family group, to hang your 'memory leaf' on the Tree of Remembering. (This tree will remain in Church until the end of November)

Obviously, we need to care for each other and ensure that everyone has

time to pay respects, pray and remember.

Therefore, we ask that you come along to Christchurch, if you can, between the following times:

2.00 – 3.00: Family names beginning with A- H

3.00 – 4.00: Family names beginning with I – O

4.00 – 5.00: Family names beginning with P – Z

Obviously, we are saddened that we can't hold and share this special day as a whole community, especially as we are so connected with each other. But we hope that this will offer a sensible and sensitive way for us to express our grief and our thanks for the lives that have touched ours.



Blessings

Tony Williams
RECTOR



Somewhere in this glorious field of sunflowers there is a man discovering that his life-time ambition to wander through such a place is more uncomfortable than romantic—sunflowers have prickly stems.

Not all dreams should, perhaps, come true.

No space for Groan of the Month this month. Instead, some one-liners

To some it's a six-pack, to me it's a support group."

Hard work is its own reward, but wouldn't you rather have the money?

If you do something you'll regret in the morning, sleep till noon.

My ex-wife's other car is a broom.

Michael Mayers General Builder

Interior/Exterior All jobs considered

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TOILET PAPER

Most people would consider toilet paper an essential, certainly going by the panic buying earlier this year. But only 30% of the worlds population actually use it ! The top users are unsurprisingly the US. But Britain comes in third as extravagant toilet roll users, using an average of 127 rolls per capita (2018). Interestingly the French only use half as much as us Brits, maybe due to the prevalence of the bidet in French toilet culture. The bidet being more hygienic and more sustainable then toilet paper. It does require water of course, another valuable resource, but far less than the amount needed to produce a toilet roll.

"It is hard to justify using virgin wood pulp to make a product that is, by definition, to be immediately disposed of..." Ethical Consumer

The big brands like Andrex, Cushelle and supermarket own-brand toilet paper all come with the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) logo or the tree-tick stamp. But what does this mean ?

In theory the timber used to make the product was sustainable sourced. There are three different FSC logos.

FSC 100% Wood from fully FSC certified forests

FSC Recycled Wood must be recycled from pre or post consumer waste

FSC Mixed A mix of FSC virgin wood, recycled and virgin wood from "controlled sources" which are not fully FSC forests but ones that are considered low risk

FSC Mixed is the source most frequently found on big brands toilet paper. Ethical Consumer has taken the lines that toilet paper made using any virgin wood pulp even if FSC certified cannot be considered a sustainable product. If your toilet paper doesn't even have one of the FSC logos (such as Superdrug own-brand) please try to look for an alternative.

The toilet paper companies have convinced us that we need luxury toilet paper, amazing softness or quilted, patterned, coloured, or even scented ! Bleach is used to whiten, soften and strengthen toilet paper and this relies heavily on elemental chlorine, which produces harmful effluents such as dioxins, one of the most harmful man made toxins.

Recycled paper requires far less bleach or uses hydrogen peroxide to whiten which is far less harmful to the environment.

It is also worth mentioning the rise of Bamboo toilet paper. Bamboo is technically a grass which grows 20 times faster than a tree and releases 30% less greenhouse gases. Bamboo responsible sourced is more sustainable also.

So which are the top toilet papers to buy ?

Ecoleaf (suma)	UK
Essential	UK
Traidcraft	UK
Emerald	USA
Who Gives A Crap	China (do recycled and Bamboo)
The Cheeky Panda	China (Bamboo)

There are few alternatives to toilet paper: the bidet , for example, is growing in use in this country. The euphemistically named ‘family cloth’ (basically a piece of material which is then well-washed) is perhaps less likely to be found in British bathrooms. Paper remains essential so we must use it wisely from sustainable sources.

Lindy Lathan

Source material for this article from www.ethicalconsumer.org

Farmyard Frolics & Rural Snippets

We are both reasonably into technology but this zoom has not appealed to us at all, therefore we’ve kept well away from it. In April a young woman from the Red Tractor food standards rang Phil concerning our annual farm inspection and requested he took part in a virtual one. Phils reply was “Oh No, you’d better speak to the wife” ! Well the wife decided to put on a computer dumb act and the girl concluded it would be less stressful all round to await an on farm visit. Sometimes it pays to play on your age !!



Sometimes I give a waiter a tip.....
But they never seem to appreciate my advice.

Never annoy the waiter bringing your
soup.....

October Quiz

A general knowledge one this month. Answers on p 33

1. How many of Henry VIII's wives had the first name Ann(e)?
2. What is the name of the Amazon device for reading e-books?
3. Who played the title role in the 1972 movie "The Godfather"?
4. With which sport would you associate Brand's Hatch?
5. What was the name of Napoleon Bonaparte's horse?
6. Alphabetically what is the first of the US States?
7. Who is the lead guitarist for the Rolling Stones?
8. What are the three primary colours?
9. A deficiency of Vitamin D in the diet can lead to which medical condition?
10. Which country both hosted and won the inaugural FIFA World Cup in 1930?
11. Which artist's studio was known as "The Factory"?
12. In which English county would you find the seaside resort of Weston-super-Mare?
13. Which planet in our solar system is NOT represented in the seven movements of Holst's "The Planets" suite?
14. In which ocean would you find the island of Madeira?
15. The Cavaliers and the Roundheads fought on opposing sides in which conflict?
16. Which Northern venue has hosted the World Snooker Championships since 1977?
17. Released in 2012, what was the title of Taylor Swift's first UK number 1 album?
18. How many kidneys does a normal human possess?
19. What name is given to a musical piece for nine vocalists or instruments?
20. Where in London would you find the "Whispering Gallery"?

Lime Kilns: part of our industrial heritage



These structures, found just outside English Bicknor on a lane to the right at the bottom of the road past the school, are a fascinating reminder of how we used to do things.

Many rural villages had their own lime kilns (there is another, larger example, in Lower Lydbrook) which were used to produce an essential ingredient for both building mortars and agricultural use. Transport of both raw materials and the finished product was usually by water—the Wye being the obvious route for both the local kilns . Both local kilns are located high above the river, presumably the Wye was a likely to flood long ago as it does now.

The method of extracting lime was universal. Chalk or limestone was layered with wood or charcoal. In Britain, at least, from about 1360 coal was also used. A fire was lit and as the fuel burnt away the ash that remained was raked out, riddled and the resultant powder used locally.

The development of the railway in the later Industrial age made small-scale kilns unprofitable and even small villages had to depend upon lime manufactured elsewhere.

Apples: the autumn bounty

Did you know there are around 7 600 different varieties of apple and no one knows just how many of those grow in the British Isles? The supermarkets stock just a very few commercial varieties, grown because they are resistant to disease and keep well.

But the tastiest, crunchiest, and juiciest are the ones grown in your own garden.



There is a mystique surrounding apples which goes back at least as far as the Ancient Greeks.

For instance the Greek Hero Heracles, he of the Twelve Labours, was required to travel to the Garden of the Hesperides and pick the golden apples off the Tree of Life growing at its center.

The Greek goddess of discord, Eris, became disgruntled after she was excluded from the wedding of Peleus and Thetis. In retaliation, she tossed a golden apple inscribed "For the most beautiful one", into the wedding party. Three goddesses claimed the apple: Hera (Queen of the Gods), Athene (Goddess of Wisdom) and Aphrodite (Goddess of Love). Paris, son of the King of Troy was given the unenviable task of selecting the winner. After being bribed by both Hera and Athena, Aphrodite tempted him with the most beautiful woman in the world, Helen of Sparta. He awarded the apple to Aphrodite, thus indirectly causing the Trojan War.

The apple was considered, in ancient Greece, sacred to Aphrodite. In many parts of the world, to throw an apple at someone was to symbolically declare one's love; and similarly, to catch it was to symbolically show one's acceptance of that love.. The philosopher Plato is said to have written to his prospective love:

I throw the apple at you, and if you are willing to love me, take it and share your girlhood with me; but if your thoughts are what I pray they are not, even then take it, and consider how short-lived is beauty.

Staycation 2020— or ‘glamping’ for beginners

We planned a short break at a glamping site not far from the lovely town of Ludlow. We envisaged gentle strolls during the day, visits to a castle or two and evenings spent sipping wine while eating a delicious meal cooked from local delicacies and watching the stars before retiring to a comfortable bed.

The first hint that the reality might not quite match the expectation was to find that romantically curved shallow flight of steps shown on the beautifully illustrated map as leading to the glamping area was in fact 21 eight-inch tall narrow blocks of concrete set one above the other on an approximately 1:4 incline: with no handrail. The iron gate at the top, we later discovered, had a mind of its own and happily swung back to catch you as you placed your first foot to descend. Grabbing a nearby branch saved many a fall.

The various glamping accommodations are scattered around an arboretum and each one has its own lawn and is almost completely secluded from any other. Idyllic. They are also several hundred feet from the top of the steps up an incline which rises steadily through a variety of trees. Looking in vain for our place we wheezed loudly and tried to still our thumping hearts as we took yet another fork in the path. We were much comforted by the young, slim mother of several children staying in a large showman’s caravan who said, loudly, as we went past, that if anyone wanted anything else from the car they could get it themselves as she was not walking back up that slope again. Possibly ever.

The accommodation we were looking for as we struggled up the hill, was described as a Shepherds Hut. Visions of a George Clark Amazing Space had been conjured up, or possible one of those Homes and Gardens transformations. Admittedly, the three on-line photographs showed a fairly small space but there was a bed covered with a large and rather beautiful Welsh woven rug, a pretty shelf with bunting and lights and a small cooker. The reality was a sleeping platform. An MDF board supported on rough pine legs covered by two cast-off pieces of foam seating from garden furniture. The battery -operated lights lasted, dimly, for the first evening. The single burner camping gas stove managed to boil a kettle before running out of gas. Changing the cylinder required a technical genius and is not something one wants to do in the semi-dark. And filling the kettle needed three hands as the water was dispensed from a collapsible water carrier which managed to spill at least as much as went into the kettle.

The unexpected joy was finding a sack of dry logs and a makeshift fireplace safely away from the hut on which, on the second night, we cooked the sort of 'fry up' that only a day in the open air can even begin to justify.

We ate every meal outside but we never did see the stars. The most spectacular electrical storm for countless years lit up the sky for two nights and reminded us again just how small a human being is in terms of the cosmos. On the third night a torrential storm turned the path to the steps to a river depositing mud and leaves at the bottom and covering the steps with the remains of the woodchip path. We came home that morning .

Was it enjoyable? Well, yes, in an odd way it was. When things are so very far from that which one had hoped for there is only one thing to do and that is make the best of it. Yet another lesson from this awful spring and summer, perhaps.

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Actual transcript of a US naval ship with Canadian authorities off the coast of Newfoundland in October, 1995. This radio conversation was released by the Chief of Naval Operations on 10-10-95...

US Ship: "Please divert your course 15 degrees to the North to avoid a collision."

Canadians: "Recommend you divert YOUR course 15 degrees to the South to avoid a collision."

US Ship: "This is the captain of a US Navy ship. I say again, divert YOUR course."

Canadians: "No, I say again, you divert YOUR course."

US Ship: **"*THIS IS THE AIRCRAFT CARRIER USS ABRAHAM LINCOLN, THE SECOND LARGEST SHIP IN THE UNITED STATES' ATLANTIC FLEET. WE ARE ACCOMPANIED BY THREE DESTROYERS, THREE CRUISERS AND NUMEROUS SUPPORT VESSELS. I DEMAND THAT YOU CHANGE YOUR COURSE 15 DEGREES NORTH. THAT'S ONE-FIVE DEGREES NORTH, OR COUNTER MEASURES WILL BE UNDERTAKEN TO ENSURE THE SAFETY OF THIS SHIP.*"**

Canadians: "This is a lighthouse. Your call."



Rule Britannia: the true story behind the words

Many of us will remember singing *Rule Britannia* at school or adding our voices to those at the Last night of the Proms. The Black Lives Matter movement has caused us to rethink some of our history and *Rule Britannia*, for a while at least, looked as if it would become a victim of political correctness. Yet how many of us know the origins of the song?

Pirates are the stuff of stories and legends. Among the most famous are those of the 17th and 18th centuries looting ships in the West Indies for gold and treasure: far enough away in both geography and time to be thought romantic. Think Jonny Depp, or Robert Louis Stephenson.

But did you know that the waters around our own islands were once the haunt of pirates? Or that for many years the fishermen and sea-traders of Cornwall, Devon and the West coasts of Wales and Scotland feared to go fishing much further than a mile or so from the shore? Crossing from Ireland to Scotland was considered too dangerous by many and, for decades, Lundy Island was used as the headquarters of pirates.

These pirates were North African Slavers. In the 1600's, at the same time as the pirates of the Caribbean were looting ships for gold, the North Africans were stopping English ships and carrying off the crews to be sold as slaves in Algiers and Tripoli. Between 1609 and 1616, 466 British ships were captured by Slavers in the English Channel, Irish Sea and North Atlantic and the crews sold into slavery.

In 1625 a raiding party landed at Mount's Bay in Cornwall and 60 people, who had taken refuge in a local church, were dragged out, loaded up and taken off to Africa to be sold as slaves. On 12 August 1625 the Mayor of Plymouth wrote to London for military help after 27 ships had been seized by North African Slavers in just 10 days. There seems to have been a singular lack of response to that request for just 20 years later, in 1645, at the height of the English Civil War (1642-1651), 240 people in coastal villages in Cornwall were seized and abducted as slaves.

The situation only began to change after the end of the English Civil War when the Navy was built up under Oliver Cromwell and subsequently became the Royal Navy under Charles the Second (1660-1685).

By 1700, North African Slavers knew better than to bother the British Isles in their search for slaves because of the Royal Navy. It was a triumph that the navy of the now United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland was finally able to control our own coastal waters.

It was in commemoration of this success that, in 1740, James Thompson wrote *Rule Britannia* as a hymn of thanksgiving that seamen and fishermen were now safe to go about their daily business without fear of capture and enslavement.

In 2004 Clive Milton, an historian and author, wrote the book *White Gold*. Using largely unpublished material sourced from the British Library, universities and elsewhere, he documents a slave trade which captured seamen – mainly but not exclusively English and French - and took them to North Africa. Just as with the later enslavement of Africans themselves, the tales of torture, deprivation and death are difficult to read .

Rule Britannia, with its defiant refrain of ‘Britons never, never’ never will be slaves’ is not a nationalistic rant but a thankful reminder that even mortal danger can be overcome.

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A few more one –liners

If I can be of any help, you're in worse shape than I thought.

I have often regretted my speech, never my silence.
"When all men think alike, no one thinks very much." -
Walter Lipman

Speaking your mind isn't the same thing as using it.

It takes fewer muscles to smile than to frown, and fewer still to ignore someone completely.

Don't judge a book by its cover.

By Ann Harvey

I had saved for months to go on a rather expensive creative writing course. I had arrived early with a new file and sharp pencil and eagerly looked around the other students. Most of us were smartly dressed middle aged folk who stood up when the lecturer entered. He welcomed us and then he was interrupted by the door opening by what I thought must be a tramp. He was unkempt, long haired very dirty looking. He took a seat, I was glad it was not near me. He must be in the wrong place I thought. Surely he wasn't enrolled on this course?

"For our first exercise I will give you a few minutes to write down a sentence which sums up Autumn." the lecturer announced.

"Easy " I thought!

"Mind you I don't want any thing that has been said before – no mellow fruitfulness or patchwork fields or gold and russet foliage. Think hard, make it original!"

Wow, I was stumped and to this day can't remember what I read out at the end of the writing time.

The tramp had no paper or pencil but when it came to his contribution this is what he said in a polished eloquent voice.

"Autumn is a beautiful woman screaming how beautiful she is."

This happened several years ago but every Autumn when I admire the canopies of Autumn trees I repeat out loud his words. It certainly showed me the truth in never judging a book by its cover!



Bicky's

There is a new café in Coleford. The mother and daughter team of Kim Bick and Michelle Tonge, have taken over one of the units in Pyarts Court and remodelled it as a café.

There is good Covid security and the tables are well spaced out, with some outside in a sheltered walkway. The staff wear the smallest and neatest face visors which cover mouth and nose but do not restrict facial expressions so that those who lip read, for example, are not disadvantaged. And, even more importantly, the visors, unlike a mask, do not hide a smile.

The aim of Bicky's is to provide a community meeting place and there is a warmth and generosity of spirit which engages customers as they walk through the door and sign in with their name and contact number. Thereafter, one of the staff will bring a menu and take an order. There is a growing regular clientele some of whom arrive for breakfast and then return later for lunch. Or even tea. Morning coffee includes an array of luscious cakes and in the afternoon there is the added choice of a cream tea. Baked beans on toast is a favourite breakfast, as are plain scrambled eggs. The menu is not huge – Bicky's prefers to supply a smaller menu cooked freshly to perfection rather than carry a complication of items, but there is sufficient variety to suit most tastes and all at reasonable prices. As far as practicable, ingredients are locally sourced and the excellent coffee comes from Ross on Wye.

Bicky's is a welcome addition to Coleford providing a warm and friendly venue for shoppers and others living or visiting the town.

Answers to October Quiz

- 1. Two (Boleyn and Cleves 2.Kindlle 3.Marlon Brando. 4. Motor racing.***
- 5. Marengo. 6. Alabama. 7. Keith Richard.***
- 8. Red, yellow and blue. 9.Rickets. 10. Uruguay. 11.Andy Warhol.***
- 12. Somerset. 13. Earth. 14. Atlantic. 15. English Civil War.***
- 16 The Crucible, Sheffield. 17. Red. 18. Two. 19. Nonet.***
- 20. St Pauls Cathedral.***

Bottles to Bricks

Much of the plastic that cannot be recycled can be stuffed into one of those reusable plastic bottles. Keep the pieces of plastic small and make sure you make the bottom of the bottle as firm as you can. Ram everything down as you go. The website is www.ecobrick.org. You will find all sorts of information there including a more accurate estimate of weight—a 2lt bottle weighs about 600gms when filled. That takes some doing but also represents a lot of plastic which has not gone to land fill. The sides of the bottle should be rock-hard with no give at all. Keep going!

Filled bottles can be dropped off at Christchurch where there is a collection bin marked Bottle to Brick.



This is the *Gaia* Installation by the artist Luke Gerram which will be in the nave of Gloucester Cathedral from 13th October—1st November. Built using images from NASA and a massive 7 m across Luke says that he hopes the structure will give people a new perspective of the planet on which we live. If you were one of the 70 000 people who say Luke's earlier *Museum of the Moon* you will know just how impressive and thought-provoking these installations can be.

Look out for Luke Gerram's other installation *Of Earth and Sky* which is poetry-based and will be found throughout the city while *Gaia* is in the cathedral.

Community Organisation Contact Page

The Gloucestershire Wellbeing Trust

A support service in times of difficulty

If you would like to talk to someone in confidence please contact the Community Wellbeing Service at Forest of Dean District Council on 01594 812447 or 01594 812399.

Gloucestershire Police

Find out about local police activity and link in to the various ways you can find support and information by going online to <https://www.gloucestershire.police.uk/neighbourhood-policing/>

English Bicknor Chit Chat

The Facebook page contains information about the village and local events. If you are not a Facebook user and would like anything added then please email Daphne@drysladefarm.co.uk

Barnwood Trust

Information and help applying for grants from the trust is available from the Forest of Dean Office on 01594 839191

Or visit www.barnwoodtrust.org

Christchurch and English Bicknor churches website

www.christchurchfod.org.uk

If you run a community organisation and would like the details published in the magazine on this page, please contact Judith on 01594 781436

Christchurch, FOD and St Mary's English Bicknor

Parish Contacts

Rector: Revd. Capt. Tony Williams, CA

Christchurch Vicarage Ross Road Christchurch Coleford GL16 7NS

01594 836751 revtonyw@hotmail.com

Ministry Team

Joan Atherley, Sue Boulter, Sandie Bradley, Maggie Fisher,
Jacqui Fudge (Reader in training), Helen Rodwell , Carol Turley (Pastoral Team Leader),
Glenda White-Miller (Reader) , Sally Whittington , Tony Williams,

Safeguarding Pam Iddiols and Andy Iddiols 01594 334598

Or email: pamelaspooner@sky.com

Christchurch

Church Wardens: Linda James 01594 822935

Trevor Harvey 01594 835897

PCC Secretary Judith Brickwood 01594 781436

Treasurer Barbara Davies 01594 837270

English Bicknor

Church Wardens ; Jennie McHattie 01594 834855

Jan Furnival 01594 541566

PCC secretary Jan Furnival 01594 541566

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