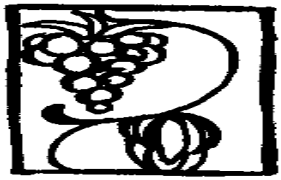
THE BRADFIELD GRAPEVINE



February 2024 No:221

Well, it's like we have been through four seasons in the last month!! Sitting here compiling the Grapevine, the morning after Storm Isha, the sunshine is glorious but the trees are still swaying and dancing in the wind. Out walking, even the first snowdrops of the year have been spotted, and the birds have been very busy in and out of the hedgerows, we eagerly await the arrival of Spring! Alice's weather report should be interesting to read this month as she summarises 2023.

As usual, there is plenty happening in St Clare during the month, Kit Cafe, Whist Drive, Charity Quiz for Prostate Cancer, hopefully there is enough variety to tempt you all. Isobel reminds us that the Shantyfolk will be performing again on Friday 8 March, so if that's for you, remember to book your tickets with Isobel There will also be a churchyard clean up in March (date to be confirmed) - this not only helps keep our beautiful church and grounds looking welcoming to visitors (human and the wildlife variety), it is a friendly,community spirited morning, sustained by bacon butties and hot drinks so if you are able to support and give a little time it would be lovely to see as many people as possible - many hands make light work and all that!

Margaret Lovick
Tel: 01284 386662

Debbie Thomas
Tel: 01284 386302

Email: stclaregrapevine@gmail.com

News from the Rectory

Dear friends

I may have written before about my dislike of the month of February. It feels as though Spring is a long way off, and we often experience cold temperatures and snow in this month. However, there are some bright spots on the horizon for those of us who are averse to the second month of the year. One of them is Shrove Tuesday, otherwise known as Pancake Day!

Shrove Tuesday is the day before Ash Wednesday, which is the first day of Lent. We are holding the annual Ashing service in Felsham this year at 11am on 14th February so do come along if you can! Lent is an important time for Christians around the world, and is a time of solemn observance and preparation for marking the death and resurrection of Jesus at Easter.

From its start until its conclusion on Easter Sunday, Lent has traditionally been a time for fasting or giving something up. Just as we prepare for events in our personal lives such as birthdays or weddings, we are invited during Lent to make our hearts and minds ready for remembering Jesus' life, death and bodily resurrection.

These days, Christians around the world observe Lent in many ways. I like to hold a 'Lent Course' every year, where anyone can come and join a group which thinks about the Christian Faith and studies the Bible. It's a great way of learning more about what it means to be a follower of Jesus.

In recent years, Christians have been taking up challenges such as making a generous act every day through Lent. Our schools often take up Lent challenges such as fundraising for various charities.

If you would like to know more about Lent/Easter or anything else about Christianity, don't hesitate to get in contact with me!
with every blessing

Sharon

Canon Sharon Potter, revsharon2@gmail.com, 01284 828599

Cockfield Benefice Services and Events February 2024

Sunday 4 February Second before Lent	9.30am Communion CW - Stanningfield 11am Communion CW - Bradfield St Clare 6pm Six2Seven - Felsham Village Hall
Sunday 11 February Sunday next before Lent	10am Morning Prayer CW - Cockfield 10.30am Communion CW - Bradfield St George 6pm Praise & Worship - Gt Whelnetham
Wednesday 14 February Ash Wednesday	11am Communion & Ashing - Felsham
Sunday 19 February First in Lent	9.30am Morning Prayer CW - Stanningfield 10am Morning Worship - Felsham 10.30am Communion CW - Cockfield 4pm Evening Prayer CW - Bradfield St Clare
Saturday 24 February	2-4pm 'Knit & Natter' - Bradfield St Clare Village Hall
Sunday 25 February Second in Lent	9.30am Communion CW - Gt Whelnetham 10am Worshipping Together - Bradfield St George 10am Communion BCP - Gedding

Please note these services may be subject to change – for up-to-date service times see the benefice website at ***www.cockfieldbenefice.com***

A service of Celtic Morning Prayer is normally held every Tuesday at Cockfield at 9am and at Stanningfield every Thursday at 9am.

For more details contact Canon Sharon, revsharon2@gmail.com, 01284-828599 or 07825086063

Church Report



2024 and another Christmas is over. And for our church, what a lovely Christmas it was. The 17th of December saw our annual Carol Service, taken by Rev. Sharon and very well attended. The church, decorated by Margaret Lovick, Val Nunn and Debbie Thomas, looked so pretty and festive, with lanterns and greenery in every window.

On Christmas Eve we were fortunate enough to host, once again, the Crib Service for the whole benefice, taken by Helen. This is a popular service so we expected about 40 people to come. How wrong we were! They came and they kept on coming! By the time we closed the doors every seat in the church was full, including the choir stalls, and we had 100 people waiting to hear the Christmas story. The story was told in the form of an unusual nativity, ably acted out by many of the children present, with Charlie from Elm Green as Master of Ceremonies, keeping everyone up to the mark. Audience participation consisted - again - of shouts, jeers and animal noises. How does Helen always manage to get us making animal noises! The service was followed by wonderful refreshments, which we somehow managed to stretch for everyone there - a bit like the parable of the loaves and fishes! A big thank you to everyone who made refreshments.

On New Year's Eve we held a carol communion, where people in the congregation took it in turns to choose the carols that we sang. A high spot of the service was the Advent wreath catching fire! Mike Morley, who had been appointed to keep his eye on the candles, has been sacked as Fire Monitor!

Another reminder that on March 8th we will again be hosting The Shantyfolk at Bradfield St George Village Hall – see poster elsewhere in the Grapevine. If you came last time you will know how good they were and if you didn't

come, now is your chance to hear them and have some fun. We have reduced numbers a little this time, to give people a little more room and tickets are selling well, so don't hang about. Tickets are available from me, Isobel Payne, by calling 01284 386169. Adults are £15, teenagers 12-18 are £7.50 and children under 12 are free. The ticket price includes a two course supper.

In March we are planning to have a churchyard clean-up and would greatly welcome any helpers who could give a little time. Coffee and bacon sandwiches afterwards!

A happy and healthy New Year to everyone from Bradfield St Clare Church.

VILLAGE FRIENDS

The next meeting will be on

Thursday 15 February at 2pm

at Felsham and Gedding Village Hall

This month we will be making pancakes!

Village Friends is an over 65's friendship group of men and women from various villages who meet once a month

All welcome, just come along

If you require transport please contact:

Canon Sharon 01284-828599 or 07825 086063

revsharon2@gmail.com or

Susan Metcalf 07925 867221st.metcalf@btinternet.com

Sponsored by the Cockfield Benefice

KIT CAFE

keep in touch.

Our next opening will be: Saturday, 17th February from 11 am – 1 pm

This café is FREE and OPEN TO EVERYONE Why not make a date in your diary?

Please come and join friends and neighbours (past and present) for coffee, tea, cakes and savouries. Pop in for five minutes or stay for the whole two hours. There are games, colouring books and pencils to keep our younger visitors amused. We have quite a selection of books in the hall too so please feel free to take some home to read. There are also a few jigsaws that can be borrowed/exchanged. There is something for everyone at the Kit Café and you can be sure of a very warm welcome and plenty of lively chat.

The answers to our Winter Quiz will be displayed in the hall and the winner announced. If there is more than one correct entry the winner will be drawn from a hat.

Any offers of help in the kitchen or setting up would be most welcome. Equally donations of cakes or savouries would be much appreciated. It's always nice to see somebody turning up with a sample of their favourite recipe!

For further information please contact Val on 07483245825.

Don’t forget February 13 - Pancake Day!

Ingredients:

100g plain flour

1 large egg

300ml milk

oil or melted butter, for frying

STEP 1
Sift the flour and a pinch of salt into a bowl. Make a well in the centre with the back of a spoon then break in the egg and pour in half the milk. Whisk together, gradually incorporating the flour to make a smooth thick batter. Beat thoroughly to remove any lumps, then stir in the rest of the milk.

STEP 2
Heat a little oil or butter in a medium frying pan, then tip off the excess into a bowl. Pour about 2 tablespoons of batter into the pan, tilting the pan as you pour, until the batter thinly coats the base. Cook over a moderate heat for 30 seconds to one minute until golden brown on the underside.

STEP 3
Flip over the pancake with a palette knife, and cook the other side until it is golden brown. Slide the pancake out of the pan on to a plate, heat a little more oil or butter and cook the remaining pancakes one at a time in the same way.

STEP 4
If preparing in advance, cook and stack the pancakes. Reheat in the microwave on Medium (750W) for about 2 minutes. Alternatively, heat the oven to 180C/gas 4/fan 160C. Wrap the pancakes in foil and warm them through in the oven for 10 minutes.

GATEHOUSE FOOD BANK

Just a couple of days before Christmas we were absolutely delighted to find, again, an envelope in our post box, addressed to the food bank, with a monetary gift inside.

This time it was £240.

There was no clue as to where or from whom it came, save for a quotation from a Woody Guthrie song from 1939.

Gifts of this type are very valuable to the food bank as it enables them to direct spending to areas where there may be shortfalls.

A thank-you letter was received from the food bank and copies have been posted on the noticeboard outside the church and on the official village notice board.

The needs of the food bank are ever increasing so, please, if you can, give a little to our collection points in the church porch and outside the front door of The Maltings, on Bury Road.

Once again, mystery benefactor, Thank You.

Charity Quiz

Friday 23rd February 2024
Bradfield St CLare Village Hall
At 7.30pm

No Specific entry fee - we will leave that to your discretion. There will be a small prize for the winners.

Teams of four, bring your own drinks, tea and coffee making facilities will be available.

It is hoped that this will be a quarterly event and February's will be in aid of Prostate Cancer Uk.

Please book your table, call Clive Leal on 07717 823 525

Pat's Christmas Pud Knits and Marmalade

Thanks to all your generosity and support we were able to support two places at 'Crisis For Christmas' to the tune of £60 and in addition were able to send £70 to the Bury Drop-In Centre.
Thank you so very much on their and my behalf. **Pat**

News from Homefield



Here goes with my first writings of 2024, I wish you all a very Happy New Year, which seems a bit odd in February but it still counts!

It is funny that all my new year resolutions with ‘not to do’ have appeared as ‘to do’ on the jobs around the house list! We did have a lovely family Christmas together with all the vegetables coming off the allotment which was very pleasing. I have accepted that after three new batteries in the scales they are correct and not over weighing, thank goodness they don't talk as well.

The sheep were all foot-trimmed a couple of weeks ago. With all the wet conditions, and being on grass with no abrasive rocks to climb, their hooves get long and soft. The mud gets in between their hooves and causes discomfort at best and lameness at worst. With my usual shepherding stealth I set up a gate pen with the integral working pen inside. This means I can put tools on the floor without the other sheep ‘borrowing’ them. With a bucket of food, they were lured in after two attempts, Steven and Chicken were not so sure about the gates. To the people walking by I must explain that my lying on the ground was merely to put the sheep at ease to the procedure awaiting them, nothing to do with the slippery ground. Once they were in, they were sat up and their hooves trimmed with no real problems. Apologies to Steven, in the fading light he was tipped up twice (a bit of Karma there I think). The next day we had a sharp frost so they were all walking on their toes on the frozen hard ground,

like some dressage event. The sheep are now offered hay as well as the sheep nuts and grass. The hay was made from our little wild flower meadow in August. I filled five ex-builders bags and stored them under cover. This has resulted in some lovely sweet smelling vernal hay. We have a hayrick on wheels as well, which is just as nice a feed. It is not a true hayrick as there is a plastic sheet as a cap, I'm not that confident on my stack building to shed all the rain.

Now to the allotment, where there is not much to report. We still have beetroot, parsnips, carrots and sprouts that we are harvesting. I have spread some year old compost (builders bag again) on this year's potato ground. With all the rain just laying on the surface for days there is a lot of capping on the soil but hopefully this can be sorted. In the polytunnel I have started onions and garlic in pots. I didn't want to plant them out in the mud to rot. There are a few lettuce seedlings in the tunnel which will be planted out later when it dries up a bit, they will be under cloches to protect from that North /Easterly wind cutting them in two. Where would we be without the weather!?

Valentine's Day - February 14

Valentine's Day, also called Saint Valentine's Day or the Feast of Saint Valentine, is celebrated annually on February 14 in honour of one or two early Christian martyrs named Saint Valentine and, through later folk traditions, has become a significant cultural, religious, and commercial celebration of romance and love in many regions of the world. Have you got yours ready?

They're back!



The shantyfolk



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Bradfield Weather

Nov 2019	Nov 2020	Nov 2021	Nov 2022	Nov 2023
81.5 mm	42 mm	34 mm	109.5 mm	99 mm
Dec 2019	**Dec 2020**	**Dec 2021**	**Dec 2022**	**Dec 2023**
82 mm	119.5 mm	74 mm	69 mm	78 mm
Annual total '19	**Annual total '20**	**Annual total '21**	**Annual total '22**	**Annual '23**
612.5 mm	689 mm	623 mm	443 mm	835.5mm

What's your New Year's resolution? Are you hoping that mine has been not to moan about lack of rain? Well…… it certainly HAS been wet and 2023 was well above our average annual rainfall, but if we average out 2022 and 2023 it brings us back to around 640mm. Interesting. What we just need is for it to fall in steady amount and sadly that's not how nature works! My excuse for being slow to get this to the Ed this month is I was waiting to see what Storm Isha brought – I think we got off lightly. However, it's our ninth named storm this season and the meteorologists are saying this could be the new norm. We've had a couple of cold snaps: one in early December but thankfully with temperatures getting above zero during the day, and one last week, which was chillier but beautifuller (yes I know but it should be a word!) and at least it was dry. The most exciting news though is that sunrise and sunset have both broken the 8am and 4pm markers and the days are suddenly starting to draw out – and when they're not being blown out of the sky or rained on, the birds are starting to say spring just might be on its way. (For the record, I treat December as late autumn and February as spring which means there's only a month of winter!). At the time of going to press we are awaiting for Jocelyn, fingers crossed it's not dissimilar to Isha for us - we got away relatively lightly. - **Alice Ward-Thomas Jan 22nd**

The Library Van Dates 2024

Contact: help@suffolklibraries.co.uk Telephone: 01473 351249
The Library Van will call at Bradfield St Clare Village Hall from **9.40am until 9.55am** on the following dates:

13 December 2023	26 June
10 January **2024**	24 July
7 February	21 August
6 March	28 September
3 April	16 October
1 May	13 November
29 May	11 December

BIN COLLECTIONS FOR NOVEMBER 2023

Wednesday 7 February	Blue Bin
Tuesday 13 February	Brown Bin
Wednesday 14 February	Black Bin
Wednesday 21 February	Blue Bin
Tuesday 27 February	Brown Bin
Wednesday 28 February	Black Bin

www.westsuffolk.gov.uk/bindays

Village Hall Whist Drive



Sadly we had to cancel our January Whist Drive due to several players suffering from coughs and colds. Also with several local roads flooded it would have made it difficult for players from outside the village to make it.

For our December whist drive we had fourteen players, 8 men and 6 ladies so Ian Markham kindly agreed to play as a lady, which was lucky for him as he won first prize!

Ladies: As mentioned Ian took the first place prize on 177, a really good score. In second place was Siobhan on 162 and Sylvia came third with 160. Val took the wooden spoon with 140.
Gentlemen: Ean won the first prize with 171, Gerry came second on 166 and Jim took third place with 163. Derek took the wooden spoon with 142.

Whist Drives are held in the village hall on the first Friday of every month, the next one being **Friday, 2nd February at 7.30 pm.** Entry is £2 per player with all proceeds handed out in prize money. There is also a prize draw the proceeds of which go towards village hall funds for the upkeep of the hall. **Donations of draw prizes would be much appreciated.**

If you enjoy playing cards and would like to join us new players are always welcome. For further information ring Val Nunn on 07483245825

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Useful Local Contacts

Anglian Water - Emergencies	03457 145145
Borough Council	St Edmundsbury Offices - 01284 763233
Local Member	Sarah Mildmay-White - 01359 270580 Sara.Mildmay-White@stedsbc.gov.uk
Bradfield St Clare Book Club/Village Halll Bookings	Mrs Val Nunn - 01284 388830
Bra dfield Grapevine Magazine	Mrs Debbie Thomas - 01284 386302 stclaregrapevine@gmail.com Mrs Margaret Lovick - 01284 386662
Bury Stray Cat Fund	01284 388455
Charity for the Relief in Sickness	Secretary: Mrs Vicky Spall - 01284 386357
Suffolk County Council Switchboard	01284 763233
Local Councillor	Mrs Karen Soons - 07864601887 Karen.soons@suffolk.gov.uk
Dentist (Emergency)	By appointment Sat and Sun pm 0300 130 3065
Doctor – Suffolk Doctors on Call	Ring your own Surgery
	Or alternatively call 111
Electricity	UK Power Networks Supply Faults 0800 783 8838
Footpath Warden	Mrs Fenella Fraser - 01284 388310
Gospel Hall	Mr Keith Arknett - 01359 240910
Mobile Library	Mr Carl Bell - 07721 879855
Member of Parliament	Mrs Jo Churchill - 01284 752311 www.jochurchill.mp@parliament.uk
Neighbourhood Watch Contact	Mrs Dianne Bullard - 01284 386598
Parish Council Clerk	Mrs Nicola Sturgeon - 07817170906
Parish Council Website	http://bradfieldstclare.one Suffolk.net
Police	101 (non-urgent) 999 (urgent)
Post office Delivery Office	01284 358201
Schools:Cockfield Primary	01284 828287
Thurston Community College	01359 230885
West Suffolk College	01284 701301
St Clare Church	Rev. Canon Sharon Potter revsharon2@gmail.com 01284 828599 / 07825 086063
St Edmunds RC Church	Fr David Bagstaff - 01284 754358