

Braunton Memory Cafe News



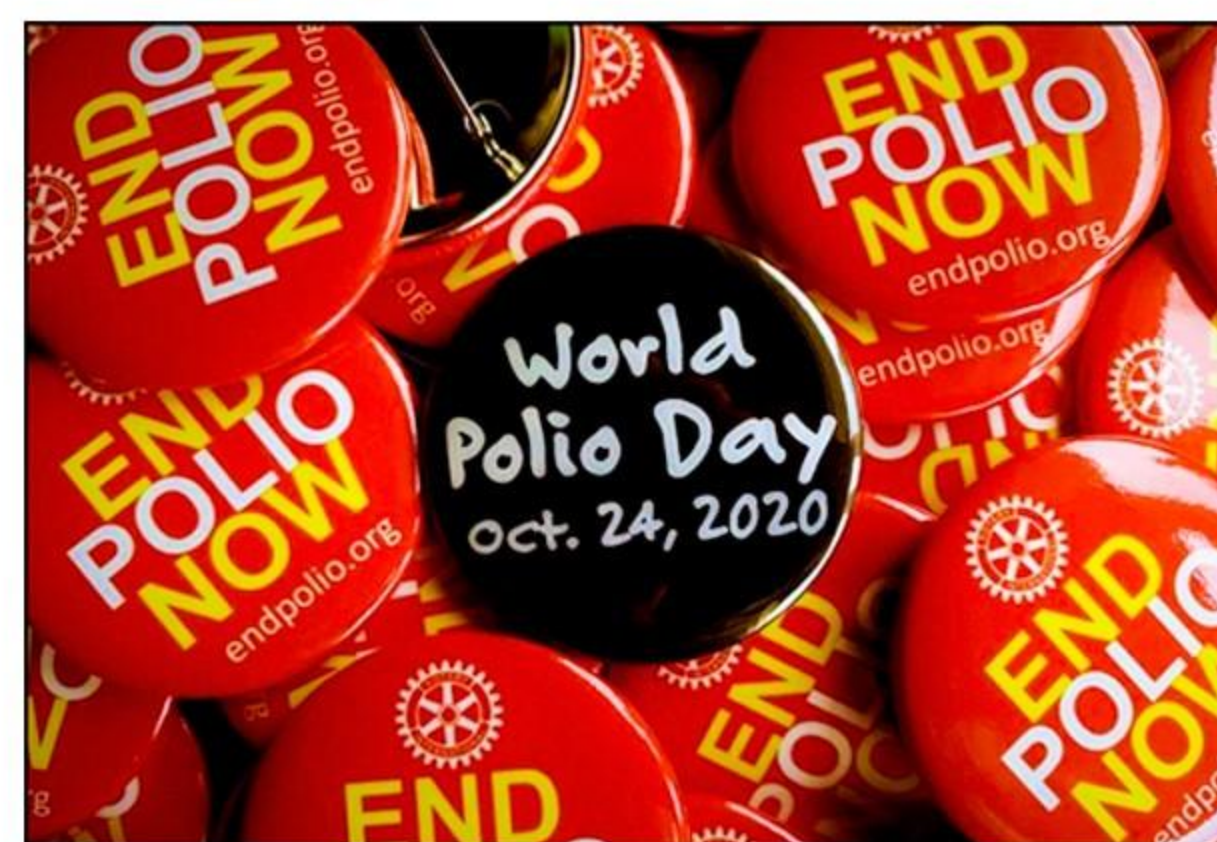
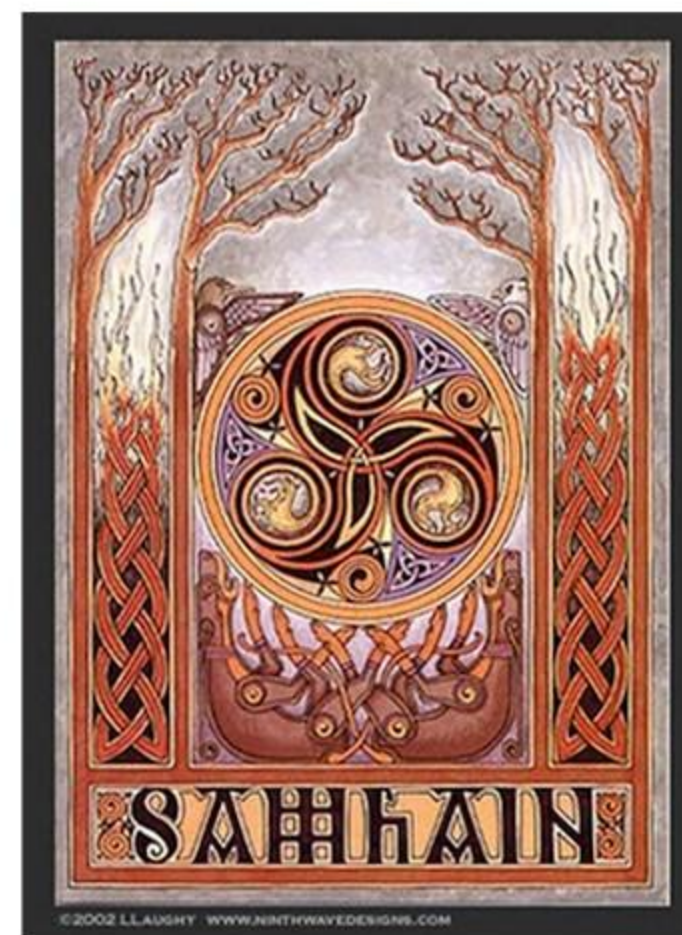
Hello to you all

Autumn has arrived and the leaves are turning. As Edward Capern, the Postman Poet of North Devon says "Such heavenly lights and pearly heights, Such ruby reds and blues, And amber tints and mystic hints In softly painted hues." And we are picking up on the 'mystic hints' in this newsletter by referring to Halloween.

October 24th is World Polio Day. Since 1985 Rotary's key humanitarian priority has been to rid the world of polio. In 1988 the Global Polio Eradication Initiative was launched. This partnership includes Rotary, the World Health Organisation, UNICEF, the US Center for Disease Control, Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and GAVI the Vaccine Alliance. Over 400 million children still receive polio vaccinations by GPEI partners multiple times every year in 50 countries. The good news is that on 25th August 2020 Africa was declared polio free.

Below are some pictures of our last delivery of the newsletter, CD and biscuits. We hope you enjoyed them all.

We hope you are still taking care of yourselves and please remember if you need to speak to a member of the team, contact Geoff on 01271 815377.



PANDEMIC PLEAS by Martin Underhill
 In these coronavirus days
 We each have gone our separate ways
 Distressed and saddened by our plight
 Cowed by Nature's towering might
 No more we meet for happy chat
 Where we talked and played at this and that
 We want those days to come again
 And these laments should be in vain
 We all miss music and fun
 At Mariners where all could come
 Musical Mem'ries ruled OK

ORIGIN OF HALLOWEEN

The origin of Halloween can be traced back to the ancient Celtic Festival of Samhain. The Celts celebrated their new year on November 1st. It marked the end of summer and harvest and the start of winter, darkness and a time of human death owing to shortage of foods. They believed that the boundary between the worlds of the living and the dead became weak and the dead could return to earth. They would build bonfires, make sacrifices and tell fortunes whilst wearing costumes of animal skins and heads. The embers from the bonfires would be used to light their hearth fires to protect them from the coming winter. Throughout the Roman Empire, the Celtic festival became entwined with two Roman festivals. The first was Feralia, when Romans celebrated the passing of the dead and the second honoured Pomona, the goddess of fruits and trees. The symbol for Pomona is an apple and possibly is the link to bobbing for apples.

By 609AD the Catholic feast of All Martyrs Day was established to honour all Christian martyrs. Pope Gregory 111 later included saints in this festival. And by the 9th Century when Christianity had spread into Celtic lands, this festival began to replace the ancient Celtic one. In 1000AD the Church made November 2nd, All Souls Day as a festival to establish a church-sanctioned holiday.

All Souls Day was celebrated in much the same way as Samhain with bonfires, parades and costumes. It began to be called All-hallows or All-hallowmas (from the Middle English 'Alholowmesse' meaning All Saints Day) and subsequently the night before it became (the traditional night of Samhain) known as All-Hallows Eve and eventually Halloween.



Even when you're old and grey
 One day we want it to return
 Meanwhile we all must seek to learn
 The lessons of the times we're in
 So there's something all can win
 Of kindness caring love and hope
 Look! There's no harm in some soft soap
 Truly we should change our ways
 And urge the world to better days
 Meanwhile our mem'ries will sing
 And comfort to our hearts will bring.



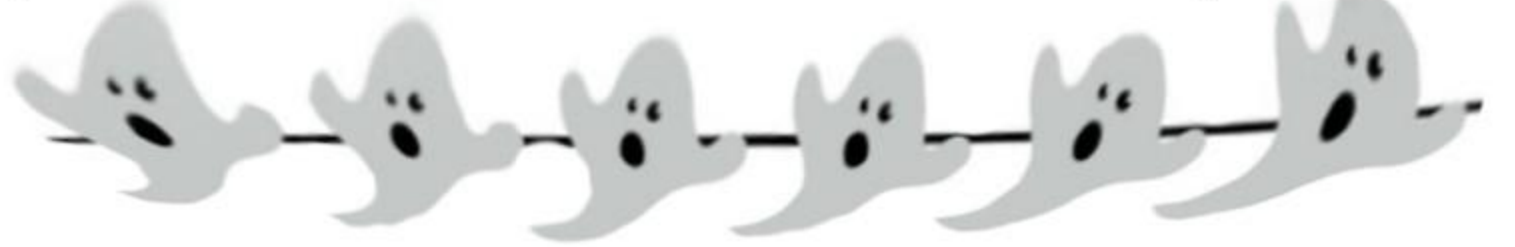
JAN'S GHOST STORY

In 1998 Gerry and I moved into our new home at Heddon Mill. It was everything we'd ever wanted. Big house with lots and lots of land. It came with a box of paperwork - it's history since 1904. Lying in bed, not long after moving in we both smelt smoke. It seemed to be cigarette smoke. Neither of us smoke, so we got up and searched the house for any sign of fire, nothing. A few nights later, the same thing happened. Again we got up and searched, again nothing. Nothing then for some months so we forgot it. Then again, cigarette smoke. By now we had installed smoke alarms and outside lights on sensors. No alarm and no lights on. We even got to the point of walking down the drive and out onto the A361. There isn't a pavement or street lights, but no one was there. After awhile we decided we were either dreaming, or we had a spirit of some sort. Either way we had stopped worrying, and let the 'smoker' continue undisturbed. In spring 2001 we acquired a puppy and a kitten. Life was fun, and they were a joy to have around. After a few months we realised our smoker had stopped visiting. In a casual conversation with a local we explained this strange phenomenon. They confirmed there had been a resident who was a very heavy smoker and who had died in the property. That smoker was also a huge animal lover. We have always believed that by getting our puppy and kitten we helped that spirit to settle. After that there were always animals in the house and we never again smelt the cigarette smoke.



JENNIE'S GHOST STORY

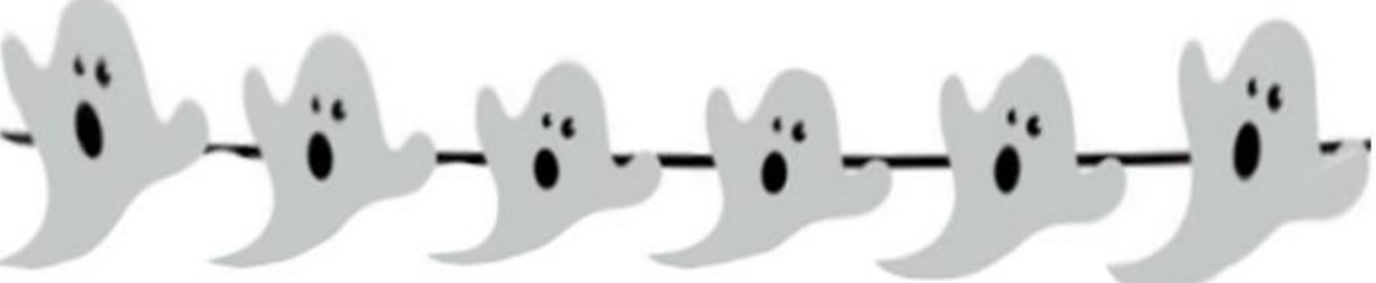
In 1977 I moved into a house on Abbott's Hill with our 2 cats. Within days our tortoiseshell cat started behaving strangely and would not come into the lounge. Eventually she moved in next door with my neighbour, only coming back to me for feeding at the kitchen door. In 1978, friends came to stay. Our cottage had only two bedrooms and we had a small son, so our friends slept downstairs in the lounge. The stairway to the upstairs came down into the lounge and had a door at the bottom. One morning, when I came down stairs, Eric (my friend), asked me why I had got up in the night and why had I not talked to him? I was surprised and responded that I had not got up. He told me that he had seen me and that I was wearing a long dressing gown. He had asked what I was doing and I had not responded. Eric's expression suddenly changed and he said "I have just realised the door never opened and you never went back upstairs!" As none of us believed in ghosts, we decided to ignore the so called event. But later Eric's wife, Gill, felt something brush her legs, thinking it was one of the cats she bent down to stroke it. There was no cat there. My neighbour later said that the end house on the terrace was haunted by a monk who came from a monastery at the top of the hill. Could Eric have encountered the monk? Surely not? Yet a year later we moved and took our tortoiseshell cat with us and she settled immediately in the new house. We wonder, did she feel the presence of the monk in our old cottage?



HALLOWEEN WORD SEARCH

V L J Z N I T G K R H S T R Y Q Y S U S M C F C R E E P
 Y A D R S K E L E T O N S C P O T I O N C N L V C C Y Z
 C B I M P U S M H X W C E M K A A I D B L H I A S A P
 D Y P J G M V S M R L C A F B N N T O M B S T O N E S
 L P Y L V W I O S C J P D X A H B L T L Y I T C Z H W N
 L K Q J E H N Q Y F E S C R E A M O P E F J Z J B X P Z
 R O R Q T E A M G P P S D D S N J E T Y P Z Y Q A E J A
 O B W N W S B Q A V T S U T M F T D M G B R O O M R
 M Y E N N P M W G X Z O G I L M V W S Y P F O Z Z O P
 C H S U G K C I W Y G H L G Q M L K O K S O B K H A
 U N T E D D F F S W H Q K I U S P I D E R I U H G M W A
 E L G L Y N B T M G J C N Z D W X V I P Y M Z C I M K
 Z C Z F F Q S J X L Q T J O M X Y D P A J G H B Y Q A U
 R Y Q C V U O Y N C R R U O M N N E Q L V J V H O C
 O F F I N W B B F T W E R E W O L F

Find these words:
 Skeleton, Pumpkin, Bones, Scream, Magic, Scary,
 Goblin, Haunted, Ghost, Werewolf, Tombstone,
 Creepy, Spider, Spooky, Broom, Potion,
 Cemetery, Vampire, Coffin, Witch, Halloween



In his book, 'Victorian Days in a Devon Village', A H Slee tells of witchcraft, ghosts and effigy burning. He refers to ladies who "had the power of curing ills" and to "a most efficient charmer" of warts. The latter having charmed some 80 warts from the hands of a friend. As to ghosts, a figure clad in clerical clothing was often seen at the ruins of St Micheal's Chapel on Chapel Hill. Whilst another figure rode in Buckland Woods and dug for treasure by the full moon. Much to the disappointment of the villagers, a ghostly sighting in the boy's school turned out to be a pair of white Fantailed Doves! Effigy burning was often used as a pay-back for a grievance. Those who "shocked the

What do birds say on Halloween?
 Trick or tweet!

Why don't skeletons ever go trick or treating?
 Because they have no body to go with!

What's a ghost's favourite dessert?
 I-Scream!

What do you call two witches who live together?
 Broom-mates!

THE BRAUNTON 'GHOST'
 On Wednesday morning a man who was returning to Braunton from Horsey Bank when passing the Square as the clock struck one, when he saw the figure of a lady draped in white walking along the road. Needless to say he was greatly surprised. He summoned sufficient courage to speak to the figure, however, but received no answer. A dog which was passing at the time proved bolder than the man, and it jumped against the lady, but she took no notice. Braunton has a wide reputation for the quality of its ghosts and when the experience was related on the following morning, various interpretations were placed upon the incident, but no one questioned the facts as related. The town-crier, Mr John Yeo Tucker, was sent round the following morning to ask the people to keep a look-out for the lady in white, and to offer a reward to anyone who would clear up the "spook" mystery. Nothing was seen of the elusive lady on the following night, but early on Saturday morning she was again seen by another man. He approached the figure, and found it was nothing more than a lady walking in her sleep. Thus ends the latest Braunton ghost scare.

good taste of the villagers" by drunken behaviour or over familiarity with others' wives often had their effigies burnt as a public punishment.

Clippings by courtesy of The Braunton History Page.



AN OBLIGING GHOST - One of those remarkable narratives for which this neighbourhood is famed has been going the rounds. A certain good man was awakened from a peaceful slumber to discover a ghostly figure stationed at the foot of his bed. He rubbed his eyes in astonishment but the apparition remained and he recognised the features of a departed friend. Some conversation ensued, the apparition giving instructions as to the finding of a silk umbrella and other articles which it alleged had been misappropriated. Acting on this mysterious advice the enlightened one hastened to procure lodgings at the spirit's abode when in the flesh, and in the dead of night, so it is said, searched the chimney with surprising success. Disturbing some temporary hoarding he discovered the umbrella and removed it from the house later by an ingenious ruse. At all events the man arrived at the house of a friend in all haste and prevailed on him to keep the umbrella in a safe place until he came again for it. The spirit, it is presumed, is perfectly satisfied with the transaction for it has not reappeared.

SUPERSTITION IN THE 19TH CENTURY - One would have thought that the superstitious notions of the last generation had been entirely swept away by the advance of education and civilisation, but there seems still to lurk in the minds of the ignorant a belief in witchcraft, charms and other equally absurd delusions. A short time since an aged couple living at Heaton Punchardon bought a pig, - certainly not a very promising looking animal - and shortly afterwards it became afflicted with some disease which porkers are "heirs to". The pig growing worse instead of better under the treatment it received, these old folks came to a conclusion that the animal was witched - that some evil-disposed person had with malice afore thought "overlooked" the unfortunate pig; and in order to charm away the evil influence recourse had to the prescribed treatment in such cases. The old lady, unknown to anyone, procured a "quick-bind" or mountain ash, and after performing a number of manoeuvres the worthy couple jointly performed the talismanic charm by entwining the "quick-bind" round the pig's neck. According to the owner's story, the poor thing soon afterwards rose and began to eat, having fasted many days, although constantly tempted with daily morceaux.