

WHILTON WINTER NEWSLETTER



Christmas angels in St Andrew's, created by Clifford Ellison in the 1990s.

DECEMBER 2021 - FEBRUARY 2022



Winter 2021 - 2022



Letter from the Editors

It must be getting close to Christmas as the first Christmas Songs have been on the radio today. Which also means that we are reaching the end of another year in which we have been challenged by Covid and village life has not been quite the same. Some of our village groups have not been able to return to their usual activities but others are thriving and we carry some write ups of their activities. One article also reminds us that the problems caused by epidemics are nothing new and enables us to reflect on how the lives of our ancestors were affected. We are living in a connected and joined up world but it is hard to imagine how difficult it would have been without modern communications. We are also able to look back on a very successful Heritage Open Day which also gave us the chance to catch up with many of our neighbours. The Parish Council do a great deal to look after our interests and we have an report on their activities. It is nice to see the Christmas Angels in Church again - such a pity that we do not have a service in the village on Christmas Day!

This is a good time to thank all those who have contributed to the Newsletter during the year either by writing articles or submitting material. We also thank the volunteers who deliver the finished article to your front door. In fact there are a number of unsung heroes who just get on and help throughout the village, whether it be grass cutting, help with village events, sorting out the church etc and we pass on your thanks to them. There is always room for new blood to help with such things, so perhaps a New Year Resolution to get more involved in village life?

We wish you and your families a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

The Editors.

NEWS FROM THE PARISH COUNCIL

As we draw towards the end of what has been an extraordinary and eventful year with the Covid pandemic and lockdown, we are starting to see some forms of normality return to the Parish. Social gatherings have returned, seeing such events as the very successful Pop-Up Pub organised by Richard Bunce in the Village Hall, and the equally successful Whilton Heritage Open Day organised by Anthea Hiscock and the team. The Parish Council have also been busy behind the scenes dealing with a number of issues on behalf of the Parish.

So to keep everyone informed, here is what your Parish Council have been up to over the last few months.

- **YOUR PARISH COUNCILLORS.** One of the key points that we agreed on joining the Whilton Parish Council was that the team would all be open to the Parish if anyone wanted to talk with us to raise any issues or concerns, or just to have a chat. So it is worthwhile knowing who your Parish Councillors are. So your Parish Council team are:
 - Councillor Randal Smith (Chair)
 - Councillor Jane Melling (Vice-Chair)
 - Councillor Ann Gilbert
 - Councillor Jonathan Hanslip
 - Councillor Adrian Lee
 - Councillor Mark Hampson
 - Councillor Keith Hiscock
 - Sue Porter (Clerk)

- **WEST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE COUNCILLORS FOR OUR PARISH.** With the recent formation of the new West Northamptonshire Council, the Ward of Long Buckby (of which the Whilton Parish is part) has been allocated 3 new Councillors. These are:
 - Councillor Daniel Lister (daniel.lister@westnorthants.gov.uk)
 - Councillor Philip Bignell (phil.bignell@westnorthants.gov.uk)
 - Councillor Andrew Morton (charles.morton@westnorthants.gov.uk)

West Northamptonshire Councillor Report.

A quick report from our Ward Councillor Daniel Lister:

- **West Northamptonshire Strategic Plan: Spatial Options Consultation.**

There is a West Northamptonshire Strategic Plan out for consultation which gives the vision of West Northamptonshire in 2050. This plan also includes a possible 5000 more homes being built for Long Buckby between the Railway Station and the Wharf. Long Buckby Parish Council, Whilton Parish Council and our West Northamptonshire Councillors are all against this proposal and are all preparing and submitting their responses accordingly.
 - **Northampton.** Northampton is applying for City status.
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- **Speed Limit through Whilton Locks.** The original speed limit through Whilton Locks a few years ago was 60 mph, which the Parish Council then managed to get the Highways Authority to reduce down to 40 mph, but this was still proved to be too fast for the area, especially considering that Nobottle and Norton were down to 30 mph and effectively on the same road from Northampton to Daventry. So the Parish Council pushed Highways once again, and after 18 months of bureaucracy and delays from Covid, the limit has now been officially reduced to 30 mph with new signage in place in Whilton Locks.

- **Daventry Area Community Transport (DACT) Bus Service.** After a long period of closure due to Covid and social distancing requirements, the DACT bus service is now running again to Daventry and Northampton. The pick-up point in Whilton is by the red phone box by the Green. If you wish to travel on the bus on any of its journeys, please let the clerk of your Whilton Parish Council (clerk@whiltonpc.co.uk) know, so your name can be registered as a member of the Evergreen Travel Club. You only need to register once, and this covers the insurance aspects of the service.
- **Irresponsible Dog Owners Around Whilton Village.** I'm happy to say that we at last appear to be resolving the dog fouling issues we had around the village, which are now seeing a downward trend in reported instances. There is still quite a lot along the paths in the fields around the village (which really should also be picked up by dog owners), but there have been no reported occurrences in the village for the past few months. So let's all keep it up and pick up after our dogs.
- **Gigaclear.** Superfast broadband is here in the Parish, and there is a growing number of residents connecting to the network. Generally the feedback that I receive from people who have connected is that the connection and the service for many has been great with no problems, and everyone appreciates the greater speed offered.
 - **Connecting to the Gigaclear Network – Hints and Tips.** It's probably worthwhile reiterating the following for those who have yet to connect to the network.
 - **Packages.** The packages that Gigaclear offer can be found at www.Gigaclear.com, and they now seem to have a whole range of packages between 300 Mbps up to 900 Mbps. They also seem to offer other packages from 100 Mbps upwards on social media with special limited deals.
 - **Discounts.** Through social media, there have been various discount offers from Gigaclear seen. So always worth checking what the latest offers may be on Facebook etc.
- **Whilton Village Phone Box.** For a number of years, BT have been trying to sell off their red phone boxes because of lack of use, and the Parish Council have resisted for the one on the Green in the village in case someone needed to use the phone in an emergency. But records have shown that the phone has not been used for quite some time, and also, BT appear to be unwilling to maintain the exterior of the box, which meant that it was becoming unsightly. Hence, the Parish Council have now decided to buy the box from BT for £1.00 (the selling price from BT) and will now become responsible for its upkeep.
- **Defibrillators.** There are 2 defibrillators located within the Parish - in Whilton (by the Village Hall) and Whilton Locks (next to the BT phone box on the canal bridge). Each cabinet is locked with a code, which can be obtained from the emergency services when you dial 999 should they be required.
- **Whilton Parish E-Mail Distribution List.** The Parish e-mail distribution list is a closed list to keep people informed of the latest issues and information concerning the Parish. If you are interested in being added to the list to find out what is going on in your Parish, please send your e-mail address to clerk@whiltonpc.co.uk.

- **Parish Council Website.** The Whilton Parish Council also do have a website at www.parish-council.com/whilton/ which details all the work that they are doing for the community, together with any notices of interest for the Parish. There are also details of who your councillors are, and how to contact them about any matters relating to the Parish. Of note, the e-mail address is councillors@whiltonpc.co.uk.
- **Parish Council Meetings.** **The Parish Council hold a regular meeting in the Whilton Village Hall every 2 months, which is open to the public to attend and raise any issues. With the need to comply with social distancing requirements, meetings were previously being held virtually via Zoom, but the team are now back with physical meetings in the Village Hall which anyone in the Parish may attend.**
- **The Spinney.** A lot of maintenance and groundworks have recently been undertaken in The Spinney at the bottom of the village. A number of old and damaged trees have now been removed following specialist advice, and the resident Work Party have completed a number of tasks, including freeing up the stream and replacing a number of walkway supports. Safety checks for the area are still completed by volunteers on a monthly basis, but, following periods of inclement weather, there can be occasions where trees or branches may have fallen and have yet to be cleared away. Hence, whilst I would urge all of you to visit and enjoy The Spinney, please also to be vigilant for any hazards that may be in the area. If you do notice anything that may be a danger, please report it to the Parish Council clerk at clerk@whiltonpc.co.uk.

Finally, on behalf of your Parish Council Team, I wish you all a very Merry 'safe' Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Randal Smith, Chair of the Whilton Parish Council, Rose Briar

TERESA'S WINTER CASSEROLE WITH DUMPLINGS (Serves 6)

2 potatoes	1 x 15 oz can of butter	<u>Dumplings</u>
2 carrots	beans (do not drain)	7 oz plain flour
1 small fennel bulb	1 pint vegetable stock	4 oz (vegetarian) suet
1 small swede	2 tbsp tomato puree	1 tsp dried thyme
2 leeks	1 cinnamon stick	1 tsp salt
2 courgettes	½ tsp ground ginger	4 fl oz milk
2 oz butter	2 bay leaves	
2 tbsp plain flour	salt & black pepper	

Method

1. Cut all the vegetables into even, bite sized pieces then fry gently in the butter for about 10 minutes.
2. Stir in the flour then the liquid from the beans, the stock, tomato puree, spices, bay leaves and seasoning. Bring to the boil, stirring.
3. Cover and simmer for 10 minutes then add the beans and cook for a further 5 minutes.
4. Meanwhile make the dumplings: mix the flour, suet, thyme and salt to a firm but moist dough with the milk and knead until smooth.
5. Divide the dough into 12 pieces rolling each one into a ball. Add the dumplings to the casserole (space them out to allow room for expansion).
6. Replace the lid and cook for a further 15 minutes. Remove the cinnamon stick and bay leaf before serving.

Our Own Pop-up Pub

*Whoe'er has travell'd life's dull round
Where'er his stages may have been
May sigh to think he has found
The warmest welcome, at an inn.* William Shenstone 1714-1763

The quotation seems oddly appropriate to present circumstances 280 years on from when it was written. Aspects of lock down and continuing restrictions have certainly made things dull at times and it was a shame we had to wait a further 18 months to hold our pop-up pub which was originally booked for April 2020. However, at last we have been able to resurrect The Plough, 60 or so years after the village pub closed its doors.

Villagers seemed keen to meet and enjoy a pint on 29 October and about 70 of us turned out. If the noise of friendly communication was anything to go by, it was a resounding success. Many have said afterwards how worthwhile it was to hold the event, a great opportunity to get together with old friends and neighbours – and meet many of the relative newcomers too.



Richard with "The Plough" before the event.

So, many thanks to all for their support and to the select team of those helping with the clear-up the following day. A special mention goes to Richard (Dougal) for getting the barrel for us at discounted rate and for fetching it from the brewery.

A straw poll suggests that we should think about doing it all again in spring next year, Covid etc. permitting. We came close to draining the barrel of Phipps IPA this time; let's try a bit harder at the next!

Richard Bunce

KNOW YOUR PUBS?

The pop-up-pub was based on memories of the old Plough Pub. But do you know where the old pubs of Whilton were? We have records that 6 existed at different times. Suggestions for you to choose from are below. (Answers on page 26)

<p>The Mill was</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) By the windmill on Whilton Hill b) On the site of "Millslade", Main Street c) At Whilton water mill 	<p>The Sugar Loaf was</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) beside Home Farm in Manor Lane b) in Main Street c) on the site of South View
<p>The Spotted Cow was</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) At Foursquare Farm, by the canal b) In Manor Lane by the Old Cottage c) Beside Hill Top farmhouse 	<p>The Bannaventa was</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) on the site of the Whilton Carpet Shop b) at Whilton Lodge c) at the A5 crossroads
<p>The Plough was</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) in Buckby Lane b) in Main Street c) on the site of the Stone House 	<p>The Wheatsheaf was</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) beside the Rectory b) on the site of Woodview, Brington Lane c) at Roughmoor

CHRISTMAS 2021

The Whilton Carol Singers will be coming round the village on the evening of Tuesday 21st December.

We hope you will be ready to open your door or window to enjoy the festive sounds.



Whilton Kids Group

An informal group to plan events for children of all ages in the village to help them and their parents get to know each other!

Games, Pizza, movies, picnics, exploring and anything else we can think of!

Join the WhatsApp group by contacting Helen on 07809 230 870.



Letter from the Rectory

Dear Reader,

On an unseasonably warm November day, I sit to write my Christmas letter to you. It is the warmth and the light that have directed my thoughts that I share with you today.

Christmas celebrates the birth of Christ, we do this on the 25th of December, in the depths of winter. The actual birth date of Jesus is not known, but it certainly was not in December. The gospel accounts give us clues as to the time the year when he was born. We are told that the shepherds were in the fields tending their sheep. The climate in the Middle East suggests that it would have been in around March or April time.

When Christianity was in its infancy, it began to replace the old pagan festivals with Christian celebrations, and so the midwinter festival that brought light and hope into the long days of darkness and looked forward to new life coming in the spring was a very apt date to celebrate the birth of Christ, bringing the message of his light and salvation to the world, hence that is why the 25th of December was selected.

For many this is a most special time of year, putting up the tree, the decorations, buying gifts, making plans to see family and friends. For others this is not a season of joy, watching the world around gearing up for the festivities can compound feelings of isolation, bereavement, and loneliness.



A well-known chocolate brand has in the past aired adverts that depict children playing in their garden and items such as footballs keep crossing the fence to land in their neighbour's garden. Finally, we see a bar of chocolate land on the grass, this is the youngster's way of showing their gratitude and care for the man next door.



This Christmas as we celebrate once again the birth of Christ, may we all be mindful of "the man next door" and share some joy in a simple hello, a helping hand, a coffee and a chat or even a simple chocolate bar. For there is no better gift than that of friendship and love.

We have a whole host of services happening across the benefice in December. The easiest way to found out what's going on is either by looking out for our Facebook posts, just search for The Spencer Benefice Churches or by our weekly email service. If you would like to be included in our mailing list, then please contact us by sending an email to: spencerbenefice@outlook.com

We do hope that you will come and join us to hear again or for the first time the message of God love for us all, wrapped up in the babe in the manger. We would love to see you.

Sending you blessings for this Christmas and the coming New Year.

Rev Andrea Watkins.



ST ANDREWS 2021 CHRISTMAS LIGHTS

This year we are once again giving you the opportunity to illuminate the Church and make it a focal point of the village during the Christmas period. Cost is just £10 a night. You can pay by cash or directly in to the bank account

309255 00083490 quoting Lights and surname To reserve or to select a date, please contact Jon Brierley (843380) Jbrierley1@aol.com

11 DECEMBER JON AND HELEN BRIERLEY	
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18	31
19	1 JANUARY
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Whilton Village Hall

Unsurprisingly, it has been another quiet period for the Whilton Village Hall. Thankfully, the Pre-School continue to be our regular users, keeping the building warm three days a week.

On a more positive note, the Whilton Gardeners Association held an evening talk regarding pruning, which was well attended. They also have a members' Christmas function on December 1st.

However, the recent 'pop up pub' held on a Friday evening was the highlight of the year. Very well attended and organised. Our thanks go to Richard Bunce for this. Hopefully the turn of the year will see more functions/usage start to be planned and take place.

Nick Busby

POPPIES

My apologies for not getting round to everyone with Poppies this year. I ran out of time. A huge Thank You to all of you who gave so generously. The Remembrance Sunday service was held on 14th November, and there was a super attendance, which was great to see. Next year it would be great to have a bugler. If you play one, or know of someone who does, please let me know.

THE CHURCH

The Church offers the monthly Holy Communion Service; the next one will be held on Sunday 9th January 2022, at 9.30am. In addition, there will be a Benefice Service on Sunday 5th December 2021 at 10am where the other 5 parishes will come to us to worship. Our Carol Service will take place on Sunday 12 December, 6pm. This celebration will consist of 5 readings interspersed with seasonal carols. Everyone is welcome. Should you like to read one of the lessons, please let our Vicar know, revawat@gmail.com. She can then let you have a copy of the reading in good time.

Outside of these services, the church sits empty and unused, which is really quite sad. There have been some discussions about the Church, especially post-Covid, and how we, as a community, can best use this building. Rev Andrea Watkins works closely with the other churches in our Benefice, and is keen to get involved with Whilton. She would like to get to know us, and get an understanding of our needs, and wants. Andrea also has lots of ideas on how we can use our Church for all sorts of activities, but cannot do anything without us.

There is an open invitation for all of us to make suggestions and put forward ideas on how we can use the church. She would like to invite you for coffee, cake and chat on Thursday 2nd December 2021, 10 am - midday, at The Church.

Hopefully this will become a regular thing, but we hope that you can make the first date.

Many thanks,

Lucy, lucy@gow.co.uk



Coffee, Cake & Chat
Thursday 2nd December 2021
10am – midday
St Andrews Church

The Spinney Report

If you have not been down to the Spinney since the 22nd September you will certainly be surprised!. Treeworx have done a major clearance of 8 trees, assessed as potentially unsafe by our Tree Consultant, and reduced 3 others.



There is more light and open space especially at the pond end. The new look gives the Parish Council an opportunity

to consider new possibilities over managing the trees that remain, potentially introducing more wildlife and woodland flowers. Consultations have commenced with both the Wildlife Trust



and The Small Woodlands Association, and contact with more local similar facilities. A possible 10 year development plan may evolve- so any ideas or thoughts from you all are welcome, if you would write to me. We may in the end require a sub group to consider a submission to the Council; so again if you would like to be involved let me know.

The future is there to plan for, but everyday maintenance and monthly risk assessments need to go on. Our 7 volunteers have been hard at work on 3 occasions since the tree work was done and are likely to be needed at least once a month for the winter months. It was great to be given the name of a new volunteer the other day, so if there are others reading this, do contact me.

Meanwhile do give the Spinney a Yule Tide wander.

Keith Hiscock

On behalf of the Parish Council.





WHILTON HERITAGE OPEN DAY

Saturday, 11th September was the first Heritage Open Day for Whilton Local History Society.

The occasion marked the display of the 17th century carved Whilton Stone, which was on view in the church.

Martin Emery's plough hit the mud-caked and buried stone as he and Gordon were preparing the field for sowing in autumn 2014. They prevented more damage by removing it from the field. Since then the stone has remained in Whilton.

Gordon and Martin brought it down to the church in the early morning of 11th September. They moved the heavy stone from the trailer to the church on their sack trolley.

Inside the church, the stone was carefully unwrapped and laid on straw bales in the flower-bedecked chancel.

After this September event the stone has now been moved to its new permanent home in Rugby Art Gallery and Museum.



The carved stone came to Whilton with our Victorian Rector, Rev Randolph Skipwith, and so the day marked the history of the stone, and also the elaborate harvest festivals which this Rector introduced to Whilton in the 1860s. The activities and decorations were based on a report of the 1866 “ingathering of the harvest.”

The day began with wheat buttonholes being presented to everyone as they got ready to join the procession, while Parish Councillors stewarded the route.



The procession wended its way from Wadd Close Lane up to and around the church, led by the Rector and Curate with the Whilton Warblers choir, followed by the Pre-school with their percussion, harvest posies and their wheat wreath. Villagers and visitors followed behind, singing Victorian harvest hymns.



After the singing all were welcomed to the church, where displays had been prepared.

The building had been decorated with flowers, wheat, barley and oats, provided by villagers, Gordon and Mary Emery and Whilton Locks Garden Village, in the spirit of Harvest Festival 1866.



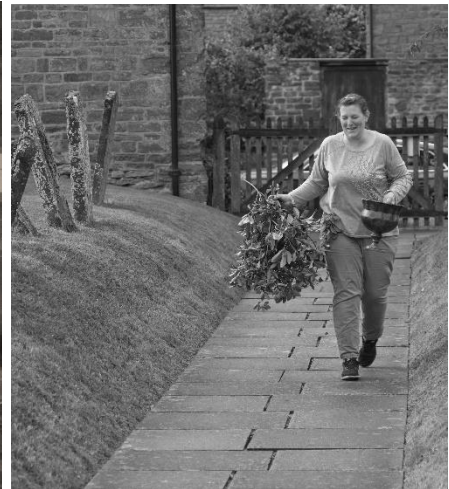
On the previous day the church had been a hive of activity as preparations were made. Some of the activities were captured by our photographers, as can be seen below.

In 1866 parishioners took several days to get ready. Their hangings, banners and floral arrangements were more elaborate than we could manage in 2021.

21st century village children had coloured illustrated texts which were shown around the church. These replaced the embroidered illuminated texts of the Victorians.



Floral decorations were provided by Whilton residents and families, sometimes at great effort, as can be seen!



Some of the church altar cloths were on display and a photographic record was made.





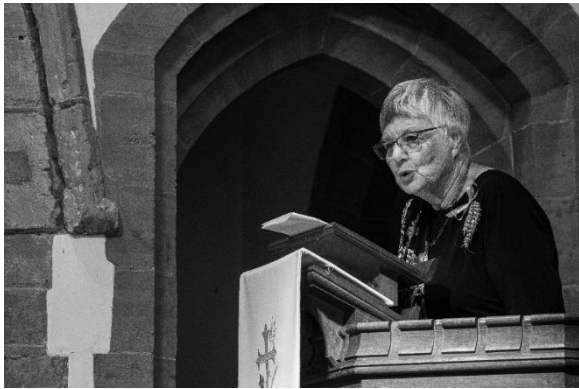
The church bells rang morning and afternoon, with an opportunity to have a go in the church and with the handbells outside.



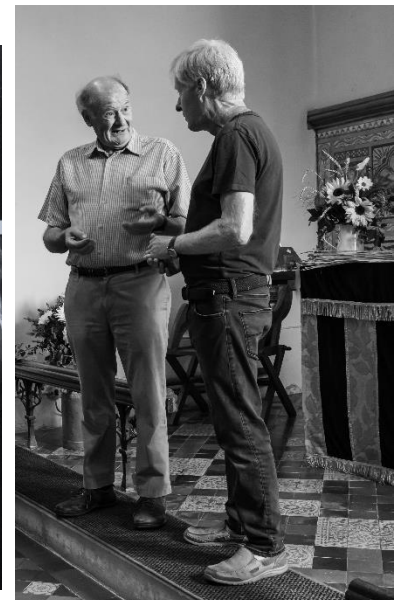
In 1866 there were boiled and roasted joints with free ales and tobacco, followed by tea and cakes. This year home-made cakes provided by volunteers were served all day, with tea, coffee and squash, and the fine weather enabled people to sit outside in the sunshine, while children followed a trail in the churchyard.



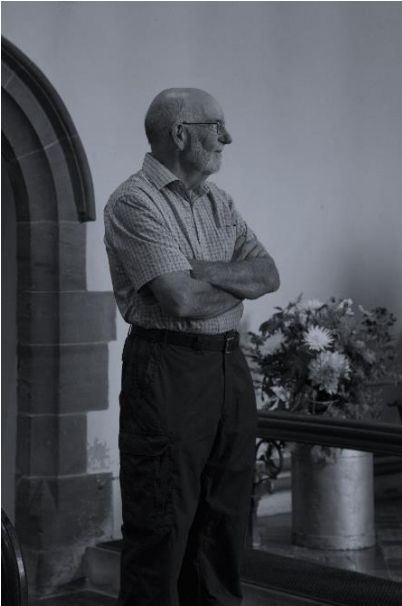
A talk on "The Rector and the Stone" was given in the morning and the afternoon by Anthea Hiscock. Portraits of members of the Skipwith family were shown and books about the Stone and Whilton history were available.



There was time for conversation...



...contemplation...



...investigation...



....and surprise...



Over 40 volunteers helped with this day, which proved to be a whole community event. This was just the aim of Randolph Skipwith in 1866. As a son of the 8th Baronet Skipwith of Prestwold, he would probably have been pleased to know that the 13th Baronet, Sir Alexander Skipwith was in the audience for the afternoon talk and happy to meet Gordon and Martin Emery who ploughed up the Stone.

Sir Alexander Skipwith, his wife and daughter talk with Gordon Emery and Anthea Hiscock.



Whilton Local History Society

The Local History Society would like to thank everyone who so willingly shared their time and skills for the Heritage Open Day in September.

There are a few remaining copies of "The Mystery of the Whilton Stone," price £15. To purchase, please contact Anthea Hiscock, anthea@hiscockfamily.co.uk 843319, or Brian Melling, brianmelling47@gmail.com

Apart from the Heritage Day and two Woad Walks, the Society has had limited activity during the Covid19 pandemic. We are intending to return to our usual pattern of bi-monthly meetings in 2022.

The first will be the Annual General Meeting on Friday 21st January. This will be accompanied by a meal as eaten in Whilton Rectory 200 years ago. This will be for members only, but new members are welcome. For information please contact Anthea Hiscock (Chair) or Brian Melling (Treasurer), as above.

WHILTON LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

7.30 p.m. Friday 21st January 2022

Whilton Village Hall

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING



**AN INVITATION
TO JOIN THE LADIES OF WHILTON RECTORY
FOR A MEAL IN 1822.**

Pandemics and epidemics in Whilton



The gravestone of William and Richard Langton

As we move toward the third winter to be overshadowed by the Covid 19 pandemic, several residents have suffered from the infection, and we wish them well. Most older parishioners have now received their vaccinations and some village organisations are beginning to meet again.

There is little information about previous pandemics in Whilton. Circumstantial evidence suggests that the 14th century Black Death was as disastrous here as in all the country. Our lord of the manor and his heir both died close together at this period, and evidence that the boundary hedges were not in good repair suggests a lack of labour.

Following the Plague of 1665 in London, outbreaks continued for some years and spread into the provinces. It is just possible that this was responsible for some of the extra deaths in Whilton from 1682 – 1686, but there is no proof of this. The only clue is in the deaths of the brothers William and Richard Langton.

William died on 10th January 1685, aged 46. His younger brother Richard died later in 1696 aged 42, but Richard was described as “late of London.” Did Richard come home and pass on an infection in the 1680s? Five other Langtons died between 1683 and 1686.

The post First World War flu epidemic does not seem to have affected Whilton. On the whole Whilton was a healthy place to live, especially once childhood had been survived. However, from January to July 1767 the burial records show ten deaths from smallpox and possibly one or two cases from which people recovered.

Smallpox affected all levels of society. In the 18th century in Europe, 400,000 people died of the disease annually. Survivors were left with disfiguring scars and many went blind. With the encouragement of Lady Mary Wortley Montague, the upper classes were beginning to accept variolation or inoculation, using a lancet with smallpox pus by the early 1700s, but it is unlikely that Whilton knew about this in 1767.

It was recognised that women working with cows, particularly milkmaids, had beautiful unblemished complexions, untouched by smallpox scars. These women had often been infected with the much milder cowpox, by touching sores on cows as they milked. These observations eventually would lead Edward Jenner to the development of the vaccine against smallpox, using the less deadly cowpox in the 1790s. However, it was not until 1980 that the World Health Organisation could pronounce that smallpox had been eradicated.

In Whilton in 1767 old farmer Thomas Emery had a servant, Ann Butlin, a single lady aged 45, probably his housekeeper. She had relatives among the woad and cloth-making people. This family suffered a series of bereavements from smallpox. Ann’s brother was a weaver and tailor and his sister-in-law Mary Essen died in May, followed by his wife, Hannah, a week later. These Essen sisters had been brought up working the woad. Thomas Emery’s servant Ann Butlin, then died and was buried on 16th June. In July, her brother William Butlin, died too.

William’s burial on 9th July marked the end of the outbreak. The majority, perhaps all, of the deaths can be connected to the cloth and woad labourers, and so the infection may have arrived with one of

their visitors. Although Whilton was an area involved in the cloth industry, it was mainly an agricultural settlement. It is probably true to say that the majority of its population would have had close contact with cows. Most people would have had experience of milking. They may therefore have built up a natural immunity to smallpox.

None of those who died were directly involved in farming, and probably never milked a cow. They are more likely to have been the customers of the milk producers. Weavers, tailors and woad workers may therefore have been more susceptible to catching and suffering from smallpox. This may explain why the outbreak was so limited and short-lived in Whilton.



WHILTON GARDENERS' ASSOCIATION



On October 6th we held our first indoor meeting since February last year. It was encouraging to see seventeen members turn out to hear Stuart Phillips talk to us about pruning.

He began by discussing the different types of secateurs available and had a selection which were passed around the audience. It is important to buy a pair which are the correct size for your hand. An angled head is useful as it saves having to bend the wrist as much. The best and most expensive ones he had were Swiss made, by Felco, and cost around £45. They had a rotating handle which helps to prevent blisters. Keeping them sharp is important and he advised having a small sharpening stone or steel with which to restore the edge after each use.

He covered root pruning, which is a useful way to prevent a plant becoming oversized. The root system and top-growth are naturally in balance and root pruning can cause the top-growth to die back so as to restore that balance.

When pruning top-growth we should aim to remove about one third and make the cut just above a bud, angling the cut to allow water to run off. The pruning cuts can be disguised by rubbing soil onto the wound. Leaving a long spur after the last bud can cause the whole branch to die.

He explained how a terminal bud sends hormones down the stem which inhibits the growth of lower buds. Notching the bark above a lower bud will prevent the hormone from reaching it and it will grow larger.

This was an excellent talk and was well received by the audience. I think Stuart is a speaker that we will be booking again in the future.

As I write we are planning our Christmas meal and social on December 1st. So far 25 members have said they are coming. Our next meeting after that will be the AGM on February 2nd, when we shall be taking subscriptions and issuing some up-to-date membership cards.

Roy Haynes
Chairman WGA

Aperture Photography Group



Moving forward again

Although the APG never stopped its activities during the worst of the pandemic, meeting solely on Zoom never felt quite the same. So when we held our first face to face meeting for 18 months on 2nd September, it was like seeing a bunch of old friends and there was a real feeling of excitement and relief. So where are we now and where is the group going in 2022?

Currently we are offering a range of face to face and online activities. Our face to face events include: fortnightly meetings, and photographic outings and workshops. Through Zoom, we plan to continue to deliver our training, as this seems to be the most effective way of teaching our members new skills. So, if you are interested in joining the APG, let's tell you a little more

Our face to face meetings take place every fortnight, on Thursday evenings, at Long Buckby Rugby Club. This is now our new venue and we have been made to feel really welcome by the people in the club. Our meetings aim to cover lots of topics and types of photography, so there will be something for everyone. Our 2022 programme will feature a range of speakers, including professional photographers and APG members, who will share their images and hopefully inspire us to get out with our cameras. Unlike other clubs, we don't hold competitions, but we do set several photo assignments every year to challenge the members. We then review the images so that we can learn from each other; it is noticeable that the standard of work has improved considerably over time.

Now that we can mix again, our photography outings have also restarted. Since lockdown ended, we have been out photographing the autumn colour in local woodlands, creating abstract images at the Weedon Ordnance Depot, and we are encouraging our members to attend Long Buckby Rugby Club's home matches, so that we can supply the club with images for their Facebook page, website and advertising.

Next year we also plan to restart our photography workshops: a chance to get away for a few days to take photos, learn some new skills and make friends with the other group members. Previously, we have been to Norfolk, Anglesey and Liverpool, so we are now busily identifying some new locations for 2022.

What really sets the APG apart from other photography groups is our comprehensive training programme. Our Monday Livestream sessions on Zoom have become a firm favourite and attendance has grown since we started them. The aim is to teach the skills required to enhance photos using computer software. This skill has become a key part of photography since the arrival of digital and it can be a way to create far more professional images. I see the taking of the photo as the equivalent of creating a sketch in painting. Finishing the picture is done back in the studio in order to ensure the right composition, optimum exposure and the best colour balance.

However, no matter how good your camera skills and how well you can enhance your images in the computer, unless you understand what makes a good picture, your photos may lack that certain something. This is where our Talking Pictures sessions come in. We meet online every month and share 10 images at each session. The aim is to get the members to discuss the photos and discover the techniques the photographer has used in their composition, and to understand what the photographer is trying to say, and how he/she has chosen the optimum moment to press the shutter button.

For those APG members keen to really improve their photographic skills, we are now offering a mentoring programme. Those of you who share your images on social media, will know that rarely does anyone give you any constructive feedback on your photos; the most you will probably get is a 'Like' or a "Great Shot!". The APG mentoring programme provides the opportunity to work with the our most experienced photographers on a project of the member's own choosing. Over a period of seven months we review their work, giving open, honest and detailed feedback. During the programme we teach them the importance of looking at other photographers' work and the skill of critiquing photos. Each project is different, but each one has the aim of creating a final product, whether that be a book, fine art print, or a slideshow. At the end of the programme, the members present back their work to the rest of the group at one of our Thursday meetings. It's a challenging programme, but so far the members who have taken part have all risen to that challenge.

Finally, we have special interest groups. Well, currently we have one Special Interest Group, but the intention is to set up more in 2022. The purpose of the groups is to bring together members who have a common interest in a certain genre of photography and to organise separate events for them to learn and practice the skills needed to improve their work. Currently we have a group looking at how art can influence photography, and in 2022 we are considering establishing groups for sports, landscape and wildlife photographers.

There's a lot happening, as you can see, so if you are interested in learning how to take better photos, we would love to have you on board. Complete beginners and more experienced photographers are welcome. Please get in touch and we will invite you to one of our Thursday meetings, so that you can meet the group and decide whether you would like to join. We are a bunch of really friendly and enthusiastic amateur photographers and we will always do our best to make you feel welcome.

Neil Phillips

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WHILTON ALLOTMENT GROUP

We have now reached the time of year when there is much less activity on the allotments other than some winter veg. The past year has given green fingered a chance to try new ideas as well as continuing with tried and tested plantings. As with most things we learn from our experience and after two years of being hit by tomato blight have decided to try something else next year. Success can be measured by the amount of veg stored in freezers or processed in to jam.

Not many people will know that the allotment site was purchased from Daventry Council in recent years by our Parish Council. This will help to preserve this amenity for the future. Whilton Allotment Group acts as an umbrella organisation to liaise between the Council and its allotment holder tenants. Earlier this year we agreed new terms for our annual leases which more clearly sets out the responsibilities of the tenants and landlord. We are very fortunate that the Parish Council are extremely supportive of our activities and assist us in maintaining this space. Running an allotment can be hard work and the weeds seem to grow overnight but it does get you out in the fresh air and there is always someone to have a chat with. All the plots are taken currently but if you are interested let us know.

JB Chairman WAG

BRINGTON AND WHILTON PRE-SCHOOL

The children of Brington and Whilton pre-school have had a very busy start back learning all about the different Autumn festivals including Diwali. They collected food for the harvest festival which we donated to the local food bank. Some of our families joined in with the Whilton village celebrating Whilton Heritage day playing instruments and joining in with the village procession.



The Whilton Parish Council kindly helped us by letting us use the spinney to organise a half term pumpkin hunt. Great Brington store and post office supported us by selling our trail sheet. Everyone loved it and we raised a fantastic £101.

This term the children have spent time using tools including the hand drills, screwdrivers and the hammers to make holes in our pumpkins.



The tools will help the children with their fine and gross motor skills developing their muscles in their hands and arms and aid their co-ordination.

The children have been enjoying all the different Autumn weather this term collecting leaves, acorns and conkers, making dens for the animals and ourselves and having lots of fun with some outdoor splatter art to make some fantastic firework pictures.



The children had a two minute silence for Remembrance Day and we talked about why it is so important to remember those soldiers and animals who have died in all of the wars. They also made their own poppies which we made into a wreath and placed on the memorial in the village.



The children have had lots of fun with our Friday morning foodie sessions making lots of delicious food including scones, flapjacks, lemon biscuits, coconut barfi (Diwali sweets) and hedgehog bread...yummy.

If you are looking for a small caring and nurturing pre-school with amazing outdoor environments for your child aged between 2-5 years old then please contact Trisha at managerbandwpreschool@gmail.com or look and follow our activities on Facebook page at - Brington and Whilton preschool.

The Whilton Newsletter is published quarterly and circulated to every household within the parish boundary.

The costs are met by the Parish Council,
and we thank all who contribute information and articles.

The Newsletter is delivered by volunteers who willingly give up their time to bring this to your door, and we thank them for their help.

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The Editors welcome material for the Newsletter.

The next issue will be the Spring Edition, covering March – May 2022.
The last date for contributions will be 20th February 2022.

USEFUL WEBSITES AND CONTACTS

Aperture Photography Group: www.aperturephotographygroup.co.uk, 07966 575972
or neilp.apg@gmail.com

Brington and Whilton Pre- School: www.bringtonandwhiltonpreschool.org.uk

St Andrew's Church: spencerbenefice@outlook.com

West Northants Unitary Authority: <https://www.westnorthants.gov.uk>

Whilton Gardeners Association: e-mail: royandtricia@btinternet.com

Whilton Local History Society: <https://whiltonlhs.org>

Whilton Locks Garden Village: www.wlgv.co.uk

Whilton Parish Council: www.parish-council.com/whilton

Whilton Village Website: www.whilton-village.net

Answers to pub quiz on page 6:

Mill: c; Spotted Cow: a; Plough: b; Sugar Loaf: :b (almost certainly the original name of the Plough);
Bannaventa: a; Wheatsheaf: b.



WHILTON LOCKS GARDEN VILLAGE

We have so much going on up to and through the festive period and we'd love you and your family to join in! This year our theme is Winter Wonderland!

From our REAL ice rink, to Santa's magical grotto, tea with Elsa, wreath

workshop, amazing displays – and festive food in our Canalside restaurant there is something for everyone at Whilton Locks.

BOOK NOW

<https://whiltonlocksgardenvillage.com/product-category/christmas/>

The very best Santa for smiles – real ice, ice rink and snow much more!

Ho ho ho-nly at Whilton Locks Winter Wonderland.

What's On in Whilton

DECEMBER 2021 – FEBRUARY 2022

DAY	DATE	TIME	PLACE	EVENT	CONTACT
Wed	1 Dec	7.30 p.m.	Village Hall	Gardeners Association Christmas Social	royandtricia@btinternet.com
Thurs	2 Dec	10 a.m. - midday	Church	Coffee, cake and chat	lucy@gow.co.uk
Sun	5 Dec	10 a.m.	Church	Benefice Communion	spencerbenefice@outlook.com
Sun	12 Dec	6 p.m.	Church	Carol Service	spencerbenefice@outlook.com
Sun	9 Jan	9.30 a.m.	Church	Holy Communion	spencerbenefice@outlook.com
Wed	11 Jan	7.30 p.m.	Village Hall	Parish Council	Whilton Parish Council clerk@whiltonpc.co.uk
Fri	21 Jan	7.30 p.m.	Village Hall	Local History Society AGM and 1822 meal	843319 anthea@hiscockfamily.co.uk
Sun	13 Feb	9.30 a.m.	Church	Holy Communion	spencerbenefice@outlook.com

POLITE NOTICE

There will be the usual **private** family firework party at midnight on New Years Eve 2021/2022 in Brington Lane, the Police will be made aware.

We have a lot to celebrate having missed 2 Golden Wedding Anniversaries 2020 and 2021 Eldest sons wedding 2021, our youngest sons 40th birthday 2021 but lastly and not least to celebrate the life of our very special 99 year old Father, Father-in-law and Grandfather who died suddenly on the 3rd of November 2021 and who thoroughly enjoyed fireworks



South View and Main Street in January 2020

Happy New Year to all our readers.