

# GRASS

## THE NEWSLETTER AT THE ROOTS OF THE GRAND UNION BENEFICE OF BLISWORTH AND STOKE BRUERNE/ SHUTLANGER, WITH GRAFTON REGIS, ALDERTON AND MILTON MALSOR

### Rector's Letter

As we go into September, it's hard to believe that Monique and I have been here in the Benefice for just over 12 months; how time flies as you get older. But on a serious note, would any of us have contemplated this time last year the last six months that we've all been through? These kinds of events only take place in movies, not real life. But these last six months have not only changed our own individual lives but also the face of the world. It is hard to believe that most things will not be the same again.

While driving through the Benefice, the landscape is continually changing in front of our eyes. It is apparent with all the activity taking place on the land that Harvest time is upon us, a simple sign that autumn is fast approaching. Harvest is a time we traditionally stop and give thanks to our creator for the beautiful world we live in and the fruits that He has bestowed upon each of us.

With all this external change going on around us, we need to stop and think about the internal change going on within each of us. As the year progresses and we grow older, we are never the same person that we were this time last year; this is even more evident now due to the previous six months. I have had many discussions since March of how many of us are imagining that we can have a better world once this pandemic is over.

The best place to start with changing the world is by transforming ourselves; no matter how perfect we think we are, we can all do with improving. When we stop and give thanks for what the divine generously gives us, ask what fruits, in turn, we can offer back to the world. For example, the fruits we are each called to bear; we need to read Galatians chapter 5, fruits of the spirit are love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, and generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. These are the kinds of fruit all of us need at this time, but not to keep for ourselves but to offer to our neighbours, and to the world.

Over the last five weeks, we have returned to our church buildings, which have been enjoyed by all. Making sure that we had a good internet connection so we could Zoom at the same time was tricky but successful. Each service felt unique; we are now looking at ways to improve both experiences. I would love to hear some of your positive thoughts.

We are still meeting on Zoom on Wednesday and Sunday at 9.30 a.m. If anyone wants to join in on these services, please email [grandunionbenefice@gmail.com](mailto:grandunionbenefice@gmail.com).

Peace, Richard

### Useful Telephone Numbers for the United Benefice of Blisworth and Stoke Bruerne with Grafton Regis, Alderton and Milton Malsor

**Rector:** Canon Rev'd Richard Stainer, The Rectory, 37 High Street, Blisworth NN7 3B, tel 01604 857619.

**Churchwardens of Blisworth:** Mrs Fiona McKenzie, tel 01604 859541 and Mrs Angela Cheesbrough, tel 01604 858059.

**Churchwardens of Stoke Bruerne:** Mrs Christine Frost, tel 01604 862561.

**Churchwardens of Grafton Regis:** Mrs Jean Glanville, tel 01908 543463 and Lord Charles Fitzroy, tel 01908 542908.

**Churchwarden of Alderton:** Mrs Amanda Selvey, tel 01327 811380.

**Churchwardens of Milton Malsor:** Mrs Jane Treharne, tel 01604 858323 and Mrs Sue Bell, tel 01327 351043.

## VILLAGE NEWS



### GRAFTON REGIS

#### Special Visitors to Grafton Regis

Early in August we were delighted to welcome to the village Thomas Dennis, a professional actor who has recently been playing the lead role of Albert in the UK tour of War Horse. Thomas is currently producing a YouTube series called 'SwipinThruHistory', in which he is giving his own very entertaining individual treatment to each of the battles of the Wars of the Roses. Thomas spent time filming in Grafton Church, and we're looking forward to seeing some of the results in his next video release, about the Battle of Northampton, which is scheduled for release on 10 September. His current release, about the Battle of Ludford Bridge, well worth watching, can be found at <https://youtu.be/Ft38kkfhgg4>

Thomas is a particularly special visitor because he is the grandson of Ken Plummer, who was the inspiration behind the writing of 'Grafton Regis: the History of a Northamptonshire Village', which was



published in 2000. Ken moved to Grafton with his family during the Second World War, loved the village's history, and published 'The Church of St Mary and Village of Grafton Regis' in 1959.

We were also really pleased to welcome back Thomas's parents, Clare and Steve Dennis, who organised the memorable Medieval Foot Tournament and Festival at Grafton Manor back in 2001. Proving that truth is stranger than fiction, the day after the August visit, I came across a raffle ticket bought at the Festival. I'd used it as a bookmark in Jeremy Paxman's 'The British'. I didn't win a prize on the day, though. Did



you?

Keith Harry



### ALDERTON

#### Churchyard Rota

30 August – 12 September

13 – 29 September

30 September – 17 October

Doris (Graham)

Pete & Liz Smallwood

Anthony & Ruth Barry

#### Wooden Effigy

Work has been going on since the beginning of July and our knight has now been cleaned and stabilised and now looks rather handsome. He has been moved to a temporary position halfway along the church where he will stay until his final resting place can be paid for, designed and built.

To this end, we are still fundraising. We held another of our market stalls on Saturday 22 August, which raised just over £300 and we are very grateful to all those people who



contributed, cooked cakes and pies, jam and pickles and provided home produce for the stall, as well as those who came along and purchased edibles and other goodies. Again, it was a lovely morning and really good to see people out and about.

We will be holding another stall, this time in the churchyard, to coincide with the annual Ride and Stride event on 12 September. We are also hoping that this will be an opportunity for visitors to see the knight now that he has been conserved. Hopefully this will bring extra people to the churchyard and they will be tempted by our wares. Again, there will be cakes, biscuits, jams etc as well as very interesting items to purchase, including jewellery.

### Alderton Art Festival

Over many years, the Alderton Art Festival has made some decent profits for the upkeep and redevelopment of St Margaret's Church. Normally a third of our profits come from the sale of paintings with two thirds coming from the sale of antiques/crafts as well as food and drink to the 600-700 visitors that we attract over the weekend. However because of Covid19, this year will be very different as the festival is postponed until 2021.

We have however set up an "online art festival" which closes on Saturday 5 September. There are currently 356 paintings on the site from 34 local artists and prices start at £10. Subjects include landscape, animals, people, birds, still life, trees, abstract and places. Go to [www.aldertonartfestival.co.uk](http://www.aldertonartfestival.co.uk)

Another new initiative is that we have also launched the Alderton Lottery bonus ball competition and this goes live at 7.45 p m on the evening of Saturday 5 September. All 59 balls have now been sold. Charlie Reece

**ALDERTON**  
**ONLINE**  
**ART FESTIVAL**

[WWW.ALDERTONARTFESTIVAL.CO.UK](http://WWW.ALDERTONARTFESTIVAL.CO.UK)

---

Watercolours  
Pastels  
Acrylic  
Oils

View at your leisure

All amazing local artists  
Wide variety of paintings  
Originals  
Prints  
Framed  
Unframed

All credit/debit cards accepted



ALDERTON  
NORTHAMPTONSHIRE

All purchases to be collected from Alderton on  
Sunday 6th September

**1<sup>ST</sup> AUGUST- 5<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2020**

St. Margaret's Church, Alderton NN12 7LP

### Ride and Stride, Saturday 12 September

If anybody would like to participate in the Ride and Stride, then sponsor forms can be obtained from Linda Dards – either email me or telephone and I will let you have one. When I have cycled for this event in the past, it has always been enormous fun and we have visited lovely villages and churches in the vicinity, and met really nice people. You can walk or cycle – it's entirely up to you. With regard to money raised, half goes to the participant's church of choice and the other half goes to the Historic Churches Trust. You can walk or cycle as far as you want to. Mostly, the churches you visit will provide you with a drink and something to eat, so that's a bonus.

### Outdoor Church Service

The service on 23 August took place in the churchyard at St Margaret's Church and was a really lovely event. The weather was kind to us and we all managed to socially distance without any problems. The service also went out on Zoom so could be enjoyed by others in the Benefice. We are hoping to have another outdoor service on 27 September, which will be followed by our annual church meeting, see below.

## Annual Parochial Church Meeting

This will take place after the service on 27 September. This is when we elect churchwardens and PCC members for the coming year, and it is an opportunity for members of the electoral roll to find out what is going on in the life of our church.

## GENERAL NEWS

### Bell Ringing

After the prolonged period of lockdown, bell ringing can return but unfortunately not at every tower for the time being. Risk assessment and bell checks have been carried out at Blisworth, with ringing due to start in September. The bells were checked on Saturday 15 August and rung to celebrate VE and VJ days.

Ringling will be different with not all bells being able to be rung as the ropes are too close together to maintain social distancing.

Stoke Bruerne will be checked next and eventually the other towers. We are still waiting for new ropes for Grafton. We hope that we all be able to ring all bells in the Benefice when it is safe to do so.

Diane Rogers

### A Recipe

Since lockdown, I have asked for recipes, and we have included some very interesting ones from various people. I have kept the following recipe 'on hold' until now. However, I can't remember who sent it in, so apologies for not mentioning their name. It's an old recipe from when the author was at school, hence the imperial measurements, which a lot of our older readers may prefer.

*Date & Walnut Loaf - First Made Whilst at School in the Last Century.*

Makes 2 x 1lb. loaf tins & bake at 180°C for about 35 minutes.

Soak 6 oz chopped dates with 1 teaspoon bicarbonate of soda in 1 cup of boiling water

Cream 2 oz soft margarine or butter with 7 oz sugar and add 1 egg.

Once the dates are cooled, add to sugar mixture, add sieved flour and 2 oz chopped walnuts.

Combine well so no lumps of flour are left behind. Fill the lined tins and bake until skewer comes out clean when put in centre of cake. Leave to cool for 5 minutes in tins.

When ready to handle, put on cooling tray. Leave for a day if possible, for the flavours to mature then eat sliced & buttered. Yum, yum .

### News from The Old Mail

For events and happenings in the nearby villages: Cosgrove, Potterspurty and Yardley Gobion, see the newsletter, The Old Mail, is available online at various websites: [www.cosgrovevillage.co.uk](http://www.cosgrovevillage.co.uk); [www.potterspurtypc.org.uk](http://www.potterspurtypc.org.uk); [www.yardleygobionpc.wordpress.com](http://www.yardleygobionpc.wordpress.com)

### How to Contact the Police

We no longer divide our villages between officers unless they are specifically sponsored by the village. Our team cover all South Northants villages and this ensures villages are covered across all shift patterns. If they have a query for a specific officer, it's best to mark it for their attention via an email and they will pick it up when they are next on duty.

999 – For a crime or incident in progress

101 – For non-urgent incidents

03000 111 222 – Direct dial Northamptonshire police

To Report online: <https://www.northants.police.uk/ro/report/>

Email for Towcester: [neighbourhoodteamsouthnorthants-towcester@northants.pnn.police.uk](mailto:neighbourhoodteamsouthnorthants-towcester@northants.pnn.police.uk)

Your local officers are as follows:

PCSO Peter Firth, PCSO Charlotte Morris, PCSO Nicole Degg, PCSO James Herbert, PCSO Kev Thompson (Schools Liaison Officer)

For more local NPT information, visit the local policing pages [www.northants.police.uk](http://www.northants.police.uk).

## R. Wilson Garden & Tree Maintenance

Robert Wilson is a qualified tree surgeon and gardener based in Hartwell covering the Northamptonshire and Buckinghamshire area.

NPTC Qualified since 1997

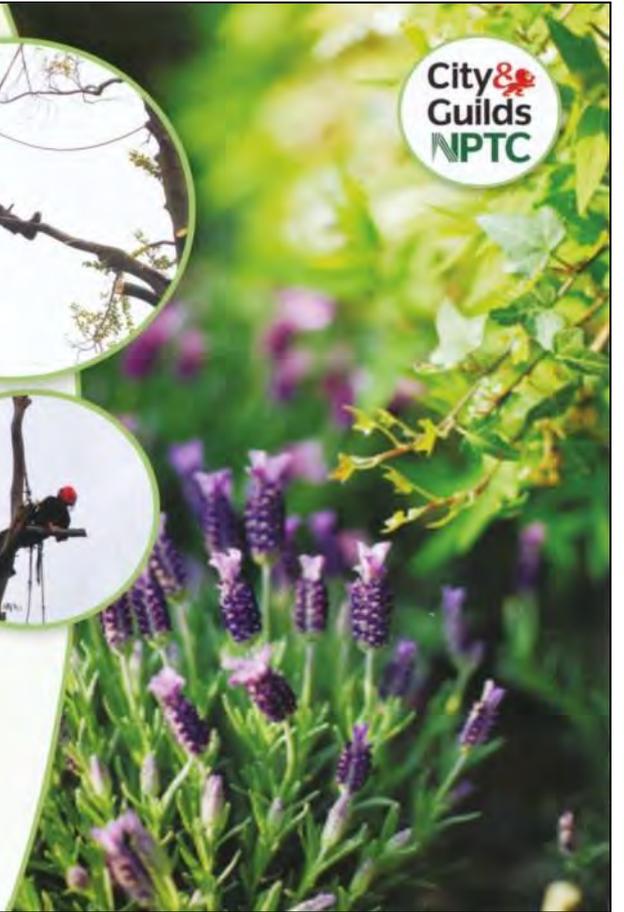
Over 15 years gardening experience, including tree surgery at Buckingham Palace gardens

Public liability insurance to £5,000,000

For more information or a FREE quotation call

**01604 862034**  
or **07854 218992**

Email: [bobtreesurgeon@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:bobtreesurgeon@hotmail.co.uk)



## THE PLUMBER

Apprenticeship Served 1972 - 78

City and Guild Qualified

**ON CALL EVERYDAY**

Domestic and Commercial Installations,  
Maintenance and Repair Service.

- 💧 Burst/Leaking Pipes
- 💧 Blocked Sinks/Toilets
- 💧 Hot Water Tanks
- 💧 Overflows
- 💧 Showers
- 💧 Radiators and Pumps
- 💧 Garden Taps/Water Butts
- 💧 Fault Finding
- 💧 FREE WRITTEN QUOTE

**Call The Plumber Anytime**

**07970 317843**

**[theplumber@email.com](mailto:theplumber@email.com)**

*1<sup>st</sup> aid for your plumbing*



**PDC**  
Computer Solutions



**Windows 7 has reached end of life, and it will no longer receive security updates; it is time to change.**

**I can upgrade it to Windows 10, but still keep the look of Windows 7; all your documents, pictures and programs will transfer as well.**

Looking for a laptop? I have a number of refurbished laptops, prices starting from £150.

I repair laptops down to component level; ask for a free quote.

Contact Paul Dards on 07540 000844 or 01327 811265 or [paul@dards.co.uk](mailto:paul@dards.co.uk)

PDC, Moorend, Spring Lane  
Alderton, NN12 7LW  
[www.dards.co.uk](http://www.dards.co.uk)

SUPPORT NORTHAMPTONSHIRE'S BEAUTIFUL CHURCHES

# RIDE + STRIDES

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE HISTORIC CHURCHES TRUST

**Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> September 2020**

between 10am and 6pm

**a day in the open air ... plan your own route**  
350+ stunning churches and chapels to visit -many of them open and welcoming with covid precautions in place. Stay Safe!



All sponsorship money received will be divided equally between the NHCT and the church or chapel chosen by you.

**Sponsorship forms and a list of open churches and chapels are available from your local organiser:-**

**Northamptonshire Historic Churches Trust**

Registered Charity No 1021632 For more details see our Website: [www.nhct.org.uk](http://www.nhct.org.uk)

## SNIPPETS:

*Every day may not be good but there's always something good in every day.*

*Don't wait for things to get better. Life will always be complicated. Learn to be happy right now, otherwise you will run out of time.*

*People who use other people as stepping stones will one day lose their balance.*

## **THE CLOSING DATE FOR THE NEXT EDITION OF GRASS is 19 September**

**If you can get any copy to us earlier than that it would be very much appreciated**

Please send any copy to: Linda Dards, Moorend, Spring Lane, Alderton NN12 7LW tel 01327 811265, e-mail: [linda@dards.net](mailto:linda@dards.net). **Could you please include your name & phone number with entries in case we have any problems.** If you would like to add photographs or drawings to your text these are welcome and can be supplied via email or as photos, and returned after scanning. Contributions by email are most welcome, we can accept most formats; please request a response from us on receipt – so you are sure that we have your submission. Word (any version) is preferred.