

THE *Mardler*

BROCKDISH & THORPE ABBOTTS



Edition No. 228 August - September 2020

**THE MARDLER is FREE and delivered to all
houses in Brockdish and Thorpe Abbots**

Also available on-line at www.the-mardler.org.uk

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The views expressed in The Mardler are not necessarily those of the Editorial team. The Editor reserves the right to amend or alter any copy received.

BROCKDISH VILLAGE HALL

Monday - Aerobics 6:45 - 7:45pm
Tuesday - Line Dancing 7.15pm
Wednesday - Ballroom & Latin Dance
Classes 7pm – 11pm *
Thursday - Tea Dance 2pm
- Carpet Bowls 7:30pm
Friday - Hall available for hire
Saturday - Quizzes, Ballroom Dancing*
Sunday - Tea Dance*

* See notice board for more information.

ADVERTISING IN THE MARDLER

If you are interested in advertising, the current rates are £25 for ¼ page and £50 for ½ page, which covers the 6 issues from 1st April annually. The cost for less than 6 issues is £5 per issue for ¼ page and £10 per issue for ½ page. For further information please contact Judith Chambers, see above.

Useful Contacts

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Emergencies 01379 853503

Police

Harleston and Diss 101

NHS Direct

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Gas Emergencies

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South Norfolk Council

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Borderhoppa

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Brockdish Village Hall

Bookings Jill Edwards 01379 669057

Thorpe Abbots Village Hall

Bookings Kelvin Halifax 01379 668705

Waveney Heritage Centre

01379 668285

Carpet Bowls Club

Glyn Catchpole 01379 668698

Line Dancing

Tracey Hood 07854 943490

Aerobics

Clare Peed 01379 668715

Sunday Tea Dance/Ballroom

Latin Dance Classes

Niall O'Brien 07526 883776

South Norfolk District Councillor

Clayton Hudson 01379 676259

Parish Clerk

Teresa Hines 01379 308617

Libraries

Harleston 01379 852549
Diss 01379 642609

Editorial

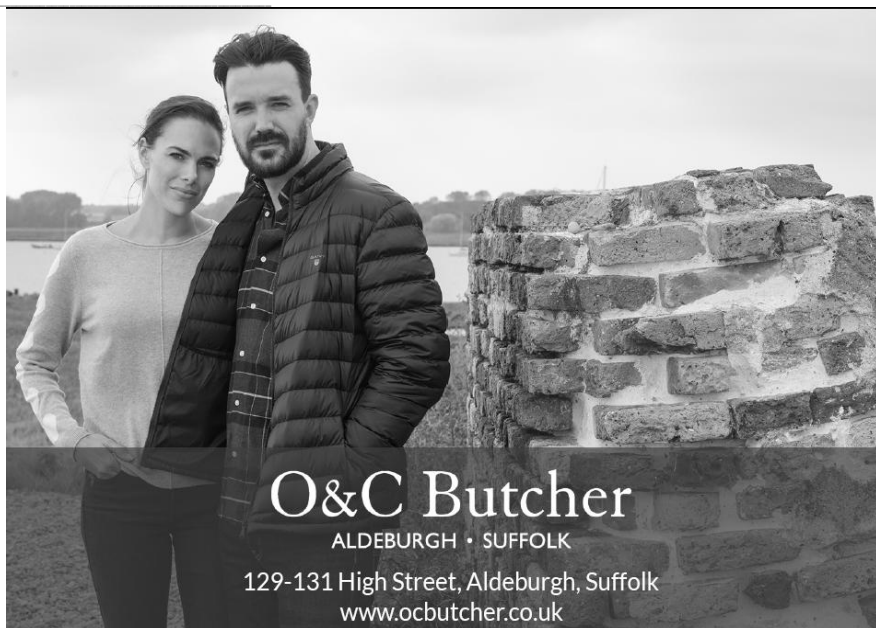
Yet again our resident artists have been busy with their easels and their results are extremely impressive. Hot on the heels of Councillor Clarke who not only has drawn another set of windows and doors in Brockdish for your observation, but also the cover picture (albeit we have few minor amendments, see if you can spot these), we now have young Rosie Pursehouse from Thorpe Abbots showing us her artistic talents that she has put to good use recently.

We always welcome any content for your magazine, so feel free to contact any members of the editorial team.

Robert Buck
Editor



REMEMBER
Closing date for entries in the
October / November 2020 issue
Is Friday 4th September 2020
**Articles received after this date may
not be included in the next issue.**



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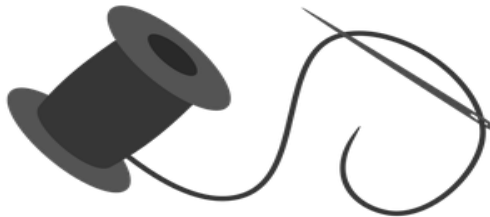
For more information/photos/prices contact; colin@snakefreight.com

Information

WANTED

Is there anyone locally who is able to undertake
small sewing / alterations jobs?

Please contact Linda Bell on 669293



Village Information

A thank you on behalf of our communities of Brockdish and Thorpe Abbots to all the unsung heroes who have helped us in this very difficult time, shopping, gardening and phoning people to make sure they are alright and don't need anything. The care and help has meant so much to so many. No names but you all know who you are.

Thank you.

May I, through our magazine, give my thanks to all my librarians, bread providers, shoppers, telephone callers and window wavers. From my heart, thank you for keeping me going.

Much love and God bless.

Lois

Bonfires

At this time of year, when we are enjoying our gardens and have our windows open, please could people be mindful when starting a bonfire, especially on a windy day.



Richard Stacey

Janice and family would sincerely like to thank all those who donated to Cancer Research UK in memory of Richard. Your generosity was incredible and £2,000 has been sent to the charity.

Thank you
Janice

**Thorpe Abbots Village Hall
warmly invite you to**

**A Great British
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Picnic at the Pump**

***Saturday 29th August
3pm onwards***

Now that lockdown is easing,
let's bring our community back together!
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for further details



Village Information

THORPE ABBOTTS TELEPHONE EXCHANGE

The telephone exchange has been a big hit and is proving a popular place to find new books, DVDs and games. A huge thank you to the Mounser's for fitting the new shelves! We now need a volunteer to be 'Phone Box Monitor' to keep the stock looking fresh. Please speak to or phone Paul Slater for details (tel. 668585).



Rosie Pursehouse Aged 11

Village Information

Waveney Heritage at the Old School Brockdish

Well, despite the current situation we are moving on! We have appointed two people to keep the grounds under control. We definitely don't want a "tidy" soulless appearance, but we have to keep access to the building clear and have some places where we can sit on nice days. Gareth is looking after our grass, which is full of wild flowers; the raised beds have also been flowering well as a result of our sprinkling of wild flower seeds and the steep banks behind the building have had a light trim, looking out for wildlife of course! It is important to keep the vegetation here away from the building but to encourage small shrubs and plants to keep the bank stable.

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Waveney Heritage at the Old School Brockdish

Henry has cleared the car park and re-instated the path around the boundary so that we can get access. He and a friend have also removed much rubbish and bits of clutter, so we look slightly more organised. He is working on the trees as well. One is dead and needs to come down because it overhangs the car park and is therefore a hazard. He has also cleared the edge of the car park of very long grass, leaving a sensible length to protect and accommodate the wildlife and is due to start on the repainting and repair of some of the windows.

In the meantime, we are progressing with our conversion to a charity, advised by a local solicitor. We are working hard to ensure that this is complete within a year, despite the difficulties of getting reasonable contact with official bodies as a result of the Covid epidemic.

One of our directors, Anthony Scott-Robinson is working his way through a course to give him a qualification re museum curation. We are hoping that we can eventually apply for museum status for our collection of radio equipment, and other artefacts and his experience and contacts will be invaluable here.

We now have a volunteer who is working her way through our archive room, sorting and eventually cataloguing all our wonderful material, much of it generously donated by yourselves. We are in contact with Gary Tuson at the Archive Centre in Norwich, who we hope will guide us through the correct way to ensure that our system is compatible with others in Norfolk, so that they are all easily accessible.

All we need now is be able to invite you all to talks and exhibitions again!

Mary Thompson
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Parish Council

BROCKDISH PARISH COUNCIL (including Thorpe Abbots)

CHAIRMAN – Christine Mackenzie Tel: 01379 668818

CLERK – Teresa Hines Tel: 01379 308617

e-mail: **brockdishthorpeabbottspc@gmail.com**

If you are interested in becoming a Parish Councillor, then please contact Christine MacKenzie (Chairman) on 668818 for further details or email brockdishthorpeabbottspc@gmail.com (currently two vacancies).

PLANNING www.s-norfolk.gov.uk

Applications:

2020/1139 Pantiles, Grove Road, Brockdish

Proposal: Replace windows and external doors. Change colour of windows and exterior of property.

2020/1044 Land North of The Street, Thorpe Abbots

Proposal: Erection of 4 Bay Garage/Workshop Store.

Decision:

2020/0585 Mill Pightle, School Lane, Thorpe Abbots

Proposal: Extension to form two storey dwelling, conversion of existing garage to form annexe. Replacement outbuilding for use of garage/storage & gym/games room.

Proposal: Change of use of agricultural land to residential curtilage & erection of outbuilding.

Approved by SNC & PC.

DATES OF NEXT SCHEDULED MEETINGS (members of the public are most welcome to attend). Agenda posted on both village notice boards prior to the meeting.

- Thursday 24th September 7pm Thorpe Abbots Village Hall tbc
- Tuesday 27th October 7pm Brockdish venue tbc
- Thursday 26th November 7pm Thorpe Abbots Village Hall tbc

Back by popular demand....

The Thorpe Abbots Socially Distanced Quiz XIII: Charlie & the Norwich Chocolate Quiz



Saturday 15th August 8pm

Live on Facebook across the nation

Featuring all the old favourites:

- The Pandemic Play-off
- The Wheel of Doom

Simply 'like' 'Thorpe Abbots Village' page on Facebook and tune in on the night. Better than a trip to Louis Tussaud's in Great Yarmouth!

Quiz update: The quiz will now run once a month. Next quiz will be

Saturday 26th September at 8pm

Contact Paul & Jo Slater for further details (tel. 668585)



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Local History

Another Midwife David Seddon

In the last issue of The Mardler, I wrote about Anna Sharman, who was a midwife in Brockdish until her death in 1927, and about midwives in the region more generally. I would like to add to that now, by telling you that Clara Elizabeth Todd was also a midwife, in Brockdish and Syleham, a little later than Anna Sharman.

I know this because Jan Croxson - who is the fount of all knowledge for anything to do with Brockdish and the village's history - very kindly called me, after reading my earlier piece, to tell me this. I haven't been able to find out too much yet about Clara Elizabeth's life and work as a midwife, but hope that others will have some memories to share...about her and possibly about midwives and childbirth in Brockdish in particular and surrounding villages more generally.

I have been unable to discover her maiden name but wonder if she could have been the second Clara Valiant, who was baptised in Brockdish in 1875 in memory of her sister who was tragically drowned as a toddler. In any case, she was married in Brockdish in 1895 to George Todd, who was born in 1869 and was living in Occold, Suffolk at the time of the 1871 census. Was he living with his father? I ask this because in 1875, a James and Frederick Todd were baptised in Brockdish, and their mother was identified as Martha Todd; but there is no indication of a father.

In 1877, Henry Todd was baptised in Brockdish; in 1880, Ellen Todd was also baptised there. Their mother was also Martha Todd. In 1881, George Todd was also living in Brockdish with his mother. The household at this time also included the children May, Ellen and John Todd, and a George Spalding

Local History

(who, it seems was born in Weybread around 1833 and so would have been nearly 50 years old). In 1885, George Todd was at school in Eye, although his family was still living in Brockdish.

Ten years later, George and Clara Elizabeth were married in Brockdish. They had a number of children together, including Violet, Daisy, Leslie, Ada and Evelyn. A few years later, however, they were all living together in Syleham. They were still living there in 1911. George's mother, Martha Todd, was still in Brockdish between 1913 and 1918, as was his sister Ellen Todd, who was married there that year.

In 1939, the family, including Clara Elizabeth, were still in Syleham, living in Toll House, Hall Lane and, it seems, Clara Elizabeth was practising as a midwife. In 1938, her daughter, Violet Todd, married Frank C. Flaxmer of Syleham and they lived in one of the Mill Cottages in Hall Lane. The Flaxmers were a well-established Syleham family. Alice I. B. Flaxmer was born there in 1891, and died there in 1931. Daisy Kathleen Emma Flaxmer, who was born in 1903, also lived in Mill Cottages. Christine B. Flaxmer was born there in 1928 and Brian C. Flaxmer was born there in 1932 and married there in 1954.

Clara Elizabeth died in 1945 at the good old age of 73 – as seems to have been common for midwives - and is buried in Brockdish.

Violet and Frank Flaxmer had at least two children, Michael and Patsy, who are still apparently living in the area. There are records of a Michael C. Flaxmer, born in 1939, married in 1963 and apparently again in 1992, who is listed as a company director in Diss (2000-2019). Patsy Flaxmer has not yet been found.

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A GOOD FIVE MILER

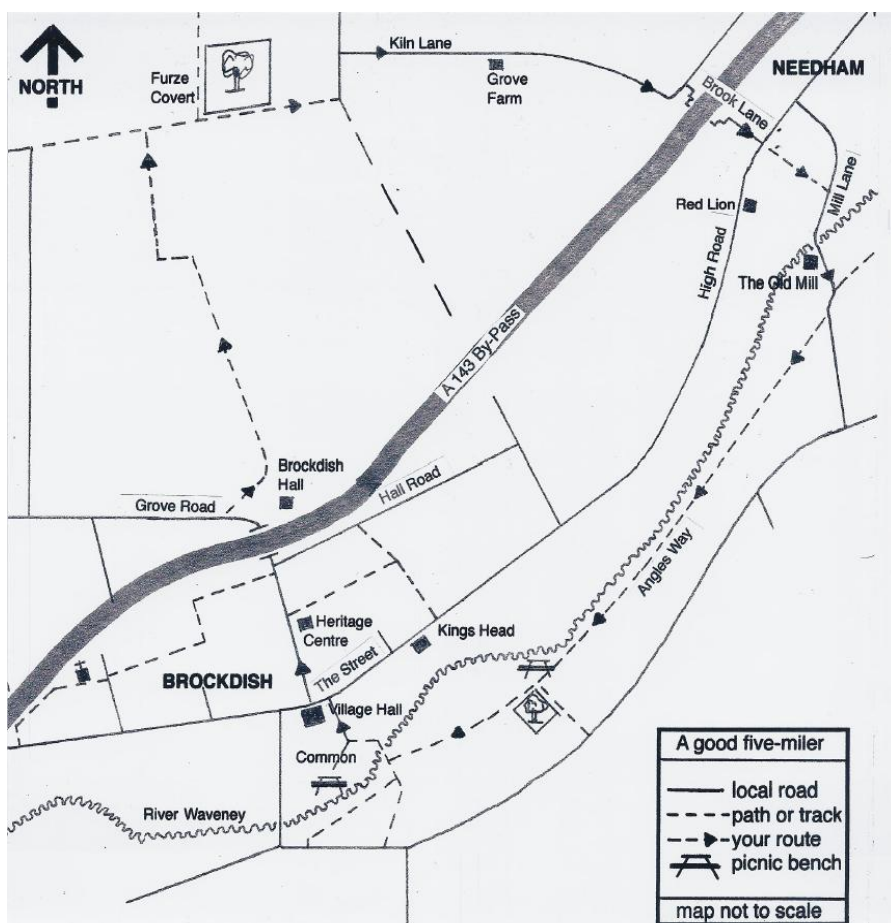
I had intended to suggest a circular walk around Thorpe Abbotts but found that an essential link across the old wartime Airfield is impassable and not signed. I have reported this to Norfolk County Council in the hope I can take you there next time.

Let's head north anyway. From Brockdish Village Hall go up Grove Road opposite. When you're beyond Waveney Heritage Centre, Common land is up-hill on your right and a deep cutting to the stream is on your left. After the junction with Hall Road continue under the by-pass bridge and as the road turns left and beyond the entrance to Brockdish Hall there is a footpath on your right with steps up the bank. Follow the field boundaries for $\frac{3}{4}$ mile. Part way up you will need to turn left for a short while before continuing north again until you reach a track. Turn right here and follow for $\frac{1}{2}$ mile passing the edge of a wood called Furze Covert to your left. When you reach a road, this is Tumbril Lane severed from its Brockdish end by the by-pass. Take a left turn and then, shortly, a right into Kiln Lane which you can follow for a good $\frac{1}{2}$ mile. Enjoy the wide-open spaces up here as you pass Grove Farm with its grass runway for microlights. As you go downhill and nearer the by-pass the lane turns left and then there is a junction with Brook Lane on the right which takes you down to some steps going up to the A143 by-pass. So please be careful as you cross. On the other side are some more steps down to re-join Brook Lane and so to High Road, Needham. You are now well over half way round and The Red Lion Pub is only a short distance away to your right – just in case you need some refreshment.

Across High Road opposite the end of Brook Lane is a footpath which takes you through a field to Mill Lane. Turn right to The Old Mill and a bridge over the River Waveney and follow the road for a short while until you see the Angles Way footpath sign pointing right into a field. You may find inquisitive horses here. The walk now follows Angles Way along the Waveney Valley for over 1 mile.

This is a fairly straight and well used but very attractive route. About a mile along the Way is a very accommodating spot by the Waveney with a seat and a picnic table. A further $\frac{1}{4}$ mile on you come to a gate near a bridge back over the Waveney and into Crescent Farm Poultry yard and so to Common Lane. The Common is on your left and there is a well-kept path back down to the Waveney where you will also find a picnic table in a tranquil area by the river. The Village Hall is at the top of the Common Lane and a few yards to your left. One of my favourite walks!

An Old Scout



Thorpe Abbotts Village Hall Hedge

Thank you once again to Richard Longe for cutting Thorpe Abbotts Village Hall hedge, very much appreciated.



Coffee Break

Jokes

'The other day my husband accused me of being a nosey-parker - well that's what I read in his diary! '

Examples of why English is not so easy -

There was a row among the oarsmen about how to row.
Upon seeing the tear in the painting, I shed a tear.
Since there is no time like the present, he thought it was time to present the present.
A thought - My mother taught me about justice - She said, 'One day you will have kids of your own and I hope they turn out just like you!'

Which films do the following quotes come from?

1. 'A census taker once tried to test me. I ate his liver with
2. 'Of all the joints in all the towns in all the world, she walks into mine.'
3. 'Love means never having to say you're sorry.'
4. 'Frankly my dear I don't give a damn.'
5. 'There's no place like home.'
6. 'I'm king of the world.'
7. 'Why don't you come up sometime up and see me?'

Answers on Page 27



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Managing Plague in 1665 © Elaine Murphy

Coronavirus is on every one's mind as I write this. I suppose like everyone else I'm deliberately avoiding travelling anywhere crowded and especially not on the London underground. Today two large social gatherings I was expecting to go to in the next two months have been cancelled and there'll surely be more to follow. Being in the danger age range certainly makes one wary even if the mortality rate is actually quite small. So, I was wondering how they coped and prepared in times gone by when they didn't even know what caused the epidemics. And it was bubonic plague that kept recurring after the initial devastating epidemic of 1348. Every few years it wreaked its terror again.



Fifteenth century illustration of bubonic plague

Local History

We know quite a lot about the 17th century outbreaks of the plague, because so many people wrote about it, including Samuel Pepys. Pepys, because he was a government employee, is the best source for understanding the desperation and frustration of officialdom in dealing with a catastrophe that they didn't fully understand. In early June 1665 he described his first encounter with their futile measures to control the spread, 'I did in Drury-lane see two or three houses marked with a red cross upon the doors, and "Lord have mercy upon us" writ there – which was a sad sight to me'. As with previous outbreaks, it was decreed that any house where plague was identified should be shut up for 40 days with the family inside, marked with a cross and be guarded by watchmen.

Throughout the period from the Restoration in 1660 to the Glorious Revolution of 1688, England and Norfolk generally prospered but the economic impact of those terrifying plague years set them back, if only temporarily. It is reckoned that about 20% of the City of Norwich died of bubonic plague in 1665-66, officially the number was 2251 although the total population is not certain, it was something between 13,000 and 17,000 but up to 30,000 if surrounding villages are included. Many towns in Norfolk and Suffolk suffered similarly. Ipswich deaths numbered about 1600, estimated to be about 17% of the total population of the city.

Norwich had a pest-house designed to be used to isolate sufferers but only 10% of the plague deaths occurred there because few victims were willing to enter it, correctly fearing that admission was an inevitable death sentence. Norwich authorities decided to deal with the issue of contagion, of which they had only the vaguest understanding, by nailing up the houses in which victims of the plague had died or even with live inmates still inside.

Local History

But the authorities in Norwich failed to cancel fairs and were less effective than some other cities in containing the epidemic.

Reports of a recurrence of the plague began to reach England in the early 1660s. The Privy Council considered what steps might be taken to prevent it crossing the channel to England. Quarantining of ships had been used during previous outbreaks and was again introduced for ships coming to London in November 1663, following outbreaks in Amsterdam and Hamburg. This is like grounding Easyjet and Ryanair! Two naval ships were assigned to intercept any vessels entering the Thames estuary. Ships from infected ports were required to moor at Hole Haven on Canvey Island for a period of 30 days before being allowed to travel upriver. Ships from ports free of plague or completing their quarantine were given a certificate of health and allowed to travel on. A second inspection line was established between the forts on opposite banks of the Thames at Tilbury and Gravesend with instructions only to pass ships with a certificate.

The quarantine duration was increased to forty days in May 1664 as the continental plague worsened, and the areas subject to quarantine changed with the news of the spread of plague to include all of Holland, Zeeland and Friesland (all regions of the Dutch Republic), although restrictions on Hamburg were removed in November. Quarantine measures against ships coming from the Dutch Republic were put in place in 29 other ports from May, commencing with Great Yarmouth. The Dutch ambassador objected to the constraint of trade with his country, but England responded that it had been one of the last countries introducing such restrictions. Regulations were enforced quite strictly, so that people or houses where travellers had come ashore without serving their quarantine were also subjected to 40 days of quarantine.



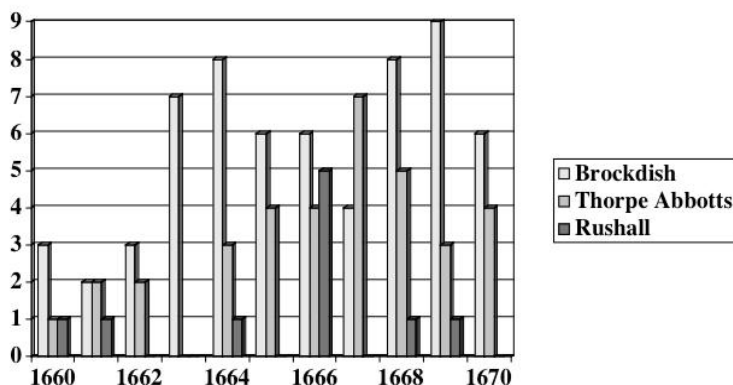
Physician wearing 17th century Hazmat Suit

Norfolk Justices also imposed isolation on Yarmouth by placing guards round the streets from the town in May 1665 and refused to allow food and provisions to go in unless the citizens stayed put. None of these seemingly sensible and well-planned measures worked. Yarmouth was devastated by plague, yet Lowestoft escaped. No one could explain that, nor can yet. Most towns refused entry to strangers without a 'health certificate' declaring them plague free, of dubious use and readily forged by desperate people fleeing the cities. The plague spread by infected people and goods travelling from town to town but it seemed to locals that plague hit a village or town at random; Stowmarket in Suffolk was spared, Needham Market four miles away was almost wiped out, its market never again reaching the pre-1665 size.

Local History

I decided to look at the registration of deaths in our local villages of Brockdish, Thorpe Abbots and Rushall for the period between 1660 and 1670 to see if I could detect any increased mortality rate during the plague years. The numbers are small and it is difficult to know if they are significant. There was no rise in recorded deaths in 1665 and 1666 in Brockdish and Thorpe Abbots and no two deaths recorded in the same family but in Rushall there was a rise from just one or none to 5 in 1666, although again all the deaths were in different families. These villages were lucky and rather miraculously so, given Brockdish's position on the main highway. There are no records documenting whether any preventive action was taken locally but probably the locality was spared because of the scattered nature and self sufficiency of the farming settlements and villagers having the good sense to stay away from the large towns until the danger was over.

Recorded burials in Brockdish, Thorpe Abbots and Rushall 1660-1670



Local Information

Plots and half plots available now at Brockdish and Thorpe Abbots Allotments

Brockdish and Thorpe Abbots Allotments Association (BATAAA) is run by a small committee of volunteers for members of the local community. The allotments are situated at the end of Church Road in Brockdish, just before the bypass. We have full (250m²) and half (125m²) plots available and there is water on site.

To find out more about the allotments or to check plot availability please e-mail Rebecca Abrahall, BATAAA Secretary, at bataaa@hotmail.co.uk, or contact David Young, Treasurer, on 01379 668556 or find us on Facebook.

Coffee Break Answers

Answers to the quotes from films from page 20

1. The Silence of the Lambs. 2. Casablanca 3. Love Story
4. Gone with the Wind 5. The Wizard of Oz
6. Titanic 7. She Done Him Wrong.



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The Mardler Gardener

August and September can be busy months in the garden minimising pest, slug and disease on plants.

August is a good time to apply lawn feed but do continue mowing. While weeding flower beds lookout for self seeded plants, it is surprising what you may find, and can save money in the future.

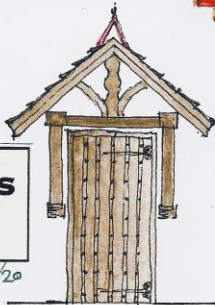
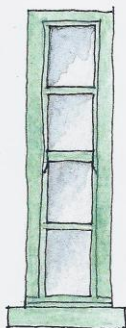
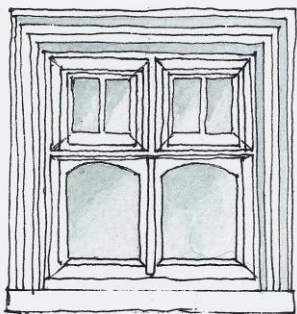
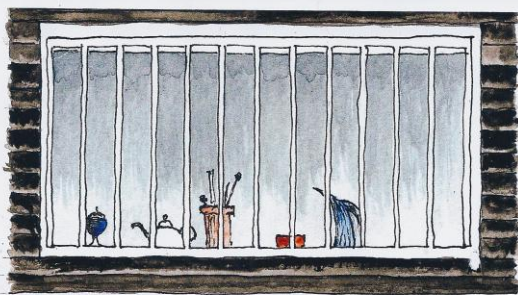
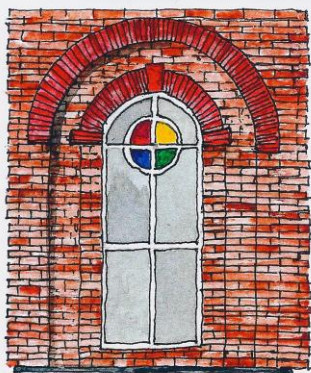
Continue to feed and water container plants and, if you manage to go away, group the containers for easier watering by your friends and neighbours.

Deadhead and prune roses, cutting them back to at least one or two leaves below the base of the flowered shoots, to a healthy outward facing bud.

When pruning rambling roses any old stems can be pruned out to the ground which will encourage more new shoots to develop from the base of the plant.

September is the time to get a compost bin. Start clearing garden debris, remove thatch from lawns and aerate and top dress them. Now is the time to feed and re-seed-tired lawns. It is advisable to stop feeding container plants now as they will produce soft growth which will be damaged in winter. One last feed with Sulphate of Potash will benefit them by building up their resilience to the rigours of winter. Use rock potash if you prefer to be organic.

September is also the month for planting. Plant new perennials, container grown shrubs, bulbs for Christmas in pots, spring bulbs in grass and in containers. Sow hardy annuals and plant out spring bedding plants, having cleared out summer bedding. It all seems like hard work but the rewards will be wonderful! (don't forget the G&T rewards on the patio).



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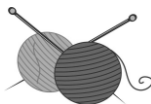
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UPDATE ON KNITTING APPEAL



Thank you to all the kind ladies that are still knitting baby gowns, hats and triangles. I will not mention any names as some of you do not give me your name and send them by other people, but you all know who you are and you're all very special.

I would also like to thank the lady that knitted for the homeless, all your things have been passed to the appropriate people and will be handed out to those in need.

I have the following to go any day now:

100 Gowns	64 Small Hats	34 Triangles
2 Pairs Bootee's	7 Baby Blankets	
119 Premature Baby Hats		

Thank you also to the two ladies that donated wool for me to knit up.

Please feel free to keep knitting, I am always happy to make sure it gets to the hospital.

***Thanks to you all
Cheryl Mounser
Tel. 741435***

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The Crafty Bombers

@ Thorpe Abbots Village Hall

The Crafty Bombers is a craft club for busy kids who like to do busy things!

Each month there is a themed session with a variety of activities. Refreshments included. Toys and games are also provided to keep younger children occupied.

All sessions are 10.30am – 12pm.

Saturday 12th September:
Autumn animals

Saturday 10th October:
Hallowe'en fun



We will follow similar guidelines to schools to ensure our crafts are Covid-19 safe. Weather permitting, sessions will be held outdoors. Please do not attend if you or your child shows symptoms of Coronavirus.

To cover the costs of materials, we ask for a donation of £1 per child. Any crafty donations also gratefully received!

*For any enquiries please contact Jo Slater
tel. 668585 / jogslater@hotmail.com*

Brockdish Church News

Brockdish Church has reopened. The Church will be open at 9.30am each Sunday for either Morning Prayer or Communion. Following these services, the Church will be left open for Private Prayer until 4pm. These details may well have to change with very little notice so please visit the Benefice Website www.7churches.org.uk for the latest information.

Harvest Festival will take place on Sunday 20th September at 9.30 in the morning.

Would people visiting or tending graves in Brockdish Churchyard please take all rubbish home and refrain from throwing it in the hedge or over the wall into the adjoining field.

Thank you to Richard for cutting the edge of the Church field so that the Church wall could be uncovered. Thanks to Andrew who loans his truck to remove waste and allows it to be unloaded on his garden waste heap. What would we do without them?

Jan Croxson - Church Warden

Church Contacts

Minister in Charge
www.7churches.org.uk

Benefice Administrator
admin@7churches.org.uk

Brockdish
Church Wardens
Thorpe Abbots
Contact

Revd Nigel Tuffnell
rector@7churches.org.uk

Mon to Fri 01379 851148
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