

THE
Mardler
BROCKDISH & THORPE ABBOTTS



Edition No. 232 April - May 2021

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

Also available on-line at www.themardler.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

EVENTS IN THE VILLAGE HALL
ARE CURRENTLY SUSPENDED UNTIL
FURTHER NOTICE.

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

Surgeries Harleston Bullock Fair Close Emergencies	01379 853217 01379 853503
Police Harleston and Diss	101
NHS Direct	111
Electricity Power Cuts	105
Gas Emergencies	0800 111 999
Anglian Water	03457 145 145
South Norfolk Council	01508 533633
Borderhoppa	01379 854800
Brockdish Village Hall <i>Bookings Jill Edwards</i>	01379 669057
Thorpe Abbotts Village Hall <i>Bookings Kelvin Halifax</i>	01379 668705
Waveney Heritage Centre	01379 668285
Carpet Bowls Club <i>Glyn Catchpole</i>	01379 668698
Line Dancing <i>Tracey Hood</i>	07854 943490
Aerobics <i>Clare Peed</i>	01379 668715
Sunday Tea Dance/ Ballroom Latin Dance Classes <i>Niall O'Brien</i>	07526 883776
South Norfolk District Councillor <i>Clayton Hudson</i>	01379 676259
Parish Clerk <i>Teresa Hines</i>	01379 308617
Libraries <i>Harleston Diss</i>	01379 852549 01379 642609

A warm welcome to our spring edition. As you read this, I am hoping you are all enjoying the chance to meet friends and family again at long last, albeit in our gardens. The schools have returned, the days are getting longer and hopefully a bit warmer, and in a few more weeks our lives will be nearly back to normal. Please keep a lookout in the Mardler for upcoming events as I am sure we will be overwhelmed with invitations! In the meanwhile, I hope you are all keeping safe and well, and that you enjoy this bumper edition celebrating our very special area of South Norfolk.

Rob Buck, Editor



REMEMBER
Closing date for entries in the
June / July 2021 issue is 5th May 2021.
Articles received after this date may not be
included in the next issue.



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Village Information

Brockdish and Thorpe Abbots Allotments

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 from 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. Having an allotment is an excellent way of getting your daily exercise whilst growing healthy food for the table, so why not give it a go!

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

Village Defibrillators

Brockdish Defibrillator is located on the outside wall of Brockdish Village Hall. At the Village Hall there is a clothes bank, all proceeds from this go towards the running costs of the Defibrillator.

Thorpe Abbots Defibrillator is located outside the Village Hall.

HOLIDAY ACCOMMODATION WITHIN 2 MILES OF BROCKDISH

Beautifully refurbished, air-conditioned, vintage American Motor Home now permanently sited in its own secluded grounds with patio. Converted from 10 berth to 2 berth, spacious accommodation, large double bed (linen provided) sofa bed suitable for 2 children. Shower and WC, (towels provided) fully equipped kitchen with hob, oven, microwave. crockery and fridge. TV, DVD player and Wi-Fi. For more information/photos/prices contact colin@snakefreight.com.



Village Notices

Wortwell Bowls

There are plans afoot to open the bowling green after April 12th (Covid restrictions allowing). Why not come along on a Monday afternoon at 2pm for a very friendly roll up?

For further information call **Peter Croxson (01379 668630)**.

Brockdish Common

Working Parties are getting going again! If you would like to get involved in helping to manage our Common come and join us on Monday 12th April from 10.00 until 14.00. We will be making good some of the winter damage and clearing some rubbish dumped many years ago. All the tools will be provided but please bring gloves.

If you can help just turn up, but if you have any questions please contact: **Derek Clark (01379 669201)**.

Brockdish Carpet Bowls

It's been a long time since we played Bowls. We hope restrictions will be lifted soon and we can start again. When we can play we meet on a Thursday evening in the Village Hall at 7.30. Everyone welcome.

Glyn Catchpole

WEIRD BUT INTERESTING

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Village Notices

Fresh Fish To Your Door

Call or email for a selection of local fresh fish. We can call weekly or fortnightly.



Spen's Fish

07929097124 spensfish68@gmail.com

Jim's Mobile Grocery Store

visits Brockdish and Thorpe Abbots. Please call 07967 108986 to place an order or to request a stop.



IN LOVING MEMORY

To announce the sad loss of Brockdish resident

Dorothy May Roberts

Born 13.09.31 Died 27.01.21

A Village 'Thank you'

Glyn and Joyce Catchpole would like to thank all friends and neighbours who have helped them in anyway after the flooding in their house and garden. There were so many, God bless you all.

Glyn and Joyce

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The Annual Thorpe Abbotts Easter Egg Hunt

**Saturday 3rd April
12pm onwards**

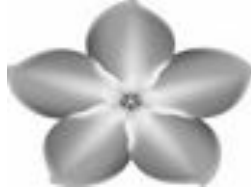
Follow the clues around the village to find the Easter treats left by the Thorpe Abbotts Easter bunny.

Clues will be arriving through your letter boxes soon!

Covid restrictions still apply – please follow social distancing.



Please contact Paul Slater (tel. 668585) for further details.



Harleston & District Dementia Friendly Community & Café

April 2021

After a year of Lockdown It's beginning to look like we can finally see a 'light at the end of the tunnel' and we are slowly getting back to some normality. Unfortunately, it is still too early to resume our Cafes yet, maybe when Mid Summer comes along it will be safe to meet up again.

The Dementia Cafe in Harleston has been created as a safe and enjoyable place for both people who are experiencing some memory loss, or have a diagnosis of Dementia and their family, carers and friends who may be feeling a little more isolated than others. Along with tea, coffee, cake, and conversation, there are activities to engage, inform, stimulate and entertain everyone. Plus it is an opportunity to make new friends, keep active and feel more confident.

If you would like more information about getting involved, or attending our Group later in the year. Please do contact Pat.

Patricia.simmonds@mail.com or 01379 676557



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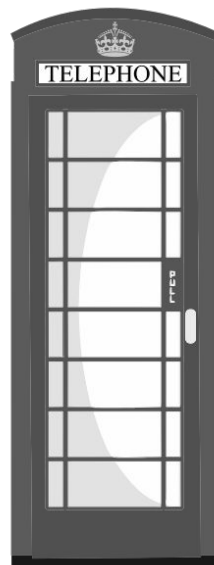
Village Notices

Thorpe Abbots Telephone Exchange Spring Clean Sunday 10th April - all day

It has been nearly a year since the Telephone Exchange was established, and in that time the box has accumulated rather a lot of stuff. Time for a clear out!

On Sunday 10th April, you may either **SWAP or TAKE AWAY** but **DO NOT BRING**. Anything that has been lingering unused for the past year will be donated to charity.

Jo Slater (tel. 668585)



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Bees In Brockdish!

It won't be long until the bees start to venture out as the weather improves. All bees (25 different ones in the UK!), along with other insects, are vitally important for their pollinating expertise, without which we would all starve.

The big round furry ones which sound like mini helicopters are **bumble bees**. These are the queens, the only ones who hibernate through the winter and they are looking for nice cosy sites for this year's nest. As the summer goes on you'll notice that bumble bees get smaller. That's because they are the new arrivals, hatched in the new nest. If you happen to have a nest in your garden you'll notice it gets busier and busier as the year goes on and more babies arrive! Please, please leave the nest alone. The bumble bees are not usually aggressive if left in peace.

Honey bees on the other hand live in a colony which goes on from year to year and they're the ones beekeepers look after in a hive. Of course they can also live in the wild, but these days wild colonies often struggle due to problems with lack of food, modern agricultural practices, a shortage of suitable sites and so-on.

From late May onwards there will be tens of thousands of bees in the hive and things get a bit crowded! This will encourage some of the bees to leave home looking for a new less crowded site. That is when swarms appear. They can be quite frightening but just leave them alone and they will settle down in a big group on a tree or hedge whilst they decide what to do next.

Beekeepers are delighted to collect them at this stage and will be able to rehouse them as a new colony. If you come across a swarm, phone Philip Thompson (01379 668279) and he will come and have a look and be delighted to deal with them if he can.

Although you might find a collection of bees alarming, please just leave them alone. Philip or one of the local beekeeping associations (they have websites, as do the Wildlife Trusts), can advise you and collect them if you wish.

Philip Thompson (01379 668279)

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Local nature

Identifying some common birds in your garden or on your local walk.

Spring is a great time to learn about wild birds. They are very active with singing, displaying and nest building. Here are four birds to look for in your garden and four you may see on a local walk. Why not find and identify all eight?



The acrobatic little Blue Tit is a regular in most gardens, often seen hanging upside down on the bird-feeder. It is rose-yellow beneath with greyish-blue head and wings. If you put up a suitable nest-box a pair are sure to adopt it as their family home.

Although nearly black, when the light hits the starling's plumage it is glossy with a purple and green sheen, it is speckled with white in winter. It can be told from the blackbird by its short tail and habit of running rather than hopping. This bird has suffered a massive decline, but a starling nest-box high on the side of the house is a great help.



An unassuming small brown bird with slate grey breast. It has a quiet mouse-like way of creeping about under the bushes. Formerly known as the hedge sparrow, it is actually our only representative of the accentor family. Despite its sombre plumage it has a rather complex lifestyle, with both the male and female often having several mates.

The male, as its name suggests, has a plumage of various shades of green with an obvious yellow/green bar on its wing. If you put out sunflower hearts in winter you are sure to attract greenfinch. In spring the male repeats a nasal 'twe-ee' call from a high perch or during a butterfly-like song-flight.



Local nature

Identifying some common birds in your garden or on your local walk.

The kestrel is our commonest falcon and can be found almost anywhere there are mice and voles. It is most often seen hovering over roadside verges, and is the only falcon to do this. The female has brown striated plumage that is barred with black. The male has a blue-grey head with chestnut coloured wings.

Kestrel



One of our best known and best loved summer visitors. It has a long forked tail, blue/black plumage with white breast and red chin. Often seen skimming low over the fields, it displays a speed and grace unmatched by other birds.

Swallow



Give or take, these birds are almost identical. Both migrant here in spring from warmer climates and both will sing continuously. The song of the willow warbler has a very sweet descending cadence, not loud but very clear, for me it is the sound of spring. Its cousin the chiff-chaff is rarely seen among the blossom filled branches, but it repeats its name without stopping to ensure you know it is there.

Willow Warbler and Chiff-Chaff



Yellowhammer



This handsome sulphur yellow bunting is a familiar bird of country lanes and thick tall hedgerows. Its monotonous, but appealing call of 'little bit of bread and no-----cheese' is unmistakeable. Look for them on top of telegraph poles making this demand all through the spring.

How it all started -Brief History of the Beginning of the Mardler

(Extract from the minutes of the Parish Council held on January 19th 1982 at Brockdish Village Hall)

The Chairman said that he had been told by Mrs Longe that she would be prepared to produce a parish magazine and that she asked for the views of the Parish Council.

He then invited Mrs Longe to explain her suggestion to the meeting. Mrs Longe said that in her view a parish magazine was very much needed. There were 8 clubs in Thorpe Abbots and 24 in Brockdish and a magazine would keep the parish informed of their activities.

Councillors and members of the public were very much in favour of Mrs Longe's proposal and on the proposition of the Chairman and seconded by Councillor Catchpole it was agreed to give Mrs Longe a grant of £25 to enable her to purchase paper, stencils and ink for her first edition. Members of the public present offered assistance with typing and delivery.

By 13th April 1982 the first edition had been issued.

"The Chairman said that the first edition of Mrs Longe's magazine had been issued and that congratulations were in order. Members agreed with the Chairman's remarks.

Original Team: Mrs C Longe, Mrs P Bailey, Mrs D Garrod, Mrs L Palfrey, Mr & Mr G Riley

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A cartoon illustration of a woman with dark hair, wearing a white apron over a dark shirt, standing behind an ironing board and ironing a piece of fabric. The illustration is in a simple, friendly style.

Local History

Syleham House, Syleham

By Elaine Murphy

We've all driven past this beautiful old house at the bridge over the Waveney, the old miller's house. Several people have asked me about it, so although it isn't in Brockdish or Thorpe Abbots I thought we could borrow it for the Mardler. And have you noticed that after some years of neglect, the house and grounds are getting the love and attention they need from Charlie and Millie Mitchell, who are bringing family life back to this much admired house on the banks of the river?



Syleham House, Syleham

The house was built in the mid to late 1760s for the miller who owned Syleham Mill. It is difficult to be exact but we know the owner was contributing to local community groups by the early 1770s and insured the mill in 1779. The house is Grade II listed, three storeys of white-washed brick with a roof of glazed black pantiles. The two-storey canted bays of three lights with sash windows were added much later in Victorian times. Later too is a rear wing, which can be seen from the road as you turn towards Weybread. But since a watermill has been sited on the Waveney here since Domesday at least and probably earlier, it is highly likely that there has been a miller's house on this site for centuries before this 'new' Georgian one was built.

Syleham House, Syleham



*William Mann of Syleham, 1838-1812,
portrait by Joseph Clover,
Courtesy Norfolk Museums Service.*

The Builder. **William Mann**, who was not an artisan miller himself but a very successful entrepreneur, flour factor and the owner of at least three other water mills on the Waveney, was a large employer in the area. There is a wonderful oil painting of him looking suitably prosperous in the Norfolk Museums Collection. Having bought Syleham Mill, probably in 1779, he went on to buy the mill at the Staithe in Bungay in 1784, and also owned for a time both Needham and Weybread mills. He was adept at buying up cheap mills that had gone bankrupt or accidentally burnt down.

The mills along the Waveney produced and exported corn to America during the American War of Independence, to support loyalists. This was probably because of the influence of one of William Mann's tenants, an American refugee Joseph Hooper, a staunch Royalist who opposed American independence and had his property seized. He fled to England in 1775 and settled in Bungay, where he converted his part of the Bungay corn mill he rented from Mann to a mill producing fine paper. In 1790 he complained that the people of Ditchingham had opened up Ditchingham Dam and diverted the flow of the river Waveney starving the mill of water and making it hard to produce paper. The problem took two years to resolve, and it was only after William Mann intervened and threatened those responsible with action for damages that the dam was restored.

Mann himself was content to stay at Syleham House for the rest of his life. But he had bigger ambitions to acquire land and local property. When Syleham Manor came on the market he bought the entire estate, the largest half of the

Local History

Syleham House, Syleham

entire parish. His son Charles lived at the manor house, that lovely house with the Georgian façade along the valley towards the Cross. William and his wife Ann had at least six children, probably more but three of their sons died in their late teens and there is a sad slate slab tomb in the west end of the floor of the nave of Syleham Church where lie William Jnr who died age 19 in 1781, his brother George who died in 1784 also 19 and who was followed only 6 months later by his brother Thomas age 18 in 1785. Ann outlived William to die in 1830. Their grandson Charles Mann became a lawyer, and eventually Advocate General of South Australia, de facto governor. And his children became well-known politicians in Adelaide.

Now let's race on from through a succession of resident millers throughout the 19th century to Syleham House's most illustrious twentieth century residents, **Sir Charles Arden-Clarke, GCMG** (1898 –1962) a British colonial administrator and his wife **Lady Gina Arden-Clark**, who are still remembered with affection by some older people in Syleham.



*Sir Charles Arden-Clarke
GCMG (1898-1962)*

Arden-Clarke was born in India on 25 July 1898, the eldest son of a Church missionary in India. He was just old enough to serve in the First World War, enlisting in the machine-gun corps in 1917.

By the time he was twenty, he was already a captain and had earned a mention in dispatches. Involved in a serious breach of discipline while stationed in post-war Germany, he struck a senior officer after a row in the mess, which led Arden-Clarke to volunteer for the south Russia expeditionary force sent in support of the White Russian army. But coming to the conclusion that the army was not the career for him, he joined the colonial service in 1920. He married in 1924 Georgina Dora (Gina) Reid, daughter of a British Indian civil engineer and they had one son and two daughters.

Local History

Syleham House, Syleham

After a spell in the northern provinces of Nigeria, in 1934 Arden-Clarke was transferred on accelerated promotion to the secretariat in Lagos. There, he worked for the new governor, Sir Donald Cameron, and in 1936, he was offered the post of assistant resident commissioner in the more temperate climate of one of the South African high commission territories, Bechuanaland (now Botswana) and a year later was promoted resident commissioner. In 1942 he became resident commissioner of Basutoland (now Lesotho).

At the end of the Second World War, when the Labour government decided to assume responsibility for Sarawak (now part of Malaysia) the Colonial Office chose Arden-Clarke for a pioneer governorship in 1946, bringing him a knighthood. The problems of rebuilding an economy ravaged during the Japanese occupation of the East Indian archipelago were compounded by local resentment against the empire. Arden-Clarke survived an attempt on his life only because he had left the country; his successor as governor was assassinated in 1949.



The governorship of the Gold Coast colony followed in June 1949, guiding the country from dependent territory to independent Ghana, becoming Governor General of the new Ghana when Nkrumah became Prime Minister. His brief to channel rather than check the vigorous nationalist spirit was, according to official

Sir Charles Arden-Clarke with Ghanaian nationalists 1951

Local History

Syleham House, Syleham

histories a turning point in the annals of Britain's colonial administration in Africa. On his own initiative, Arden-Clarke released the charismatic nationalist leader Kwame Nkrumah from prison and invited him to form a government. Although their first meeting was characterized by mutual suspicion, they soon developed a real feeling of friendship and partnership. Nkrumah's impression was of 'a man with a strong sense of justice and fair play, with whom I could easily be friends even though [he was] a symbol of British imperialism'. On Arden-Clarke's death, Nkrumah commented, 'It can be truly said that independence for Ghana might have been seriously delayed but for Sir Charles's readiness to co-operate with the forces of nationalism' (West Africa, 22 Dec 1962).

In retirement Arden-Clarke remained active in African affairs. and supported many voluntary organisation working in Africa. But after retirement he and his wife Gina made their home at Syleham House, which they had bought some years earlier and became popular figures in the local community. Arden-Clarke was tall, well-built and imposing, with 'rock-like solidity'. He loved stamp collecting and gardening. He died from cancer at home on 16 December 1962, having spent over half his thirty-seven years in the colonial service as an imperial governor. He was survived by Lady Arden-Clarke, who in later life lived at Syleham House with a lady companion. She died age 93 and is buried in Syleham churchyard with her husband.

G.G. EVANS

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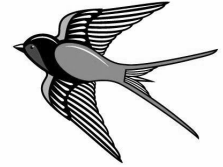
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SPRING SONNET

Winter: How much longer must I search for the Spring?
For little green leaves the frost cannot sting.
Woodbine, wild arum first out of their beds,
Ac'nites, green collars and bright yellow heads.
Snowdrops shiver cold their white skirts trimmed with green,
Stitchwort and buttercups then daisies are seen.
Primrose and cowslip and celadines gold,
Daffodils shooting up spears sharp and bold.
Bluebells, first one and then a carpet of blue,
Forget - me - nots twinkling, pretty eyes true.
Milk maids and king cups on low meadows show,
Lilac and apple, sweet may - flower sense blow.
Cuckoo, chiffchaff, swallows, martins all come
"Spring's here now" they call "Enjoy and have fun".



Jethro the poet



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The Book Club recommends...

Being an avid reader, I belong to a book club.

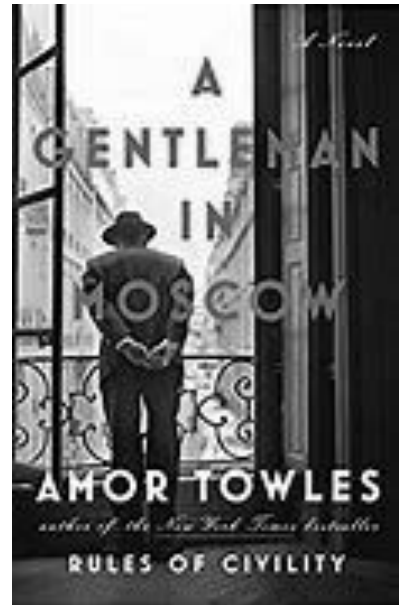
We are a group of ladies from Brockdish , Thorpe Abbotts and Weybread and meet once a month to discuss two chosen books. As we all have very different tastes, the book club gives us the opportunity to be introduced to books we would never have chosen ourselves. This leads to much hilarity as some choices are unfortunate and others simply amazing! There is always much to talk about. We have kept our book club going during lockdown thanks to Zoom.

We all now know what being in lockdown means, but what if lockdown was for life? The main character of the book I have chosen to review had lockdown imposed upon him.

A Gentleman in Moscow by Amor Towles

Alexander Rostov, a Russian Aristocrat, was sentenced to indefinite house arrest in Moscow's Metropole Hotel, following the Russian Revolution, at the beginning of the 20th century. We find out how Rostov deals with his internment through his encounters with the people who move in and out of the hotel and the staff who work there. The book is beautifully written and full of interesting characters which keep the pages turning until the very end.

We enjoyed this book so much we then went on to read **Rules of Civility** by the same author.



If you too love books, whatever the genre, and would like to contribute to a regular Book Review article in The Mardler, then please e-mail

judecham@gmail.com.



Jokes

Who tells the best puns? *Comedy-hens!*

What's an eggs favourite motivational phrase? *Stay on the sunny side up!*

What is the best way to to make easter easier? *Put an 'i' where the 't' is.*

Dingbats

These are 'pictures' depicting a phrase or saying.

Example:

GROUND
—
LONDON

 = LONDON UNDERGROUND

Can you work out the answers to the following:-

- | |
|------|
| LONG |
| — |
| DUE |
- | |
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| GETTING |
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The author Enid Blyton created many memorable characters. Among her most popular were the members of the Famous Five gang. Can you name them?



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Village Hall

Aerial photo of Thorpe Abbots taken by James Hutchinson



Memories from Doris Chenery Thorpe Abbotts - As it Was

**Published on the 25th Anniversary 150th Edition of the Mardler Magazine
April 2007**

It has been suggested to me that I should write down what I remember of this village before everyone dies who remembers anything of it. I have decided to try and give a picture of the village and some of its characters in it as I first remember them.

The pump was the centre of the village and three roads led away from it as now. The Lion public house faced it and opposite it to it, The Street led towards Brockdish passing on the right-hand side the village shop and post office, blacksmith's shop and, two cottages, Thorpe Abbotts Place with two cottages in front of it as now. On the left two cottages, one large thatched house, Home Farm, and Mrs Anna Warnes's house now called Surwood.

Back at the Lion, and turning right we passed Highfields Farm House behind its brick wall and on the School at the corner of School Lane. To digress to the right, up the lane was the Glebe and four cottages, occupied by men who worked at Hall Farm.

Also up this lane was a footpath leading to the back gate of the Rectory, which we walked up to go to Bible Class, Confirmation Class etc. (Incidentally, I walked that way many times in the morning before school to deliver the morning milk from the post office to the Rectory.)

Back to the school and continuing down to the main road, we turned right to the Rectory and the Church; next door to this Hall Farm farmed by Mr C H Poll as a tenant of Sir Edward Mann of Thelveton Hall.

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Memories from Doris Chenery Thorpe Abbotts - As it Was

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A little further along on the right, a lane leading to Wood Cottage, where Mr Walter Smith lived, Sir Edward's gamekeeper with his wife and son George. His elder son was away at war.

Two cottages at the Dale housed two employees of Mr Poll, Mr Long and Mr West, as did the cottage opposite the Church where the cowman lived with his wife and seven children, all devoted Methodists, who went to the chapel in Diss every Sunday.

Opposite the Rectory, in the Big Field, was a large Dutch Barn, and alongside it ran the Low Lane, a favourite footpath. You could walk round it and come out at Westbanks Farm buildings opposite the Lodge, or you could cross two meadows to Hoxne Watermill and walk into Hoxne village to the doctors or the grocers, or to Hoxne Church on a Sunday evening, listening to the bells as you went.

Now back to the pump and a walk up The Common. On the left hand side, the Carpenter's shop and two cottages then came the allotments, extra garden for the villagers preference given to the men in the alms houses, who had small gardens. Next were two more cottages, the newest in the village and then a small field. A small meadow came next with a big pond, where the children used to slide and skate in wintertime. We always called it Fairweather Pond because Charlie Fairweather, the village blacksmith lived in one of the cottages next to it. His son lived in the other.

On the other side of Stockson's, Lane were two small thatched cottages, occupied by old Mr George Flatman and his daughter and son-in-law Mr and Mrs James? and their eight children. The other house in the lane and the small holding behind it called the Homestead was rented by Mr Spot Thrower.

Memories from Doris Chenery Thorpe Abbotts - As it Was

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On the right-hand side of the road, starting from the pump, were two sets of double dwellers and three alms houses, then a field, then Sunnyside, occupied by Mr Alfred 'Taffy' Hart, a retired army officer and his wife, a retired singer from the London stage. Two more cottages came next, then a field before you came to 'Hayhew's Pond', so called because a man of that name has once drowned himself there. By this pond a footpath led across two meadows to Hart's Farm where George Hart and his sister Harriet lived with their widowed mother. A little further up the road a drift led to Mark's Farm, owned and farmed by Charles Mark, who lived there with his wife Dolly and eight children.

At the corner, a little further up, were two houses. One owned by Jack Daniels, Mrs Mark's father, who farmed a small holding and caught moles. In the other cottage was an elderly widow called Mrs Burrows who was as deaf as a post. Two more houses, Grove Cottages completed the village, occupied by a Mr Gunton and family and Mr J Aldrich. He and later his two sons were enthusiastic threshing engine workers.

I have omitted to mention two cottages in Mormor Lane by the Home Farm. And one pink plastered house further up where Mr Robert Finch, the roadman and his wife whom all the children called 'Aggiebob' lived.

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Brockdish: Old and New by GAR

(edited by David Seddon davidseddon2011@hotmail.co.uk)

Some of you may have already read this little harvest of memories by GAR, who was, we think, George Riley, written probably in the 1980s; many of you will not. Some of you may be able to add detail to the references and help us decide exactly the period to which it refers. Please do. Jan Croxson has already helped me a great deal with references.

In the next issue of The Mardler I hope to be able to provide a much fuller account, based on further research, and readers' contributions. Please send me what you can at the e mail address given above, in time for the next edition.

Brockdish is a small village in the Waveney Valley between Diss and Harleston. If you drive a car you will probably find you are through it before your mind has registered the 30 mph sign. Do not worry – everybody does. The population is about 400, and there are three shops, two pubs and a garage in The Street. One shop is the Post Office Stores and the other an antique shop; and there is a recently opened craft shop.

Many years ago, although still within living memory, the village was completely self-sufficient. There were two grocers as the antique shop was one; a butcher's shop with a slaughterhouse at the back, and a baker who baked his own bread on the premises. In the small open space at the corner of The Street and Grove Road, between Bridge House and its neighbour, was a cycle repair and electrical shop.



Newsagent and post office, now a private house

Brockdish: Old and New by GAR

Empton House was once three cottages: a laundry was run in one, a tanner lived in another, and two brothers – the Barkways – made gloves in the third. Women in the village hand-sewed the gloves in their homes, for which they were paid three old pence a pair. Most of the gloves made were strong leather workman's gloves and were worn by hedgers and ditchers to protect their hands, but some fine ladies' gloves were made too.



*The Greyhound Pub,
now a private house*

Albert Strange ran a builder's and undertaker's business in what is now Chipperfield Pottery, opposite The Greyhound. A doctor rode his horse from Harleston and held his surgery at Rose Cottage. A Mrs Liest and her daughter Rose lived next door and made and sold sweets and rock. There are still large hooks on the wall from which the rock was pulled during the process of making it.

Church Cottage in Church Road used to be two cottages, and Billy Gilman sold sweets to children from his side window. He was very fond of children, and used to play his gramophone, complete with large horn, for them. Not many people had a gramophone, and he would take it to the Church Fete, held in the Rectory garden, and play records while he took entrance money.

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Brockdish: Old and New by GAR

A Mr and Mrs Cracknell lived in a cottage which now forms part of Sheriff House. Mr Percy Cracknell was organist for many years, and Mrs Cracknell was a dress maker. She would turn a coat for one shilling and make a blouse for two shillings and six pence. Mrs Cracknell's mother, Mrs Sharman, was a certified midwife. She wore a proper uniform and delivered all the babies in Brockdish. She would stay a month in the big houses.

A smithy stood where the garage is now (in The Street). Many young people had a bicycle, and a number would cycle together to attend dances in neighbouring villages or church halls. A tent was erected on the common land down Common Lane, and for three pence you could watch a magic lantern picture show. Once a year, Kepple's Fair was held in the King's Head yard at the back of the pub. There were six cottages on the present car park.

Reading Room Yard is so called because a hut stood at the top, which was for the use of anybody to read the daily papers provided by the church; and a billiard table was also there. Mrs Paullin, a member of the old brewery family, was the benefactress who provided the Reading Room. The present Village Hall did not arrive until 1928.



The first village hall

Although there was plenty going on in old Brockdish, what a lovely quiet place it must have been. No lorries or juggernauts; no cars or motorbikes; no fighter planes overhead. Just horses' hooves; perhaps a squeak of a cart wheel in need of grease; the smithy's hammer and anvil; and children playing, bowling their hoops or spinning their tops. What a price we pay for progress!

'and even in our time sheep were driven on the hoof up Mill Lane along The Street to the marshes', GAR. (added in handwriting).

Brockdish: Old and New by GAR



Brockdish service station: the nearest petrol station is now Diss or Harleston



The antique shop, Brockdish, now a private house

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The building of the A143



Top left: Road closed for the building of the A143, 1995

Above: Serious earth moving on the A143

Left: Opening of the A143 bridge over Grove Road, 1996

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Hare today, gone tomorrow!

Photographs by Caroline Tillett





Brockdish and Thorpe Abbots Parish Council

Dangerous Driving in Brockdish

The Parish Council has received complaints of persistent dangerous driving through the village of certain cars. Registration numbers will be taken and further action will be put in place. If you witness dangerous driving please inform the local police.

Chicken Lorries through Thorpe Abbots

The Parish Council would like the views of the residents of Thorpe Abbots and surrounding area, on the route taken by the Cranswick Chicken Lorries travelling to the Poultry Farm on Mill Road. In the past the lorries have left the A143 via The Street and along Mill Road, a distance of 0.9 miles. Following regular complaints, from residents in Thorpe Abbots to Cranswick, regarding disruption and disturbance, an alternative route was adopted 6 months ago. Lorries now leave the A143 along Church Rd North, turning left up Grove Rd, right along Ingrams Road, left up Back Rd, left along Mill Rd before turning into the farm, a distance of 1.8 miles and four 90 degree bends. Considerable damage has been done, particularly on the bends, to the grass verges and more importantly to the road surface, requiring extensive repairs to make the road safe. We would like to ask residents if they feel this is a suitable route for these large lorries to negotiate in preference to travelling the more direct route through Thorpe Abbots village. Please send your comments/views to the Clerk.

brockdishthorpeabbottspc@gmail.com

Litter Pickers now in Thorpe Abbots Telephone Box

There are a number of litter pickers, heavy duty bin bags and hi-vis jackets available at Thorpe Abbots Telephone Exchange, courtesy of South Norfolk Council. If you would like any more to help keep our community clean whilst out on a walk please get in touch with Paul Slater (tel. 668585) who will gladly provide you with one!

Herbaceous Borders

Herbaceous perennials are plants that live for at least three years or longer. Herbaceous means soft, non-woody growth that dies back to the root each winter and grows back in the spring. A purely herbaceous border will almost be bare in the winter.

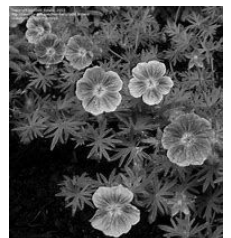
Perennials look great if intermingled with shrubs, roses and dwarf conifers in a border. This will ensure that there is always something of interest to see.



Perennials spread making clumps grow bigger until the centre of the plant dies out. To keep perennials healthy and to increase stock, divide the plants every few years where needed.

Summer flowering plants can be divided either in autumn or early spring, whereas spring flowering plants are best divided in summer once flowering has finished. Do not divide plants that are putting on growth at the time. Lift the plant from the ground with a fork then tease apart by hand if the roots are delicate. For plants with a well developed fibrous root system, put two forks in the clump back to back, pulling apart gently. Some plants may need a spade or knife to separate. Replant all divisions immediately and keep well watered until established.

Some examples of common herbaceous perennials are (from left to right) Rudbeckia, Aquilegia, Peony, Lupin and Cranesbill.





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Sunday 17th April

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Take Some Potatoes

Mushroom and Potato gratin (serves 4)

Bring 100ml milk and 284ml double cream to the boil then tip in 500g sliced potatoes, 200g diced mushrooms and 2 sliced garlic cloves.

Season and cook over a medium heat for 10 mins. Pour into a gratin dish, top with grated parmesan and bake 180°C/160°C fan/gas 4 for 30 mins, until tender and golden brown.

Spicy Wedges (serves 4)

Cut 4 large unpeeled potatoes into wedges and toss with 5 tbsp olive oil, juice of 1 lemon, 1/4 tsp paprika, 1 tsp chilli powder, 1/2 tsp each of ground cumin and ground coriander.

Arrange in a single layer on a baking tray and bake 220°C/200°C fan/gas 7 for 30 - 40 mins, shaking the tray occasionally until brown.

Chunky Cheese Pasties (serves 4)

Cut 2 large peeled potatoes into chunks - boil for 15 mins. Drain and mix with 100g grated cheese, 1 chopped onion, fried.

Roll out 500g block puff pastry to a 40cm square, and cut into 4 squares. Fill each with the potato mix, brush the edges with beaten egg then pull the four corners together in the middle to seal. Brush with more egg then bake at 220°C/180°C fan/gas 6 for 15 mins until golden.

Coffee Break Answers: 1. LONG OVERDUE 2. GETTING AWAY FROM (OR OVER) IT ALL 3. SCRAMBLED EGGS 4. ADDING INSULT TO INJURY 5. MIXED UP KID 6. SEARCHING HIGH AND LOW 7. TALE OF TWO CITIES 8. INCOME TAX. *The five members of the gang were – Anne Dick, George, Julian and Timmy the dog*

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All Saints Church Thorpe Abbots

As with many things, the Church has been bereft of visitors since our Christmas Service, apart from the team who did the repair work on the West Nave wall..... BUT there is a little light at the end of the tunnel. We are very hopeful that we will be able to run a service of some form at Easter. Of course, that does rather depend on the rules at the time, but fingers remain firmly crossed. As soon as we know, we will let everyone know. You have no idea what a pleasure it will be to welcome you all to a church service again!

The next event is our AGM on 21st April, at which we will review the events and achievements of last year. It will most probably happen by Zoom (what isn't at the moment?). Again, more details nearer the time.

Churchyard

As I write the churchyard is ablaze with Aconites and Snowdrops, particularly around the north side. Daffodils are coming through before our Meadow Saxifrage makes its annual appearance in May/June. June is a very good time to have a wander around the churchyard, which you will know is managed for its wildflower population. Every year I am surprised by the appearance (or even non-appearance) of various flower species there. Please do feel free to pop up there, many of our wildflower species are in decline and churchyards offer havens of which All Saints is a very good example. Some people think that just because the church gates are closed means that you cannot go in. Nothing could be further from the truth. These gates, whilst physically together, are never closed to those who wish to enter: a gentle push is all it needs. Additionally, the Church will be open at weekends and Bank Holidays after Easter if regulations permit.

All Saints Church Thorpe Abbotts

Church Lights

A big thank you for all those who have had the lights on to celebrate or remember events or loved ones over recent months'. It is so lovely to see the church alight. It costs just £5 a night and the money goes straight into our Maintenance Fund, from which we draw frequently for the upkeep of this Grade 1 listed 900 year old Church. If you would like the lights on, please contact Sue Williams on 07855 414941. Payment would be appreciated before the night, if you could please.

Simon Beet

Brockdish Church

Well spring has sprung as can be seen with all the spring flowers out in the churchyard. Hopefully a sign of better things to come.

There is hope that the Church could be open for service at Easter, but this of course depends on the guidance and restrictions that must be followed. Keep a lookout on the notice boards for confirmation and details nearer the time.

During this latest lockdown period the builders have been in and repaired the walls in the Chancel that were in a very poor state. Two windows have gone to the repairers and soon two more will go. All the cost for this work has been met by fundraising grants but most of all by generous donations that have come from the village, Thank you.

A huge thank you to Richard Longe for cutting the holly hedge and tidying the footpath by the Church.

Hope to see you all soon at various planned events in the in the near future - quiz night in July!

Jan Croxson - Churchwarden

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

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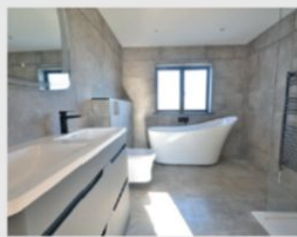


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