

Focal Point

£1

March 2021

***This month in
profile— David
Bailey: all action
Lay Minister***



KNOWLEDGE. INTEGRITY. RESULTS.

When it comes to moving home, you need professionals who are trained and trustworthy, with in-depth local knowledge and the technology and connections to market your property.

As exclusive Members of The Guild of Property Professionals we can meet your needs and clearly stand apart from the competition in both sales and lettings.

Contact us for a free confidential marketing appraisal

DAVIES & WAY

CHARTERED SURVEYORS • ESTATE AGENTS

SOLD

SUBJECT TO CONTRACT

0117 9863681

daviesandway.com

Keynsham Office

1 High Street, Keynsham

Bristol, BS31 1DP

0117 9863681

keynsham@daviesandway.com

Saltford Office

489 Bath Road, Saltford

Bristol, BS31 3BA

01225 400400

saltford@daviesandway.com

www.daviesandway.com



Your property in Park Lane

Showcase your property to the
lucrative London market



By instructing your local Fine & Country agent, your property will not only be marketed locally and regionally, but nationally and even internationally via Fine & Country's Head Office and Showroom located at one of the most prestigious addresses in the world – 121 Park Lane, Mayfair, London W1.

With over 40ft of window display on Park Lane, we not only reach a lucrative buyers' market other agents cannot, we also market all Fine & Country properties 24/7 through touchscreen technology, enabling customers to browse the details of Fine & Country properties from around the globe, even when the office is closed.

For more information on promoting your property in our Park Lane office or for a free valuation, please contact:
Homes of Bath Fine & Country, 36 Gay Street, Bath, Somerset, BA1 2NT
01225 320032 | bath@fineandcountry.com
homesofbath.co.uk | fineandcountry.com



FONTHILL
garden centre



A family run business that's been growing since 1967.

www.fonthill-lakeside.com



BATH ROAD, BITTON. 0117 932 3110
OPEN MON-FRI 8.00-5.00 SAT 9.00-5.00 SUN 10.30-4.30



Focal Point

Bitton Churches' Magazine

March 2021

A monthly church newsletter
serving Bitton, Swineford,
Willsbridge,
Upton Cheyney & Beach

To advertise in Focal Point
please contact Roger Tiller
roj.tiller@hotmail.com

FOR ALL FOCAL POINT INQUIRIES

Editor: Jim Heavens

Phone: 07720 248534

Email:

jimheavens@outlook.com

Website:

www.stmarysbitton.org.uk

*Deadline for the April
magazine is:*

Wednesday 18 March 2021

In this month's Focal Point:

- Page 12 ***Lay Minister's Message—
John Sibley ~ Lent in
Lockdown: a chance to
reflect on what's
important in life.***
- Page 14 Fourth Sunday in Lent: How
Mothering Sunday made its
return,
- Page 17 *Stephanie Bailey* Some
personal reflections on
lockdown.
- Page 20 Remembering David Holley
- Page 24 *This month in profile:
David Bailey***
- Page 28 Remembering David Willis
- Page 30 The Lons and the people
who lived there. Part 4
1931 –52
- Page 33 Council seeks views on new
local plan
- Page 34 ***Ellacombe's Chiming
Device—Looking forward
to the Bicentennial on 26
June.***
- Page 36 *WI News*
- Page 40/41 This month's Quiz
- Page 45 Last Word

**Churches' news and
information about acts of
worship pages 8 to 11**

S M Wilkins Electrical Services

- ◆ **FREE QUOTES**
- ◆ **COMPETITIVE RATES**
- ◆ **FULLY INSURED**
- ◆ **SIX-YEAR WARRANTY**
- ◆ **OVER 20 YEARS' EXPERIENCE**

- Testing & inspection
- Landlord certs (EICR)
- Fault finding/repairs
- Fuse board replacement
- Extra sockets/lights
- Cooker/shower installation
- Smoke alarms
- Security/outdoor lighting



Mobile: 0771 218 9118



Email: smwilkins.electricalservices@gmail.com

A small and friendly practice providing
the very best care for animals and their owners

OLDLAND HOUSE Veterinary Surgery

Stephen Pullan, BVSc, MRCVS
103 High Street, Oldland Common, Bristol
Monday-Friday 8am-7.30pm: Saturday 10-12am
Tel: 0117 932 3100



E. C. Alderwick & Son Ltd
Funeral Directors

Serving Bristol since 1945

Kingswood - 11 Regent Street, Kingswood, Bristol, BS15 8JX

Tel: 0117 967 3609

Hanham - 71 High Street, Hanham, Bristol, BS15 3DG

Tel: 0117 935 3746

HRD Hardware

New owners Jim & Janette
look forward to welcoming you

Plumbing & electrical supplies
pet foods - paints - tools - gifts
fabric dyes - paraffin

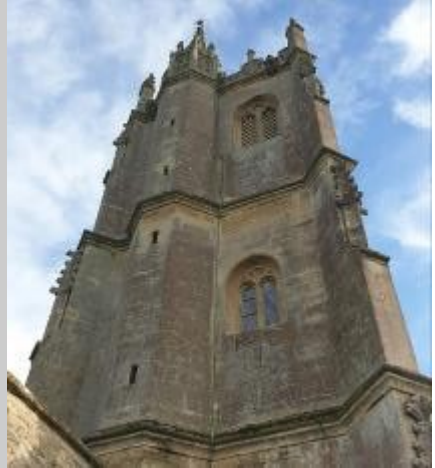
20 Westcourt Drive, Oldland Common

- Churches & Services -



**ST MARY'S
CHURCH,
BITTON**

www.stmarysbitton.org.uk



Vicar:

Rev Jeremy Andrew
The Vicarage, Warmley
0117 967 2724

Ordained minister:

Rev Richard Humphrey
Splinters, Kenilworth Drive
Willsbridge **0117 949 0502**

Lay ministers:

Ken Gibson, 8 Church Road,
Bitton
0117 932 2122

Churchwardens:

Pete Midgley
30 Kenilworth Drive, Willsbridge
0117 932 6898

David Bailey, Westover,
Bath Road, Bitton
0117 932 8949

Jacqui Harris
29 St Anne's Drive, Wick
0117 937 4706

Services in March

It is likely that the COVID-19 pandemic will still prevent us from entering St Mary's Church throughout March. We will continue to share worship on Sundays and also Midweek services on Wednesdays through video links which will appear on our Website:

www.stmarysbitton.org.uk

This month's church calendar

Sunday 7 March

Third Sunday in Lent

Sunday 14 March

Fourth Sunday in Lent
Mothering Sunday

Sunday 21 March

Fifth Sunday in Lent

Sunday 28 March

Palm Sunday

From the Register

Funeral

29th January - David George Willis

2nd February - David Charles Holley





UPTON CHEYNEY United Reformed Church



It is unlikely that any services will take place during March due to Coronavirus restrictions and the need to maintain safety. As soon as possible, information will be provided.

FOCAL POINT

Thank you to all readers who have subscribed for another year of Focal Point. We hope you continue to enjoy it.

A big thank you also to our advertisers who have continued to support the magazine during a year that has been difficult for many businesses. We hope that you will want to continue to advertise in 2021. Our rates are unchanged and all those who advertised last year have been invited to do so again.

Roger Tilley is currently collecting advertising money and would be pleased too to hear from any new advertisers. Contact—rogj.tiller@hotmail.com

No services at St Mary's in February – but COVID not wholly to blame

There were no regular services at St Mary's last month, but this was as much due to heating problems as it was the pandemic.

The church heating system broke down in November. Churchgoers batted on through Christmas but it was decided in the new year, with very cold weather approaching that there were likely to be very few attendees.

The problem was that a pipe running under the footpath between the church and the boiler house was leaking, It was also discovered that the cold water feed pipe from the header tank was blocked.

Access to the leaking pipe proved particularly difficult, involving digging a trench across the footpath and cutting a hatch in the side of the kitchen unit to gain access to the pipe junction below and behind the kitchen unit, which was difficult and has proved costly. The heating system is now working again, but the problem with the blocked cold water feed has not yet been resolved.

Stephanie Watkins

Friends of Stephanie Watkins, who lived in the High Street for over 50 years, will be sad to learn of her death on 13 February.

Stephanie had been in hospital on several occasions over the past year but she died at home with several members of her family around her.

John Sibley

Lent in Lockdown: a chance to identify what's important in life



A year ago this month the Prime Minister announced that the UK would enter into a lockdown due to Coronavirus infection rates. It was all a bit of a novelty then! We went walking around our locality, rediscovering long forgotten footpaths. We enthusiastically tended our gardens. We used the opportunity to decorate the house. There was a sense of 'enjoy it while we can'. How that has all changed, we are still in lockdown a year on, who would have thought it? No sense of fun now though, more a feeling of despondency, boredom and fatigue. I don't know about you but

Focal Point, March 2021

I have definitely had enough and am really feeling the strain of being shut in my house with only the occasional trip out for an errand or a walk.

We spend another season of Lent in lockdown. Tradition has it that we are supposed to give something up for Lent, it seems to me that we have spent the last year giving things up, there is not much left! However, the season of Lent has got me thinking about Jesus and his 40 days and nights in the desert. It began of course with his baptism in the River Jordan by John the Baptist. Jesus went into the water as the son of a carpenter from Nazareth and emerged as The Son of God. He then went into the desert, into lockdown, to prepare for the task that lay ahead.

And so it is for us in a way. Having my COVID vaccine is like a baptism, because it changes things. As I write this 16 million of us have had our jobs. Covid cases are coming down, hospital admissions are coming down, we are beginning to see the light at the end of a very dark tunnel. It is time to begin the thought process about how we want our country to be, it is time to think about what we ourselves should be. Firstly we should not forget that 120,000 of our fellow citizens have died from this terrible virus. Second, we must not forget the dedication and heroism of our frontline NHS staff.

On a personal level I have used this lockdown to take stock of what is really important in my life. For me above all else it is my family. It is now a year since I had a hug from one of my grandchildren, and that hurts. It is my friends. It is fellowship at church and fun at my drama group. It is singing in the choir I belong to. Above all it is human contact. Cinemas, theatres, holidays, football, pubs and restaurants are all lovely and enjoyable but they are not what I miss most.

When life does return to normal (whatever that normal will look like), it will be a rebirth of sorts. A rebirth which we must not take lightly. So this Lent, I will contemplate on what really matters in life and how I can use this to make me a better person. May God bless you all and keep you safe.

John Sibley

Lay Minister

The Fourth Sunday in Lent

How Mothering Sunday made its return



The fourth and middle Sunday in Lent is also known by two other names: Refreshment Sunday and Mothering Sunday.

Refreshment Sunday was determined in the church to be a day when the Lent fast could be relaxed. An opportunity therefore for people to visit their families and particularly their mothers. It is known to be a tradition in England that dates back to Tudor times.

Biblical and other texts selected to be read on fourth Sunday in Lent allude to the Christian church as a mother and in the early middle ages, around the time of the Norman conquest in 1066, the Sunday was respected not so much as a date to visit your own mother but your “mother church”. In those times, with much smaller populations, it was rarely the pattern for each village to have its own parish church. There would be a *mother church*, sometimes called a *minster church* that could serve quite a wide area, often with some additional chapels dotted about. Although there is no record of it is being described as a minster church, St Mary’s most probably was a mother church of that type and until the nineteenth century was listed with two chapels of ease at

Oldland (now rebuilt as St Anne's Church) and at Hanham Abbots where the chapel still exists within Hanham Court.

This concept too changed over time and in respect of a visit to one's mother church, this was later seen as the church where you were baptised. A further tradition was that of the Simnel cake, a fruit cake with an almond paste centre and topping, was traditionally taken to one's mother on that day.

Like most traditions of this type, however, it did not really survive the nineteenth century and had largely died out, until about 100 years ago when it was revived as Mothering Sunday. The chief mover and shaker

of this revival was Constance Penswick Smith, a vicar's wife who created the Mothering Sunday Movement in 1913. To those who rather sniffily correct others who refer to the date as Mother's Day which had been established a little earlier in the United States, they should remember that Smith herself was inspired by the American initiative.

She published a play, *In Praise of Mother: A story of Mothering Sunday* in 1913 but her most influential publication, *The Revival of Mothering Sunday*, is today celebrating its centenary. In it, she set out the principles of Mothering Sunday to give thanks not only for our own mothers but also for our mother church, the mothers of earthly homes, the mother of Jesus, and the gift of mother earth.

The celebration of Mothering Sunday grew in popularity and acceptance between the world wars and by the 1950s was well recognised as a day for mothers. In St Mary's, our tradition has been to hand out bunches of daffodils to mothers on that day. Sadly, last year and again this, the restriction of Coronavirus are likely to prevent us from doing so.



Constance Penswick Smith

An invitation to the Benefice Prayer Meetings on Zoom

In non-COVID times there are two occasions each month when we are invited to come together and pray – one at the Vicarage at 7.30pm on the first Tuesday of the month and the other, which moves around our 3 churches, at 9.00am on the third Saturday of the month when we have breakfast and then pray.

Both these meetings have moved to Zoom which is working really well and this is an invitation to join in either or both of the March Zooms:

Tuesday 2 March at 7.30pm

Saturday 20 March at 9.00am

The link inviting us to these meetings will come out by email from Pete Midgley shortly before the day fixed for the meeting and it will also be posted on the St Mary's website www.stmarysbitton.org.uk in the same way as the links to Sunday and midweek services are posted.

The pattern of the meetings is that we have a period of chat when we can mention things we want to pray about whether close at hand or around our country and indeed the world. This can include news on our mission links in Brazil, Uganda and Gaza. Then we have a time of prayer. Short prayers are encouraged and various people speak prayers. However there is no pressure to do this as it is of equal value to pray as we listen to others. There will also be times when we are all praying silently and no one is speaking. Whether our prayer is a thank you or a request, Jesus has assured us that God wishes us to bring our prayers to him.

Stephanie Bailey

Some personal reflections on lockdown

I don't know whether you have been listening on Mondays to Marian Keyes on Radio 4 at 630pm. In this most engaging show, our pandemic is referred to as The Pandemonium and The Current Unpleasantness, and she has not enjoyed it. An introvert, she has been surprised to miss people and rowdiness. An acknowledged writer, she has not felt creative, and her moods have been up and down.

One thing that she said really resonated with me: " All the terrible things I've done in my life have come back to haunt me...they are all coming back to challenge me".

I realised that this is exactly what I have experienced. I thought at first that this could well be a feature of advancing years, but now acknowledge that it has more to do with having less to do: time devoid of varied activity. A visit to M&S is something of a treat: it's an outing. Likewise collecting prescriptions. This is truly pathetic!

While so grateful for my own health, and that of family and friends unaffected by Covid 19, I do nevertheless catch myself feeling resentful of all the restrictions.

Added to this is my dread of being challenged about what I have achieved during The Current Unpleasantness when I have had such a lot of time on my hands.

Apart from lots and lots of gardening during our glorious summer, and those rare trips already mentioned, I have done so much less than I could

Marian Keyes comedy show, ***Just between ourselves*** is broadcast on Radio 4 on Mondays at 6.30 pm.
It is also currently available on BBC Sounds

Focal Point, March 2021

have.

Those miserable, darkening afternoons that heralded winter did hold one real source of satisfaction. During the fabulous summer months our elderly house became the desired residence of just about every bluebottle in the county. To give some idea of the pleasure they bring, picture us tucked up in bed with our books and pinpoint lighting to assist reading. Our uninvited guests would wait until we were nicely engrossed in our novels and then these kamikaze pilots would hurl themselves at us. I became quite adept at swatting them with my Daily Light booklet, which is the perfect size and weight for the task. Winter's arrival, and the placing of a fly deterrent pulsator in the attic, saw them off.

Technology has, to my surprise, come to the rescue and not just to eliminate the fly hazard. Zooms with family and friends have been a highlight of the interminable weeks. The hilarious "can you see me; we can't hear you; move the cursor to the top right hand side" have given way to relative calm as we master logging on and catching up. Of course, there is little to report as we cannot go anywhere or do anything, but it is surprising how much we find to say, and it is so lovely to see people again. It is a real tonic!

Talking of tonic, wine has been quite a feature of lockdown life, as the fun videos Whatsapped around bear testimony. A nice glass of sauvignon blanc has cheered us up, though since 'himself' is the wine police, quantities have not been as generous as I would have liked.

Well, the past coming back to haunt me seems rather appropriate in this season of Lent. I have decided to try to learn from my mistakes and omissions, so that's a start.

I am looking forward to Easter!

If you would like to share and record your experiences of recent months and how things have changed or reflect on the current position, please get in touch.

A Christmas Card for 2021



Last call for all Photographers!

One of the initiatives pioneered for last year's *Virtual Fete* was a Christmas Card that was printed and sold for church funds. This proved very popular and sold out, even its additional run.

The beautiful photograph of the Christmas window in St Mary's (shown here) was taken by David Harris.

Sadly, David died after a two year battle with cancer last November, but before David's death I discussed with him what we could do for 2021 and the idea that we came up with is to have a competition through this winter for a photograph of 'St Mary's in Winter'.

The competition is free to enter and the closing date is 31 March 2021. The plan is to produce a Christmas card for 2021 featuring the winning entry which will be sold in aid of St Mary's.

Please send me your entries to 8 Church Road, Bitton, Bristol BS30 6HH or post them through our letter box by 31 March 2021.

Jill Gibson



Help at Hand

**Private Coaching
For Primary School Children**

Please contact Jean Byers—jean.ab@live.com -0117 932 2578

English and Maths Tutor, Highly experienced, Friendly and supportive
Special Educational Needs qualified—for example, dyslexia, dyspraxia, autism

Tuition currently available online References available

Focal Point, March 2021



Remembering David Holley

David Holley, who died in January, was well known at both St Anne's Syston and at Bitton, where, until Covid restrictions he had played the organ. The following is from the eulogy written by his wife, Sue.

David was a charismatic figure who loved life and lived it to the full. Born in Norton Fitzwarren, Somerset, he sang in the choir as a boy in the village church of All Saints. Taught by his uncle he learnt to play the church organ and there began a life long love of the instrument. David had to frequently cajole his younger brother into pumping the organ which in those days had to be done manually. At the age of thirteen he took his first post as organist at All Saints church.

After he left the village school he went to Huish's Grammar School in Taunton and left there at sixteen to join the Police cadets of the Somerset Constabulary. He was a great sportsman, enjoying football, cricket, rugby and he ran various Police Football Teams. He was one of the first to go on the Duke of Edinburgh's Award schemes to the Outward Bound School in the Lake District.

At nineteen he joined the Police Force and served at Yeovil, Keynsham, Bridgewater, The Police Training Centre in Taunton, within the C.I.D, and finally as Inspector in the City of Bath.

He was married in 1963 to Susan, a girl from the same village, a romance that began in a churchyard and lasted a lifetime. They had three children and six grandchildren, he was a wonderful father and grandfather.

After retiring from the Police Force he began a consultancy to the licensing trade which he ran from an office above his wife's shop in Bath. He loved on occasions to help in the shop and chat to the many

Focal Point, March 2021



David's red Volvo estate, which took him on his final journey.

interesting visitors from all over the world quite forgetting he was meant to try and sell them something. He loved spending so much time in the City of Bath, regularly attending Bath Abbey and greatly enjoyed listening to the music there.

At weekends he and Sue would visit flea markets and antique fairs searching for wonderful old textiles and

antiques for decoration. This took them to France, a country which he loved. David had a real flair for colour and the appreciation of art in all its forms, and he always dressed with style a true 'country gentlemen'. He loved the church and always said religion was a 'hand on his collar'.

David's great loves were his family, music, his old books, antiques and his Volvo cars which were always RED, his favourite colour. The latest Volvo which brought him to the church on his last journey is a 'Celebration' model, a detail he loved to tell people about, including the AA as they were called for assistance on quite a few occasions!

As an organist he had great flair and individual style giving pleasure to so many people. He played at countless weddings and funerals and every service had great thought behind it. In recent times he played the organ regularly at the Church of St Anne's Syston and at St Mary's, Bitton.

He was always a bit of a rebel, with a strong handshake and would always say what he thought no matter what. Chatting amongst good company was his one of his most favourite things.

We shall miss his lovely warmth and smile and his wonderful sense of humour and the world is a duller place without him. Au revoir...

David Bailey writes -

Stephanie & I have known David & Susan for 30 years, ever since we moved into Bitton.

David played the organ at Syston & Bitton in this benefice. I would ring him up before services at St Anne's Syston to discuss what hymns to play. For no logical reason, we would both end up laughing out loud on the phone. When he arrived at the church he would be smartly dressed in a tweed suit and a dash of red (his favourite colour), always a broad grin and always upbeat.

David and Susan have lived in St Anne's Cottage for the last 30 years. It was formerly the school house for St Anne's school (photo courtesy Bath In Time/Bath Central Library). The house was rebuilt, under the direction of



Canon Ellacombe, in the late 19th century by locals, teachers & pupils of St Anne's School, following a fire.

David was very saddened by the recent death of Poppy, their grand daughter from a rare form of cancer. He was, however, able to attend the funeral at St Mary's in a wheel chair and died peacefully, one week later, at St Anne's Cottage.

We will all miss David. He was a kind, generous man who gave joy to his family, friends, church and community.

This month in profile

David Bailey

St Mary's popular lay minister and former doctor David Bailey was one of three brothers who all became doctors. Born in the small town of Shepshed, near Leicester, David shared later a flat with his brothers who all studied at London University. He studied at Charing Cross Hospital, later Imperial College, and did a PHD at King's College on the transfer of molecules across the placenta. After ten years training, he qualified and worked for 15 months in Obstetrics at Charing Cross Hospital. By this time, he had met Stephanie, nearly 50 years ago now, at a flat warming party in Earls Court.

GP

The young family, who had Dominique and Guy, decided to leave London for a better quality of life. They moved down to Exeter, where they had their third child, Joe. Living in St Leonard's the family enjoyed the beautiful countryside and beaches, and David found the practice interesting." The GP rotation was good," he says, "with one year full time as a GP and two years in hospital, where I worked in Paediatrics and Psychiatry." As time went on and the family became older, he and Stephanie wanted to look for a larger house and be near good schools so decided to move to this area. David was successful in applying for a job at Hanham Health centre (200 applicants applied for the job). He says in the last five years the life of a GP has become less attractive, but he thinks there will be a surge of interest in nursing and medicine now.

He believes qualities required to make a good doctor, if you are thinking of this as a career, include:

Listening: "A patient usually knows what is wrong with them, but they need the space and time to express themselves."

Objectivity: “It is easy to be prejudiced by your own experience, one must try to value and judge objectively.”

Commitment: “For 20 years I never got home before 7.30pm and often had to do night visits.”

Emotional stability: “You have to make difficult decisions and be able to live with the consequences.”

Having said this, he would definitely recommend this career choice, he really enjoyed being a GP and found it both challenging and varied.

Collingwood

Stephanie became the Registered Provider of Collingwood Care Home 20 years ago and David took over from her 6 years ago when he retired from being a Partner in his practice. There are twenty-six residents. The home did really well keeping COVID-19

out right up until end of December. It was one of the last four care homes in South Gloucestershire to avoid it, but unfortunately many residents suffered in December and one very sadly died. Now there are no cases and from next week visitors will be allowed after having a lateral flow test and their temperature taken. “This will make a big difference for everyone,” says David. All staff and residents have been vaccinated.



Sydney

In 2012 David and Stephanie went to Sydney where David worked for a year. He really enjoyed shedding the responsibility of being a partner in a large practice in UK and loved driving to work with the roof down, feeling the sun on his bare arms. Working with young doctors, new patients and new experiences as well as experiencing the incredible gastronomic delights of fusion food in Sydney were high points of the trip. The couple both missed their family, but they were able to come and visit. David also felt that the practice was more limited in Australia, consultations were more targeted and constrained, and the driver of the business was profit. Patients without insurance were disadvantaged. After the year was finished David and Stephanie travelled extensively in Australia and Tasmania – fond memories for lockdown!

Ministry

In 2002 David became a lay minister after a two-year evening course run by ‘Equipping God’s People’ in Bristol Diocese. This was an excellent preparation and really strengthened his faith. David was brought up as a Baptist; both his parents were pastors. The services were less liturgical and more informal than those at St Mary’s, with open prayer and communion being brought to the pews. Baptism only took place for those aged sixteen and over in a 10’ by 6’ pool in front of the church. “A lot of effort was made to make the water warm,” he says. His parents led a youth group in their house and David remembers youth holidays in Kilcreggan, near Greenock at the Worldwide Evangelical Crusade conference centre. “Scotland is very beautiful,” he says, “but that Loch was freezing!”

David says that a strong personal faith is essential to be a good minister. Good presentational skills are also important, and although he does not like the term ‘emotional intelligence’ it does apply –empathy with people’s spiritual and emotional needs is particularly important. Also, it is a big commitment – each minute of a talk takes about one hour to prepare. There is a great feeling of fellowship at St Mary’s and he has relished the chance to understand each other at a deeper level, especially in the home groups. He has had constructive criticism about talks and feels

Focal Point, March 2021

that truth in the Bible is eternal but ways of expressing it are changing, we must constantly adapt to invite and welcome new people in.

Lockdown

It has been an incredibly sad time: three Davids have died locally, so David and Stephanie are thinking and praying for their families. They have been to two funerals and would have liked to attend three more but could not because of the restrictions. However, working as Registered Provider at Collingwood has given him a focus. David cycles one a week (a mere 40 miles a time – the cover photo was taken at Cheddar Gorge) and he and Stephanie enjoy walking, keeping fit with Joe Wickes and with Jo Stewart on zoom at Upton Cheyney each Friday morning.

St Mary's is very lucky to have such a n experienced and thoughtful (and fit!) lay minister.

Sarah Heavens

Matt Bressington Plastering Services Friendly & Reliable



All types of Plastering Rendering Pebble Dashing

Dry Lining Coving

Fully Insured Over 25 years experience

Competitive Rates Free Quotations

Tel: 0117 9830108 Mobile: 07905 474 966

Email: matt_bressy@yahoo.co.uk

Remembering David Willis

David Willis, son of Bob and Ann, died a few days before Christmas. His funeral service was held at St Anne's Church, Syston with a committal afterwards at St Mary's.

The following is based on the eulogy given by Rev Richard Humphrey.

David had spent most of his life in Bitton since the family moved back to the Bristol area from Somerset. He attended The Meadows and Sir Bernard Lovell School. At the Willis home in Church Lane, he kept ferrets and had a fine collection of birds eggs (less frowned up then than today).



One year for the Church Fete, the family dog was chosen for a guess the weight competition and David appeared in the local press with his friends lifting the dog into the basket.

David was a talented engineer with a passion for making and mending things. He completed an engineering apprenticeship at Torrances and went on to run a successful garage in Bitton Village. A very private person, his true nature was probably only known to his close family and friends. To them he was loyal, intelligent, talented, gentle, independent with a great sense of humour. He was not materialist and preferred to live a simple life.

For the past 30 years, David battled chronic illness without complaint despite considerable pain. He has now found peace.

Our thoughts are with the Willis family.

**BITTON PARISH COUNCIL
LOCKDOWN PHOTOGRAPHY
COMPETITION**



**CAN YOU SNAP THE BEST URBAN
OR THE BEST RURAL PHOTOGRAPH**

**ALL AGE GROUPS CONSIDERED -
PRIMARY/SECONDARY/OVER 18'S**

PRIZES GIVEN FOR EACH CATEGORY AND AGE GROUP

**PLEASE SUBMIT YOUR ENTRY TO
CLERK@BITTONPARISHCOUNCIL.GOV.UK**

CLOSING DATE - 30 APRIL 2021

Bitton History Group

THE LONS

and the people who lived there



Part 4

The Bitton Parish History Group has continued to investigate the history of The Lons or Lons Court as it is now known, and the people who lived there.

One might assume a large residence with extensive grounds such as The Lons would be retained by one family over a number of generations. As we have seen, however, the house was built and first occupied by families who had made money in the nineteenth century and who sought a relatively modern but specious house. Far from being an ancestral home, the Lons was a home of new money and, if not the self-made, then those whose wealth had come over recent generations and largely in trade.

So it was the case in 1931 when George Lancelot Wood and his family moved into the Lons as its next residents. Wood was the owner and manager of a highly profitable funeral business in Bristol. For some generations past the Woods had managed a masonry business and there is little surprise than that someone as enterprising as George would see



Woods Funeral Services—grew from a family masonry business in Bristol since 1700. Horse drawn hearses gave way to motorised transport in the twentieth century



Eezall, produced in Oldland, Hanham and Willsbridge, was a boon to pre-war washdays, but by the time the Halls moved to The Lons, its was fast losing out to more modern detergents.

an opening for a more extensive funeral service during the late Victorian era as the fashion for pomp and ceremony in funerals grew. In fact, the business had flourished and by the time the Woods moved to Bitton the firm was not only well established but still growing. George's wife, Julia was his second wife, and he was her third husband (having divorced one and buried a second). Her second husband had been a workhouse master and she had taken the role of matron. This was however, sometime in her past as she had married George Wood in 1911 and they had lived in Portishead together with George's daughter Ida.

Although he was already in his 70s, George had seemingly not retired and continued to run his business from The Lons. Otherwise, although the family was one of the longest occupants of the house, they kept what can only be described as a low profile socially and there is little record of any engagement with the local community. Clearly a residence of such a size required a number of servants to help maintain it and various people appear on electoral rolls, during the period of their occupancy. Julia died in 1937, but George and Ida remained at The Lons until 1946. George lived on until 1955, well into his nineties.

After the Woods left, there may well have been some short term tenants, but by 1948 the house was occupied by Norman and Alexandra (Queenie) Hall. The Halls were, at that time, very wealthy. Norman had inherited a soap powder business from his father which traded under the name of Eezall and had been marketed since the 1900s. Eezall was sold as a powder both for washing clothes and dishes. It was made from sodium carbonate and (washing soda) and sodium silicate. The company also markets other cleaning products with equally interesting names such

Focal Point, March 2021

as Lavdust (for obvious purposes). The company was locally based with factories in Barry Road, Oldland, Hanham and Willsbridge. Mr Hall was known as a good employer. He had served in France during the First World War and was an Air Raid Warden in Bitton during the second. In the 1930s, the Halls had lived at Chewton Hall in Keynsham where they held extensive social events. Their time at The Lons during post war austerity, probably provided little opportunity.

As it happens, by the time the Halls moved to The Lons, the writing was already on the wall for their cleaning products. Detergents, based on phosphates, had been invented in the 1930 and were far more effective in breaking up oils and grease. The early versions, however, tended to leave clothes stiff and uncomfortable to wear and were dismissed as a passing fad by some existing soap manufacturers and government restrictions on phosphates during wartime also held back change. But the launch of products such as Tide and Surf in the late 1940s saw a rapid decline in the business fortunes. Hall rejected an offer from Persil to buy his business, which he may later have regretted as the company went into liquidation in 1953. Of the items put up for auction was a large Daimler saloon, bought by Mr Hall in 1947.

The Halls left The Lons in 1952 and later moved to Beckington, in Somerset, where Norman died in 1974.

Photographs of Woods Funeral service Business were sourced by Bitton Parish History Group from Horfield & Bishopston Record 4 June 1920 and Pinterest. The photograph of the Eezall delivery wagon is courtesy David Townsend.

Bitton Parish History Group

Research on this part of the History of The Lons was undertaken and described in an extensive set of papers by Mike Gates, Annette Rothwell, Jenny Jeffries, Pauline Harris and Pat and Keith Short.

The full sections of The Lons History are available online at the email address below.

Mike Gates is also happy to provide printed copies for readers without access to the internet.

Contact: Mike Gates, Secretary, 0117 932 8777
email: mg122@btinternet.com

Council seeks views for new Local Plan



South Gloucestershire is updating its local plan, looking at future needs for housing and development of the towns and rural areas within the district. These plans are updated every few years, but this time, it has particular importance in taking account of central government plans to build more homes. All local authorities are being asked to review their current plans to increase the number of homes available. Once agreed these plans provide a guide to planning decisions often defining the type and extent of development that can take place.

Consultation is currently taking place on the early stages and planners are anxious to get local views on the issues that should be considered in the process. They have identified 8 areas of particular importance:

- **Climate change and the environment**
- **Improving Health and wellbeing**
- **Exceptional places and spaces**
- **Planning for urban and rural areas**
- **Planning for new homes**
- **Our economy**
- **Travel and transport**
- **Providing the right supportive infrastructure**

At this point in the consultation the council are asking whether local people support the issues and priorities and if they have any comments or new issues to add.

In addition, the council planners have put forward some of their early thoughts about how principles might be applied both to existing towns and to rural areas and how either could be expanded.

You can find out more and complete the online questionnaire at

<http://www.southglos.gov.uk/localplan2020>

Ellacombe Chimes Bicentenary—26th June 2021



H T Ellacombe
in 1817

Ellacombe's chiming device

With the prospect of some relaxation in COVID 19 restrictions, plans are now being finalised for the 200th anniversary of the Ellacombe Chimes and the events that led up to their installation.

The chimes were devised and first installed in St Mary's by its then curate and later vicar, Henry Thomas Ellacombe.

Ellacombe was himself somewhat coy about his invention, giving most of the credit to Thomas Watts, a local carpenter. Yet it is almost certain that Ellacombe himself was the designer of the apparatus with its system of ropes and pulleys. He undoubtedly had the technical knowledge and know how, having previously been engaged by the great engineer Marc Isambard Brunel in charge of his works at Chatham Dockyard.

Marc Brunel was the father of the more famous Isambard Kingdom Brunel, the builder of the Clifton Suspension Bridge and the SS Great Britain; but he was an engineer in his own right, the builder of the first tunnel under the Thames and devised a system to make pulleys for the Royal Navy. What exactly Ellacombe worked on at Chatham is not at all clear, but it was one of the most important centres in the country for making ropes and pulleys for the navy at that time. It is pure speculation, but interesting to think that the St Mary's chimes may be the by-product of the work of one of Britain's most renowned engineering families.

Sir Marc Isambard Brunel
by James Northcote
oil on canvas,
1812-1813

NPG 978
Licence mw00868
© National Portrait Gallery, London

This portrait was
painted at the time he
was employing
Ellacombe at Chatham



The bi-centennial celebrations of the Ellacombe Chimes are planned to take place on 26 June, this year, with participation from churches around the world that have an installed and working chiming device. The Chime around the World will begin in Timaru, New Zealand at noon (11pm BST on 25 June in Britain), over the next 17 hours, working their way across the world, bells will be chiming at noon local time in each of the major time zones, arriving at their birthplace at Bitton, in South Gloucestershire, at 12 noon BST on Saturday 26th June.

Subject to COVID-19 restrictions it is intended that there will be a live streaming of the festivities as well as a special performance based on the Ellacombe Chimes.



News from Bitton WI

As I am writing this, we are in the second month of the third Coronavirus lockdown. I think most people are finding this lockdown more difficult, because we are now in winter. It takes a real effort, because of the freezing cold weather to go outside for our permitted daily exercise.

Unfortunately I have heard of the sad passing of Mary Watkeys, a long standing member of Bitton WI, our thoughts are with her family at this sad time. We have no idea at the moment when our monthly meetings will resume, but rest assured everyone will be notified when we have some news.

Whilst walking in the village and churchyard I noticed that the Bitton snowdrops are in flower, and thought that spring is on its way. In previous years the bulbs that WI members ordered in the autumn would now be appearing in the spring sunshine, hopefully it will not be too long before we will be able to order some new bulbs. I wonder how many members can remember helping to plant the daffodil bulbs in the grass triangle at the bottom of Cherry Garden Hill. I am always pleased to see them flowering, as they bring back many memories, and the hope that soon the weather will improve.

In last months Focal Point there was the news that Bitton Fete (COVID permitting) would take place on September 11th, at last we have something to look forward to. The WI usually has a stall selling baskets full of goodies and also a cake and produce stall, so I hope members will be looking up recipes and thinking of things to put in the baskets so that we can raise funds for WI and St Mary's.

I have Mary Smale to thank for this months recipe, crustless quiche, which is a low fat quiche which should help us loose some of the lockdown pounds we have gained.

I hope you will enjoy making and eating Mary's quiche. I will try to include a recipe in the following months that can be made for the Bitton Fete. Please stay safe because, hopefully soon, after everyone has been vaccinated our meetings will resume.

Lyn Coles



Crustless Quiche

Ingredients

- 1 Pot low fat cottage cheese with chives
- 2 eggs
grated low fat cheese
roasted vegetables (mixed peppers
courgettes, red onions, mushrooms)
salt and pepper

Method

Roast the vegetables. Mix the cottage cheese, two eggs and a handful of grated cheese into a bowl. Season with salt and pepper, then add roasted vegetables and place in oven proof quiche dish, cover with the remaining grated cheese. Bake for approximately 45 mins at temperature 180 degrees. The filling can be changed for bacon, salmon or broccoli.



Soot n Sweep

For all your chimney sweeping needs

All types of chimneys flues &
AGAs swept and cleaned

Contact Nick Wilcox

07983 215312 or 0117 949 2258

NACS qualified & certificates issued





collingwood
care home for the elderly

“Home from home”

Our new bedrooms have underfloor heating, large fitted wardrobes and en-suite shower rooms

Make an appointment with Wendy or Lizzy and they will be delighted to show you round

Collingwood Care Home
78A, Bath Road
Longwell Green
BS30 9DG

0117 932 4527

www.collingwoodcarehome.co.uk

Just **KIM**
*Unisex Hairdressing with
Beauty Room & Solarium*

*188 High Street
Oldland Common
Bristol
BS30 9QQ*

Tel: 0117 932 3539



Bendrey Bros

TIMBER RETAILER SINCE 1890

Your local stockist of:

- Fencing Materials
- Graded Building Timber
- Timber & Composite Decking
- Sleepers & Landscaping products
- Gates - Residential & Agricultural
- Timber Claddings
- Fast Local Delivery Service, or collect from our yard

Opening Hours:

Monday - Friday:
8.00am - 5.00pm

Saturday Morning:
9.00am - 12.00pm

www.bendreybros.co.uk

☎ 0117 9674382

The Sawmills, Bath Road, Bridgegate, Warmley, Bristol, BS30 5JW



Absolutely Feet
Caring for your feet, in your own home.

Professional treatment of corns, callus, fungal infections, painful or thickened nails, diabetic foot care, nail trimming etc.

Joanne Nash MCFHP MAFHP
Insured & Registered Foot Health Professional

07881 530600
absolutelyfeet@hotmail.com

February's Quiz Answers

Last month's quiz was about great novels.

The correct answers are:

(1) Orlando; (2) Persuasion; (3). Crash; (4) Dubliners; (5) Misery; (6) Solar; (7) Freedom; (8) Jaws; (9) Twilight; (10) Trainspotting; (11) Moonraker; (12) Snuff; (13) Room; (14) Atonement; (15) Inferno; (16) Remainder; (17) Clarissa; (18) Middlemarch; (19) Divergent; (20) Middlesex

Correct answers were received from:

Jan & Diane; Sue & Rod Nethercote; Pearl and Debbie Evans; Ros & Charles Knight; Jon and Pam Heyes; Alan & Sue Murtagh; Sarah Craddock.

This month's winner is:

Ros and Charles Knight

The March Quiz

This month's quiz is on collective nouns of animals.
e.g. A 4 of A 4 - Army of Ants, S 5 of F 4 - Shoal of Fish

- | No. | Clue |
|-----|---------------------|
| 1. | P 4 of D 4 |
| 2. | C 6 of H 6 |
| 3. | T 5 of G 8 |
| 4. | B 5 of H 4 |
| 5. | L 4 of L 8 |
| 6. | R 6 of R 12 |
| 7. | P 6 of P 8 |
| 8. | P 5 of L 5 |
| 9. | C 9 of C 8 |
| 10. | L 6 of M 5 |
| 11. | T 5 of K 9 |
| 12. | B 6 of C 5 |
| 13. | K 4 of T 5 |
| 14. | D 6 of Z 6 |
| 15. | K 6 of K 7 |
| 16. | C 6 of B 4 |
| 17. | M 3 of M 8 |
| 18. | B 3 of O 7 |
| 19. | C 8 of M 7 |
| 20. | B 5 of H 11 (or 14) |

Name:

Contact:

Please send your answers to Carolyn Russell at Martin House, Church Road, Bitton (the yellow house) or email mrsrussell@icloud.com by 15 March



Based in Keynsham

Fully trained and registered member of the
Guild of Master Chimney Sweeps

Contact Hugh on 0117 9868936
or 07824 508758
www.bristlesweep.co.uk



Robert Pearce has over 40 years' experience
plumbing in the local area



Available for
general plumbing
and repairs

Tel: 07814 607974

Email: robsuep@btinternet.com

Hanney Welding Limited

For all your Welding & Fabrication
requirements

Eastover Works, Golden Valley Lane, Bitton

Tel: 0117 932 2647

Email: martin@hanneywelding.co.uk

The last word

A reflective Lent



Whether or not you have chosen to give up alcohol (and personally, I haven't), Lent is supposed to be a sobering season and a period of reflection with the promise of new hope and relief at Easter. There is more than one article in this month's edition that takes a reflective line, and in so doing they capture the mood of our time.

This March marks a full year since the country was placed in its first Coronavirus lockdown. For some families, those 12 months will have been particularly painful due to death or the very debilitating effects of the illness. For those who have not been so directly affected the year has, it seems, made us more reflective on what matters to us the most. Of course, many of us are looking forward to greater if often very simple freedoms: to have a drink in a pub, to go to a movie or simply to go somewhere spontaneously. We also know that, in spite of the vaccine, things are likely to take many months, even years to return to normal and that they probably will not ever quite be the same again. But it has also, perhaps led us to a place where we set our values a little differently. Living lives separately from our family and friends hurts more than anything. While Zoom and other modern communications make things easier, they are no substitute for being in the same place with someone. What we value the most and what we are now still missing is other people and particularly those most close to us.

Jim Heavens

Acupuncture with Alison Pickering

(BSc LicAc MBAC)

Five Element Acupuncture, Ayurveda treatments, Nutrition advice, Reiki

Please contact: Alison@theleafclinic.co.uk
Or text 07775 854341 to make an appointment

Covering Bath, Keynsham, Bitton, Kelston, North Stoke and surrounding areas

Fully insured through the BAC



Graduated from the
College of Integrated Chinese Medicine,
one of the leading colleges in the country.





- Design and build
- Building Maintenance
- Renovation
- Refurbishment
- Roofing

K P Wilton & Son Ltd

11/12 Brighton Place, Kingswood, Bristol BS15 1QY

Tel: 0117 967 1207

Email: info@kpwilton.co.uk



ROY PREDDY FUNERAL DIRECTORS

2 Cossham Street, Mangotsfield BS16 9EN (0117) 9562834

We are at your service 24 hours a day

We will help and guide you every step of the way

We will guide you through our choice of funeral plans

We can help and advise you choose a memorial

We are members of the National Association of Funeral Directors

Our other Bristol businesses can similarly help you -

Roy Preddy - Kingswood (0117) 9446051

TB & H Pendock - Hambrook (0117) 9566774

Stenner & Hill - Shirehampton (0117) 9823188

R. Davies & Son - Westbury-on-Trym (0117) 9628954

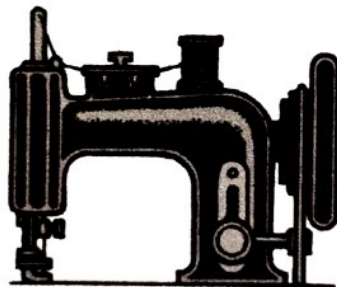
R. Davies & Son - Horfield (0117) 9424039

R. Davies & Son - Bishopsworth (0117) 9641133

Whitchurch FS - Whitchurch (01275) 833441

Part of Dignity Ltd, a British Company

Parker's Sewing Services



**Clothing alteration
and repairs**

Soft furnishings

**Specialist projects
and commissions
undertaken**

Telephone Lizzie : 01179326662

Mobile : 07837126945

Email :

lizzieparkerclarke@rocketmail.com

Steve Painter Decorating Services

A family business for three generations offering professional exterior and interior painting and decorating services locally

- ❖ Traditionally trained
- ❖ Quality workmanship
- ❖ Paperhanging specialists
- ❖ Friendly and reliable
- ❖ Competitively priced
- ❖ No VAT added

Contact Steve on 07853 250035

or 0117 956 5190

M.C AUTO REPAIRS

- *MOTs *SERVICING**
- *CLASSES 4 + 5 + 7**
- *REPAIRS *WELDING**
- *BODYWORK**

Telephone: 0117 947 7405

Unit 4d Kingsfield Lane

Longwell Green, Bristol BS30 6DL

NORTON TAX SHOPS LTD

ACCOUNTANTS & TAX SPECIALISTS

Are you.... Self Employed?
A Company Director?
A Landlord?
An Investor?

Then we can help!

We offer: Accurate high quality work
Competitive fees
Up to date advice
Friendly qualified staff
Local offices in Keynsham & Kingswood
Help to reduce paperwork
Help with 'Making Tax Digital'

Please call us on **0117 9860960** to arrange a free appointment.



Website: www.nortontaxshops.co.uk

Bitton Motor Company

Bath Road Bitton
Bristol BS30 6HY



MOT
Testing Centre



Cars Bought and Sold

Servicing Repairs Engine Tuning
Welding Tyres Exhausts Cam belts

Telephone: (0117) 932 8686