

OUTLOOK



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January
2024

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The Parish of St. Thomas, Mellor

Registered Charity No. 1130414

Vicar: Revd Andrew Tawn , The Vicarage , 51 Church Road, Mellor

Phone 0161 604 4993 Vicarage

Email revandrewtawn@gmail.com

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contact phone 0161 484 5079 or email office@mellorchurch.org

The Office is open Monday to Thursday 9.30am to 12.30pm

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Dep Church Warden Rachel Howling 0161 427 5891

PCC Treasurer Richard Elliott contact via Parish Office

Assistant David Butterworth

Treasurers Andrew Sanders

Gift Aid Secretary Karen Greenough

PCC Secretary Julie Elliott 64 Ernocroft Road 427 5981

Director of Music Tom Howling (email:t.howling@nhs.net)

Editors of Outlook Magazine Maggie Williams and Margaret Leng

Elected Members Ian Dayes, Alison Dowdeswell, Alex Eggeman, Julie Elliott,

Of PCC Richard Elliott, Kate Higgins, David Horsfall, Sylvia Knight,

Angie Stanton, Sian Yeowell.

Emma Wilson & Kathryn Maxwell (Safeguarding Officers)

Deanery / Diocesan Judith Shiel / Mary Heijbroek

Churches Together in Marple Representative Helen Kennedy

Pastoral Care Group Coordinator Lesley Futchter 449 0977

Articles for Outlook should be submitted to the editor (preferably by email)

melloroutlooksubmissions@gmail.com.

The deadline for the February issue is January 15th please

CALENDAR OF EVENTS FOR JANUARY 2024

3 Wed 10.00 am Holy Communion (The Mellor Centre)

7 Sun Epiphany Sunday 8.30 am Holy Communion
10.00 am Parish Communion
6.30 pm Holy Communion (The Mellor Centre)

10 Wed 10.00 am Holy Communion (The Mellor Centre)

14 Sun 2nd Sunday of Epiphany 8.30 am Holy Communion
10.00 am Parish Communion
6.30 pm Evening Prayer (The Mellor Centre)

17 Wed 10.00 am Holy Communion (The Mellor Centre)

21 Sun 3rd Sunday of Epiphany 8.30 am Holy Communion
10.00 am Parish Communion
6.30 pm Epiphany Carol Service

24 Wed 10.00 am Holy Communion (The Mellor Centre)

28 Sun 4th Sunday of Epiphany 8.30 am Holy Communion
10.00 am Parish Communion
11.30am Eco Church Group meeting
6.30 pm Evening Prayer (The Mellor Centre)

31 Wed 10.00 am Holy Communion (The Mellor Centre)

Coffee and Chat with the Vicar is on the 2nd Monday of the month

Prayer Group meets every Monday 10.30 to 11.00 am (The Mellor Centre)

Women's Evening Fellowship meets on the second Wednesday 2-4pm (The Mellor Centre)

Toddlers' Group meets on Thursday each week 10.00 am to 11.30 am (The Mellor Centre)

Knit and Natter meets on Thursday each week 10.30 am to 12 noon (The Mellor Centre)

The Choir practises each week on Friday at 6.30 pm



Vicar's Viewpoint Christmas thanks

As I write this, we have just enjoyed an amazing Advent carol service. I know, from all the rehearsals and the weekend at Fort Belan, what an immense amount of work has gone into this. I want to thank Tom Howling, especially, for all the countless hours of work he spends in preparation and rehearsal. Also, John Le Grove, Nathan and Eleanor for excellent accompaniment and organ voluntaries. By the time you read this, we will also have enjoyed the Nine Lessons and Carols, as well as many other musicals feats over Christmas. Thank you to everyone in the choir, not simply for singing so well, but for lifting our spirits and inspiring our worship. If you enjoyed these services, make a note of the **Epiphany Carol Service on Sunday 21st January at 6.30 pm**

I will wait until I have experienced the crib service to thank the many people who are working so hard to make this happen. It is very good to be returning to having two crib services on Christmas Eve, and exciting to see how rapidly the (free) tickets have been booked up for both services!

Thank you, to all who decorate the church so beautifully for Christmas.

Confirmations on 14th January

The Confirmation Preparation Course has begun with a small but enthusiastic group. I made it clear that people were welcome to attend the course without any commitment, but I am hoping and praying that some of the group will choose to be confirmed during the **10 am service on 14th January** when Bishop Sam comes to join us.

Messy Church on 4th February

I hope that some of the families attending the crib service will want to become more involved with St. Thomas'. So I have put a date in the diary for a **Messy Church afternoon on Sunday 4th February**. This will be based around **Candlemas** and will include a **Christingle service**. Organising this now, before I have assembled a team of helpers, is an act of faith, because we will need a strong team to provide craft activities, and to prepare and service food and drinks. But I am confident the enthusiasm and support is there to make this happen. Is this something you could do? Do you know any families who might be interested in coming? Please spread the word.

May God bless you this new year and always.

Andrew

Analogy

I love this analogy!

You are holding a cup of coffee when someone comes along and bumps into you or shakes your arm, making you spill your coffee everywhere.

Why did you spill the coffee?

“Because someone bumped into me!!!”

Wrong answer.

You spilled the coffee because there was coffee in your cup.

Had there been tea in the cup you would have spilled tea.

Whatever is inside the cup is what will spill out.

Therefore, when life comes along and shakes you (which WILL happen), whatever is inside you will come out. It's easy to fake it, until you get rattled.

So we have to ask ourselves..... “What's in my cup?”

When life gets tough, what spills over?



Joy, gratefulness, peace and humility? or

Anger, bitterness, harsh words and reactions?

Life provides the cup, **YOU** choose how to fill it.

Today let's work towards filling our cups with **gratitude, forgiveness, joy, words of affirmation; and kindness, gentleness and love for others.**

Sent in by Ann Preston.

Friday Strollers

In January Friday Strollers are meeting at Marple Library at

10.15am on:-

January 5th

January 12th



All welcome.

Contact Judy Cooper for more information

0785 5290958

Notable Dates - Epiphany January 6th?

The Journey of the Magi

A cold coming we had of it,
Just the worst time of the year
For a journey, and such a long journey:
The ways deep and the weather sharp,
The very dead of winter.
And the camels galled, sorefooted,
refractory,
Lying down in the melting snow.
There were times we regretted
The summer palaces on slopes, the
terraces,
And the silken girls bringing sherbet.
Then the camel men cursing and
grumbling
and running away, and wanting their
liquor and women,
And the night-fires going out, and the
lack of shelters,
And the cities hostile and the towns
unfriendly
And the villages dirty and charging
high prices:
A hard time we had of it.
At the end we preferred to travel all
night,
Sleeping in snatches,
With the voices singing in our ears,
saying
That this was all folly.
Then at dawn we came down to a
temperate valley,
Wet, below the snow line, smelling of
vegetation;
With a running stream and a water-mill

beating the darkness,
And three trees on the low sky,
And an old white horse galloped away in
the meadow.
Then we came to a tavern with vine-
leaves over the lintel,
Six hands at an open door dicing for
pieces of silver,
And feet kicking the empty wine-skins.
But there was no information, and so we
continued
And arriving at evening, not a moment too
soon
Finding the place; it was (you might say)
satisfactory.
All this was a long time ago, I remember,
And I would do it again, but set down
This set down
This: were we led all that way for
Birth or Death? There was a Birth,
certainly
We had evidence and no doubt. I had
seen birth and death,
But had thought they were different; this
Birth was
Hard and bitter agony for us, like Death,
our death.
We returned to our places, these
Kingdoms,
But no longer at ease here, in the old
dispensation,
With an alien people clutching their gods.
I should be glad of another death.

T.S. Elliot



Ed. MML



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Mellor Birds

Maggie Williams

At the moment birders are looking at all the trees with berries on to see if there are any **waxwings**, *Bombycilla garrulus*. When it is very cold in Europe they come to the UK for the milder weather. I saw some last week at the junction of Glossop Road and Sandy Lane. Once they have stripped the berries they move on, so maybe they might come in the Mellor direction. They are a very handsome bird to look at, a bit smaller than a blackbird. If they are perched, the first thing I notice is a big crest sticking up vertically from their head. Then I look for the flashes of colour on the wing. There are a row of red blobs like sealing wax, which they get their name from. Then there is a line of buttercup yellow with black and white. The tip of the tail is buttercup yellow and black. The main body of the bird being pink-brown and grey. Previously I have seen them locally in the bushes by Morrisons in Bredbury.



Around midnight in the vicinity of the Royal Oak I often hear a Tawny Owl going 'Twit'. Last month's talk at the High Peak RSPB meeting at the Senior Citizen Hall in Marple was about Barn Owls. Paul Hackney gave the talk about being a licenced rehabilitation keeper of barn owls and then he took the plunge to breed and release the endangered species. While incidentally being a practising lawyer, he has written a book about his life called "Growing Barn Owls in my Garden". It is well written and easy to read.

The next RSPB meeting is on Monday 15th January at 7.30pm.

The talk is about Foulshaw Moss nature reserve in Cumbria. 'Birds, Beasts and Bugs of the Bog'.

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Economics

Some years ago at an ancient university, an examiner was beginning to mark the final paper of the Economics Exam. He had been an examiner for 2 years, and one of the questions seemed to be familiar so he looked at the previous year's questions and was astounded to find that the previous questions were the same as the present year. On further research he found that the same questions had been set for the last 20 years. He reported his findings to the Senate who summoned the Professor of Economics to explain himself. The Professor was quite unabashed: he said "In Economics we change the answers".

Chancellors of the Exchequer have been asked the same question that has been asked for hundreds of years – What measures should be enacted to run the economy for the maximum benefit of all people? Every Chancellor gives a different answer! One might expect some differences between political parties, but there are differences within the same Party. It is not easy to decide how to run the economy when the Finance Ministers of countries around the world are also planning to make life easy for their voters and difficult for us. Of course plans can be spoiled; as Robert Burns wrote *The best laid schemes o' mice and men gang aft a-gley*. And they do go a-gley when events like the Covid pandemic and the war in Ukraine disrupt normal life. The result of these events is that the Chancellor has been forced to borrow hugely because tax revenue could not cover expenditure. Our children and grandchildren will be paying off the debt for years to come.

The Church of England has not been immune from the effects of the Covid pandemic as churches were closed over the lockdown period leading to a drastic fall in giving. The reports of the Church Commissioners, who manage the church's investments, can be found on line. The largest items of expenditure were supporting dioceses around the world, paying retired clergy pensions, running cathedrals and paying bishops.

The generosity of previous generations has allowed capital to accumulate and to produce income which supports the church's activities around the world, and which will fund the work of the church to bring Christianity to more and more people.

The Walrus

‘Oh Deer, Oh Deer’ or should it be ‘Oh Dear! Oh Dear!’

4 weeks ago there was one. Last week there were 4 in the back garden enjoying any plants they felt they could digest.



The other two were behind the pond

Any suggestions as to what to do about them?

*Editor
Margaret Leng*



New Season New Project

Eco Church Group will have its first meeting after 10am Service January 28th.

The gardener's wisdom tells us this is the best time of year for putting new structures in the ground.

Its time to share your ideas

For managing the natural church environment,

For encouraging the fruitfulness and sustainability in Gods creation,

For inviting more people to help us in our stewardship efforts.

Please join us with your brew in hand, and come and have a chat about what we could achieve this year.

The snowdrops are beckoning!

Clare J and Sylvia

Advertising in Outlook

The feedback from our advertisers suggests that they find *Outlook* to be a good source of business at a reasonable price. We do have more space available so if you know of someone who might be interested please mention this to them. Details about space and price are available from jackiekshah@gmail.com



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SEED COMMUNITY CAFÉ AT MARPLE METHODIST CHURCH.

Our church in Mellor is in a relatively affluent area but only a mile or so away in Marple many people are much less fortunate. All Saints' Church provides a lot of practical and emotional support particularly based in "CONNECT", based on Queen Street in Marple. (More about Connect in a later article).



Churches Together Marple Area

But at the Methodist Church, home also of the Quaker gathering, the Seed Café has been running for a good few years, offering hot drinks and warm snacks and a space to find companionship on Thursdays and Fridays. Last year it received a grant to be part of Stockport's "Warm Spaces" initiative, where people could go to keep warm rather than increase their own energy bills, with free hot drinks and biscuits offered. At the moment the opening hours have had to be reduced through lack of sufficient volunteers, so it no longer opens on a Wednesday.

At St Thomas' we are keen to bring goods for Stockport Food Bank, Wood Street Mission and the Wellspring, but here is an opportunity to give practical help to less privileged people. Please give some thought to the possibility of offering to help at the Seed Café, even if only 3 or 4 times a year. Speak to me if you want further information. Thank you.

The Seed Cafe is no longer open on Wednesdays

but is open on Thursday from 10am till 1pm

and Friday from 2pm - 5pm

Helen Kennedy

Mellor Art Society

We are a self-help group of amateur artists who meet every Wednesday
7.30pm-9.30pm

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Brabyns Brow, Marple Bridge

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If you would like to join us
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Orange and Almond Cake

Jill Baker

At this time of year I like to use Seville oranges but at other times of the year a mix of lemon and orange juice works well. This is an adapted Jane Grigson recipe.

175g (6oz) caster sugar
175 g (6 oz) butter
2 teaspoons orange rind (1 large or two smaller oranges)
5 tbsp Seville orange juice (or a mix of orange and lemon)
3 eggs beaten
125g (4 oz) fine semolina
275g (9oz) ground almonds
3 level teaspoons baking powder
NB you can use all ground almonds.



Syrup

275g (9oz)caster sugar
8 tbsp water
5 cm (2 inch) cinnamon stick
9 tbsp orange juice

Optional 2 heaped tbsp chopped orange peel (or take some pieces of peel from your marmalade and chop)

This cake can be made in a 9 inch round tin or a ring mould if you have or a larger round tin with a buttered jam jar in the centre to give you a ring. Butter your mould if a ring or line if a normal cake tin. Set the oven ant 220C gas 7.

Cream the butter and sugar together and add the rind, juice and eggs. Mix in semolina ground almonds and baking powder. Fill mould there should be plenty of room for cake to rise.

Bake for 10 minutes at the high heat. **TURN THE OVEN DOWN TO GM 4 180C** and bake for a further 30 minutes. Test the cake to see if cooked.

Whilst the cake is cooking make the syrup by simmering water sugar and cinnamon together for 5 minutes then add the juices.

Tip the cake out of the tin after 5 minutes or so on to a plate and then once the syrup has reached boiling point pour it slowly over the cake, decorate with peel if wanted. Cover with foil and leave for a good few hours in a cool place (Jane Grigson recommends two days) mine had been demolished by then. (useful to know if you want to make in advance.)

Outlook report on November PCC meeting

This was our last meeting of 2023, as the PCC never meets in December. There was an update on the planning taking place for the crib services on Christmas Eve. We were all very happy that we will have two services again this year, and very grateful to all those involved in the planning. It is necessary to keep to the safe limit on numbers in the church, according to fire regulations, which is a maximum of 200 people, so free tickets will be issued on Eventbrite to ensure we limit the numbers safely and fairly.

Andrew reported that he has some young people wishing to be confirmed, and had a positive start to the classes he is offering. He is also planning to restart Messy Church, and has fixed a date for the first, on 4th February 2024, to coincide with Candlemas / Christingle.

A 'Reverse Advent' collection will take place on every Sunday in December, in aid of the Well Spring and Wood Street Mission, organised by Lynda Gwyther – thank you Lynda. It was also agreed that the 'church Christmas card' will be provided again this year, but the money raised will go to benefit the same good causes as the Reverse Advent appeal.

There was then a discussion regarding the ongoing project of updating the church's website. Work on this is being done by Alex and Sylvia and they had an initial two quotes. It was decided that we need more information about what each of the two quotes will actually provide, and ideally a third quote to consider, in January.

We had an update on the proposed improvement of the porch, and quotations had been obtained for a wood veneer door, and a solid oak door. Due to the small difference between the two, the PCC unanimously agreed to having a solid oak door.

Richard then reported on the Thanksgiving appeal, which aimed to make people aware of the cost of the running of our church and to consider either making regular donations, or increasing their existing regular giving. This had resulted in a total of

£2,600 in one-off donations, and an increase of around £4,000 in regular giving. This was a great outcome, but giving needs to increase by approximately another £10,000 per year if we are to cover all our costs without having to use reserves.

The PCC then welcomed Tom Howling, the Musical Director of our wonderful choir. Tom talked about how much the choir has recently expanded in numbers, due to its success, to the point that they are now unable to all fit into the existing choir stalls. Tom asked for the PCC's initial thoughts on a possible reorganising of the back of the church to better accommodate the choir. Tom intends to process the comments that PCC members gave him, and come back with some tentative proposals. This is at the very first stage of consideration and no firm plans are in place.

Julie Elliott

Laughs with Lynda

In a freak accident today a photographer was killed
when a huge lump of cheddar landed on him.

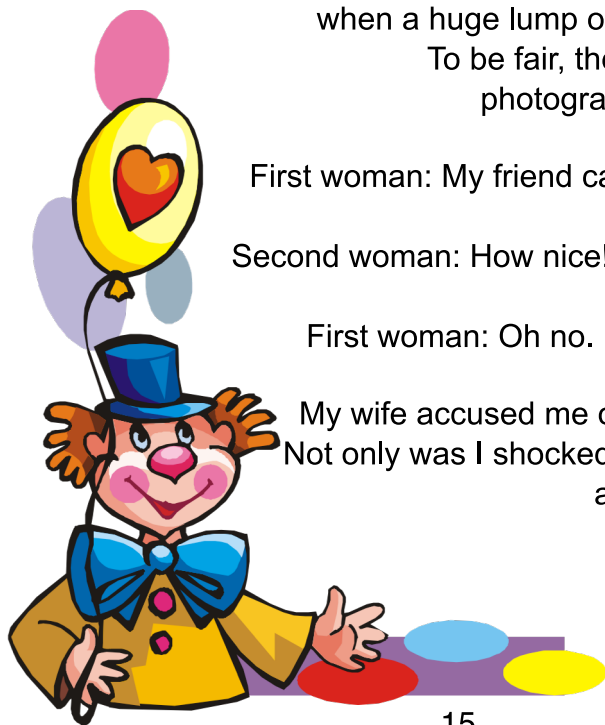
To be fair, the people who were being
photographed did try to warn him.

First woman: My friend came to visit for a summer
holiday.

Second woman: How nice! Did you meet him at the
airport?

First woman: Oh no. I've known him for years!

My wife accused me of stealing her thesaurus.
Not only was I shocked, I was aghast, appalled,
astonished and dismayed





Captain Ken

Ken Owen

One of the New Year's largest gatherings of those connected with sea faring, must surely be the Southampton Master Mariners' Club's annual Sea Pie Supper.

It has been held annually for many years; previously at the Southampton Guildhall, and more recently at St Mary's Football Club headquarters. It is a black tie occasion, and comprises several hundred Club members and their enthusiastic guests. and provides the most delicious sea pie, you could imagine.

After the meal, speeches, and toasts there is always the singing of Sea Shanties led by a professional guitar playing shanty man. Although my first impression was that it was a little odd to see so many smartly dressed people to be singing pure work songs, but gradually realized, what fun it was.

This has always amused me, as seventy years ago, the Outward Bound Sea School at Aberdovey employed Stan Hugil who was recognised as the very last Shanty man in the Royal Navy. The Club's favourite shanty used to be 'Spanish Ladies'. Some of you may remember that is was part of the sound track in the film 'Jaws'. However, some knowledgeable members insisted it was a Sea Song, rather than a Sea Shanty (the shanty being a pure working song like a chant) for hauling on ropes and heaving round a capstan.



On one sea-pie supper, it was excluded, but such was the disappointment amongst the singers, that it has always been included ever since.

The song goes:-

*'Farewell and adieu, to you fair Spanish ladies,
Farewell and adieu to you ladies of Spain,
For we've just received orders to return to old England
And we hope it's not long till we see you again.'*

But from then on the chorus and song become quite descriptive:-

*We'll rant and we'll roar, like true British sailors,
We'll rant and we'll roar, across the salt sea
Until we take soundings in the Channel of old England
From Ushant to Scilly, is thirty five leagues.*

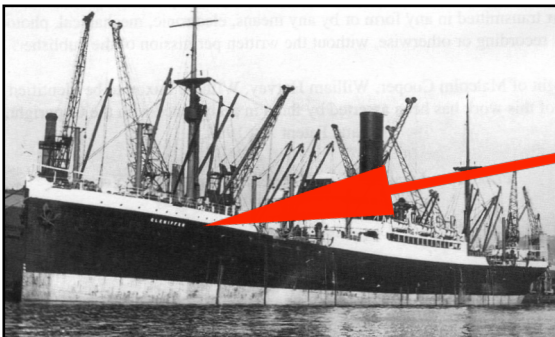
From then on, the song becomes quite descriptive of the ship's voyage; along the south coast of England, naming the various headlands up to the South Foreland light, which of course is now illegal for ships to do due to the compulsory routing.

We now proceed north, close to the French coast, and come back close to the English coast. What's more, on some occasions when I was enjoying the song, I realised that some of the Government Officials from the Maritime and Coastguard Agency and who were responsible for enforcing the routing were amongst us, and although they were obviously joining in, it might be wise not to sing too loud especially as, at the time, I was proud to be the Club's Sea Staff Captain!

Although I have never observed sea shanties being used to assist work, I recollect being completely impressed when I was a Blue Funnel Midshipman observing the 'Gleniffer', a coal burning steam ship, taking on bunkers in Aden.

I was on a new motor ship where we simply took our oil bunkers through an attached oil pipe, but the Gleniffer was loading coal carried up a gangway by dozens of native labourers each carrying a sack of coal, but all chanting together.

They were all engulfed in a huge cloud of coal dust, and the ship was black with coal dust, but the sound of their chanting was completely overwhelming and never to be forgotten.



Very difficult to find this ship but this might be it !!



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Who are they?

Do you know who these people are or where they might be? Taken in the 1960's or 1970's. ??

I was sent these photographs by
Carolyn Dee

who is writing a book about professional photographer
Leo Carter
and she is trying to find out more about the photographs. Leo worked for the Daily Express in the 1960's.



Any clues please
contact Maggie Williams
0161 427 2406

Brigit Forsyth

Actress Brigit Forsyth, who lived in Mellor for many years, has died at the age of 83. She will always be remembered for her role as Thelma in the legendary sitcom *Whatever happened to the Likely Lads* but also had credits in many other well-known television programmes including *Still Open All Hours*, *Holby City* and *Coronation Street*, *Doctor Who* and *Playing the Field* as well as stage performances that included *Calendar Girls*.

An accomplished musician, she lived on Longhurst Lane with her husband, *Coronation Street* director Brian Mills but moved later in life to Broadbottom. She was President of the Mellor March for almost all the thirty years that the charity has existed. Chairman of the March, Paddy Whitham says “Brigit was always a great supporter of the March, embracing the sense of fun that it has always generated, always willing to present cheques and recognising its important place in the community.”

She is survived by son, Ben and daughter, Zoe.

Brigit Forsyth born 28th July 1940, died 1st December 2023.

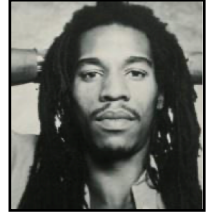
Tim Lowe



The British

by Benjamin Zephaniah 1958 - 2023

Take some Picts, Celts and Silures
And let them settle,
Then overrun them with Roman conquerors.



Remove the Romans after approximately 400 years
Add lots of Norman French to some
Angles, Saxons, Jutes and Vikings, then stir vigorously.

Mix some hot Chileans, cool Jamaicans, Dominicans,
Trinidadians and Bajans with some Ethiopians, Chinese,
Vietnamese and Sudanese.

Then take a blend of Somalians, Sri Lankans, Nigerians
And Pakistanis,
Combine with some Guyanese
And turn up the heat.

Sprinkle some fresh Indians, Malaysians, Bosnians,
Iraqis and Bangladeshis together with some
Afghans, Spanish, Turkish, Kurdish, Japanese
And Palestinians
Then add to the melting pot.

Leave the ingredients to simmer.

As they mix and blend allow their languages to flourish
Binding them together with English.

Allow time to be cool.

Add some unity, understanding, and respect for the future,
Serve with justice
And enjoy.

Note: All the ingredients are equally important. Treating one
ingredient better than another will leave a bitter unpleasant taste.

Warning: An unequal spread of justice will damage the people and
cause pain. Give justice and equality to all.

Ed MML

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CHILDREN'S PAGE

New Year Resolutions ? Do you know what these are? Ask your parents or carers or Vestry Leaders if they can tell you and help you to make your own promises for 2024. *Ed MML*

| | | |
|------------------------------|----------|---------------------------|
| Never forget to say t | H | ank you |
| Sh | A | re your sweets and toys |
| Say your | P | rayers in any way you can |
| Have fun and be hap | P | y and make others happy |
| Keep your bedrooms tid | Y | |
| | | |
| Be ki | N | d to everyone you can |
| Try to copy the way J | E | SUS lived his life |
| | W | ork hard at school |
| | | |
| Pla | Y | or sing lots of music |
| Don't forget to clean your t | E | eth |
| Re | A | d lots and lots of books |
| Take care of you | R | pets |

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Youthful Days in Mellor 1910 to 1926

By Tom Oldham Part 6.

I remember very well the old Holly Vale Mill ruins which stood nearby, and dominated this small community. They towered high in the air, vast and gaunt, with gaping window openings, and I felt really frightened of the place. Later, we often ventured into Holly Vale to catch sticklebacks, or jacksharps, as we called them, in the Ramie mill pond, and convey them home in jam jars where we kept them in an old cast iron tank.



We were never without something to do, and the whole neighbourhood within about a mile from where we lived was our playground. Little Wood, above Gibb Lane, was perhaps our favourite haunt. This was a plantation of conifers, pines and larches, growing close together and very dense, interlaced with an undergrowth of gorse and brambles, so that the eye could not penetrate further than about ten feet. We gradually generated trails and dens in this tangled growth, and came to know our way about perfectly. The wood belonged, so we believed, to a Mr Bradbury who lived in one of the stone built semis on Gibb Lane, right at the bottom of the wood. He kept hens at the back of his house, and these often roved around the wood. One day we found a nest of nine eggs, and Eric Wilson carried them home in his cap. Alas, one of them broke in transit, and it was trouble rather than thanks for him when he got home. Mr Bradbury, who was known by the curious name of "Fuzzack" Bradbury, was one of the many owners of land and property whom we feared. In fact we were often shouted at for some minor misdemeanour or trespass by people who could claim no authority whatsoever for so doing. Discipline was strict, and punishment immediate, and we knew that a thrashing was certain if we were caught trespassing on a farmer's land or in a private wood. Consequently we took good care, and by being alert and able to run faster and outdistance most of the farmers, we nearly always escaped. The fact that at any moment we might come face to face with "Fuzzack" Bradbury in the wood lent spice to our adventures there, but he rarely ventured far up the wood, and only once did he give chase, and, to our immense glee, he finished up over his boot tops in some swampy ground which we knew about and had carefully avoided.

One late summer the field alongside New Road (Church Road, as it is now called), just below the house where Clulows live, was filled with a crop of ripening barley. This is always a lovely sight, with the long, whiskery ears of grain, especially when

it is set in wave motion by a breeze in bright sunshine, but Norman and I were not impressed by the beauty of the scene as we bent over the wall reaching for seed heads. If one of these is pulled off its stalk, and put, stalk end first, into the cuff of ones sleeve, and the arm jerked about, the seed head will travel up the sleeve and come out around ones shoulder. This is what we were going to do, but retribution was close at hand. The barley field belonged to a farmer called Isaac Slater who lived nearby at Brook Bottom, and just as we were reaching over he pounced on us, having seen us from his farm and run across quickly and quietly. Norman was the unlucky one as he caught the violent swipe of Ike's stick across his tight trouser seat, and I managed to drop from the wall and scamper away before he could get one in at me. On another occasion in New Road we gathered some dry, brown chestnut leaves, which looked to us like tobacco, and took them to Wilson's garden shed. Here we made two "cigars" by wrapping them in brown paper, and these we lighted and tried to smoke. Luckily, the smoke was so pungent and irritating that we nearly coughed our heads off, so we quickly threw them away, and thereby avoiding any gastronomic upsets.



We seemed to get much more snow in those days; never a winter went by without some, and we always managed to do some tobogganing down "Heathcote's field", below Birchenough, our local run, Then we grew more adventurous and were tempted to try Alehouse Brow, or "Th' Ale'ns", as it was

known to local people. This is the hill slope down the fields behind the Church, towards Greenhill Farm. This was a very steep, fast run which, in good conditions, would attract 100 or so tobogganers at weekends, and as many spectators. I believe I used this run on some occasions almost every winter until I was nearly 30. Once, on a night of full moon and hard frost, I went to join some friends there, and as my approach was from the top end I set off between the two walls just past the vicarage. This was well above the usual start at the top of the very steep section, and I was travelling fast when I reached this point. The surface of the steep part had consolidated into smooth, hard ice after a slight mid-day thaw, and I rattled down it in seconds, all my efforts being concentrated on hanging on. There is a sudden dip at the bottom of this steep bit where one is air-born for a yard or so, and I went over here with a shattering jolt. Then down the less steep part below with scarcely any reduction in speed, until I managed to turn off the track into deeper, soft snow, and throw myself off at the bottom of the field just above Greenhill Farm.

Other snow recollections were of very deep falls. One, coming late, about early April, deposited almost two feet of snow in a single night, and in places we had to walk on the wall tops to get to school. Deep, drifting snow nearly always came on a south-east wind, and the drifts would always form in the same places. One of these was at the corner where the lane branches off Moor End Road up to Larkhill, and this would block the main road to traffic until it was dug through. It would form higher than a man's height, and we once tunnelled a grand snow house in it. Nearly every winter the Roman Lakes would be frozen over for some periods, and thronged with skaters, especially at week-ends.

My friend, Norman was always getting into trouble and suffering spectacular accidents; he was not naughty, just unfortunate. He was very fond of climbing up young, springy trees and making them sway to and fro, and on two occasions the tree tops broke off with Norman on them. One of these was on a pine tree in Little Wood, when he landed head first in a gorse bush. A similar occasion was when he fell, again head first, from the large red hawthorn tree in our front garden, and landed in a dense thorn hedge with just his legs sticking up. This particular red hawthorn tree was our favourite climbing tree, as we could get into all sorts of interesting positions, but my father disliked it, and did his best to kill it, without Miss Chadwick knowing, by boring a hole in the bottom of the trunk with an auger and putting in it all sorts of supposedly deadly concoctions. However, the tree survived, and seemed to thrive on the treatment.



Very soon after I first met Norman, and before we started at school, the Wilson family removed to the top cottage of the row up the lane leading to Larkhill. They were here for only a short time before moving to the house which adjoins the shop on the corner formed by Larkhill Lane and the main road. This shop was at one time the truck shop belonging to Wallers, the mill owners, and the house was the one on the lower side of the shop. It had, at one time, been occupied by members of the Waller family, and it was laid out in a strange way with the lower floor on two levels, and about three steps half way up the hall. There was a large garden and orchard which adjoined the one belonging to Sycamore Cottage below, and this was rather a wilderness, and consequently a grand place in which to play.

The owner of the houses and cottages around here, including ours and Wilsons, was Mr Wild, who lived at Larkhill. He was known locally as 'Thomas Peter', which were his true



Christian names, but they were always coupled together. He was regarded as an important man in the district, respected in consequence, but we boys were rather scared of him although we had no real reason to be. He wore glasses, and had rather severe features, and we considered he could be nasty if provoked, so we took good care to be on our best behaviour when he was about. However, we often took short cuts up the grassy lane known as Bird Nest Lane, or 'Bridnes' lane, as it was generally pronounced locally. This led behind Larkhill House up to the Birchenough fields, and we would pass the house like stalking Indians, crouching low down behind the wall, for the lane had been closed with gates at each end by Thomas Peter, wrongly, I am sure, for this was the old right of way to the Birchenough farms. There is a large, square yard at the back of the Springbank houses in the lane to Larkhill, and this was much used by us for ball games such as rounders and cricket. At the back of Wilsons house was a large tank constructed from stone slabs which were bolted together with long tie-bolts. This was high up on stone piers, and its original use had been for storing rain water off the roof, but it was generally dry, and we enjoyed climbing up into it where we would be hidden completely from view.



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From the Registers



Baptism

We welcomed into God's family

Finley James Nuttall on 26th November

Funerals

We remember before God and commend to his love and mercy:-

Jean Ashmore on Monday 4th December – Service at the crem

Barbara Booth on Friday 8th December

Gathering for Worship: Patterns and Prayers for the Community of Disciples

Come to this table not because you must, but because you may
Not because you are strong, but because you are weak,
Come, not because of any goodness of your own gives you the
right to come,
but because you need mercy and help
Come, because you love the Lord a little and would like to love him
more
Come because he loved you and gave himself for you
Come and meet the risen Christ, for we are his body

This is my favourite prayer in the Communion service

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Thought For The Month

Some of you may well remember the lovely Helen Sugden.....
On her 90th birthday party on 30th November 2008, she gave a little speech of thanks to her family for all the loving tributes they had paid her during the evening. She stood up and spoke, impromptu, for at least fifteen minutes and, as matriarch of their loving family, she ended by giving them a little piece of advice for living:

she quoted a Chinese proverb:-

“Keep a green bough in your heart and the singing bird will come to you.”

“And believe me”, she said, “many singing birds have come into my life.”

More a memory than a thought for the month, as I write this close to her birth date. 30.11.08 was an evening to remember and cherish.



Jenny Johnson

Prayer for the Month

*A prayer from ‘The Pattern of our Days’ edited by
Kathy Galloway*

God of the spirit of kindness,
In the glory of earth and sea and stars,
In the kaleidoscope of colour and shade and
shapeliness,
In the patterns of humour and tenderness of touch,
We celebrate your generosity.

Forgive us when we forget the gift in our every breath
The care that sustains our every moment,
The grace that can transform our every day.



Church Rotas

Stewards Rota

| Date | 8.30am | 10.00am | 6.30pm |
|--------|---------------|-------------------------|---------|
| 07 Jan | P Cooke | M Lowe & M Williams | R Holt |
| 14 Jan | A Mason | S Knight & C Langford | J Shiel |
| 21 Jan | J Butterworth | L Forbes & P Forbes | A Shah |
| 28 Jan | P Cunningham | J Elliott & R Elliott | R Holt |
| 04 Feb | P Cooke | D Jelleyman & A Sanders | J Shiel |

Please arrange your own substitute. If this is not possible email Rachel- redwards@nhs.net

Flower Rota

| | | | |
|--------|---------------|--------|-----------------|
| 07 Jan | Louise Driver | 04 Feb | Gwen Perks |
| 14 Jan | flower group | 11 Feb | Jenny Johnson |
| 21 Jan | flower group | 18 Feb | Lent no flowers |
| 28 Jan | Emma Houghton | 25 Feb | Lent no flowers |

If you wish to change a date, need a key or have any query, please contact Jill Baker (07881 902533 or jillbaker427@hotmail.com).

Holy Dusters

Brass Cleaning

| | | |
|--------|----------------------|-----------------------|
| 07 Jan | J Cooper & A Muller | L Driver & H Carlsson |
| 14 Jan | J & D Butterworth | |
| 21 Jan | A Mason & C Starling | |
| 28 Jan | A Allcard & J Jones | |
| 04 Feb | J Burrows & E Wilson | |

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