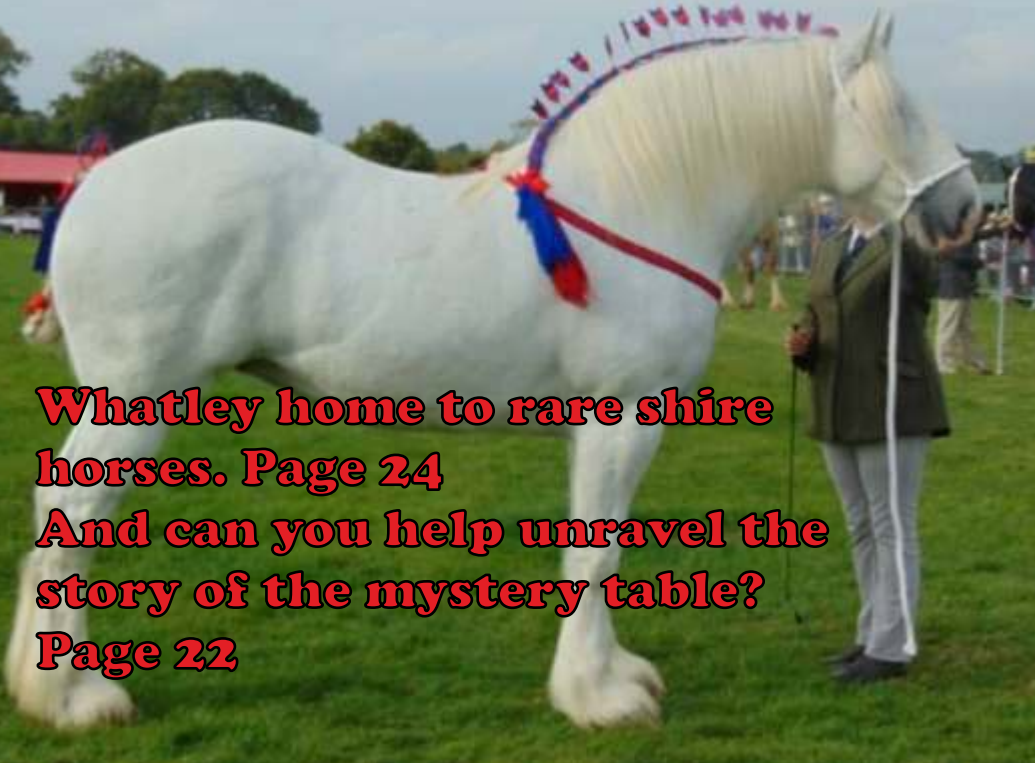


5ALIVE

March 2024



Whatley home to rare shire horses. Page 24

And can you help unravel the story of the mystery table?

Page 22

**News from
Buckland Dinham, Chantry,
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FROM THE EDITOR

I'M A GREAT FAN of what's now called 'cosy' crime books, stories set in country villages (like our 5Alive ones) where a murder is solved by a couple of pensioners or a shop keeper or someone else who is not a bobby. OK, so it's not a crime story but is there anyone there who can help solve the mystery of the antique table that's featured in the Mells section of this issue.

How I loved the name of the café where my sister-in-law lives, Tea and Tittle Tattle, so maybe a group of elderly ladies having a cuppa in Mells café will know exactly where it's from. Or...? Anyway, let's hope we'll have the answer in the April issue of the magazine!

Meanwhile will March be any better weather-wise than February? Fingers crossed! *Peter*

FROM THE RECTORY, WELL ALMOST!

IN THE OLD TESTAMENT READING for the first Sunday in Lent, God promises never again to destroy the world by flooding. The covenant is made in the medium of water, is signed in all the colours of light, a signature that once upon a later time will become that of Gay Pride. Water, the great symbol of life, in which we must be overwhelmed before we can be born. We perhaps reflect on our own baptism – and out of that, and of the dust of Ash Wednesday, Lent carries its own palette of symbols – austerity, restraint – so pale they're scarcely noticeable.

Compared with the world of our ancestors, the spiritual life of we 21st Century western Christians can seem impoverished. They had symbols; we have brands. They had ritual; we have habits. They had meaning; we have memes. When images were swept from our churches in the 17th Century, they took refuge in our minds, and the view took hold that the place of religion is inside our heads; faith no longer something we do, but something we think.

Editor: Peter Corbett mellsmag@hotmail.com

Advertising: Peter Corbett, 01373 466536, mellsmag@hotmail.com

Deadline for April 2024 is Friday, March 15th but do check!

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CONTACTS

Mells Group of churches is currently in a vacancy. For any enquiries please contact the church warden in your parish. For weddings contact the benefice administrator, Mrs Catherine Brown, email catmellsgroup@gmail.com. She works on Tuesday and Thursday afternoons.

Church laymen and women Church wardens

Buckland Dinham Jenny Waller,
07887 556936

Chantry Hazel Tovey 836384
David Rawlins 836252

Great Elm Sally Rosa 07833
900947

Mells/ Vobster Mrs Diana
Sylvester 812386

Whatley Mrs K Gay 836175

Parish council chairs and clerks

John Reckless 01373 461841
Diane Sleigh 07907 156735
parishclerk@bucklanddinham.org

John Earl 01373 812450
Joy Book 07704 584953

Andrew Bramston 01373 836513
Rachel Nash
clerk.whatleyparishcouncil@gmail.com

Roman Catholic Services

Mells: Sundays at 11.30am Frome: Saturdays 5.30pm.
Wednesdays 6.00pm Sundays 10.00am

Somerset Councillor: Philip Ham 01373 812152

Others to be confirmed

Chantry and Whatley Francis Hayden 07970 839532

Police: PCSO Russell Ford, 07547 658018

This delusion leads to a profound misunderstanding of religion as it is practised in most of the world. Last month, the head teacher of a North London school introduced a ban on what she called 'prayer ritual'. She claimed that it wasn't prayer that was being banned – people can pray in their heads – it was simply the accompanying ritual. But the ritual isn't some kind of optional side order, the spiritual equivalent of a bowl of fries: the ritual and the prayer are one. The act of prayer engages the whole self – mind, spirit, body – even if some 21st Century Anglicans do the bodily bit by being still.

A society in which it's held that we can separate ritual from prayer is a society in deep spiritual poverty. Ritual is the embodiment of meaning. Without it, we have only tokens, the Monopoly currencies of bankruptcy. I can't help but wonder just how daft we can get. You can pray, but you mustn't kneel. You may practise your violin, but it must remain in its case. You can skate, but you must keep off the ice. You may swim, but you must stay out of the water. You can love, but you may not touch. The spirituality of a pornographer's nightmare.

Robin Fisherwood

LLANGASTY RETREAT

Llangasty two-night, retreat. [LD3 7PX]. April 24 to 26th with conversational sessions on four great English Christian writers, prayer, worship and free time to enjoy the very beautiful landscape. We expect to share transport. Comfortable (mainly single) rooms with basin but not

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mainly en suite. Arriving after lunch on the Wednesday and leaving after lunch on the Friday. Deposits invited. All enquiries Martin Weymont, 01985-300025 or weymontmartin@gmail.com.

JOTTINGS FROM A COUNTRY CHURCHYARD

OH! THIS DREARY WET WEATHER. Thank heaven for snowdrops. I am writing this in early February, and it seems to have rained unceasingly for weeks. But thank heaven for snowdrops which seems to have exceeded themselves this year. This oddly changed climate seems to have suited them. The drawback is that one is as seldom tempted out to admire their abundance as one would on lovely sunny woodland walks. A hurried head-down plod with the dogs is about all this weather invites.

In the churchyard the snowdrops have spread their lacy carpets more richly than I ever remember along the south-eastern side and corner of the ground. This area was cleared of brambles and dead wood by helpers and so the snowdrops which must have remained hidden for years have quietly been multiplying and have now burst forth to air and freedom.

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They seem to have this ability to bide their time while deeply covered and then spring up when offered light and freedom. I have found the same in my garden where an area of ivy-covered ground has been lightly cleared and is suddenly studded with snowdrops which I have either forgotten or not even known were there.

Another treasure that seems to have prospered in the past wet year is camellias. Mine are so loaded with fat buds on every branch that I have had to resist cutting branches for use in my church flower arrangements. The glossy evergreen leaves make excellent foliage but this year I cannot find any to cut without sacrificing flower buds. Camellias, being shallow rooted, dry out quickly in hot weather but mild and wet weather seems to suit them a treat.

A generous friend brought me a lovely, scented bouquet of winter flowering shrubs from her garden. This included fragrant sarcococca which reminded me that mine died in the late short sharp freeze in 2022 so I will try and replace it with one of my Christmas or birthday gift tokens. (I then call the plant/shrub/tree after the token giver, so my garden is filled

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Hardington Vale Church Services – MARCH 2024

DATE	TIME	SERVICE	LEADER
Sunday 3 March	9.00 am	Norton St Philip , Informal Breakfast	F Stewart J Robinson/B Day M Weymont
	10.30 am	Rode , Holy Communion	
	11.00 am	Laverton , Holy Communion	
	6.00 pm	Rode Chapel , Meeting Place	
Monday 4 March	9.00 am	Norton St Philip , Morning Prayer	
Tuesday 5 March	9.45 am	Rode Chapel , Ecumenical Holy Communion	
	5.00 pm	Tellisford , Evening Prayer	
Wednesday 6 March	8.30 am	Hemington , Morning Prayer	
	6.00 pm	Rode Chapel , Informal Prayer	
Thursday 7 March	6.00 pm	Norton St Philip , Silent Prayer	
Sunday 10 March Mothering Sunday	10.30 am	Rode , Holy Communion	C Walker J Robinson/B Day
	10.30 am	Norton St Philip , special Mother's Day Informal Service	
	11.00 am	Laverton , Matins	M Griffiths
	11.00 am	Buckland Dinham , Iona Service	
Monday 11 March	9.00 am	Norton St Philip , Morning Prayer	
Tuesday 12 March	5.00 pm	Laverton , Evening Prayer	
Wednesday 13 March	8.30 am	Hemington , Morning Prayer	
	6.00 pm	Rode Chapel , Informal Prayer	
Thursday 14 March	6.00 pm	Norton St Philip , Silent Prayer	
Sunday 17 March	9.00 am	Farleigh Hungerford , Morning Worship	C Walker/M Harrison C Walker/M Harrison
	10.30 am	Rode , Holy Communion	
	10.30 am	Norton St Phillip , Informal Worship	J Robinson
	11.00 am	Laverton , Matins	S Kivett
	11.00 am	Buckland Dinham , Holy Communion	
Monday 18 March	9.00 am	Norton St Philip , Morning Prayer	
Tuesday 19 March	5.00 pm	Tellisford , Evening Prayer	
Wednesday 20 March	8.30 am	Hemington , Morning Prayer	
	6.00 pm	Rode Chapel , Informal Prayer	
Thursday 21 March	6.00 pm	Norton St Philip , Silent Prayer	
Sunday 24 March Palm Sunday	9.00 am	Tellisford , Holy Communion	J Robinson C Walker
	10.30 am	Norton St Phillip , Palm Procession starting at the George car park	
	6.00 pm	Rode , Chapel, Meeting Place	J Waller
	6.00 pm	Buckland Dinham , Evening Service	
Monday 25 March	9.00 am	Norton St Philip , Morning Prayer	
	9.00 pm	Rode chapel , Compline	
	9.00 pm	Norton St Philip , Compline	
	9.00 pm	Laverton , Compline	
Tuesday 26 March	9.45 am	Rode Chapel , Ecumenical Holy Communion	
	9.00 pm	Rode chapel , Compline	
	9.00 pm	Norton St Phillip , Compline	
	9.00 pm	Laverton , Compline	

DATE	TIME	SERVICE	LEADER
Wednesday 27 March	9.00 pm	Rode chapel, Compline	
	9.00 pm	Norton St Philip, Compline	
	9.00 pm	Laverton, Compline	
	9.00 am –	Tellsford, Day of Prayer concluding with	
	9.00 pm	Compline	
Thursday 28 March Maundy Thursday	6.00 pm	Norton St Philip, Silent Prayer	
	7.00 pm	Norton St Philip, Passover Meal	
Friday 29 March Good Friday	10.00 am	Rode, March of Witness, St Lawrence	
	11.00 am	short service in Rode Chapel	
	2-3.00 pm	Norton St Philip, Hour at the Cross	
Sunday 31 March Easter Sunday	6.00 am	Norton St Philip, Sunrise Vigil	
	9.00 am	Farleigh Hungerford, Holy Communion	J Robinson
	9.00 am	Norton St Philip, Holy Communion	C Walker
	10.30 am	Rode, Holy Communion	J Robinson
	11.00 am	Laverton, Holy Communion	S Kivett
	11.00 am	Buckland Dinham, Holy Communion	tba

Chantry services

Sunday March 3rd 2024

Group Service at Great Elm at 10.00am

Sunday March 10th 2024 (Mothering Sunday)

Holy Communion at 11.00am - Rev. Chris Hare

Sunday March 17th 2024

Mattins at 11.00am - Valerie Rawlins

Sunday March 24th 2024 (Palm Sunday)

Holy Communion 11.00am - Rev. Anthony Davies

Sunday March 31st 2024 (Easter Sunday)

Holy Communion 11.00am - Rev. David Clark

Sorry but we didn't receive the services schedule for the other parishes
by the time we went to press.

with things like Ann's Japanese cherry, Sue's big green plant pot, Diana's daffs etc). Incidentally I have just had my 92nd birthday and my sideboard is graced with 51 beautiful cards which I will leave displayed to enjoy for several weeks. Although my family are few, I am blessed with so many wonderful thoughtful friends.

There must be little doubt that most things seem to be flowering earlier than ever this year. Many of the daffodils along the village verge are already in flower and the churchyard ones are showing fat buds. They will probably be over before Easter, although Easter this year is about as early as I can ever remember in March. Also, I have just noticed that my cherry plum in the orchard is just opening the first of its fat buds – in February instead of March.

Sadly, I cannot grow crocuses, either the early tiny specie ones or the fat mauve and yellow ones that everyone else seem to have in abundance. I have spent so much on crocus bulbs which never appear (do squirrels dig them up or mice eat them?) that I have long given up trying. I planted nearly 300 around my parents' grave years ago and have never seen a sign of them so even in churchyard I have no luck. Except for the last handful which I planted on the grave of Muffin, one of my long departed and much-loved cavaliers. These flower faithfully every year and are even now in early bloom (known of course as Muffin's crocuses).

In Chantry church we have at last acquired the necessary faculty for the removal of some pews and the installation of new heating and lighting. The pews have already been removed with much kind voluntary help but before we can put the other plans into action we have to embark on a programme of fund-raising. These things take time so I do hope I shall live long enough to praise and enjoy it all.

As I finish writing this there is a rare burst of sunshine so I must take Ebbie out and go and enjoy it before it rains. Yet again.

See you in April. *Hazell.*

BUCKLAND DINHAM

CHURCH NEWS

We are pleased to announce that the new Friends Group of St. Michael's is being formed and we hope to have lots of fresh ideas for fund raising

to maintain and improve the fabric of our church. For further information please contact our Church Warden, Jenny Waller.

The Sunday services for March are as listed in the rota. In addition, on March 31st, Easter Sunday morning there will be a "Sun Rise" service, all details from Jenny Waller. Rev. Martin Weymont will then take the 11.00 service in St. Michael's. All welcome.

Sidesperson To be arranged

BENJAMIN PRINCE MELLOR

January 25th 1935 – January 30th 2024

On Tuesday February 13th, on a grey and rainy afternoon, St Michael's church in Buckland Dinham was full as mourners gathered from far and wide to celebrate the life of Ben Mellor, who has died aged 89.

The church was beautifully decorated with spring flowers and lilies. The service was conducted by the Reverend Martin Weymont and attended by over 70 of Ben's family and friends.

Hymns were Love Divine, all Loves Excelling, and O Love That Will Not Let Me Go. The scripture reading was John 6:35-40, read by neighbour Peter Corbett.

In his address, Martin took us through the highlights of Ben's life. He emphasised how Ben's was a life well lived among family and friends. Ben came from a farming family in Derby and was himself a lifelong farmer through and through. He loved animals and was particularly handy at fixing things.

If there was something to be done, he was the man who could do it and would do it – an invaluable combination. Married in 1961 to Glenys, Ben spent many of his working years at Kingman's Farm in Hemington, moving to Buckland Dinham on retirement. A quiet man, he nonetheless had many strong friendships in the village, as attested by the number of people who came to say goodbye.

Martin concluded the service by reminding us of our faith as Christians in the resurrection and the life to come, ending on a note of hope. The beautiful Italian aria "Time to say Goodbye" accompanied the congregation as they left the church for the graveside and the committal service.

Our thoughts and prayers are with Ben's family and friends at this time.

COFFEE MORNING

We were pleased to welcome so many people to our February meeting and so look forward to seeing you all again on March 16th. If you have new neighbours do invite them to come along with you and enjoy the coffee/tea and homemade cakes.

All are made to feel very welcome, and it is an easy way to make new friends and to learn more about what goes on in the village.

CONCERT

Saturday March 16th. The HOODOOS

will be playing an eclectic mix of swampy blues, folk, jazz, bluegrass, country, pop and funk wrapped with gorgeous goose-bumping vocal harmonies at **St.Philip and St.James Church in Norton St. Philip** at 7.00 p.m. Tickets £12.00 can be booked at email glenysbrown1711@gmail.com or from Jonny Griffiths. Light refreshments will be available but feel free to bring your own alcohol. Very kindly this concert has been arranged as a fund raiser for the Friends of St Michael's, so with your help we will be a step nearer to raising enough money for the complete restoration of the Lych Gate



WI TO CLOSE - OR MAYBE NOT!

After over a century of the Buckland Dinham Women's Institute in the village we are closing at the end of this month. This will be a sad day as it has been very much the heart of many of the activities that have been held in the village hall, but with so few members and the reluctance of new people joining it was the only option.

However, "the few" have decided to keep on meeting on the first Tuesday of the month at 7.30 in the village hall so perhaps if you were reluctant to join the W.I. you might like to come along meet up for a cuppa, chat and the occasional speaker!! As this will be something new for all ladies of the village we do hope for your support.

SHORT MAT BOWLS The next date for short mat bowls in the Village Hall is on Wednesday March 13th, 2.30 to 4.30. Normally we meet every week. If you have not played bowls before do come along and have a go, it is fun for all ages. Cost £2.00

CRAFT DAY Saturday March 24th 10.00am to 2.00pm. in the Village Hall. (Usual meeting is last Saturday of the month but change as Easter Weekend 30/31st). Bring your own lunch, coffee/tea and biscuits provided. You can either bring your own craft to do, or just pop in for chat. We all do different things and can help with anyone wanting to try something new. Cost £5.00.

POPPY APPEAL

Thank you to all who donated to the door-to-door collection in October/November 2023. Adrian and Susie collected £238.81 from you



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CHANTRY

The lack of a report last month was due to an administration error therefore my notes were not printed, apologies have been received (An 'administration error' is a very kind way of putting it but it was actually a complete foul up by your editor – apologies, Peter!).

The group service on February 4th should have been a communion service but sadly the vicar was feeling very poorly and had to return home. Valerie came to the rescue, and we held morning service instead. Thankfully the small congregation were very understanding and the service went smoothly, followed as usual by coffee and cakes. Thank you, Valerie.

It was lovely to see a young family in church the following week. We wish there were more of them.

Chantry church will be hosting the Stations of the Cross service on March 29th which will be led by Rev Martin Weymont. All welcome to this very solemn service.



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On Easter Sunday there will be a service at 11.00am as usual when the church will be decorated and hopefully look beautiful. At last, we have been given permission to go ahead with the alterations with the removal of a few pews and a new heating system. This will make the whole building more able to be used as a community centre without detracting from its original use, we look forward to this happening.

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Andrew and Richard have been very busy laying carpet. Thank you both very much! The kitchen area still needs attention to the electrics, but we are always hopeful that things will eventually get done.

We have had two new volunteers to help with the cleaning, thank you Sonia and Clare.

Maintenance

Date	Cleaning	Flowers
09-03-24	Dolly & Val	Lent
16-03-24	Sue	Lent
23-03-24	Sonia	Lent
30-03-24	All hands on deck to clean and decorate for Easter!	

VILLAGE MEETING MARCH 26TH 7.00PM HOLY TRINITY CHURCH CHANTRY

It's taken nearly three years, but permission has been granted by the Church of England to make the necessary alterations for Holy Trinity Church to be a community hub, as well as a church. Pews have been removed to provide more flexible space. The next stage is to upgrade the heating and lighting.

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Back in 2020, a village meeting agreed it was important that the church building was protected for the community. As a Grade 1 listed building it is an important heritage asset, but like many churches throughout the country, it will be in danger of falling into disuse and decay without a plan in place to take care of the building. There is no village hall in Chantry, so central to our plan was to make the church accessible to the community for non-religious events and activities (without losing its role as a church). To put this all in place we have created "Friends of Chantry" as a village organisation that will oversee the community use and support of the church building. Through organising events and activities, the aim is to encourage community involvement and to raise the necessary funds to maintain and upkeep the building. The purpose of the village meeting is to introduce the Friends of Chantry team and to present our plans for the future. We will also have a discussion about any residents' ideas for Chantry. We look forward to seeing you there. Everybody welcome.

PARISH WEBSITE www.whatleyandchantry.co.uk

Ellie Swinhoe, from Chantry, has joined the Parish Council and is completely overhauling the Whatley and Chantry website. Do check it out



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as it contains a lot of useful up-to-date and ongoing information for residents of Chantry and Whatley. There is a "Marketplace", which will be furnished with local businesses and services - you should have had a letter asking if you'd like to feature in this section of the website (free advertising!). Also don't forget that we have a Facebook group, simply called Whatley and Chantry - make sure that you check-in regularly for news and announcements.

GREAT ELM

GREAT ELM CHURCH NEWS

We are looking forward to a joint Mothering Sunday service with the congregation from Mells on Sunday March 10th at 9.30am when Robin Isherwood will take this Family Service.

During the course of the service we will be making posies to distribute. If there is anyone who would like to take Holy Communion Robin will add this on after the main Family Service.

Easter Sunday, March 31st. Following the 9.30 Holy Communion Service there will be the Egg Rolling competition down the hill at Elm Lane. This will be at 11.00am. All welcome.



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STEP IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION!

Hansons have recently repaired the steps leading up to the Tedbury Camp Quarry, greatly easing access up from Great Elm. This old quarry is a well-known site of scientific interest displaying a geological unconformity between different rock strata

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Hanson UK has rebranded to Heidelberg Materials. As well as aligning with our parent company, our new name better reflects the company we are today.

Our commitment to running our operations to the highest standards and being a good neighbour remains. Our Whatley quarry continues to supply aggregate to local markets by road and nationally via its dedicated rail link. We actively support local initiatives and regularly host school and college visits.

www.communities.heidelbergmaterials.co.uk/en/whatley-and-westdown-quarry-community-page



MELLS WITH VOBSTER

PIECING TOGETHER A FRAGMENTING WORD

March 22nd, 7.00pm, Mells Barn

On Friday, March 22nd, as part of a series of talks to raise money for Mells Community Village Shop, Sir Dominic Asquith will be speaking on ways to resolve some of the current challenges of world politics.

Dominic has served for 35 years as a diplomat in India, the Middle East and the Americas. He was appointed British Ambassador to Iraq, Egypt and Libya (2006-2012).

After retirement, he was recalled to be British High Commissioner to India (2016-2020). Prior to his diplomatic career, Dominic worked as a journalist, teacher and researcher in the Middle East, including in Lebanon, Jordan and the West Bank.

Like the BBC, who consult Dominic at moments of crisis in India and the Middle East, bring your own questions and seize the rare chance of listening to this brilliant and experienced political speaker.

The talk will be at Mells Barn, starting at 7.00pm.

Tickets, which include a glass of wine, cost £20 each and are available either from jillhenderson1@icloud.com, or from Mells Village Shop.

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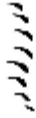
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RECOGNISE THIS TABLE?

This elaborately carved refectory table, dated May 1914, has recently been discovered in an old cottage near Mells. It was modelled on a rare Elizabethan table that was owned by the late Lord Lincolnshire

(Charles Wynn-Carington, 1843-1828) at Gwydyr Castle, in the Conwy valley, North Wales. The table has carvings representing lions, an elephant's head, an eagle and fleur de lis. An elephant's head and fleur de lis were elements of the coat of arms of the



Caringtons, and the makers of the table were Nicholls and Janes, of High Wycombe - the firm's name is carved along the side, along with the date May 16th 1914. There is an intriguing story regarding the original table, which connects it with N&J's MD Ralph Janes. Ralph wrote in a memoir published by the Cabinet Maker Magazine in 1951 that the late Lord had allowed him to spend a week at Gwydyr Castle, probably early in the first decade of the 20th century, taking take moulds and drawings of the furniture. Ralph's concluding comment: "I secured material for making many interesting and beautiful chairs, court cupboards, tables and stools. Very many of them are now gracing British, American and Russian homes." This table is likely to be one of

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the tables he was referring to, although exactly how it came to be in Somerset is a matter of ongoing research.

Nicholls and Janes also had a long association with the eminent architect Sir Edwin Lutyens, being the only High Wycombe manufacturers invited to contribute to his Queen Mary's Dolls House. N&J were also selected to make much of the furniture Lutyens designed for later commissions. Lutyens had a long association with Mells. Mells Park was built by Lutyens for the Rt Hon. Reginald McKenna in 1925 to replace an earlier house lost in a fire in 1917, but he had worked earlier for the Horner family on Mells Manor. According to an article on the Lutyens Trust website: "There is a strong sense, at Mells, of a village where Lutyens worked not just for clients but with friends". The table has been provisionally offered to High Wycombe Museum, but they are likely to want more details about its provenance – who was it made for and how did it end up in Mells? More information about Nicholls and Janes is on the Nicholls and Janes website, www.nandj.org.uk If anyone can throw any light on the previous location of the table or the significance of the date, May 16th, 1914, could they please email info@nandj.org.uk.

MELLS CAFE

The next PCSO visit is Wednesday March 20th at 10am

WHATLEY

PARISH NEWS, ST. GEORGE'S CHURCH CHURCH NEWS

Katie Gay reports that, despite the building works going on in the church, there will be a service of Holy Communion at 9.30 on Easter Sunday morning. Any help with flowers and church decoration will be very welcome. Come and see how we are getting on with the changes! Mary Scott has kept the church tidy during the previous month of the building work, but the rota is again in place.

CLEANING ROTA MARCH

2nd Pippa Witt *

23rd Alice Gooden*

9th Katie Gay*

30th Sue Pollock

16th Jenny Norris* * no flowers

VILLAGE LIFE

Congratulations to Jess and Rob Tyler-Boorer on the birth of their first child, a beautiful daughter. Marlie Tyler-Boorer was born on January 18th, the day after her mum's birthday, weighing seven pounds. We are delighted to welcome you into the village, Marlie.

DID YOU KNOW WE HAVE A PRIZE-WINNING SHIRE HORSE IN THE VILLAGE?

Bomber is a year old, born in the stables behind the church. Already in his short life, he has won silver awards in big local shows, Mid Devon and Gillingham and Shaftesbury.



Claire Baber fell in love with the breed as a teenager after helping cousins with their four black shires and two (ex-Whitbread) greys.

When Claire broke her hand milking, she decided her life would be a whole lot better with her own shire, so she thought she'd have a quick search on the internet. One mare took her fancy so she went to just 'have a look' but the horse came back to Whatley with her! This impulse buy of a grey shire mare has led her to becoming a breeder of these beautiful animals, the

largest of the four main heavy horse breeds. Claire now has four shires in Whatley, two grey and two blacks.

Once these beautiful shire horses worked all the fields around Whatley. They were our tractors and transport, pulling carts of crops

and villagers to market, able to pull three times their own immense body weight. Now they are on the risk list of rare breeds.

Thank you, Claire for keeping alive this link to our agricultural heritage in Whatley.

WACCA NEWS.

The skittles evening takes place on March 4th, so more news in next month's edition of Five Alive! It promises to be a fun family event.

Remember, that if you want any news or general village information published in the local parishes magazine, let me know or send directly to Peter Corbett, 5Alive editor, mellsmag@hotmail.com. lorna.thomas60@gmail.com



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