

IN-TOUCH

Great Hockham News Sheet

Issue No 543
December 2023

Merry Christmas



Editorial

The bonfire and fireworks on November 4th went ahead as planned, despite the heavy rain of the preceding days. The fireworks lasted a good half hour without a break. A big Thank You to all those who organised this spectacular display.

Details of the traditional Christmas activities planned for our village can be found in this issue. We are looking forward to seeing our beautiful Christmas tree, now a permanent fixture on the Green, brightly lit up throughout the festive season.

We are also looking forward to the visit once again of the Common Ground Theatre Company to the Edinburgh Hall on 30th December. They are well known throughout East Anglia and we are privileged to have them here.

Have a very Happy Christmas everyone

Carols on the Green

All are welcome to join us on the village green for Christmas Carols - Friday 22nd December at 7.00 pm.

We should have a very jolly half hour's singing and it makes a great start to the Christmas weekend.

Carol sheets are provided - let's hope for a starlit evening, with not too much deep, crisp and even snow, nor cruel frost!

We make a perfect Christmas card scene - all well wrapped up and heartily singing while gathered around the beautifully lit and decorated village Christmas tree.

I hope you can join us this year.

Vince Thurkettle

Annual Christmas Lunch

Coffee
Cake
Chat

We are putting on another delicious lunch to thank all our regular guests for your support through the year

Village Hall
9 December
12 noon onwards

Regular supporters £3 each
Guests £5 each

Numbers are limited so
please call Mandy on
07712 445477
to book your tickets



Need a lift? Bev Plummer is happy to organise.
Call her on 07741 270204 or 01953 498243



The Wayland Group of Parishes
Breckles, Caston, Great Hockham, Griston, Stow Bedon and Thompson
In the Church of England Diocese of Norwich

Worship in December 2023

Sunday, 3rd December,

First Sunday of Advent

10.30 a.m. United Holy Communion,
St. Botolph's, Stow Bedon

3.00 p.m. Christmas Concert,
St. Margaret's, Breckles

Sunday, 10th December,

Second Sunday of Advent

10.30 a.m. United Holy Communion,
St. Martin's, Thompson

6.30 p.m. Carol Service,
St. Margaret's, Breckles

Sunday, 17th December,

Third Sunday of Advent

10.30 a.m. United Holy Communion,
St. Margaret's, Breckles

6.30 p.m. Carols by Candlelight,
Holy Cross, Caston

Christmas Eve

10.30 a.m. United Holy Communion,
Holy Cross, Caston

5.00 p.m. Christingle Service with the Nativity
Tableau, Holy Cross, Caston

11.30 p.m. Service of Lessons & Carols,
St. Martin's, Thompson

Sunday, 31st December

First Sunday of Christmas

10.30 a.m. United Holy Communion
Holy Trinity, Great Hockham

Churchwardens Letter December 2023

Dear All,

As the excitement for Christmas and all the festivities builds, I thought I would focus on Advent for my Churchwarden's entry. As with many people today my own children, with the eldest now well into his teenage years, tend to think mainly of the calendars when they hear the word Advent and are much more focused on Christmas itself. To be fair though they have always been

fully aware of the religious meaning of Christmas and enjoy the carols and readings at a carol service as much as my wife and I do. This is my first year as a churchwarden so I too have learnt a few things about Advent.

Advent is observed in most Christian denominations and marks the beginning of the church or liturgical year. It is a time of preparation for the birth of Jesus Christ and also as a time of preparation for the second coming, or return of Christ. The word itself is derived from the Latin word 'adventus' which means 'coming.' Advent begins on the Sunday closest to the feast of St. Andrew the Apostle (November 30th) and is the first of four Sundays leading up to Christmas. Although it is not known when Advent was first observed, the history books can trace it back to the fourth century.

The weeks leading up to our modern Christmas are often a time of fun, parties, Advent calendars and even over indulgence, but back in Medieval times Advent was a time of fasting. During the fast you were expected to give up meat and dairy products. If you were well off you could replace meat with fish, but, of course, if you were poor many of these food types would be considered a luxury anyway.

The Advent wreath is a well recognised feature of the church at this time of year. It is usually a circle of greenery with five candles rising from it. There will normally be four red or purple candles surrounding a white or gold candle which is lit on Christmas Day. The four red or purple candles represent the four Sundays of Advent symbolising Hope, Peace, Joy and Love. Sometimes the candle lit for the third Sunday is pink as rose is the liturgical colour for joy. Names and traditions however do vary across the Christian denominations.

During this Advent period we have become very used to attending Carol services often called Nine lessons and Carols. Some churches will hold their service quite early on in Advent so by the time Christmas Eve arrives, some of us will have attended three or four different Carol services. It certainly puts you in the festive mood.

I hope you all have an enjoyable Advent period and also wishing you a Merry Christmas and a Peaceful New Year.

Jason Drake,
Churchwarden at Holy Cross Church, Caston

Common Ground Theatre Company

Saturday 30th December, 7.30pm

**MISS MIMPLE MEETS
THE ICE WOLF**

by Pat Whymark

Renowned amateur sleuth and part-time dog trainer Miss Jean Mimple is on a hiking tour of the Italian Alps, sightseeing and collecting the odd alpine to take back to her garden in St Mary Mirkin. In a remote hostel, she meets Dr Bridges, assistant to the mysterious Professor Ramekin, who lives in nearby Castle Pandoro.

The body of one of the servants at the Castle has been found torn to shreds, and Dr Bridges invites Miss Mimple to help with the investigation. The locals at the inn warn her of The Ice Wolf, or "Bestia Gelato" - half man, half wolf, half frozen dessert - which has terrorised the region for several months? Undeterred, the plucky Miss Mimple sets off to investigate.

Could the terrifying Ice Wolf be linked to Professor Ramekin's experiments? (Spoiler: Of course, it is!) Will Miss Mimple ever return to sleepy St Mary Mirkin, and will the odd alpine be happy there or will he miss his Italian roots?

A festive comedy with songs lasting 2 hours including an interval.

Tickets available from Chris Garrod (01953 498447 boxoffice@greathockham.org) or the Hockham Eagle.

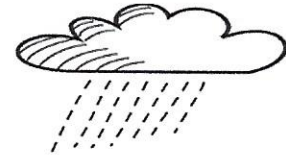
Limited tickets remaining so book now to avoid disappointment.

Ticket prices:

£13 Adults / £10 Under 21

October Rainfall

October 2023		161.5 mm
October 2022		40.0 mm
Jan-Oct 2023		718.1 mm
Jan-Oct 2022		335.6 mm
Highest Oct since 1979	2023	161.5 mm
Lowest Oct since 1979	1994	13.0 mm



Mobile Library Service

CHESTNUT SQUARE	10:55 – 11:10
SCOTGATE CLOSE	11:15 – 11:35

The mobile library visits on a THURSDAY.

Date of forthcoming visits:

7 Dec / 4 Jan / 1 Feb / 29 Feb / 28 March / 25
April / 23 May / 20 June / 18 July

Annual Fuel Allotment Awards
(Fuel & Furze)

The annual awards will be distributed in January 2024. Those wishing to apply should do so please to:

Clerk to Hockham Fuel Allotment
Chris Garrod
Oaklands
Vicarage Road
Gt Hockham
Norfolk
IP24 1PE

The closing date for consideration is 31st December 2023.

Father Christmas

Father Christmas has undergone a renovation and repaint ready for going up in the tree on the green, in early December.

A big thank you to Joe Garrod for all his hard work. It's much appreciated.

(Christmas Tree Team)

Please use the village bottle bank



Great Hockham Carpet Bowls

The Carpet Bowls Club meets every Tuesday evening at 7pm - 9pm in the Village Hall either for matches in the Spring and Autumn and / or for practice games between ourselves.

For more information - Tel 07737 046121

Robin



The Book Club meets on the first Tuesday of every month at 7.30 pm at The Eagle.

New members are welcome.

Village Hall Bookings December 2023

Regular Bookings

Monday	Reserved for	
	Parish Council	Evening
Tuesday	Carpet Bowls	Evening
Wednesday	Yoga	6.00-7.30pm
Thursday	Tai Chi	1.30-2.30pm
Thursday	Taekwondo	6.00-8.00pm

Dec 2023

Sat 2 nd	Sound Bath	2.30-4.30pm
Sat 9 th	Coffee, Cake & Chat	Lunch
Tues 12 th	Exploring Drawing	10am-1pm
Wed 13 th	Gardening Club	PM
Fri 22 nd	Kids Holiday Club	
Sat 30 th	Common Ground Play	7.30 pm

For Yoga information ring June on 01953 498343

For Taekwondo contact Dave Robb 01953 882848 or 07710 666133

For Tai Chi contact Gary Brighton 07952 971129

For Sound Bath contact Tracey Mathison 07748 213397

For Hall bookings contact Chris Garrod 07770 710307 or e-mail chris@oaklands4.co.uk.

Exploring Drawing

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Call melodie on 07531 875713

Email: melcookartist@icloud.com

Instagram @exploringdrawing

Facebook Melodie Cook Artist



Great Hockham Gardening Club



Wednesday 13th December - 2 pm

Club Christmas Event

Membership fees are £10 per annum

Indoor meetings are held in the Edinburgh Hall, Harling Road, Great Hockham, IP24 1NT on the second Wednesday of the month

Doors open 1.30 pm / Speakers start at 2 pm

Indoor meetings free to members / £3 to visitors

Outdoor visits are subsidised by the club but members may have to pay a small contribution for some visits

Secretary: Rosemary Martin 07563 505020

secretaryghgc@gmail.com

Website: greathockhamgardeningclub.org.uk

The content of the articles in In-Touch is the responsibility of the named contributors, not the Newsletter Committee. Anonymous items will not be accepted.

Christmas Trees

Manor Farm, Vicarage Rd, Great Hockham IP24 1PE

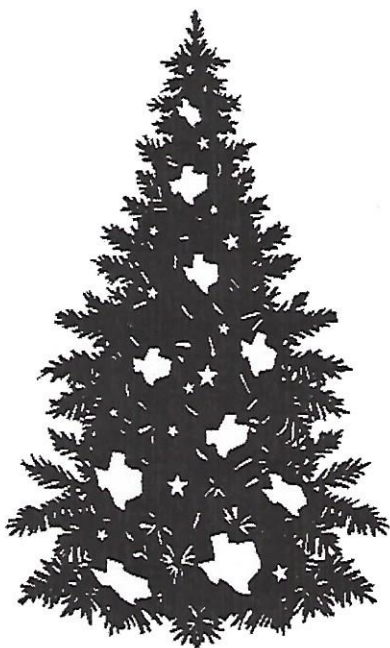
The secret to a great tree is freshness, ours are cut daily. You can't get better!

Open weekends - 09.30 to 4.00pm

25/26 Nov - 2/3 Dec - 9/10 Dec - 16/17 Dec

If you need your tree on a week day please call:

07704 897787 or 01953 498442



manorfarmchristmastrees.com

Vinyl Records

I have inherited a large pile of vinyl LPs and would like them to go to a good home!

They are mostly from the 1960s and 1970s - modern jazz, party dance and singers like Frank Sinatra, Astrud Gilberto - with some comedy like the Goon Show and Hancock's Half Hour.

If you would be interested in having these records, for free, please give me a call on: 01953 498 442.

Vince Thurkettle

Norfolk Wildlife Trust Breckland Local Group

Last month we had an extremely interesting talk by Anne Mason from friends of Thetford Forest. She spoke on the history of the Warrening industry in the Brecks and proved to be very popular.

On Wednesday December 13th we have a talk by BTO director, Ieuan Evans who will be Unravelling the Mysteries of Bird Migration. This will be at 7.30pm at The Methodist Centre, High Street, Watton. IP25 6AB. Festive refreshments will be served. Cost £2 members £3 non-members.

Please note that the first 2 talks of 2024 have had to be swapped around. So it's a NWT staff member giving an update from the reserves in January and Martin Hosier with foreign wildlife photography in February along with our AGM.

Fiona Roat

Hockham Streetlights

By the time you read this, hopefully all the streetlights owned by the parish will have been changed to a soft LED lamp, which should use far less energy in the coming years and be more reliable.

The parish council has had to bear this cost from the precept that you all pay in your council tax and at a cost of just under £7000 it's not a cheap job, but it's a way of trying to future proof the electricity costs that must be borne.

Please note we do not own the Scotgate Close lamps as these are Norfolk County Council's responsibility.

Anyone who sees an issue with any lamp outside of the Scotgate Close ones, please advise the clerk, on hockhampc@outlook.com who will report issues to the maintenance contractor.

Hockham Parish Clerk

THE EAGLE



Harling Road, Great Hockham, IP24 1NP 01953498893

Dates for your Diary

3rd December Sunday Roast (pre-book) 12 - 4pm

16th December Christmas Bingo 7pm

17th December Christmas Quiz and Draw 7pm

23rd December Pizza Truck 3 – 8pm

27TH December Big Fat Quiz of the Year 8pm

28th December All you can eat Breakfast 10am –
2pm (pre-book)

31st December Cheese and Wine Night (ticketed
event from 7pm)

We are still open for drinks as usual this evening.

Please pop in or call ahead of these events to book a
table.

Opening Hours

Mon - Thurs 12 - 2:30pm 6 - 11pm

Friday 12 – 11pm (Food available)

Saturday 12 – 11pm (Food available)

Sunday 12 – 11pm (Food available)

Please note times may differ over Christmas time with
hours and food serving times.

For more information on events and activities held at
The Eagle see our Facebook page.

Tree Works

Following an independent risk assessment, the
identified trees on Chestnut Square and the
green, were given a prune of all the dead wood
they contained. We hope this essential work did
not inconvenience anyone.

Hockham Parish Council

Armistice Day

On Saturday 11th November shortly before 11
a.m. about 20 people gathered at the Hockham
war memorial in the churchyard. The names of
the fallen of this village in the two world wars and
their respective regiments were read out before
the 2 minutes silence and the laying of wreaths.

Jamie Plummer, Hockham churchwarden, then
gave an interesting talk on the Matthews
brothers of Great Hockham who were named on
the memorial and who died during or as a result
of the First World War. It was sad to note that
here, as on so many other local war memorials,
the names of several members of the same family
were recorded. A detailed book of remembrance
is held in the memorial chapel in Hockham
church.

Christine Rogers

The closing date for contributions to In-Touch has
been extended by one week to the 22nd of each
month.

A series of articles by Chris Garrod on aspects of
Hockham's history will appear in In-Touch from
the January issue.

This is the last issue of the In-Touch Newsletter
that will be delivered to every household in the
village.

All those who have expressed an interest in
continuing to receive a paper copy have been
added to the distribution list, effective from the
January edition. The newsletter will continue to
be posted to the village website.

If you have not contacted us thus far but would
like to be added to the distribution list, please
either e-mail to intouchnewsletter@yahoo.com,
text to 07747 611890, or telephone 01953
498868 with your name and address.

School Birthdays



“Happy Birthday” to Noah R, Ryder, William, Thomas W, Bonnie, Rocky and Barnaby.



Great Hockham Primary School & Nursery

We have had a very busy half term here at Great Hockham Primary School, thinking about helping others. We have supported the Poppy Appeal through donating money for Poppies and a range of other items with Poppies on. A group of children visited the War Memorial at Holy Trinity Church, laying crosses and saying a poem to remember those who have fought for our country, in the past and currently.

We also supported Children In Need through wearing spotty or brightly coloured clothes and will be donating bags of sugar to local shelters and food kitchens to support the homeless, needy and vulnerable in Norfolk during these cold winter months. Our families have been really generous and we really appreciate it.

We now have lots to look forward to in preparing for Christmas. We will be cooking a Christmas meal ourselves, where the children will all participate with different roles, such as peeling vegetables and making the batter for Yorkshire puddings. Hopefully it will be a wonderful celebration, where all of the children will feel proud of themselves for what they have contributed.

We are planning a Hockham’s Got Christmas Talent Show, where the children can share their special talents with the whole school. We will then finish off the term by visiting Holy Trinity Church to perform a Nativity and a Christmas Celebration for all of the families to enjoy.

All of the children and staff have worked extremely hard this term and I am really proud of each and every one of them, they will certainly deserve a good rest when the holidays finally arrive.

Lastly and most importantly I would like to wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a Peaceful New Year from all of the children and staff at Great Hockham Primary School and Nursery.

Mrs L Hazard, Headteacher

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PAKISTAN... Working in Taliban country!!!

Continued from last month

Went to the work site, completed all the necessary and took stock of the task I had been brought all this way to do; I wished I hadn't looked. It appeared the whole of the generator control system had been butchered for another site somewhere else, now they wanted me to re build what they had. Oh my God, I didn't know where to start, plus the Gas Turbine has a problem with a massive cooling fan which was outside the building, so nothing could run until the contamination problem was sorted; a little bit of chicken and egg.

We decided Turbine first, so outside work to be done, but, oh dear, someone had other plans.



I managed to get this picture of my escort on the way back when no one was looking as photography was not allowed. Not the best pic but you can see the machine gun just in front of the man on the phone.

Typical working day:

After a somewhat sparse breakfast, we would climb into our "Orange Overalls" and journey to the work site with a small escort as it was approx. a mile only, then to work. As I said, we were outside sometimes

and inside a bit, but when we were outside in our orange overalls we stood out like a sore thumb and every so often we would hear "Ting" followed by a small "Crack". **WE WERE BEING SHOT AT!**

It appeared this was not Taliban, Al Qaeda or any other Muslim fanatics after a Westerner, it was the local people again (*if you remember I had this in Nigeria*). The big problem was the Government of Pakistan was extracting gas from the site we were on and making loads of money, but not one penny was coming back to the local area, the proof was the refugee camps all set up by the UN, Pakistan apparently contributed nothing much.

This business of taking pot shots at us went on the whole time I was there, and the bombing of the pipelines, well that carried on again, apparently, as I did not hear any more explosions.

Home Time.

Well we got as far as we could it was time to leave, so the same escort assembled, I said my goodbyes and got ready to get into the car, then who should turn up, my Muslim fanatic to sit with me in the car for the 4 / 5 hours on my journey back to Quetta....he didn't succeed in converting me, but what he did was gift me a token of his confidence that one day I would be a Muslim, a ring, and I still have this ring in a drawer at home, and every time I see this ring I almost start quoting the Koran!

The journey back was uneventful, apart from the constant preaching in the car and in true protection style we arrived back via a different route, and was I glad to be on that plane to Lahore!

Some of what I had to do I cannot write about or share, but I hope I can share some more about the travels of a contractor and some of the things we had to put up with, just to earn a pound.

Ken Neal

Defibrillator

The defibrillator is located in the telephone box by the Village Green.

Press the button to the right of the unit to connect to the emergency services who will give the code to unlock the cabinet.

Christmas Word Search

U S T S R S I O L L R S R A B E H A B O U S A R Y
 R U I F A V R S S D A G E S R A M R I E R G T T S
 S N N H Y F P M O N O E J Y E O U E S R J U O A U
 T R S G R S A S R R N N R A S S R B F C S C T T E
 S R E I E H J Y N E B A K S S S N E L A M G P H H
 S U L M L O N G M T M S O E E S E Y A E N N L R R
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 S O I E Y R S T C R C S R W R A F T C N P L N E I
 B E P E V I T S E F S A B N N B E T R R U C E K N
 E H Y D W E C B S P B E P A S L D C A P D H P I D
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 A J I S I A M C T S L I L D S M E S S D I O S T U
 R E I B T S N O W M A N A R E B S U L U D N E I A
 D A E Y I B K M O N S N I S S T E M O N S G H L R
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 U T E D I T E L U Y H U E M G L G T L P E Y I S N
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 S S S S D I E Y L L O H G R A R T U O L G W L G S
 R S M R S D M A S R J T N L C I N E S L H S G S B
 C O L S E A C I B E D R Y L N S E D T U R K E Y T

Baby Jesus

Carols

Donkey

Joseph

Pudding

Sleigh

Stuffing

Wise Men

Baubles

Christmas Tree

Eggnog

Mary

Reindeer

Snowman

Three kings

Yuletide

Brussels Sprout

Crackers

Festive

Pantomime

Rudolph

Stable

Tinsel

Cards

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Holly

Presents

Santa Claus

Star

Turkey

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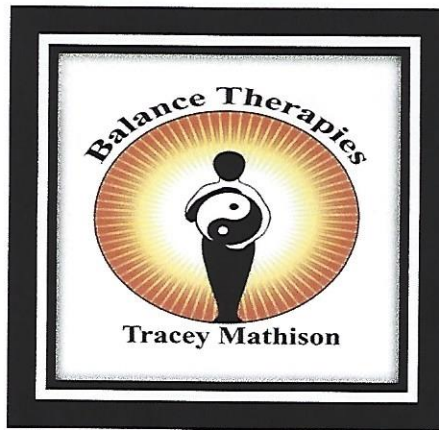
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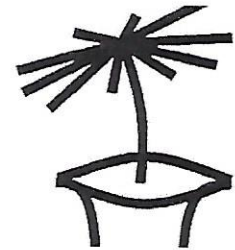
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