

FECKENHAM

January 2021

News



Published by Feckenham Church for the Village

Editor: Sasha Furey

feckenhamnews@gmail.com

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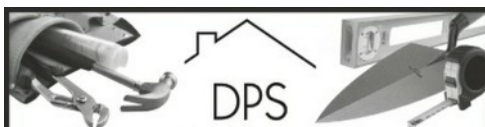
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Feckenham News in January

Editor's Note

Happy New Year everyone. We are pleased to produce another longer magazine thanks to your wonderful contributions. Please keep them coming!

You'll remember the painting by Ian Ridley, which was the front cover of the December 2020 issue - great news, this has been sold in aid of the Air Ambulance.

Dates for January



Send your articles for the February issue of Feckenham News by **14th January**

Thursday 7th January 7:30pm- Zoom Parish Council Meeting - see page 10

Does anyone have any information about the Startin family who lived at The Manor House, Droitwich Road in the 1990's? Rosalyn Startin died 1994, and Barry in 1997. There were two children. Please contact **Pat Onions** on **01527 404055** or email **ptcmo@blueyonder.co.uk**

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Front Cover

Henry, son of Charlotte and Paul Styler, delivering the December 2020 magazine on horseback - see page 9

Magazine online at www.feckenham.com

Many articles in Feckenham News are contributed by members of the public. They remain the responsibility of the writers and neither the production team nor the publishers can be held responsible for the views and assertions contained therein.

January Church Services

PARISH CHURCH of ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST

Priest-in-charge: Rev Wyn Beynon **07595313035**

Church Warden: Ann Mathews **892180**

Please contact Wyn for Weddings, Baptisms & Funerals at wynbeynon@gmail.com or Ann at ann@the-madison-group.co.uk

Church Website: achurchnearyou.com/church/18729 **Email:** info@feckenhamchurch.org.uk

Wychbrook Website: <http://www.wychebrook.co.uk>

There will be a **service on zoom every Sunday at 11.00am**. Please phone Ann Matthews for details 892180 or e-mail ann@the-madison-group.co.uk for the link to join.

Due to the ongoing pandemic we are still not able to say whether there will be any services in church in January. Up-to-date information can be found on the church noticeboard at the end of Church Walk and on the church website www.achurchnearyou.com/church/18729

If you would like to be kept up to date on events in the church and would like to join our e mail mailing list please send your details to jeff@the-madison-group.co.uk

Every weekday evening at 9.00pm there is a service of Compline on Zoom. Compline is a short contemplative service lasting about 15 minutes. If you would like to join again e-mail Jeff for the link.



FECKENHAM ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

St John Fisher & Thomas More

There is a live-streamed Mass on Sundays at 4.30pm. Fr. Tony Rohan will officiate. The link is: www.eventcast.uk/live

Note: Type the link into your browser on your computer. Do not use a search engine.



Fr. Anthony Rohan, The Presbytery, Redditch. Tel 63096

Local contact: Phylis Mott, Feckenham. Tel 893898



Bob and Amanda Gordon are pleased to announce the arrival of their second grandson Rhys Hunter Gaynon who was born in St Thomas's hospital London on March 8th. He has flourished this year, being able to demonstrate his newly learned walking skills on his most recent visit. They are looking forward to many more visits next year.

Jo and Dave Peate both in their early thirties moved into Valentine Cottage back in August, having moved just down the road from Hunt End. They are both enjoying exploring Feckenham's plentiful footpaths and watching the local wildlife in their garden. After a huge apple harvest from the tree in the garden, apple crumble will be a firm fixture on the menu for some time. They look forward to experiencing village life after Covid-19 restrictions have eased and getting to know many of you in the village.

Welcome to Claire and Mark Cull who recently moved into Tom and Ellie King's old house on the High Street. Ellie is 40 and Mark is 42:

"We moved into the village at the end of August, having previously lived in Ham Green just a mile away for around 5 years. We're both local - my family are originally from Solihull, although I spent most of my childhood in Studley. Mark's Mum is originally from Madeira (and is a fantastic cook!) but he grew up in Redditch with his family. I'm sure most of you have met Woody, or seen me being taken for a walk by him! He is our 5 month cocker spaniel who is quite bonkers and keeping us alert! I work for a pub company and am very passionate about the hospitality industry, Mark works in recruitment and travels around Europe with work, when it is safe to do so. We both enjoy walking and hiking, especially if there is a nice pub at the end. Mark is a keen golfer and occasionally fishes. I love to read and have recently started volunteering at the village shop. We'd both like to say a huge thank you to everyone for making us feel so welcome."

Thank you so much for supporting this years appeal, you have shown such kindness during these difficult times ! I really didn't think that we would have many boxes this year as we have all had to be very selective about when and where we shop. But I am delighted to report that the response has been simply amazing. Feckenham Village and Feckenham First School, Stoke Prior and Stoke Prior First School, Callow Hill Village, Wychbold, Upton Warren and Friends have packed and sent 291 gift filled boxes. I am also thrilled to tell you that we also received £580 in donations, this enabled the warehouse to make up another 232 boxes on our behalf, making a grand total of 523 boxes (that is a record breaker) plus some beautiful hand knitted items. Our boxes are going to Belarus this year they will be distributed in orphanages there. The children in these orphanages have next to nothing to call their own so they are going to have the best Christmas ever ! Together you have given some of the worlds most disadvantaged children something very special this Christmas a very special gift, you have given them the gift of hope. Let us all hope and pray that their circumstances will change and that they can all look forward to a brighter future. On behalf of all the children I would like to thank you for the joy you have given this Christmas and to wish you all a Very Happy and Healthy New Year. Lin If you would like to learn more about T4U please visit their website.



Thought for the Month

Rev. Wyn Beynon

Dear Friends,

Happy New Year!

When there's too much to say the only answer is poetry! This is well known, but worse for that as it still carries much truth...

Ring out, wild bells, to the wild sky,
The flying cloud, the frosty light:
The year is dying in the night;
Ring out, wild bells, and let him die.

Ring out the old, ring in the new,
Ring, happy bells, across the snow:
The year is going, let him go;
Ring out the false, ring in the true.

Ring out the grief that saps the mind
For those that here we see no more;
Ring out the feud of rich and poor,
Ring in redress to all mankind.

Ring out a slowly dying cause,
And ancient forms of party strife;
Ring in the nobler modes of life,
With sweeter manners, purer laws.

Ring out the want, the care, the sin,
The faithless coldness of the times;
Ring out, ring out my mournful rhymes
But ring the fuller minstrel in.

Ring out false pride in place and blood,
The civic slander and the spite;
Ring in the love of truth and right,
Ring in the common love of good.

Ring out old shapes of foul disease;
Ring out the narrowing lust of gold;
Ring out the thousand wars of old,
Ring in the thousand years of peace.

Ring in the valiant man and free,
The larger heart, the kindlier hand;
Ring out the darkness of the land,
Ring in the Christ that is to be.

Alfred, Lord Tennyson. Published in 1850, the year he was appointed Poet Laureate.

Best wishes, Wyn

The Village Christmas Card 2020

Ann and I would like to thank everyone who joined in with the card and donated so very generously. Thanks to Arthur for the photograph of last years 'Carols on the Square' a reminder of what a strange year we had, and hope for meeting again for carols in 2021.

Your participation raised a splendid £1220, with the Parish Church paying for the printing from their giving fund. This meant that £610 was sent to Breast Cancer Haven at Worcester Royal Breast Unit and £610 was sent to MacMillan. The Haven was particularly helpful to me recently, and as we were unable to hold the usual Feckenham McMillan Coffee Morning this year, we felt these were a good choice.

Jane White & Ann Matthews

Tea at Three

Chris Fletcher



The Tea at Three initiative for Ward 1 at the Alexandra hospital has continued with an amazing variety of delicious cakes being given by the generous bakers of Feckenham. Everyday, since the beginning of November, a cake or sometimes scones or brownies have been delivered to the staff who continue to work hard in the care of patients with Covid 19. They have been delighted by these treats and say that this has really lifted their spirits at a difficult time.

The cake delivery will resume in the New Year. Thank you so much to all those who have taken part and maybe others might be inspired to join the team. If so please contact **Chris Fletcher** on **01527 271234** and we would be delighted to welcome you to this much appreciated initiative.

Joy Styler 1929 - 2020

Joy was born on 12 June 1929 in Astwood Bank and was an only child. She was baptised Jocelyn Winifred but was always known Joy. In the early days she and her parents lived in the School House in Church Road, Astwood Bank with the then headmistress Miss Law. When Miss Law emigrated to Australia the family moved to Cyprus Avenue, Astwood Bank which remained her parents' home until they passed away.

When Joy left school, she started work in the accounts department at "The Gas Works" in Redditch and in her early days was a keen tennis player. She married her husband Eric at Astwood Bank church in May 1951 and moved to 10 Mill Lane with Eric and his widowed father and here she lived for the rest of her life. Joy continued working at "The Gas Works" until her two daughters, Angela and Karen, were born. She was then a full-time mum until 1967, when she started working for Tildawn Electronics, a company making road lamps which was based in the village. She moved up from the factory floor to delivering orders, became a buyer for the company and then eventually became a director. When the company moved to an Industrial unit in Alcester, she drove the minibus providing transport for the village ladies enabling them to continue working for the company.

From the moment she moved into the village she threw herself into village life becoming a keen WI member and Treasurer for many years. Her name was drawn out of the hat to represent Feckenham WI at a Buckingham Palace Garden Party sometime in the 1960's. The Astwood Bank WI representative was a friend she had grown up with in Astwood Bank so off the two of them went in their best outfits and hats for the occasion. She was a stalwart in organising the WI teas for the Open Garden Festivals, always leading from the front and using her cake making skills to the full. Her Christmas

cakes and mince pies were legendary at the WI Christmas Markets with orders being taken well in advance of the event. She was always willing and able to make cakes for the British Legion, the village school and other charity coffee mornings. Eric was the one washing up in the background. She has passed on her cake making skills to all four granddaughters.

She was a flower show supporter, regular church goer, fund-raiser by way of the church 100 club along with Eric, Ray & Eileen, was a PCC member and was PCC Treasurer and Feckenham First School Governor for a good number of years. We remember helping her make gallons of vegetable soup each year when the church was involved with the catering for Bonfire Night. In her 70's she started volunteering in the coffee shop at the Alexandra Hospital in Redditch. We have been reminded by some friends of the Midsummer walk overnight along the length of the Malvern Hills in the mid-1970's. We didn't see the sunrise due to mist and cloud, but we did find Joy waiting for us all, cooking bacon & egg sandwiches for everyone. It was only ill health that forced her to give up all these roles as she approached her 80's.

We are so very grateful to all the carers who came into their home and looked after mum (and dad) in particular, Sandra, who was with us for over eight years. Without them we could not have kept mum at home until the end of her life. She is now reunited with Eric, her husband of almost 65 years. Although the last years of her life were a struggle, we will remember her as she was before her last illness and for all she did and meant to so many people. The family would like to thank The Revd Canon Wyn Beynon, Mark Wheatley, the funeral directors and all our friends and neighbours for the help and support over many years and the thoughtful, kind messages and memories of Joy we have received & donations to Alzheimer's Society.

Angela Fletcher (Daughter)



OPEN BUT CLOSED...

At the time of writing Feckenham is in Tier 2 - which means that, in theory, the Village Hall could open. However, nobody would be allowed to “interact” with anyone whilst on the premises. In principle we could permit yoga, pilates and similar activities as long as the participants don’t talk to each other. The Hall, in consultation with the users, has decided to remain closed for the time being with a close eye being kept on the situation. The building is being maintained and the chance has been taken to replace the entire internal lighting system with an ecologically friendly and more economical LED system. We’re ready to open as soon as it’s safe for us to do so.

IMPROVEMENT FUND - THANKS!!

Despite having to operate under constraints the contributions to the Improvement Fund Draw have been flowing in and look to be close to the receipts we’d expect in a normal year. This Fund contributes a substantial amount to the Hall’s finances and helps to pay for necessary work which helps keep hire fees to affordable levels. We’re very grateful to everyone who has contributed in a year when the Hall’s hire income has been severely depleted. The first Monthly Draw results are below...

DRAW

The Village Hall’s **Improvement Fund Draw for March** was made at the meeting of The Trustees on 1st December.

Winners

November:

129 Michael & Pauline Bastik	£25
09 Ivor & Jenny Mason	£15
15 A. Clarke	£10

December:

16 Arthur Hind	£25
171 Dave Mitchell	£15
179 Phil & Erica Guise	£10

TREMENDOUS

While all the usual festivities have been subdued this Christmas at least the village has been cheered up by some fine displays of Christmas trees and lights. The fine specimen on The Square was provided by a mixture of generosity and ingenuity. Mrs Jane Bird kindly donated the tree – one of many she imported from Switzerland some years ago and one of a series she’s given to The Square - we’re very grateful. Tim Mayneord and Richard Dormer did the lumberjack act and Richard supplied and operated the machinery that winched it into place. The following day Ian Ridley went up the ladder to put the lights on – aided and abetted by Judy Hooker and Ian Bellion – and the result was rather pleasing... every so slightly wonky ... every so slightly eccentric ... but it got there, it worked and it was cheering. Our thanks go to everybody who helped.

MORE TREES

The Square’s trees have undergone their three yearly safety inspection and have passed the test. The inspectors spotted some dead wood in one of the Oak trees. This will have been removed by the time you read this. There are some preventative measures to be taken in the early part of 2021. The Square Committee commissions specialists to carry out these inspections in order that the trees can be maintained in good health and without the risk of falling branches causing damage or injury.

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Thank you to our Distributors Sasha Furey

As a child I dreamt of being picked up from school by pony, so when I saw Ava and Henry, members of our distribution crew, on their route from Feckenham First School to deliver magazines, I couldn't believe my eyes. What a great idea of Charlotte's, their mother, to incorporate the school pick up with volunteering to do the rounds with the magazines. I would like to thank all of our distributors for making the time and effort to deliver a magazine through each door in Feckenham. At the moment I am happy to say that we are all set going into this New Year with who's delivering where, but please keep an eye out for any changes, so that we can ensure that everyone gets a magazine. If you have any enquiries feel free to send an email to feckenhamnews@gmail.com or give Jo Warrilow a ring on 892059.



Feckenham C of E First School Jeannette Little



A warm 'Hello' from Feckenham Church of England School. Unfortunately we haven't been able to make our usual visits to the village over the past months. No:

Wake, Sports Day at the Cricket ground, Fun on the Square, Scarecrow Festival, Spring Show, Harvest Festival in the Church, Christmas Carol Concert, helping out at the Christmas lunch club and one of our favourites, a trip to FeckenOdeon for Father Christmas's whole school treat. We miss you!

We have however had a virtual visit from our lovely Open the Book Team who may I say produced a very professional on location story of Adam and Eve! We all thought it was read out and acted to perfection. The children thoroughly enjoyed watching it, so thank you to the team. We miss you too!

Although recent times have been and continue to be challenging, here at school we find ourselves in the enviable position of being surrounded by children who have the undeniable knack of bringing light relief to any situation. They have returned to school with joy and enthusiasm that has not waned and the novelty of 'hand sanitiser monitor' is still the prized goal of many pupils!

Feckenham CE School continues to grow and develop and as well as being a founding member of the Shires Multi Academy Trust, will be a primary school from September 2021 just as it started back in 1859.

We are excited about the future and as our mission statement says:

'With God we grow to live life in all its fullness'

Jeannette Little (Head Teacher)

The Friends of Feckenham Church Charity - Phil Guise

One of the fundamental principles of the Trustees duties is to promote the Church as a community asset for use by all as a social and recreation centre for the community whilst recognising the primary religious function. This principal must be promoted in harmony with the Village Hall which provides our community with such wonderful social and recreational facilities.

The Friends of Feckenham Church Charity was formed a few years ago to provide financial support for the upkeep and maintenance of our Church, St John The Baptist. As you will appreciate, there is a constant need for finance to fund the various maintenance projects that need attention. Over the past 4 years, significant funds have been raised from the benevolence of local charities and the generosity of people in the locality and fund-raising events particularly noting the triennial Open Garden weekend. These funds have refurbished and restored a number of stained-glass windows sorely in need of attention; a new sound system; refurbishment of the King George III Coat of Arms; tower access improvements; drainage issues and many more. There are more projects to finance.

The Trustees work closely with The Parochial Church Council (PCC) which is the body having primary legal responsibility for the Church and Church yard. In essence the Trustees assist in the funding requirements of the Church.

We hope that you feel the same about your Village Church as we do. It is a vitally important part of our community and must be maintained as such.

The Trustees would welcome any suggestions from the community regarding the improvement of the church or the churchyard.

Furthermore, if anyone would like to become a Trustee, please let me know. We currently have 9 Trustees (not necessarily all regular churchgoers). We are limited to 12 but each Trustee is considered for re-election every 3 years. We meet every 6 to 8 weeks.

If anyone has any queries, please contact me and I will do the best I can to answer your questions.

Thank you, Phil Guise

Trustee, Secretary to the Board of Trustees,
philguise1@gmail.com

Feckenham Parish Council

Feckenham Parish Council meetings are, in common with all local council meetings, currently being held using Zoom video conferencing. The public is entitled and welcome to attend all such meetings but, because some Council meetings have been “bombed”, we are no longer able to publish access details. The next meeting will be on **Thursday, 7th January at 7.30pm**. If you would like to attend please contact the Clerk for the access codes: clerk.feckenhampc@feckenham.com or phone 01527 892522



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Happy New Year Everyone! Here's hoping that the year ahead is a lot less traumatic than the one we have just endured. During the last 12 months, we have realised how important our village shop is in the day-to-day life of Feckenham.

Many of you have told me that it has proven to be a shopping lifeline. We have successfully managed to keep trading (albeit on slightly reduced hours) throughout the pandemic due to the amazing dedication of our volunteer staff. So, my thanks go to all of them and also to all of you who have supported us during the last few months. As a result of that support, we are enjoying record trading levels and hopefully at the end of the year we will be able to report a record profit.

The Board has always taken the view that we should distribute a proportion of the Shop's profit within the community by supporting Village events and organisations. The more the Village supports the Shop, the more we can contribute to village life in the form of donations and sponsorships. Therefore I am especially delighted that we will be making a donation of £5,000 towards the Feckenham Conservation and Biodiversity Project. Our sponsorship will be targeted towards the restoration of the historic moats in Feckenham field and the enhancement of the environment surrounding the site of King John's Hunting Lodge. I am also hoping that as life slowly returns to normal, we will be able to support other upcoming Feckenham events such as The Flower Show, The Horse Show, The Wake, Open Gardens and The Scarecrow Weekend. Fingers crossed that they can all go ahead this year and that 2021 will be a lot more enjoyable than 2020 has been.

It is also good news that we have agreed with our landlord an extension of the shop lease until October 2028. It means that going forward we

have greater security of tenure, thus enabling the Board to keep reinvesting in the fabric of the premises, which we intend to do this year by improving the Shop's external seating area.

So, thank you once again for supporting us last year and we will continue to do our best in meeting your shopping needs throughout 2021.

Please remember:

Shop Safe - Shop Local - Support the shop that supports Feckenham

Alan Slater

Chairman.

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HAPPY NEWYEAR!

Everyone at Swansbrook Radio wishes all of our listeners a Happy and Healthy New Year - and may it be a great improvement on the previous one!

We're looking forward to maintaining and improving our service throughout 2021 and to reporting from the many events and happenings as the village gets itself back into gear after its enforced hibernation.

GIVE USA HAND....

Swansbrook Radio is entirely run by volunteers. We're a bit short staffed at the moment and would be delighted to hear from anyone who'd like to join us. We're looking for...

NEWS REPORTERS AND PRODUCERS

Since the untimely passing of our founder, Stuart Knowles, we haven't been able to maintain the high standard of news and current affairs output he brought to the station. We need people to spot and follow up local happenings, we need people to carry out interviews and write news stories and we need people to present those stories on air. If you'd like to do any or all of these things we'd love to hear from you. This is a voluntary activity - so you can do as much or as little as you wish. We have the equipment and can train you in the technicalities. Please get in touch to find out more.

STATION ADMINISTRATOR

We need somebody to look after Swansbrook's finances, take care of the routine licence returns and generally keep us on the straight and narrow. It's a job that shouldn't occupy anything more than an hour or so every now and then.

If either of these roles interests you or if you think you can help in any other way, please email us at radio@swansbrook.com

The FeckenOdeon Cinema Society Ian Bellion



The FeckenOdeon wishes all Members and Cinemagoers a Very Happy New Year and hopes to be back in full operation during the early part of 2021.

Current conditions make it impossible to predict when we can start to show films again but please rest assured that we shall restart as soon as is safe to do so. Please keep an eye on our website and notice boards for news of our first shows.

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We are now in what we would normally regard as the “festive” season but it is a very different one for all of us as Covid still dominates our lives.

It is a quiet time of year at the club – the wickets have been repaired, renovated and treated in preparation for the winter and their regeneration ahead of a possible return for cricket in April. We'll keep our fingers crossed on that.

Not much can be done on the field due to the soggy conditions – the last mowing was in early November. We did manage to carry out some cleaning up of the stream that forms our Northern boundary, cutting back vegetation and removing debris that would inhibit the flow of water down to the Whirly Hole.

Our essential machinery (mowers, rollers etc.) have been reviewed and priorities agreed for maintenance and repair over the winter – if only we had heating in the shed! Regarding the shed, we recently fixed three new plaques to the front wall in the memory of people who have been significant in the birth and development of the club. These included the redoubtable Alf Bennett, who passed away 12 months ago.

Covid forced major changes to matches - no use of changing rooms was allowed and neither was the traditional cricket tea permitted. There were mixed views regarding the latter and Worcestershire clubs were asked to vote on whether teas should be abandoned permanently. The traditionalists won by a narrow margin. As with many areas of life, the pandemic has caused a re-examination of what was seen as normal.

However, let's be optimistic that an end is in sight and so I'll leave you with a joke.

A man called the hospital where his pregnant wife was admitted. He was accidentally connected to the Lord's Cricket Ground.

"So how did it go?," he asked.

The person on the other side of the line said, "We've got four out and expect to have the rest out before lunch. The last one was a duck."

I'll get my coat.

THE IRONING CENTRE

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If you would like some help then please contact JANE BULL, Clerk to Feckenham Parish Council either on 892522 or clerk.feckenham@feckenham.com and we will be in touch (& the help is free!). Any goods will be left on your doorstep. More updates on our local radio: swansbrook.com

NOTE: Coronavirus is contagious. Please take every precaution to ensure you are spreading only kindness – Avoid physical contact (keep at least 2m distance from others) and Wash your hands regularly

Feckenham CE First School

Feckenham CE First School have a vacancy for a Foundation Governor at the school. Governors play an important role and the vacancy we have is for someone with a Christian ethos who can support and develop Christian aspects and can commit time and effort for approximately six meetings per year. If interested please contact Suzanne Evans, Clerk, Feckenham CE First School on 01527 892756 or office@feckenhamfirst.worcs.sch.uk.



Jane White has been editor of the *Feckenham News* for over 30 years. Now that Jane and Oliver are moving away from Feckenham, it is only fitting that we thank Jane for her sterling contribution over the decades and to look back over her time at the helm.

In the mists of time 'Vicar Bill' (Rev. Herbert Bill) was not only the vicar of Feckenham but also editor of our magazine. Jane tells me that a Gestetner duplicating machine was used back then. This was quite an involved procedure. The text was typed, often by Jane, using a manual typewriter onto a stencil - a thin sheet of paper with a wax coating which was cut into by the typewriter. This stencil was then the master copy used for the duplicating process. To the casual spectator, the Gestetner machine appeared to be a very intricate mechanism for covering the operator in printer's ink.

Jane became the lead person for the magazine in 1987, taking over from Arthur Newbould and bringing a change in editorial style. A team was formed for producing the *Feckenham News* and the first 'team issue' (Jane still has a copy) hit the streets in September 1987. The team in that issue is given as Jane, who was also responsible for 'church matters', monthly diary, forthcoming events, meeting reports, clubs and societies; Ian Crook - sports clubs plus the art-work for the magazine; Angela Fletcher - births, deaths & marriages, The Flower Show, bell-ringers; Carol Onions - new residents plus village hall. Adrienne Newland - her 'Newshound' page; Antonia Pulsford - 'Letters to the Editor', commercial advertisements and personal advertisements. Around 1990, Ian Bellion joined the team and he has been producing the 'What's On' middle page spread since that time. In January 1994, Jo Warrilow joined the *Feckenham News* team to look after the advertising and manage the revenue associated with advertisements. This is an important role as the revenue from advertising is used to support the production costs. It is to her

great credit that Jo has looked after the advertising in *Feckenham News* from that time right up to this year, over quarter of a century. Jo is now handing over to Mary Smith and we're delighted that Mary has taken on this important role and that Jo is willing to mentor her as she 'learns the ropes'.

Back in those days, the *Feckenham News* was produced by a 'cut and paste' function before going off to the printers. This did not involve using keys on a computer to highlight appropriate text but instead exploited the older technology of a pair of scissors and a pot of glue. When the production team was formed in 1987, Jane soon became sole 'stick & paster/editor', to use her own words. The *Feckenham News* was strictly black & white in those days of course, except for one November issue when the black & white front cover was overlaid with red ink, to produce a red poppy for Remembrance Sunday. Talking of front covers, they have their own story. In 2000, they were hand-drawn scenes usually by a member of the Feckenham Art Group and printed in black & white. Cover artists included Lew Howe Bennett, Norman Ward, Gerry Cordes and Sally Roundell. In 2009, colour came to the front cover drawings and in 2011 coloured photographs took over, allowing more people to contribute to the front cover image. Computer input into the production of the *Feckenham News* started in 1995 with Ian Bellion being key to shepherding the new technology into the production team.

As you know, production of the *Feckenham News* was suspended earlier this year due to COVID and Jane felt that after all these years, it was time for a new person at the helm with fresh ideas, so we were looking for someone to whom Jane could hand over the editorial baton. Up stepped Sasha Furey (hurrah!), who offered her enthusiasm and was keen to give it a go, with the support of Jane and Ian Bellion as required, until she finishes her school studies in late summer 2021. This is actually the second issue of the *Feckenham News* with our new editor, so well done Sasha.

Although the production of the magazine embraces cutting-edge 21st Century

technologies, the distribution system is reassuringly 19th Century, with hard-copy magazines being posted through the letterbox of c.450 houses in our parish every month by a band of volunteers walking around our village (an on-line edition is also available at www.feckenham.com). On the basis of 'many hands make light work', if you feel that you can give a little bit of your time, once a month, to help distribute some copies of Feckenham News, please give Jo Warrilow a bell (892059).

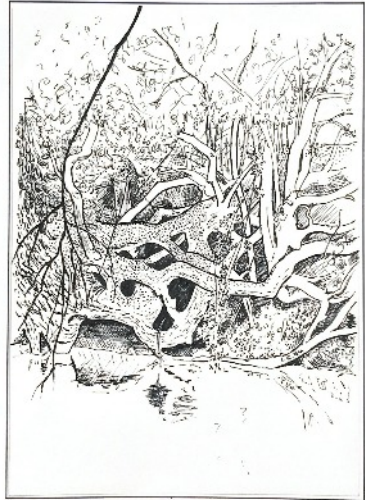
I'd like to thank Jane for sharing her memories with me. On the front of every Feckenham News it states "Published by Feckenham Church for the Village", so I would like to thank Jane White and Jo Warrilow on behalf of the PCC and the congregation of Feckenham Church for their sustained dedication and commitment to the Feckenham News over many decades – outstanding.

Prof. Mark Wheatley
(Lay-Chair of Feckenham Church PCC)

FECKENHAM

May 1994

News



Published by Feckenham Church for the village
Editor: Jane White - Tel: 893281 (Copy date 14th)

FECKENHAM

January 1996

News



Published by Feckenham Church for the village
Editor: Jane White ☎ 893281 (Copy date 12th)

Around and About



FECKENHAM PARISH BOUNDARY c. 1040

After writing about "Beating the Bounds" briefly in last month's Feckenham News, I thought you might find the following description by Liz Adams of the 19th century parish boundary interesting. Liz has kindly agreed to me using it, and has agreed to write an article about an early 17th century description she has transcribed, for a future magazine.

The description should be used with an Ordnance Survey 1:25000 map.

Starting from the corner of Heathfield/Witchfield Road, Netherch, continue along Birchfield Road towards Bredless Grove. At Bredless Cross continue down Evelyn Road to Crumbs Cross roundabout, continue down Evelyn Road as far as Daptail End. At Daptail End the boundary continues behind the houses on the left hand side (looking towards Bredless) until the cross roads at Folsand Bank, where it follows the road again. Continue towards Bredless until you reach Edgloak Lane. Turn right down Edgloak Lane until the road bears left. The boundary then leaves the road and follows what is now the modern Co. Canal. Boundary across the fields to Hall View on the right hand end of the Droitwich Road at Saurneck.

The Boundary continues to follow the Co. Canal. Boundary right the way round to Mouch Farm, along Brandon Brook, up the boundary to Ben Hall Mill, along the boundary and Eye Brook to Forest Bridge. The Boundary follows the road for a short distance then follows the Co. Canal. Boundary across what are now people's front gardens. Across to the other side of the road at the top of Bentley Green for a short way. Still following the modern boundary past Moss Farm, Upper Bredless Farm, round the Hall House, along the road towards Hunsda Brook for a short way, then joins the modern boundary again across the fields to Bentley Lane, along Bentley Lane until just before Upper Bentley Farm where the modern boundary continues across the fields nearly to the 18th century cottage. Continue along modern boundary to the back of Cranford Farm. At Cranford Farm the boundary diverges from the Co. Canal. Boundary and runs along the boundaries of the back gardens of the houses which front Cranford Lane on the left hand side (looking towards Bredless). Cross over the road and continue in front of Bredless Farm then along the boundaries of the back gardens of the houses which front Heathfield Road on the right hand side (looking towards Redditch). Finally joining up with the original starting point at the house on the corner of Heathfield/Birchfield Road. On the right hand side, looking towards Redditch.

The Making of 9 Lessons & Carols Paul Furey

And what a Christmas that was. We do hope that you've enjoyed listening to your village's radio station as much as we've enjoyed putting the programmes together for you – none more than the virtual 9 Lessons and Carols service that aired for the first time on the 20th of December (and is still available 'On demand' at www.swanbrook.com).



There's quite a bit of faffing around that goes on in the background in putting programmes together and indeed you may even have asked yourself "how did those marvellous, clever, talented people over at Swansbrook Radio manage to record a whole carol service in lockdown?"

Or you may not have.

Nevertheless, we're jolly glad that you asked and, never shy in coming forward, invited or otherwise, we thought that we might take up a few column inches in this august publication to reveal how this programme was made and to sing the praises of all those who made it possible.

Deep breath everyone...

Back in the days, post Lockdown I and pre Lockdown II your dedicated Swansbrook team got together in a pre-booked summer house behind the Rose and Crown for one of our production meetings at which we plan and scheme over a lemonade or two. Somewhat less lively and much less fun, in the absence of our late, great leader, Stuart Knowles, we nevertheless managed to conjure up a few ideas for how some of Christmas might be saved from the maws of what promised to be a bit of a beast of a winter.

A season which would almost certainly see churches dark, cold and devoid of the sounds of carols and the smell of mulled wine. Village squares un-tramped by the cold, muddy feet of eager carollers huddling around a village tree, fondly belting out the old favourites. Town and country pubs alike, un-troubled by over-enthusiastic patrons.



"Why don't we do a virtual 9 lessons!" came the cry from behind one of the flagons of frothy ale (although it may equally have been a sparkling water but that reads a lot less well). Either way, the idea survived for longer than our freedom and...



Vicars were consulted, Church wardens alerted, readers recruited, singers located (sadly not our own choir but others with recording contracts already in place) and in a jiffy we had all the ingredients.

It then became a question of how to capture voices without breaking social distancing rules and yet maintaining some sort of sound quality. Having toyed with the idea of bringing all the lesson readers to the church for a little light 'reading in the arctic' training we decided that there was nothing for it but to take the microphones to the readers.



With the help of booms, special, highly directional microphones and a few other bits of electronic wizardry, high street front door steps, hedgerows, village primary school classrooms with their teenie tiny chairs, living room windows, graveyards and

blustery hilltop gravel driveways all saw action as unlikely, temporary recording studios. But 'the talent' in all instances was unfazed by the unusual circumstances and nine lessons were soon in the can (in the British sense). And if you listen very carefully, you might just hear the odd extra voice of a wild creature singing or barking in the background.

Although, we should mention that one performer did have to brave the near-arctic conditions of our beloved church to perform the opening and closing pieces that you heard in the service.



Then it was back to the studio to chop out the "one two one two, testing testings" and the "Peter pipers picking their pickled peppers" and to erase the revving traffic of the High Street which originally accompanied some of Tommy East's reading. Thence onto sound levels...

hard-limiting the stronger voices and finally 'compressing' the whole lot to our standard -3 decibels so that our listeners wouldn't have to keep adjusting the volume controls on their sets to accommodate the differences between strong and quiet voices or volume changes in

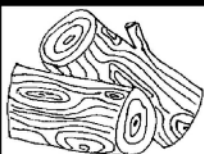
the music. And finally, (almost there now) the big sewing session which involved seamlessly bringing all the components together to make them sound more or less like they were recorded all at the same time, with everyone there.

And as that famous TV mongoose has been heard to say on more than one occasion: "simples!". But we really, really couldn't have done it without the great readers, researchers and organisers.



Perhaps this year we'll... (Best not eh... Ed.)

(Three readers not pictured here: Phil Tricklebank, Vianne Furey, Tony Mortimer and John Calvert.)



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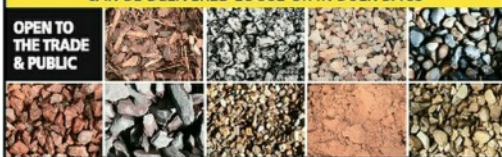
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