

MONACHORUM MATTERS

FREE

Issue 55, December 2023

The newsletter for Zeal Monachorum and St Peter's Parish



*Could we have a White Christmas this year?
Thanks to Mike Bostock for this delightful wintry celebration.*

EDITORIAL

Christmas approaches and we come to the end of another calendar year. In 2023 on the home front, we have celebrated the coronation of King Charles III, seen an enormous rise in the cost of living and, though COVID is still with us, for most people it appears to have been relegated to little more than the status of a heavy cold. On the international front, the war in Ukraine continues, followed more recently by the horrendous Hamas attack in Israel and its retaliation. All around the world the weather has caused enormous damage and suffering to many people. The bad news seems to outweigh the good news.

But here in Zeal we can be proud of one particular thing – our support for the local Foodbank has unwaveringly continued. And despite a considerable increase in demand, we know from the monthly reports in this newsletter just how much that support is valued. I believe this unquestionably demonstrates what a caring community we live in. Doubtless, there are dozens of other unknown examples of our parishioners' charitable acts, and long may it continue.

During this festive season the Editorial Group wishes all our readers and advertisers a very Merry Christmas and a Happy and Healthy New Year. We thank you for your continued support.

DEADLINE FOR JANUARY ISSUE - 8 DECEMBER

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COMMUNITY NEWS

VILLAGE EVENTS IN DECEMBER

- Sat 2 Dec Advent Fayre, St Peter's Church, 2 - 4pm
Wed 6 Dec WI – 6.50pm at the Waie Inn, Christmas meal – see page 6
Fri 8 Dec Christmas party at the Waie Inn, call Ken Hogg, 82400
Sat 9 Dec Market, 10 – 11.30am at Village Hall, bacon butties and more, see below.
Mon 11 Dec Village Walk, meet 2pm at the bus stop.
Wed 13 Dec Village Hall Christmas Bingo doors open 7pm for 7.30, entry £5

Village Hall

Saturday 9 December: 10-11.30 **Village Hall Market**. As well as the usual stalls, this month's special will be the sale of bacon or fried egg butties - come along and treat yourself, then you'll be able to face up to the Christmas shopping!

Coffee mornings: For many years a weekly coffee morning has been held in the Village Hall. In the last six months, as numbers attending dwindled, these changed to monthly on the first Wednesday. In November, it seems no-one wanted to come to the hall and three of us decamped to a nearby house where we passed a very pleasant hour. Until the hall environment can be improved, it might be better to meet in someone's warm home, at least during the winter months. Previously, it's been on a Wednesday but it doesn't have to be. If anyone would like to join in and, perhaps, host a group meeting, please contact Jan on 82571; email jansummerszm@gmail.com. Hopefully we can meet in December.

Christmas Cards

Many people found it helpful last year to have their village Christmas cards delivered for them by 'the Elves of Zeal Monachorum'. Those same elves are willing to deliver again this Christmas and will leave a box for your cards in the church from Friday 8 December until Friday 22 December. The box will be emptied daily and all cards will be delivered by Christmas Eve. Please make sure envelopes are sealed and that the recipient's full name and address are very clear. Happy Christmas.

Rainfall October rainfall - 138mm. By the end of October, we'd had more than the rainfall for the whole of 2022. Let's hope 2024 will be drier!

Mobile Library

I regret to say that the Mobile Library service is to be decommissioned by February 2024. Devon's cabinet unanimously approved the plan on 8 November. There is no visit by the Mobile to Zeal in December as Christmas disrupts the schedule. There may be a visit in January but the published timetable doesn't cover 2024. If I find out the date, I will let regular users know and put posters on the notice boards.

Erica

CHRISTMAS QUIZ

Save this for Christmas Day and get all the family involved – answers on Page 11

1. How many ghosts show up in Charles Dickens *'A Christmas Carol'*?
2. According to the song, what did my true love give to me on the eighth day of Christmas?
3. What is the best-selling Christmas song ever?
4. Which three of Santa's Reindeers have names beginning with 'D'?
5. Which company was the first to use the image of Santa Claus in its advertising?
6. Which Christmas item was invented by Tom Smith in 1847?
7. In which American state would you find the city of Bethlehem?
8. In which year did Queen Elizabeth II deliver her first televised Christmas message to the nation?
9. Who composed the music for the festive seasonal ballet *'The Nutcracker'*?
10. Thousands of what marched on London from Norfolk just before Christmas each year in Victorian times?
11. Which Monarch delivered the first Royal Christmas Day message?
12. In Charles Dickens' *'A Christmas Carol'*, what was the first name of Scrooge?
13. Which Christmas song contains the following lyrics: *'Everyone dancing merrily in the new old-fashioned way'*?
14. How many different types of birds are mentioned in *'The Twelve days of Christmas'* and what are they?
15. How many scrabble points will you get for the word 'Christmas'?

FISHING CLUB CHAT

Hi All

Since completing the work on the island, for which we once again thank everyone for their magnificent efforts, we have had storm Ciarán; it has left its mark but, fortunately, we did not get the full brunt. What we got was masses of rain which has brought the levels of the lake to overflowing. This can only be a good thing as it helps to re-oxygenate our water. Pete Henshaw has recently had some nice bream and the lake is fishing really well.

We still have a few calendars left, so if you are wanting to send some away for Christmas, please let us know asap. Telephone 01363 82400 or 07749 329832.

A Happy and Healthy Christmas to all, tight lines

Ken and Jane

GOTLAND GIN

To celebrate a friend's special birthday, I researched tickets for a Gin Experience which led to the discovery of Gotland Gin at Highampton. Here, briefly, is the Gotland Gin story...

'After completing careers in the British Army, Dawn and Mark relocated to Devon. Both lovers of animals, we decided to set up our own smallholding amongst the rolling hills of West Devon. Gotland sheep were a favourite on the smallholding from the beginning. This is a very tactile breed of sheep originally from Gotland, an island off the coast of Sweden; they became the inspiration for our gin and remain an important part of West Devon life for us. After a busy day on the smallholding, we both enjoy relaxing with a glass of gin and tonic overlooking our flock, which gave us the idea to create our own hand-crafted premium gin. In order to create a unique product and maintain the link with our Gotland sheep, we explored a variety of Scandinavian fruits such as the lingonberry and, after much experimenting infusing a diverse range of botanicals, Gotland Gin was born'.

A visit to Gotland Gin is a very special experience and, if you like gin and sheep, one not to be missed. Dawn and Mark have created an outside bar in which visitors can relax and unwind with wonderful views of rolling countryside that surrounds their small holding, while sampling their amazingly smooth and refreshing gin and meeting the sheep that were the inspiration behind the unique drink. The pictures below illustrate what to expect from your visit and I can guarantee that you will get a warm welcome at Gotland Gin from Dawn, Mark and the sheep. They will be holding a Christmas Fair on 1 December; for details of this and other forthcoming events check out their website: gotlandgin.co.uk.

Jan Summers



A view taken from inside the barn giving a glimpse of the view outside and showing what you are greeted by on your visit.



LEFT: Part of the Gotland Gin experience in Spring - cuddling a lamb. But even when there are no lambs, the adult sheep are very keen to get some attention from visitors.

BELOW: the incredible view over the Devon hills from outside the barn.



ZEAL MONACHORUM WI

Our November meeting took us to the Waie Inn for skittles and a snack afterwards. Attendance was great, much to my surprise, and it was a lively evening with the chatter non-stop, as you might imagine. Skills were varied but no bones were broken, so we live to attend our next meeting which will be our Christmas Meal. This will take place at the Waie Inn and members are politely requested to arrive just before 7pm in order that we might eat as soon as possible after that.

Our first 2024 meeting will be on January 3 and will specially meet the needs of those members who have requested lessons in knitting, crochet and whist. In addition, member Jess will have a craftwork sale. January is our bring and buy month so please bring items to donate and hopefully others might be tempted to purchase; all sales will help towards our WI funds.

We gained two new members in November and are anticipating more in the new year. Visitors are always welcome and you may attend three meetings @ £1 per visit before making a decision to join or not. Merry Christmas to one and all and a healthy 2024.

Jan Breal, President

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ST PETER'S CHURCH

Dear Parishioners,

As I write this article, we have just received the very sad news of the death of our vicar Robert. We give thanks for his ministry in what seems such a short time of being our vicar. I know he would want us to continue to grow our churches as we move forward, something he has talked about a great deal over the last few weeks. We extend our condolences to Steph, his wife, and their family and I am sure we will all hold Robert and Steph in our prayers over the coming weeks. *May he rest in peace and rise in glory.*

As we move from the season of Remembrance, it is time to turn our thoughts to Advent - a time of getting ready, not just cards, presents, decorations and Christmas dinner, but what Christmas is about, the birth of Jesus Christ. The story of Christmas is so familiar but never fails to excite us. As Christians, Christ is the centre and focal point of all our celebrations, as we come together to worship, can we truly have one without the other? We look forward to a busy December beginning with our Christmas Fayre on the 2nd. Everyone is welcome to join us for any or all of our services.

Christmas at St Peter's

Most of us have heard the good news of the Christmas story many times but it appears as new to us as when we first heard it. We begin with a service of lessons and carols on Sunday the 17th. A collection will be made for a children's charity. The service will be followed by mince pies, mulled wine and coffee/tea. We continue our celebration on Christmas Eve with Christmas Communion at 9.30pm. As we are still in the season of Advent the church will be decorated with greenery and candles for the carol service, flowers can be added for Christmas Eve. The church decorating will take place on Saturday 16th. If you are able to help please come, we can always use extra pairs of hands.

Rotas for December

3 December, 10.00am

Common Worship year B begins

First reading
New Testament

Advent 1

Isaiah 64: 1-9
Mark 13: 24-37
Sidesman
Church Cleaner

Family Service

Mr Tony Brealy
Miss Lynn Warren
Mr Colin Crothers
Margaret Down

There are no flowers in Advent and the Altar vestments are Purple

10 December, 6.30pm

Old Testament reading
New Testament reading
Gospel

Advent 2

Isaiah 40: 1-11
2 Peter 3: 8 -15
Mark 1: 1-8
Sidesman

C W E

Mrs Tina Young
Mr Robert Peck
President
Mr Tony Brealy

17 December, 6.30pm

Lessons and Carols

Readings and readers to be arranged
Sidesman

Mr Colin Crothers

24 December, 9.30pm
Old Testament reading
New Testament reading
Gospel

Christmas Eve Communion

2 Samuel 7: 1-11, 16 Mrs Jane Hogg
Romans 16:25-27 Mr Graham Rounsley
Luke 2: 26-38 President
Sidesman Mr Tony Brealy
Flowers 24th, 25th, 31st Mrs Sally Rowden

Thank you

As we come to the end of 2023, I would like to express my sincere thanks to all who have worked so hard for, and supported, the church in any way during this year. Our readers, flower arrangers, cleaners, sidesmen, bell ringers, churchyard grass cutters, key holder: all these helpers are vital to the smooth running of our church. I would also like to thank all who give regularly to church funds either weekly, monthly, annually, and all who support our fundraising activities. Like all households, income is essential for our commitments to the Diocese, Cadbury Deanery, the West Mission Community as well as helping to support and maintain St Peter's and its surroundings. Our financial year ends on the 31st December. If you would like to become a regular supporter of the church financially, you can contact either me or Becky our treasurer.

Church rotas

I am now preparing the flower, reading and cleaning rotas for 2024. If you would like to join our team of volunteers please contact me, Tel: 82204, we can never have too many.

I wish you all a Happy and Blessed Christmastime

Margaret (Churchwarden)

‘Nothing ever seems too bad, too hard or too sad when you’ve got a Christmas tree in the living room’.

Norah Roberts, American Author



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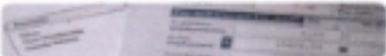
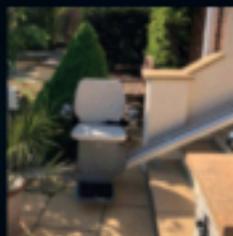
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CREDITON LIBRARY REMINISCENCE PROJECT

Crediton Library's Reminiscence Project is set to enter a new phase, thanks to funding from The National Lottery Heritage Fund. The funding, made possible by money raised by National Lottery players, will allow the library to continue gathering and preserving memories of Crediton and the surrounding areas.

So far, in partnership with the Folklore Library and Archive, the library has collected and made available a number of memories of the local area. These include recollections of life during World War Two, stories of farming and growing up in the countryside, as well as living through rapidly changing times. There are memories of the first lady to receive antibiotics in Crediton, life before mobile phones and a resident's memories of getting their first colour TV.

The Reminiscence Project was set up to collect memories from a range of people with a connection to the area, whether they have been residents all their lives, they once lived in the area or have only recently moved. These memories will be recorded in audio form, capturing the voices of the people they belong to. Over the next two years, there will be a range of events to open the collection up to the community.

Crediton Library is seeking volunteers, whether to carry out interviews, transcribe them or to help with outreach events. It is also looking for interviewees, whatever their age or background - anyone with memories of Crediton and the surrounding areas is welcome! Please contact the library on 01363 772578 or email crediton.library@librariesunlimited.org.uk to find out more.

Recordings from earlier phases of the project can be found online at: www.folklorelibrary.com/crediton-library.

Answers to Christmas Quiz on Page 4

- | | |
|---------------------------|--|
| 1. Four | 9. Tchaikovsky |
| 2. Eight Maids a'milking | 10. Turkeys & Geese |
| 3. White Christmas | 11. King George V |
| 4. Dancer, Dasher, Donner | 12. Ebenezer |
| 5. Coca Cola | 13. Rocking around the Christmas tree |
| 6. The Christmas Cracker | 14. 6: Partridge, Turtle doves, French hens, Calling birds, Geese, Swans |
| 7. Pennsylvania | 15. 16; C, M -3 pts, H - 4 pts, all other letters -1 pt each |
| 8. 1957 | |

Garden Advice from Bow Garden Centre

1. Add more Winter colour such as cyclamen, violas, pansies and wallflowers to brighten up your garden.
2. Watch out for pale blotches and fuzzy grey mould on leaves of Winter-flowering pansies that can be symptoms of downy mildew. Remove infected leaves as soon as discolouration appears.
3. Use fleece for frost protection wrapping around less hardy plants and insulate greenhouses with bubble wrap.
4. Continue planting trees, shrubs and hedges (Bow have an expanded selection in store, including many evergreen).
5. During Winter pruning remove mummified fruit that remained on branches, and continue checking supports and ties of cane fruit, grape vines and fruit trees trained against walls.
6. Clear debris to prevent slugs and snails from setting up home in damp conditions. However, it is important to leave some cover for other wildlife.
7. Get pruning wisteria, roses & Japanese maples to help improve their growth next season.
8. Harvest holly with berries for making Christmas garlands & wreaths. Stand them in a container of water until you're ready to use them.
9. Buy a pond heater to prevent ice forming, leaving an air hole free for toxic fumes to escape.
10. Don't let leaves accumulate, especially around alpiners - they will die if left damp for long. Cover bare patches around clumps with gritty compost to encourage regrowth.

Bow Garden & Aquatic Centre is a great place for all your garden essentials, with a range of Devon-grown plants, plenty of bulbs, seeds, gardening tools, garden buildings and everything you need for gardening, plus fish and pet supplies, an award-winning Waterside Cafe, and Post Office services.

Bow also has lots of Christmas inspiration including gifts for him, her, children and pets, plus a range of Christmas Lights, Decorations, and Christmas Trees.

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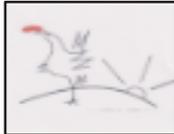
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CREDITON FOODBANK

CHRISTMAS HOUSE TO HOUSE COLLECTION IN THE PARISH OF ZEAL MONACHORUM

Thank you for very much for the food and money donated at the November Village Market. Fiona was delighted to get the first Advent Calendars of the year. A real sign that Christmas is not far away.

Jan Brealy and I, Lois Hamilton, will be starting the collection on Monday 4th December through to 9th December. We will be licensed. We may have a couple of helpers along the way and we will all be wearing badges. If you are not able to donate, or have already donated elsewhere, so that we don't disturb you, we would ask that you leave the Newsletter in a window or porch where we can easily see it.

We try to get as much done round the village as is possible on the Monday, then we start moving to the outskirts. If you are likely to be out and want to donate please could you leave your donations somewhere we can easily find them or give me a ring on 82982 and I will happily collect. Alternatively, you are welcome to leave them at Kentmere at the bottom of the hill (2nd on the right with the Waie Inn in front of you) or at North Star House, opposite the Church.

I know that many of you over the years have preferred to donate money and this is equally welcome. Such donations give the Foodbank the freedom to buy fresh food such as cheese, fresh vegetables, meat and Christmas Fayre

Families with small children will be finding it especially difficult to make Christmas as normal as possible this year, as well as the elderly who may be living alone. If you are able to give, however small, it will go a long way to make Christmas special and to let those who receive know they are not forgotten.

Fiona and all Christians working together at the Foodbank appreciate your amazing generosity over the years and particularly at this very difficult time. Thank you.



**WISHING YOU ALL
A VERY HAPPY CHRISTMAS
MAY GOD BLESS YOU ALL
FOR YOUR LOVING KINDNESS**



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Den Brook Community Fund

The Den Brook Community Fund invites local Charities, Community Groups and Not-for-Profit organisations based within the five parishes below to apply for grants to assist with funding for Capital Projects.

The deadline for receipt of applications for this “round” of funding is **31st January 2024** and as a guide, it is envisaged around £35,500 will be available for allocation by the late winter period and the amounts available to each parish are likely to be –

Bow - £7,000

North Tawton - £19,000

South Tawton - £2,400

Spreyton £2,600

Zeal Monachorum - £4,800.00

An “Easy Guide”, Full Terms and Conditions and the Application Form are available by e-mail from denbrookcommunityfund@gmail.com or from North Tawton Town Council Office, 14a The Square North Tawton EX20 2EP

The Den Brook Community Fund is administered by representatives of Bow, North Tawton, South Tawton, Spreyton, & Zeal Monachorum Town and Parish Councils.



‘I’ve learned that you can tell a lot about a person by the way they handle these three things: a rainy day, lost luggage, and tangled Christmas tree lights’.

Maya Angelou, American auto-biographer, poet & Civil Rights activist.



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- Village Hall: Chair: Erica Eden. Tel. 01363 82606
Secretary & bookings Jan Summers. Tel. 01363 82571
- Mid Devon Councillors: Natalia Letch, email: natalia.letch@gmail.com
Stuart Penny, email: stuartpenny765@gmail.com
- County Councillor: Margaret Squires, Tel 01363 84337
email: margaret.squires@devon.gov.uk
- Parliament: Mel Stride MP. Tel. 01392 823 306
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- Newsletter Editor: Jan Summers. Email: zmon.news@gmail.com

Details of some nearest services

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- Library: Belle Parade, Crediton. EX17 2AA Tel. 01363 772 578
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- Primary schools: Bow: Station Rd, Bow, Crediton. EX17 6HU
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Lapford: Eastington Road, Lapford, Crediton.
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residents/recycling-rubbish](http://www.middevon.gov.uk/residents/recycling-rubbish)
- County Council: Devon CC, County Hall, Topsham Road, Exeter EX2
4QD. Tel. 0345 155 1015 [general enquiries]
Email: customer@devon.gov.uk
Care Direct: Tel. 0345 115 100
- Highways: Tel. 0345 155 1004
- Hospiscare: Tel. 01392 688000 for services and support
Local shop: 129 High Street, Crediton; 01363 774836
- Devon Voluntary Action: www.devonva.org Tel. 01404 544 045

Defibrillators: these are located on the West wall of the Village Hall (nearest to Churchill Gardens) and at the Waie Inn



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Mary Finnigan (Client)

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