

The Grapevine



Well, December has crept up on us yet again and this edition of The Grapevine is bursting at the seams with news and articles to get you through the Festive Period. 2019 was a crazy year by anyone's standards so here's hoping that sanity prevails in 2020. All that's left for us to say is that we hope you all have a wonderful Xmas and a very Happy New Year.

Eds



Carols around the Village

This year Hankerton Carollers will be calling on you on **Wednesday 18th December 2019**

Please listen out for us and have donations ready.

Carollers please meet at the end of **Follyfield at 6.30pm**



CAROL SINGING

The history of Hankerton Carollers

When we moved into Follyfield 30+ years ago, Carol Singers came and shared the wonder of Christmas with us. The following year we joined in, accompanied over the years by young people playing flute, clarinet and even a tuba.

Over the years the group of carollers changes, dependant on their commitments, but the underlying theme has always been to celebrate this special time of year with residents and collect donations for charity. These charities are chosen for having helped and supported residents or their families who live in Hankerton, so each year the charities will vary.

We really need some younger folk to join us and hopefully take over, with youthful voices and certainly younger legs! We meet at the end of Follyfield, sing at the houses there, moving onto Hilwell then the roads off the Cloatley Road.

People willing to sing all the way round or just for a short while will be very welcome.

Any queries contact: Chris Betts 577123 or Claudine Pynn 577946

Deadline for news for the February newsletter: January 10th 2020. The size and content of The Grapevine depends on the amount of copy we receive from individuals and groups, so please keep the news and events coming in!

All articles, adverts to be sent to: grapevinesn16@aol.com

Or to 21 Follyfield, Hankerton. SN16 9LA

The opinions expressed are the responsibility of the authors.

We reserve the right to edit material.

The Grapevine is also published on-line - check out the Hankerton web-site: hankertonvillage.com

Thank you to all our advertisers for advertising with us - it helps the village to continue to have a newsletter. Thank you also to the Parish Council for continuing to support the Grapevine.

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My Sochi Adventure by Eirlys Jones

For any of you looking out your window in Follyfield very early on any Saturday morning, you will see me jumping into my mum's car with a large sports bag and a hoop. Reason being, I am a rhythmic gymnast who represents Wales and Great Britain, and every Saturday I travel to Cardiff to train with the National Squad for 6 hours.

I have my dad's Welsh ancestry to thank for my place in the team, but anyone who knows our family, with names like Eirlys, Dylan and Huw, it's a bit of a giveaway!

I've been in the Welsh squad for the past 4 years, and over this time have been given some superb opportunities including trips to Serbia and Spain. This summer was the best yet though as I got invited to travel to Sochi in Russia for a 14-day training camp.

Our squad of 8 gymnasts ranging in age from 11 to 15 were feeling apprehensive as we flew out from Heathrow at the start of August with our two coaches. Our main concerns were – how hard would the training be, how would we understand the Russian coaches and most importantly what would the food be like!

We stayed in the athlete's accommodation from the 2014 Winter Olympics and travelled each day to our training venue which was the former Olympic speed skating arena. For Formula 1 fans who watched the recent Russian Grand Prix – the arena is in the middle of the circuit.



Rhythmic gymnastics is one of the most popular sports in Russia and the top gymnasts are treated like celebrities. They currently boast both the Olympic and World Champions and we were lucky to meet and be coached by many champions, past and present when we were there.

Training was hard – 9-6 everyday - with one day off in the middle to visit the mountain resort where the ski events had taken place. The language barrier was a challenge, but we had a lovely interpreter called Oleg who helped us throughout the week. I did manage to learn a bit of Russian, I can now count to ten and another word we used a lot was **благодарю вас** pronounced Spasiba. Can you guess what that means?

Sochi is also a very popular beach resort so we managed to squeeze in a few hours at the beach on our days off, so it wasn't all work and no play.

All in all, it was a superb experience, not just travelling to a country like Russia but having the opportunity to learn from the best.

FOOD BANK - Just a reminder that there is still time to donate to The Malmesbury Food Bank before Chris Betts delivers our contributions on **December 9th**. Non-perishable goods are very welcome eg. Christmas biscuits, Children's chocolate, puddings, custard, mince pies, cakes (please check use by date) and can be left in the marked crate in the Church porch. Many thanks!



Services in Hankerton December to February

November

Saturday 30th 10:30-12 Advent Sale in the North Aisle

December

1st Advent 9:30am Advent Holy Communion Service

8th 3pm Dressing of the Christmas tree - this will be slightly different from previous years as we will be creating things to hang on the tree. Come and enjoy yourself.

10th 6pm Advent Peace at Crudwell

15th 5pm Carol Service followed by mulled wine and mince pies

17th 6pm Advent Peace at Crudwell

24th Christmas Eve

These activities are occurring at other villages in the Benefice and you are welcome to attend them

3pm All Age service Minety

4pm Carol Singing at the Potting Shed, Crudwell

6pm Ashley Carol Service

9pm First Holy Communion of Christmas, Minety

11:15pm Midnight Mass at Crudwell

25th Christmas Day

9:30am Christmas Day Holy Communion

All Christmas Services in the group will be displayed on the notice board

29th 10am Benefice Holy Communion at Hankerton

January

5th 9:30 Holy Communion

12th 10am Benefice Communion at Minety

19th 11am Informal worship

February

2nd 9:30 Holy Communion

9th 10am Benefice Communion at Oaksey

16th 11am Informal worship

The Church is open every Saturday, 10:30-12, unless specified, for tea, coffee and chat; all are welcome.

Damage to Our Church

We are very disappointed to report that there has been some damage to our lovely old church. Someone has thrown a stone through one of our ancient stained-glass windows (14th century). It was thought to have happened on Saturday 2 November. Broken glass and the stone were found on the inside. The police and insurers are aware and it will be an expensive repair. If you have any information, please contact either churchwarden, Philip Carter 575465 or Valerie Durnford 577723 or of course, call the Police.



A Meaningful Christmas - Revd Tonya Nixon

To have a meaningful Christmas, we have to know the Christmas story.

An invitation to have a meaningful Christmas is often the message you get from the church.

But what does it really mean? What is a meaningful Christmas?

Buying and wrapping lots of presents maybe? Decorating the house and creating a wonderful dinner? Both? I guess for many people it's both, but surely it should be so much more.

The Advent calendar began as a way of anticipating Christmas. 24 windows to open during the month of December and each picture revealing an aspect of the Christmas story.

There is a rather intriguing company out there called: The Meaningful Chocolate Company. And it appears to give the customer all that its name promises. The Real Advent Calendar is the UK's only Fairtrade Advent calendar. This is what it offers:

- Each calendar comes with a Christmas story-activity booklet designed to be used each day in Advent. Behind each of the 25 windows there is a Fairtrade Belgian chocolate, and a line of the Christmas story.
- Money raised from this year's Real Advent Calendar will help The Funzi and Bodo Trust

This Advent and Christmas perhaps we could find time to stop and read the story afresh. There are so many different ways to do this: Books, films, music.....and now of course the Real Advent Calendar from The Meaningful Chocolate Company!

There are also many services and special events over this period in your church. Some are quiet and reflective; others are more in the party mode, as well as the traditional carol services. Come and be a part of something meaningful this Christmas. I look forward to seeing you.

With every blessing for a Happy Christmas.

Revd Tonya

- Ps – The Real Advent Calendar is available through Traidcraft & certain supermarkets!

Hello! December already – where has the year gone? With winter clearly on the horizon, our thoughts turn to colder weather and how to keep warm. Many health problems are triggered or worsened by cold weather: dry skin and cold hands and feet are annoying; aching joints, colds and sore throats are almost expected, but serious, life threatening conditions such as asthma, norovirus and heart attacks are also exacerbated by the cold weather. The advice, of course, is to wrap up warmly and keep the heating going at home, which can be expensive. There is much that can be done to help with the costs of heating – switching supplier for electricity and gas or joining an oil purchasing consortium. Prevention is better than cure, so could your home use better insulation?

For those who are in receipt of means tested benefits (Pension Credit, Universal Credit etc) and also suffer ill health and receive DLA, PIP or Attendance Allowance benefits, the Surviving Winter grants may be available for you. Please get in touch if I can help with any of the above.

As ever, I am around for general help and support on a wide variety of issues including transport, mobility and safety around the home and reducing the feeling of loneliness. Give me a call on 07557 922020 and leave a message. I will get back to you as soon as possible.

Ellen Blacker

Health and Wellbeing Champion



CHRISTMAS CONCERT

Saturday 7th December 1930 hrs

We are performing once again at Malmesbury Abbey with a collection of traditional Carols and other lovely Christmas pieces chosen by our very talented Musical Director.

We are being ably supported by a professional string quartet and have the idea that this maybe our best concert to date!!

An evening with us will certainly get you in the Christmas Spirit and you can join in with the carols too.

There will be a cash only bar open from 18.45.

Tickets are £10 for adults and £5 under 18 available from A4 stationers in the High Street or Malmesbury Abbey.

Thank you to all our loyal supporters who come every year!

Lorraine and Sue (choir members)

INSIDE OUT

What are we like on the inside? Have we taken the trouble to look? Others can see
just the outer shell but it is God who reads us like a book

He knows what we know, how we think, how we feel – Hence our hearts to Him are
truly revealed

It's not the way we are that matters so much to Our Lord. – It's what we become, as
we follow His Son, what we learn as we browse through His Word.

As we grow, we can ask and He'll come to our aid – He says: **"I AM right here, now
do not be afraid**

**Give me your sins, misgivings and your heavy loads – Be cleansed with gladness
as you feel My Love bestowed**

**An open mind is all it takes for you to lose this hopelessness – For My Son, I sent
will save you, and fill you up with joyfulness."**

Lord, now I realise that without You my heart was imprisoned; but with You, my heart
is set free – I'm gaining Your teaching through reading Your Word. Lord, You're
changing the whole of me.

15.01.98.

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Nature Diary – December 2019.

At this time of the year our deciduous trees have usually shed all of their leaves, but on some trees there seem to be globes of mid green leaves, high up in the canopy, now easily visible amongst the bare branches. This is the well-known plant Mistletoe, *Viscum album*, which has a strong association with many traditions.

It is a plant linked with tradition and folklore partly because it grew high in the trees with no obvious connection to the earth, remaining green when the trees lost their leaves, and was therefore considered to be magical. Its ability to grow unconnected to the ground is due to the fact that it is a parasite of the host tree, tapping into the host and using water and nutrients from the tree for itself. Strictly speaking it is a hemiparasite, because with its green leaves it is able to photosynthesise some of its own food from sunshine.



The plant is dioecious, meaning that male and female flowers are borne on separate plants, so only the female plants will bear the familiar white berries. These berries are eaten by birds, especially the Mistle Thrush, and these birds are responsible for spreading the plant to new trees or sites. They eat the berry flesh, and the seeds contained within are surrounded by a very sticky substance and get stuck on the outside of the beak. The bird then wipes its beak on the surface of a twig or branch depositing the seed on its surface. The sticky substance around the seed, called viscin, then hardens and cements the seed to the bark. The seed germinates and grows through the bark to link up with the tree's own vascular system, and a new plant is established. Although it is parasitic, it is not felt that Mistletoe ever kills the host plant. It tends to grow on thinner barked tree species, the most common ones being apple, hawthorn and lime, and is very rarely found on oak.

A stronghold for Mistletoe in the UK is the land on either side of the River Severn, especially the old orchards, as the environmental conditions are mild and damp. Mistletoe is harvested for sale at Christmas and much of the UK trade is centred on Tenbury Wells in Worcestershire, where they also crown a "Mistletoe Queen". Most people will be aware of the custom of "kissing under the mistletoe", and apparently one berry must be removed after each kiss and when the last is removed, the bearer can no longer claim a kiss – sorry, that's the rules, gents! Mistletoe has been associated with Pagan tradition (considered so holy by druids that they only cut it using a golden sickle), fertility rites (human and agricultural) and medicine, but in relation to the latter it should be borne in mind that Mistletoe is poisonous. That said, I did come across a report of a young boy being cured of epilepsy by drinking a glass of water in which had been boiled some mistletoe, and at the time of the report he was 66 years old. The advice came not from a doctor but a gypsy – so I can only add, "Don't try this at home".

Steve Davies.

Thanks to everyone who came along to the Macmillan Coffee Morning in the North Aisle at the end of September – we raised £360 for this very worthwhile cause.





The Grim Reaper in Hankerton? (Our thanks to Jon Christensen for this gem!)

Just walking the footpath past Hankerton Church, spotted the Grim Reaper doing some gardening! Looks very tidy, thanks to all involved.



**Lifestyle Health
& Beauty**

Welcome to **Lifestyle Health and Beauty**. We are a hair and beauty salon based in the heart of Hankerton with plenty of free onsite parking.

Our fully qualified therapists welcomed hairdressing to the business in 2015, which now includes women's and men's hair services. We also offer vouchers which can be redeemed against beauty or hairdressing services; these can make a great gift for that special someone in your life.

Our opening hours are:

Monday 9am - 3pm,

Tuesday 9am – Late,

Wednesday 9am – Late,

Thursday 9am – Late,

Friday 9am – Late,

Saturday variable hours.

Regular offers can be found on our website:

info@lifestylehealthandbeauty.co.uk

So why struggle with town parking and give us a call on **01666 577636** and book an appointment today.

PPG Updates – Shayne Smith

Surgery News:

A new Specialist Practitioner will be starting full time at the surgery at the beginning of November. Helen Young will be attending home visits to lighten the workload of the practice doctors. Helen is a highly skilled paramedic who will use her expert knowledge and clinical judgement to identify potential diagnosis and will work independently in the community but will be part of the Health Care Team.

There is 40% of the day's quota of appointments available on the day and the rest are bookable for up to 6 weeks in advance. Should someone need an urgent appointment they need to inform the receptionist and they will try to fit the patient in to see the duty doctor.

Letters inviting people to the surgery for their flu jabs have started to be sent out. The practice is only allowed to give flu jabs to their own patients, no private jabs.

Patients may have seen some of their drugs dropped off their repeat prescription list without being informed. The CCG have removed a range of low cost over the counter medications, covering 35 minor short-term health conditions, and instructed surgeries not to prescribe them as patients can obtain them from pharmacies, local shops and supermarkets etc. Further details can be found on the following web site:

<http://www.wiltshireccg.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/OTC-conditions-list>

NHS In Touch Newsletter:

Read the latest issue of In Touch (www.wiltshireccg.nhs.uk) a newsletter for Wiltshire people that helps to keep you in touch with the commissioning and development of your local healthcare services.

If anyone would like to raise a question or provide feedback about the service they've received from the surgery I'll be very happy to take this forward for you. If you could let me have the details, my telephone number is 07856202115. The next Patient Participation Group meeting is on 9 December 2019.



The unveiling of the plaque commemorating those from Hankerton who served and died in the Great War 1914-1918, took place on Saturday, November 16th. in Holy Cross Churchyard.

The tree was donated by the Lewis family, the Parish Council provided the plaque and Brian Betts kindly made the stand. Thank you to all who attended.

Susan Mockler

Charlton Recreation Centre Committee (Anne Hodgkins)

Projects:

Heaters: The committee is in the process of obtaining three estimates for air-source heating. This will help us to decide which type of heating to install and, also enable grants towards the cost of installation to be applied for.

Autumn Quiz: on 19 October, 71 people took part in, yet another challenging quiz set by John Thorne. On a chilly evening everyone tucked into the jacket potatoes and fillings before tackling the desserts and the, now traditional, food round! After expenses, the profit from ticket sales, the bar and raffle came to £855, all of which will go towards projects at the recreation centre. Thanks to all those who helped to make the evening such a great success.

Annual General Meeting: A report of the Annual General Meeting, which was held on 14 November will be included in the next issue.

REMINDER TO DOG OWNERS

There has been a recent increase in the amount of animal faeces on the playing field. With children regularly using the field it is essential that these are removed. The committee is aware that some is from wild animals e.g. foxes. To limit the number of the droppings we must clear away, we ask that all dog owners pick up after their pets. Bags can be placed in the bins around the field.

PCC Updates

There's a vacancy on the Parish Council. At the time of writing we don't know whether there's to be an election or whether we may co-opt a replacement. Usually we can co-opt so we're on the lookout for volunteers to step forward and join the PC. Would you like to have a say in local matters in the village and parish? Do you have views on how things might be better? Come and join the PC.

Latest news on the Play Area – following the survey showing strong support in the village, a Play Area Implementation Group meeting on 16th November identified a leader to take it forward and other members to take on other roles. The first stage is to landscape the site. Meanwhile more volunteers to help are still needed – contact Jill Kearsley on 01666 577781 or at jill.kearsley@kearsley.net.

The defibrillator is now in place in the phone box, and the telephone has gone. It will be operational shortly. Watch this space (noticeboards/website) for when it's ready to go!

Following an incident last year when a gate was left open, sheep strayed and caused about £2000-worth of damage, WWT padlocked a gate off Footpath 2 where there is an access onto their land. The PC restored the adjacent stile. WWT now propose to erect a pedestrian gate there to allow better continued access, and the PC have agreed to share the cost because of the benefit to Hankerton people being able to walk that way; we've offered 50%, at £144.

The next Parish Council meeting will be on Mon 6 Jan. We will be deciding on the level of Precept needed for next year. And we'd hope to co-opt a new Parish Councillor at that meeting.



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Christmas 2019 (Available from 2nd – 23rd Dec)

Starters: *Prawn Cocktail with brown bread and butter (GFO)*

*

*Chicken liver and whisky pate,
Seeded toast with honey and mustard dressed leaves*

*

*Carrot and ginger soup
with brioche roll (V)*

*

Mains: *Roast turkey with rosemary and cranberry stuffing
and rich gravy*

*

Beef bourguignon with red burgundy wine sauce

*

*Nut and herb crusted fillet of Salmon
and new potatoes. (DF)*

*

*Vegetable and walnut roast
With spiced cranberry (Ve)*

*All served with roast potatoes (unless stated otherwise)
and fresh vegetables*

*

Desserts: *Crème brulee with shortbread*

*

Christmas pudding with brandy sauce (v)

*

Chocolate and raspberry Brownie with ice cream (GFO)

2 Courses £15.5

3 Courses £20

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