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THE LOCAL RAG

ALVERDISCOTT AND HUNTSRAW

Welcome to the
December Edition
Volume 17 Issue 11
2020



MERRY CHRISTMAS EVERYONE

Publication and Distribution

The **Alverdiscott and Huntsraw Local Rag** is produced by the Editor Elsie Potter and Assistant Editor David Potter and is distributed, free, by a team of volunteers to every residence in our area. Finance is provided by the Parish Council, income from advertisers and donations from community organisations and individuals. Local reporting is easy -

e-mail your items to:

thelocal.rag@btinternet.com

or drop in to Webbery Cross Cottage. The more articles you send the more likely the Local Rag is to continue.

The date for inclusion in the next issue is **20th of each month**. The editor reserves the right to accept, reject or amend any article submitted. Any article published does not necessarily reflect the views of the editorial team.



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From The Assistant Editor

The editorial team would like to wish a **very Merry Christmas** to all our readers. Or at least as merry as it's possible to be under the current conditions.

The year 2020 has been a miserable affair, that no one could have foreseen. We can only hope that 2021 is a little better and the much vaunted vaccine is safe and actually works reasonably quickly to get us all back to where we want to be. In the mean time we can only try to do our best and make the most of it - safely.

Cheers!

Which reminds me, one of our local brewers - **GT Ales** - who reside at Chivenor are selling their delicious ales on-line from their website. Why not have a look and place an order. You will get to taste some really

great ale, and you will be helping them to survive in these dire times.

<http://www.gtales.co.uk/>

I also want to welcome a new advertiser to the Rag - **Harriet King** see advert on p4.

Alverdiscott Hall AGM had to be cancelled in April due to the CV19 lockdown. Following the Charity Commission rules we have now held a virtual AGM. The existing officers all agreed to stand again and a new Chair was elected. The committee is now:

Chair - **Liz White**, Vice Chair - **Paul Matthews**, Treasurer - **Graham White**, Secretary - **David Potter**.

The accounts were examined and signed off by **Alan Saunders**. All other members of the committee agreed to continue.

The Future of Huntsraw Church

Update on bell restoration – the PCC put in for a faculty to refurbish the 3 bells last year. But as the oak bell frame is 400 to 600 years old and 'listed' (as are the bells, the oldest being from 1501), we were asked to do a detailed survey of the timbers. This was done in February this year but then Covid hit, and it is only now that the church authorities are looking at it. The intention generally is to put electronic hammers on the bells – like Newton Tracey church, who did this a few years ago.

Once approval is given, we can approach some of the many historic bell trusts for grants to do the repairs. **Richard Sears**.

You can also keep a watch on our website

www.huntsrawchurch.com/

for the most up-to-date information.



Emergencies

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Electricity	0800 6783105
Gas	0800 111999
Water	0800 1691144
RSPCA	0300 1234999
Calor Gas	0345 7444999

Medical

NHS - Advice Line	111
Barnstaple Hospital	01271 322577
Bideford Hospital	01271 322577
Torrington Hospital	01805 622208
For a GP out of hours call Devon Doctors on	0845 671 0270

Community Hall Bookings & Enquiries

Alverdiscott	David Potter 01271 858534
Huntsraw	Suzy White 07711 787853 huntsrawparishhall@outlook.com

Community Contacts

Advice Lines

Police	101
Crimestoppers	0800 555111
CAB	01805 626126
FCN	03000 111999
Samaritans - Free from any phone	116 123
Western Power Enq.	0800 0963080
North Devon Council	01271 327711
Torrington District Council	01237 428700

Coronavirus Test Line 119

Sandra Brown PCSO 30096@dc.police.uk

Your local neighbourhood policing team at
Torrington Police Station email address:

torrington@devonandcornwall.pnn.police.uk

What makes Huntshaw's Tower *unique*, amongst all of Devon's medieval Churches?

In fact, not just in Devon, but across all of Great Britain? Well the answer strangely, is in the spiral stairs, that go up to the bell chamber at the top. The tower was built in 1439 when Bishop Lacy from Exeter ordered the enlargement of Huntshaw church. But unlike nearly all stone spiral stairs built in medieval times that were made to be clockwise, the 'twist' (excuse the pun!) with Huntshaw's, is that it was made to go anti-clockwise as you go up it.

About 95% of all of Britain's churches and castles built in the middle ages have clockwise spiral staircases - but why, do you ask? The reason was not of its position, nor in which corner of the tower it was, but for defence of the building when under attack. When a right handed soldier ascends a spiral with drawn sword in his right hand, he is put at a disadvantage if the spiral is clockwise as his sword will clatter on the central stonework and he cannot swing it as well he could if it were on the outer circular wall. He also has his body exposed from the defender. Conversely, the soldier defending from the top can swing and lunge his sword into the attacker as his right hand has much more room against the outside of the circular wall.

As now, even back then most of the population were right-handed (about 90%), but there were some exceptions: one of the Scottish Border Clans, **Clan Kerr**, always built their staircases with an anticlockwise spiral ... because inherently they were mainly born left-handed!



Clearly through the ages stonemasons generally always learnt to carve and make the stone steps turn one way on the central newel pillar – whether they be for castles or church towers. So why Huntshaw should be any different?..... I guess we shall never know! (This picture is taken from coming down).

Richard Sears.

From the Rector Rev Gary Owen - 01769 560792

Are you looking forward to Christmas? I'm writing this article in mid-November. Hopes have been buoyed by promising news of a vaccine roll-out, but we remain very uncertain about whether we will be allowed to see family and friends over Christmas. Not being able to see relatives is causing many people great concern. A recent survey suggests, however, that some people are secretly hoping a ban on household mixing will mean that they don't have to spend time with difficult or annoying relatives!

However we feel about the coming festive season, we can be certain that it will not be a Christmas without challenges. Many cherished traditions will be put on hold... and we may be eating the turkey we ordered until Easter without guests to help consume it. For others, the challenges will be more serious.

It's reassuring, then, that the first Christmas was not without its challenges. Mary had to deal with the challenge of being found pregnant before marriage. This issue was resolved by an angelic message to Joseph reassuring him that Mary was pregnant not due to unfaithfulness but the action of the Holy Spirit. But then as the birth of Jesus drew near, the decree by Caesar Augustus that everyone would have to return to their home town to be registered threw a large spanner in the works. Then of course there was the small issue of no room at the inn as Mary went into labour...

I'm not sure why God chose to send his son into the world in a stable in Bethlehem when he did. The bible only tells us that God did so at the time he knew was 'right'. But what I do know is that God is not insensitive to the mess of our world. Rather he has entered it in his son in order to lift us to the glories of heaven.

We are still not sure what we will be able to do at church to celebrate Christmas. We're advertising what we hope will be possible, but it is of course subject to change and it will look different to previous years. Please come and join us (but please book a place so we can manage numbers safely). Make the most of the many online activities and services available. But please, more than anything, make room for Jesus in your Christmas. He is the reason for the season, and the one who can bring his comfort and joy in a Christmas like no other.

Wild Advent with Rev Tracey

As Christmas gets nearer it gets more and more difficult to think about Jesus in all the rush and busyness of Advent. Our aim should be to keep Jesus at the centre and find out more about all he has to offer us. Over the four weeks of Advent I will be posting a daily reading, prayer and activity for the children to take part in. You'll find them on the Mission Community Facebook page and website. The activities will all be based around nature. I hope you will enjoy them and that it will be a way of putting Christ back in to Christmas.

I would love to see your finished crafts, so perhaps you could put them on Facebook or email them to Rev Gary for the website for us all to enjoy. **Rev Tracey.**

DUCK EGGS AVAILABLE

Ever thought you would like some duck eggs but didn't know where to find them - then just keep on reading...

Claire and Roy Cotton have more than they can use at the moment and, rather than have them go to waste, would like to find a home for them.



If you would like some then give them a call on 858587 for more details.

Please remember that this will be the last Local Rag for 2020 and the next edition will be in February 2021. Many thanks go out to all our advertisers and also to all who have contributed articles during 2020.

Without you the Rag could not continue.

**Do You Need Assistance During Covid -19?**

If you live in the Local Rag area and are having problems due to the current situation there are several groups in the local area who are offering to help out. They will take on tasks such as shopping, collecting prescriptions and even walking the dog, all of which can be more difficult than normal, right now. Please get in touch with the Rag and we will see if we can find someone to help you.

The latest Covid-19 Updates from **Devon County Council** can be found on their website. Click on the link below:

<https://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/UKDEVONCC/bulletins/2ad4571>

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

**Christmas Related
Words
24 To Find**

MISTLETOE	STOCKINGS	BABYJESUS	STARS	GIFTS
FAIRYLIGHTS	MINCEPIE	FIRTREE	ROAST	CAKE
WISEMEN	CRACKERS	STABLE	OXEN	ASS
DECORATIONS	PEARTREE	MANGER	ANGELS	KEY
SANTACLAUS	SHEPHERDS	CAROLS	HOUSE	

Last time the word was: Waistline

Only For Fun. You have 15 minutes to find as many words as possible using the letters shown in the grid. Each word must contain four or more letters, one of which must be the central square. No letter may be used more than once in each word. No proper nouns, plurals or foreign words allowed. There is one nine letter word for which the clue is - The season to be jolly

Word count 25 = Good. More than 30 = Very Well done!

M	S	H
S	A	I
R	C	T

Leisure

Su Doku Puzzle No. 170

Good Luck...

2			1	9	8			4
			6		2			
		3				8		
7	4						1	2
1								3
9	3						7	8
		4				2		
			5		3			
5			2	4	7			6

Solution to Su Doku No. 169



3	1	2	8	6	9	4	7	5
9	6	4	2	7	5	1	8	3
8	5	7	4	3	1	6	9	2
5	9	6	1	4	3	7	2	8
7	4	8	6	5	2	3	1	9
2	3	1	9	8	7	5	4	6
4	2	3	5	1	8	9	6	7
6	8	5	7	9	4	2	3	1
1	7	9	3	2	6	8	5	4

Anglican Community - Team Rector Rev Gary Owen
01769 560792 07947 358050



All Saints in Alverdiscott will be open for private prayer on Saturdays from 9.00am to 4.00pm.

**Please observe social distancing rules.
Sanitise hands on arrival and departure.
Only use those areas not taped off.**

www.tworiversmissioncommunity.org



**Alverdiscott Methodist Chapel
Minister Rev Rob Blackhall - 01805 628041**

**We are living in very difficult times.
Life feels very different, and it is hard not meeting and worshipping as we usually do.**

**If you have any questions then please do not hesitate to ask.
I might not immediately know the answer, but I will endeavour to find out.**

**These are challenging times, but we are the Church
and we will carry on, just in a different way.**

**Please pray, read your Bibles and share in Worship in your homes.
And to start your Bible reading - try Psalm 91 - we are all under the care of Almighty God.**

Current advice from the Methodist Church can be found at

<https://www.methodist.org.uk/about-us/coronavirus-guidance/>

<http://torridgemethodistcircuit.org.uk/>



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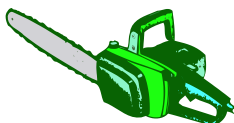
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Parish Council Facebook page: [@alverdiscotthuntshaw](https://www.facebook.com/alverdiscotthuntshaw)

Parish Council website: <http://alverdiscott-huntshaw-parish.org.uk/>

The new Parish Council website is packed with useful and relevant stuff, so do go and have a look around. If you have something that could be helpful, informative or entertaining in the current situation please get in touch, via the website or the Rag.

Parish Council Meeting - Zoom recordings:

<http://alverdiscott-huntshaw-parish.org.uk/nov-2020-parish-council-meeting-recordings/>

Parish Councillor Names and Contact Details

Bruce Millar Acting Chair	dbmillar@btinternet.com	07392 304567
Peter Ley	westbarton26@gmail.com	01271 858230
Donald Easterbrook	deasterbrook38@gmail.com	01805 623113
Eddie Staines	eddie@stainestrailers.com	07831 262808
Tony Goldstone	tone4u@googlemail.com	01271 858437
Helen Bolton	helen1bolton@btinternet.com	01271 858885

County and District Councillors**County Councillor**

Linda Hellyer linda.hellyer@devon.gov.uk 07828 758360

District Councillor

Rosemary Lock councillor.lock@torridge.gov.uk 01805 804254

Friends of the Huntshaw Church

As the Covid-19 pandemic drags on and we are in another lockdown there is little to report from Huntshaw. We are hoping to reopen the Church for a Christmas Service (possibly on the 20th December) but there is a lot of uncertainty over what we will be able to do.

Like everyone else, we are looking forward to the new year. We wish all our friends in Alverdiscott and Huntshaw a Merry Christmas.

Audrey Alimo



Parish Council News

In the absence of a Parish Clerk, referred to in the last issue, I had hoped to update you on the current activities of the Parish Council such as the VAS, flashing speed reduction warning sign at Alverdiscott / Stony Cross junction, the warning boards alerting large lorries of the non through way indicated by Sat Nav's, a recognition of Francis Courtenay's 40 years' service on the PC, the outcome of the Gammaton Cross solar farm proposal recent consultation, etc.

I joined the Parish Council, relatively recently compared to my colleagues, with a motive to help my community in initiatives such as mentioned above. Recently however, a new agenda has surfaced and I've asked what is the vision for the PC from a minority of dissenters? By way of background since the recent arrival of 2 councillors we have lost 2 chairmen, a clerk and 3 councillors, all long serving residents of this area. You will know these people, they are our neighbours, please ask them for their opinions. Something is obviously wrong.

I am only the acting Chairman, I inherited the role because frankly no one else wanted it! I freely admit I'm not equipped for this. I've been naively trying to unite all parties but it's apparent that the agenda I spoke of is over riding the function of the PC - which I see purely as an indication of local feelings for/against issues and needs in the community being passed on to Torridge District Council – the real decision makers.

By the time this article goes to press I will have become another victim of the 'agenda' as I join my predecessors with my resignation having tried and failed to work in this atmosphere of conflict. To my colleagues who continue to try and prevail – good luck notably Peter Ley, Donald Easterbrook, Des Thorpe, Eddie Staines, Francis Courtenay for their support throughout. Also Jean Huxtable who continues to help despite her treatment, and my thanks also go to Councillor Linda Hellyer. My main disappointment is that I have been taken away from my goal of traffic speed control having only weeks earlier found overwhelming interest in my petition to install a flashing sign near the junction at Alverdiscott and Stony Cross.

Finally, the object of this letter is to update you and to ask you, the Parishioners - **do you support the current parish Council / what do you want them to do different?** Please reply to our PC email -

contact@alverdiscott-huntshaw-parish.org.uk

I'd also like to thank the Local Rag and the people who deliver it which I know is hugely appreciated in our community.

Thank you - Bruce Millar

Huntshaw Parish Hall



Sadly there is not a lot to report on Huntshaw Parish Hall. Having started 2020 off so successfully with our open day in January and our skittles night in early March, we haven't been able to do anything since! But be assured we are looking after things and will be ready to reopen when we are allowed to! Here's hoping that will be soon!

Many thanks - **Suzy White**

FRIENDS OF ALL SAINTS CHURCH ALVERDISCOTT FUND RAISING and AGM

Our fund raising events this year have obviously been virtually non-existent. However, our Bingo evening in February and our Socially Distanced Sunday lunch did bring us some income. In an attempt to raise some more funds and on the basis that "every little helps" we are selling a Festive Quiz Sheet. It is only £1 and will hopefully provide some entertainment. There will be a small prize for the winner.

Copies of the Quiz Sheet are available from Liz White, bulworthy@aol.com 01271 858441.

We are also selling jars of homemade mincemeat. This is so much nicer than the stuff you can buy in the supermarket. It contains butter rather than suet and is flavoured with alcohol. You can choose from Cherry Brandy, Cointreau or Whisky.

Jars are £2 each available from Liz who will deliver or there will also be some jars alongside Joyce's eggs at West Barton.

It has not been possible to hold an AGM this year but to comply with Charity Commission requirements, we will be circulating documents to interested parties. This will include the minutes of the 2019 AGM, the accounts and the proposed officials for the year. If you would like to receive a copy please email me at bulworthy@aol.com

We would like to take this opportunity of thanking all our supporters and wishing you a happy and healthy Christmas and New Year. We sincerely hope we will be able to get back together again next year.

Graham White - Chairman



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The year 2020 will never be forgotten locally, nationally or worldwide

The Covid19 pandemic has affected the lives of everyone in so many ways. But hope seems to be on the horizon with successful vaccines on the way - 2021 has got to be a better year!

2020 has not been a good year in our family for a different reason - Ken's health!

We thank everyone for their kind concern, prayers, enquiries, cards, visits, and help in various ways over the last six months - all very much appreciated.

Although Ken is no longer able to do many of the things he enjoyed in the past - driving, helping on the farm etc - with the care he has received - and is still receiving - he has improved significantly enough to enable him to enjoy a reasonable quality of life for an 86 year old!

Remember the incredible Captain Sir Tom Moore's favourite phrase:

'Tomorrow will be a Good Day'!

From a grateful **Muriel Moore.**



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