

The Pennant



Edition 564 December 2023/January 2024

Printed courtesy of Mrs Annette Haynes as a service to the community

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to all villagers!

Please email your entries for the February 2024 issue to: ThePennant@mail.com by 21st January 2023

Bradford Abbas Artists' Exhibition



What a hugely enjoyable and inspirational event the exhibition proved to be, showcasing the amazing works of 21 Bradford Abbas artists, and the St Mary's School prize winners! Thank you so much to all those of you who were able to visit the exhibition and who made donations, bought catalogues, raffle tickets and the fantastic cakes served with tea, and of course, those of you who bought works of art. **Altogether, a staggering £1,342.75 was raised for the St.Mary's Churchyard Restoration and Maintenance Fund!!**

The winner of the raffle was Claire of Ambrose Close (ticket no. 357), who won the oil painting of the oak tree, located between Thornford and Bradford Abbas, by Simon Cain O'Grady, one of our brilliant artists. Many thanks to Simon for contributing this beautiful piece, which Claire says, will now adorn the wall over her fireplace!

Huge thanks must go to Valda Baker who kindly provided the venue for the exhibition in her studio at The Old Mill House, which we all agreed, was the perfect location for such an occasion, and to Jenny Thomas and Squish Harris who, not only organised this very successful event, but also inspired the artists of the village to contribute their artworks, and also to help out with setting up the exhibition, selling raffle tickets and manning the reception desk – fantastic teamwork throughout! Special thanks too to John and Simon who worked so hard hanging the paintings. We also owe a massive debt of gratitude to all those who kindly contributed cakes and served teas.

We look forward to the next exhibition, maybe featuring even more village artists! *The Artists of Bradford Abbas*

Christmas Post Box in the Church

The post box will be in the Church from the 4th of December until the last collection at 2.00.p.m. on the 18th of December. As always this is a free service, but if you feel that you would like to make a donation, please place these in the fabric fund box just inside the door. If you are able to help to deliver the cards please call Sue on 01935 471901. Volunteers always needed.

St. Mary's Community Trust

Friday 8th December 7:30pm – Wreath-making evening in the Village Hall, with Prosecco and puddings. £25 per person. We will provide everything you need to make a wonderful Christmas wreath. Help / guidance available. If you are interested in making an “all natural” wreath, let us know when you book. Tuition will be available. Please call or text Gary (07799 430400) to book. Payment will be needed to secure places.

Sunday 24th December 5:30pm – Outdoor Carol Service in front of the church. Church Road will be closed to traffic. What started as a response to Covid has become a village favourite. Start your Christmas off with a warm glow. See you soon. Jo, Alan, Rob, Ruth, Trevor and Gary, The ST MARY'S COMMUNITY TRUST team

Phone Box

The members of the Phone Box team would like to thank you for all your donations of books, jigsaws and plants throughout the year – we've been overwhelmed by your generosity. We wish you a very merry Christmas with lots of happy reading and look forward to receiving your donations in the new year.

Bradford Abbas Camera Club

Tuesday 12th December: Seasonal social get together with a competition 'Most unusual image'. Time 7.30pm at Bradford Abbas Village Hall.

Tuesday 9th January: An evening critiquing members photos, any subject, critiqued by Laura Pearce.

Tuesday 23rd January: "Shoot a Theme" competition judged internally by members on the theme of "motion blur", the subject chosen by last year's winner, Ally Morton. He says, 'proper motion blur, not camera shake'.

Bradford Abbas Variety Club – Variety Show 2024

Friday 12th April – 7.30pm and Saturday 13th April – 3pm & 7.30pm, so, get these dates in your diary now!

Our next planning meeting will be on Wednesday 10th January 2024, 7.30pm at the Social Club. This is for anyone who'd like to participate or offer help and assistance – don't be shy, it's a Variety Show, so the more acts the better!

Tickets on sale nearer the date but any queries, please contact: lou.silk@hotmail.com

Bradford Abbas Petanque Group

The Petanque group is still going through the winter months on Thursday afternoons at 1.30pm at the Sports Club, although we have to play skittles on wet days (lucky to have an alternative). A request has been made to play on Saturdays, so we will try this in the new year probably starting on Saturday 3rd February 2024. We are arranging a Christmas buffet on the 9th of December from 2.00pm, details on notice board. Merry Christmas to all. Bob Taylor

Pop-up Market

The next date is 16th December 2023 11am - 1 pm, in the Village Hall. For further details please call 07805 605887.

Bradford Abbas History Society

We have no meeting in December but as you all enjoy your Christmas this year try to imagine what it would have been like in 1823 and even 1923. Our next meetings are on either Tuesday 23rd January at 2.30pm or Thursday 25th January at 7.30pm in the Village Hall, starting with our AGM and collecting the annual subscriptions of £10. This will be followed with a Local History Presentation, to be announced. VISITORS (WELCOME) £2 ea. UNDER 16s FREE.

Bradford Abbas Pre-School

We are a small Charity running term-time only pre-school here in our beautiful village where our main aim is to provide a safe place to learn and play while preparing your child for primary school.

Our current hours are: Mons, Thurs and Fri 9am - 3pm, Tues and Weds 9am - 1pm. We also offer an early drop off option which starts at 8.30am daily. We accept 15 and 30 hours funding along with the option of children having a hot

meal. Spaces are now available, for any further information please contact 07722705012 or email bradfordabbaspreschool@yahoo.co.uk.

We are also holding a very special **Breakfast with Santa** on Saturday 16th December at the Bradford Abbas Sports and Social Club from 9am. There will be festive songs from the Octagon choir and a chance for children to meet Santa. Full English - Large £10 and Small £7 with free Tea and Coffee. Pre-booking advised via email bapsfundraising@yahoo.com or by message to either Ben on 07809203184 or Emma on 07754500344.

The Friendship Club

The Friendship Club meeting this month is on Tuesday 12th December at 2.00pm at Bradford Abbas Sports and Social Club. There is Bingo, a small draw, Tea biscuits and a chance to have a chat and laugh with fellow villagers. New members will be warmly welcomed. Next month's meeting will be on Tuesday 2nd January 2024.

Bradford Abbas Sports and Social Club

Christmas raffle and skittles evening Saturday 16th December from 7:30pm. Raffle on sale now from the sports club Thank you to everyone who supported the summer 4-aside skittles. £350 has kindly been donated to the charity SANDS.

Mary Dalison Charity Run

Mary would like to thank everyone who sponsored her for the Great South Run in Portsmouth. She raised over a £1000 for MacMillan Cancer charity. Thank you.

Bradford Abbas Parish Council – Post Box Update

As stated in the October Pennant the Parish Council had been made aware of an application to remove the current post box, located in the conservation area at the Old Post Office House, Bradford Abbas, and the installation of a new post box in Churchwell Street.

The Parish Council objected to the proposal as it felt that the post box, which is a G R post box, had been in its present location since c.1934. The Parish Council also considered that the proposal to install a new post box in Churchwell Street, within 5 metres of the road junction on a street with no pedestrian pavement, was not a suitable position due to road safety issues, with increased traffic on the small no-through road. The Parish Council immediately requested a site meeting with Royal Mail, which is yet to be arranged.

The Parish Council was totally unaware that Royal Mail would, on 7th November 2023, seal the existing box and paint it black prior to the installation of a new post box in the village, leaving the village with no postal service. This action was discussed that evening at the Parish Council meeting.

Following this meeting the Parish Council immediately contacted our MP, Chris Loder who issued a press release stating the Council's position and contacted Royal Mail and were advised that proper procedures had not apparently been followed by Royal Mail.

The Parish Council is pressing Royal Mail to re-instate the collection service immediately and pursuing this at the highest level.

Monday Night Bingo

Bingo every Monday evening at 6.45pm with eyes down at 7.15pm at Bradford Abbas Sports and Social Club. Everyone 18 and over is welcome to our weekly light-hearted evening which also includes a small draw a chance to win the SNOW BALL and of course a laugh and chat, we finish just before 9.00pm.

Our Christmas Bingo is on Monday 1st 8 December. After Christmas Bingo will commence on Monday 8th January 2024.

Yeovil Railway Centre at Yeovil Junction

It's that season again, starting with **Tea with Santa** on Saturday 2nd and 9th December. Children, come and have tea and a chat with Santa. They play some games and receive a small pressie. Note that there are no train rides with this event. Places are strictly limited so book early.

Santa Specials are being run on Sunday 3rd, Sunday 10th, Saturday 16th and Sunday 17th, Thursday 21st, and Saturday 23rd December. Enjoy a steam train ride and visit Santa in his Grotto.

For full information visit our website yeovilrailway.freeservers.com or visit our Facebook page.

Saturday 23rd UK Railtours is running a **diesel** hauled special to Sherborne for carols at Sherborne Abbey. The train then comes to Yeovil Junction for servicing.

There are no public events in January. Essential maintenance is carried out, as well as clearing up after the Santa Specials. The shop is open on Sunday mornings, 10.00am to 12.00 noon.

St. Mary's Church, Bradford Abbas

SERVICES HERE IN DECEMBER - EVERYBODY IS WELCOME

SUNDAY 3RD DECEMBER 10am Morning Service (lay-led).

SUNDAY 17TH DECEMBER 6pm Service of Lessons and Carols (led by Gill Thomas) with choir – come and enjoy the beautiful music in this traditional service.

CHRISTMAS EVE 5:30pm Outdoor Carol Service (lay-led) – in front of the church. Dress up warm and sing along with carols. Church Road will be closed to traffic.

CHRISTMAS DAY 10am Christmas Eucharist (led by David Dunning).

OTHER NEARBY SERVICES WHICH MAY BE OF INTEREST:

SUNDAY 31ST DECEMBER 11am at Holwell Village Hall - BENEFICE COMUNION SERVICE (led by Tony Gilbert).

January services will be posted onto the Pennant Facebook page and also displayed outside the church.

OUR CHURCHYARD

TREES: The PCC (the managing committee of the church) has been thinking about the large conifers in the churchyard. As far as we can tell, these non-native trees have been in the churchyard for less than 100 years. A report we commissioned has confirmed that their roots have now spread sufficiently to be a danger to the foundations of the church building. In addition, twice this year substantial parts of two of these trees have come down in wet, windy weather. Luckily, the damage caused was not great but it could easily have been a lot worse. We have therefore taken the decision that, for the good of the building, they need to be removed. We are hoping that this work can be carried out in the coming months.

There will be additional benefits from this. It will open up beautiful views of the church and by reducing the constant shade at the west end of the church, we hope the church will suffer less from the effects of damp.

FRIENDS OF ST MARY'S CHURCHYARD: The situation described above will be a challenge for all who love our churchyard, but the Friends Group will have fun trying to plan a brighter, more inviting space for us all to visit. The Friends will be at the forefront of this effort. If you didn't yet have the chance to let us know your views about the future of our churchyard (or if you want to tell us how you might be able to help in future), please speak to Alan Fall or Gary Siggins or you can email us on bradfordabbaschurch@gmail.com - we will be happy to let you have a form for you to complete to tell us what you think.

Our "churchyard volunteer" sessions were very successful in the summer. We will have further weekday evening sessions like this during the summer of 2024. This winter, we will call a few sessions (probably on Saturdays). Details will be posted onto The Pennant's Facebook page. If you want to be on our contact list for these days, email us using the details above and we will add you.

WREATHS AND FLORAL TRIBUTES: At this time of year, many of us choose to decorate the graves of our loved ones. If you do this, please help us all (and the planet) by ensuring that whatever you leave is ALL COMPOSTABLE (not held together with plastic or metal parts). The church authorities impose a rule on us about ensuring the churchyard is free of non-natural tributes but if you feel you absolutely have to leave plastic, metal or glass items, please ensure they are removed in the New Year, before they start to look untidy. Thank you.

Help others to help themselves this Christmas

The Sherborne-Ezo Link exists to support the work of the Diocese of Ezo in South Sudan.

Please support this year's Ezo Link Christmas Appeal which will support the more than 700 children of Masumbu School in Ezo by funding:

- the school to grow its own crops (tools, seeds etc) and thus teach the children about agriculture while providing each child with a school meal;
- building a kitchen to cook the food grown;
- solar panels to generate electricity to light classrooms and power teaching aids;
- scholastic materials – books, paper, pencils and pens etc.

Even £5 would do so much to help these children. Donations: BACs to "Sherborne Deanery Synod A/C" –

Sort Code 60-19-12 - A/C Number 9781 9735; cheque payable to "Sherborne Deanery Synod A/C" sent to: Milton Brook, Corscombe, Dorset, DT2 0NU

A message from the Vicar

Jesus said: "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. ²⁹ Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. ³⁰ For my yoke is easy and my burden is light."

There are many cares and concerns in the world at the moment and the burdens that some people have to carry are heavy indeed, so Jesus' saying can seem very difficult to understand. I think Jesus is actually talking about hope. The human spirit cannot be extinguished, and hope is always there. Jesus came to fulfil that hope and to make things right.

A medieval mystic Mother Julian of Norwich said something similar when in a vision she questioned why there was evil in the world:

*'But Jesus, who in this vision informed me of all that is needed by me, answered with these words and said: 'It was necessary that there should be sin; but all shall be well, and **all shall be well, and all manner of thing shall be well.**'*

The way Christmas has been celebrated over the 2000 years that the church has been around has changed considerably and what we have today is largely based on a Victorian set of ideas with an overlay of 20th and 21st Century commercialism. I don't think it is necessarily wrong to change the way we do things from time to time. In fact, changing things is very often a sign of life, growth and vibrancy – as long as we don't forget the reason for our celebrations. It is human nature to celebrate and make merry from time to time and it is good for us to do so. The assurance that this time of year and the coming of Jesus brings, is that no matter how dark life might seem to some, all can and will be made well. Christmas is and has always been a time of hope and of looking forward to a better future.

Have a Happy Christmas, **Tony Gilbert, Team Rector**