

No. 118 December 2022 / January 2023



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## SEASONS' GREETINGS

Another year almost over, and as ever I'm wondering how it has gone by so quickly. And what a year it has been. Covid may have become more subdued, thank goodness, but instead of business as usual who would have guessed we would be coping with everything from war in Europe to the fastest rise in the cost of living for decades, on top of the loss of our beloved queen? Add the climate crisis and a wave of industrial unrest, and no wonder many are feeling unsettled, or worse.

But take heart, we aren't helpless. Let's look forward, not back, and tackle these issues with humanity's amazing ingenuity and persistence, and with as much love, joy and courage as we can muster. Have a happy Christmas, and in our own way let's do great things in 2023.

Liz

## Contributions

We always welcome input from our readers. If you want to send us an article or local information, contact us at [poundstockpacket@gmail.com](mailto:poundstockpacket@gmail.com) or ring the editor, Liz Jones, on 079040 88779. **The deadline for our next edition is 20 January 2023.**

We do not necessarily endorse the views expressed by individual contributors and while we do our best to make sure all information is accurate, we can't accept any responsibility for errors. We reserve the right to edit items submitted and decide on what is suitable for publication. If you wish to copy or reuse any of our content, please contact the editor or article author for permission.

## Advertising and Distribution

Advertising in the Packet currently costs from £35 a year (six issues), depending on the size of ad you choose. This includes delivery direct to all the homes in the parish – currently over 550. For more information please contact Karen Probets via [poundstockpacket@gmail.com](mailto:poundstockpacket@gmail.com) or Jen Spettigue, 36 St Marwenne Close, Marhamchurch (01288 361525),

We do our best to deliver to everyone in the parish, but if you know of anyone who has been missed please let us know. For those who live elsewhere, copies are available at the Beach House and Wainhouse Country Stores, on our website ([poundstockpacket.org.uk](http://poundstockpacket.org.uk)) or by post; please contact us for details.

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# Around the Parish ...

## **Lost – and found**

Following the appeal in Packet 117, the missing plaque from the west churchyard gate was found and returned to Phil Marshall, who made the gate in memory of his parents. Many thanks to whoever put it in a safe place in the Gildhouse. The plaque has now been returned – and firmly attached – to its rightful place on the gate.

## **Bangors Methodist Chapel**

Bangors Methodist Chapel was sold by auction in October. It is registered as a community asset, which means that the new owners are unlikely to be able to develop the site until after the registration expires in May 2026. Any change of use or demolition would require full planning permission.

## **Our Packet distributors**

As the days shorten and the outdoors becomes less and less inviting, our trusty Packet distributors faithfully continue to deliver your Packet, as they do all through the year. To say we are grateful is to greatly understate what we owe to these faithful members of our team. A big vote of thanks goes to all those who willingly undertake this essential task. We really rely on you and are very grateful for all you do; thank you so much.

## **Packet 117 front cover**

One reader has written to us objecting to the cover picture of Packet 117 of the Parish Council Chairman reading the proclamation of the accession of our new king and asking why this had not been replaced by a picture of HM Queen Elizabeth II or HM King Charles III. The answer is that this was a serious and thoroughly considered editorial decision. How should we mark this pivotal moment in our nation's history? Should we repeat news that had saturated the media for weeks or was there an alternative? My decision was that, at several weeks' distance from the events themselves, it was appropriate to show how our parish responded. Of course individual parishioners and families will have had their own ways of marking these events, but as far as I was able to discover the only parish response was this proclamation. Had there been anything else, we would have been glad to include it.

I should like to make it absolutely clear that this decision did not in any way indicate a lack of respect for our Royal Family, and in particular for her late majesty, whose exemplary life of service was an extraordinary gift to a grateful nation, or our new king, who has stepped into his new role with courage and great dedication.

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## A Burning Issue: Update

Readers will know by now that the strategic planning committee of Cornwall Council has approved the plans for a crematorium to be built on the seaward side of the A39, despite hundreds of objections from local residents and concerted opposition from the Parish Council. Members of the committee expressed the view that there is 'a desperate need' for a crematorium in North Cornwall, and that concerns over the viability of this particular project were no reason to withhold permission. On the question of the effect on local holiday businesses, one member commented, 'I don't believe it would have any adverse effect on tourism.'

In response to concerns over emissions, the committee said there would be 'mitigations' to address some of these, together with 'robust conditions' to protect the local environment. What these are remains to be seen. Unfortunately, as of 28 November, the Cornwall Planning website has not yet been updated to indicate the decision made on 17 November.

The committee approved the plans by three votes, with seven members voting for and four against. Under planning law, there is no right of appeal to objectors to a planning application once permission has been granted. Permission normally expires after three years unless work has started.

## Volunteer Cornwall

We are a charity dedicated to promoting and supporting active citizenship and voluntary action covering emotional, social, environmental and economic needs and opportunities in Cornwall.

From our Head Office in Truro and our outreach teams across Cornwall, we provide support to all aspects of volunteering across the county. Our website, [volunteercornwall.org.uk](http://volunteercornwall.org.uk), shows the range of projects and services we are involved in.

Every year, Volunteer Cornwall's community transport scheme helps around 50,000 people in Cornwall get to hospital and other appointments, visit family and attend activities. We are looking for volunteers to become volunteer drivers. You would drive people in your own car, and we would reimburse out of pocket and mileage expenses. As a volunteer driver you'll meet new people, with out of pocket and mileage expenses paid, helping you keep your car on the road. Hours are flexible with no minimum commitment, and you transport only those you feel comfortable taking.

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# Christmas and January Services

## December

- 4 HC, Bude 9.30; FS, WSM 10.00; Christingle, Marhamchurch 4 pm  
7, 21 **HC, WB 10.00**
- 11 **MP, Poundstock 9.30**; HC, Marhamchurch 9.30 and Whitstone  
11.15; EP, WSM 6 pm; Carol Concert, Whitstone 7 pm  
14, 28 HC, Bude 10.00
- 16 **Service of Nine Lessons and Carols, WB 2.30 pm**  
17 Carol Concert with Bude Choral Society, Bude 7 pm  
18 HC, Bude 9.30 and Week St Mary 11.15; MP Marhamchurch 9.30;  
**Carol-singing in the Warm and Dry, Poundstock 2.30 pm**; Service  
of Nine Lessons and Carols, Bude 4 pm; Carol Service, WSM chapel  
6.30 pm
- 24 Crib Service, Bude 3 pm, Marhamchurch 4 pm and WSM 5 pm;  
Christmas Communion, Bude 9 pm, Whitstone 9.30 pm and  
Marhamchurch 10 pm
- 25 **Christmas Communion, Poundstock 9.30** and WSM 10.00

## January

- 1 HC, Bude 9.30; FS, WSM 10.00; EP, Marhamchurch 6 pm  
4, 18 **HC, WB 10.00**
- 8 Epiphany: **MP, Poundstock 9.30**; HC, Marhamchurch 9.30 and  
Whitstone 11.15; EP, WSM 6.30 pm  
11, 25 HC, Bude 10.00
- 15 HC, Bude 9.30 and WSM 11.15; MP, Marhamchurch 9.30  
22 **HC, Poundstock 9.30**, Marhamchurch 9.30 and Bude 11.15; MP,  
Whitstone 9.30 and WSM 10.00
- 29 **United benefice service, Poundstock 10.00**  
**Candlemas, lunch and service, Poundstock Gildhouse 12.00**

## February

- 1, 15 **HC, WB 10.00**

*EP Evening Prayer; FS Family Service; HC Holy Communion: MP Morning Prayer; times are a.m. unless otherwise stated.*

You will be really welcome at any service.

At Poundstock we always enjoy a coffee or tea and a chat in the Gildhouse after the service. If you're not a churchgoer or can't make the service but would like a bit of company, you'll be more than welcome. Just come along.

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# Kids' page

At Christmas, every family has its own traditions, but do you know what happens in other countries? Try this mini quiz (answers on p. 25).

1. In which country do they hide a pickle in the Christmas tree? Is it  
(a) Thailand (b) Germany (c) Finland (d) Tanzania?
2. In Russia, what is Father Christmas known as? Is it  
(a) Cousin Snow (b) Uncle Icicle (c) Grandfather Frost (d) Daddy Cool?
3. In Thailand, who helps Father Christmas deliver presents? Is it  
(a) elephants (b) black bears (c) gibbons (d) cobras?
4. What's a favourite Christmas dinner in Japan? Is it  
(a) Fish and chips (b) Pizza (c) a Big Mac (d) Kentucky fried chicken?
5. What do people in Iceland say happens on New Year's Eve? Is it  
(a) cows talk (b) seals turn into people (c) elves move house?

**Have a very happy Christmas and New Year!**

## **Rumbles – a Christmas recipe from Australia**

*You need* a 400g tin sweetened condensed milk  
250g any plain sweet biscuits  
250g desiccated coconut  
 $\frac{1}{2}$  tablespoon cocoa powder  
extra coconut or icing sugar to roll your Rumbles in



*Method* Crush the biscuits (the easiest way is to put them in a strong plastic bag and bash them with a rolling pin). Mix them with the 250g coconut and the cocoa. Now add the condensed milk and stir it all up (it will be very sticky). Use clean hands to roll the mixture into bite-sized balls, and finally roll each ball in coconut or icing sugar to look like a snowball (Australians love a bit of snow). You can eat them right away, but they'll keep in the fridge for up to three weeks.

*I was wondering why these had such a funny name and discovered they're really called Rum Balls, because the original recipe included rum. But there's no rum in these and I think Rumbles is a much better name!*



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# Diamond Anniversary Congratulations

Many congratulations to Gwen and Derick Prouse, who celebrated their 60th



wedding anniversary on 6 October. Gwen and Derick are well known and well loved in and around our parish. Now living in Bude, they both grew up on Poundstock farms and lived at Treskinnick Cross for many years. Together and individually, they have been a central part of the local community all their lives, Gwen as a faithful member of Bangors Methodist Chapel and, until recently, organist at St Winwaloe's Church, and Derick as a renowned bellringer.

Back in 1962, Gwen and Derick were married at Titson Chapel on 6 October at 10.30 in the morning,



returning to Gwen's family home at Langford Hele for a small reception only to find that the house well had run dry! Fortunately there was a back-up so guests could have that essential cup of tea. Sixty years later, a very happy anniversary reception, hosted by their son Trevor, was held at the Gildhouse, where no such mishap occurred. Many congratulations to them both.



Emmanuel  
God with us

## Christmas greetings from Poundstock's churches

Everyone is warmly invited to our Christmas services and events:

A Service of Nine Lessons and Carols, 2.30, Friday  
**16 December, Our Lady & St Anne's, WB**

Carol-Singing in the Warm and Dry, 2.30, Sunday  
**18 December at St Winwaloe's, Poundstock**

Family Christmas Communion, 9.30 am, Christmas  
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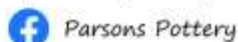
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## 2<sup>nd</sup> Bude (Jacobstow) Scout Group

Beavers, Cubs and Scouts have been busy this term. Beavers have been working towards their Disability Awareness, Animal Friend and Personal Challenge badges. Cubs have also been working towards their Disability Awareness badge, along with Entertainer and

Home Help badges. Scouts are near to achieving the DIY badge. Several of our Beavers, Cubs and Scouts attended St Genny's Church for Remembrance Day.

October saw twelve Scouts attend a winter camp based at Nine Ashes, Bodmin. A great weekend was had by all, with outdoor activities, craft and campfire songs.

On Saturday 24 September we held an open day at the New Scout Hut to let people come and see the progress made.

Josie's Dog Show took place in October, a super fun afternoon which was well supported by people and dogs.

Our fireworks evening took place on 3 November, after having to postpone our initial date due to weather warnings. Despite the thunder, lightning and rain, the evening was a super success and the weather certainly did not dampen our spirits.

Our final fundraiser for the year is our annual Christmas carol and draw evening on Monday 5 December at 6.30 pm in the New Scout Hut.

The following week each group will have their Christmas parties and that will bring this year's activities to a close.

As for the Scout Hut, we are now working on the inside of the hut. The main hall walls have been insulated and covered in a sheet of plastic, and we are now battening them off. Next stage will be plasterboarding the walls and ceiling and starting the plumbing.

*Jill Cole, Treasurer*



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# Garden Diary

This glorious autumn is giving way to winter, bringing with it rain and wind and taking away the last of the leaves. Trees that hang on to their canopy late into autumn in my garden include American oak, which turns a glorious shade of gold; and Liquidambar, whose leaves are a palette of burnt treacle shading to deep mulberry and eventually almost black. As the days darken the trees go out in a blaze of glory, leaving only their stark outlines against the sky – and that's where colourful trunk and bark comes into its own. I love the brilliant white of paperbark birch on a sunny January afternoon; or the striated trunk of Snake-bark maple, or Tibetan cherry with its lovely red peeling bark.



I have three birches in the island bed in my garden. They really brighten up a winter day and just like a favourite view, you never tire of looking at them. There's little chance or inclination, come to that, to go out and actually do some work in the garden but although it might be frightful outside, that's just an opportunity to plan what you're going to do next year. December and January are the traditional months for placing your seed orders. You may well have favourite varieties, but it's an opportunity to try new ones, compare their performance and perhaps set new must-haves. We're lucky to have a good discount on our seed and potato orders at Juliotter Garden club because the club runs a seed ordering scheme with a big supplier. There's not a lot you can plant out in December but if you've not got round to it, you could put out hard-neck garlic corms direct (although I usually start mine off in jiffy pots or root trainers in the greenhouse first). They actually benefit from a period of cold, which prompts growth later. Garlic doesn't like to sit in water, so if your soil is heavy and holds water, try dibbing a hole with an old spade handle or suchlike. Put about an inch of sand into the base and plant the clove on top, filling above with fine compost. This ensures good drainage and stops rotting. They do say that onions sown towards the end of the month make better plants, but I've never had a lot of luck with sowing from seed and prefer to wait until the sets arrive in January. So, not a lot to get on with outside so cuddle up in front of the fire with your tempting seed catalogues. Happy browsing!

*Pat Thorne, [www.juliottergarden.club](http://www.juliottergarden.club)*



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Parish council chair: Robert Gavin	(see p. 39)
Parish clerk: Lynn Pluess	0776 8100 560
Cornwall Councillor: Nicky Chopak	0781 030 2061
Cornwall Council	0300 1234 100
Bude Library/One-Stop Shop	0300 1234 111
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Citizens Advice (Phone advice line, operates 10–4, Monday–Friday)	03 444 111 444
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Poundstock Ringers	079040 88779
Juliotter Garden Club	01566 781559 or 01840 261237

# Local Organisations

## Libraries

Bude Library is currently open 10.00–4.00 Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, 10.00–1.00 Saturdays. Reserve books by phone (0300 1234 1111) or online at [capitadiscovery.co.uk/cornwall/login](http://capitadiscovery.co.uk/cornwall/login).

Poundstock's two pop-up libraries, in St Winwaloe's and Our Lady and St Anne's, are available when the churches are open (all day, every day). A wide choice of books can be borrowed or bought, with all proceeds going to charity.

## Poundstock Post Office

Still based in the old shop at Cornish Coasts Caravan and Camping Park on the A39. Open Mondays and Thursdays, 9.00–1.00 (ask at the new shop).

The following are accurate to the best of our knowledge, but check before you go (contact details below or p. 21).

## Scouts and Guides

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Scouts: Tuesday 6.30–8.0 pm

Beavers: Wednesday 6.0–8.0 pm (07855 001284)

Rainbows, Brownies and Guides: ring Louise on 078 1798 5661.

## Marhamchurch WI

Marhamchurch Methodist Hall, 2.30 pm, second Tuesday of the month (note change of time to afternoon).

## Jacobstow WI

Jacobstow Parish Hall, 7.30 pm, second Thursday of the month.

## Juliotter Garden Club

Otterham and St Juliot Hall, 7.30 pm, fourth Tuesday of the month.

## Launcells/Bude Dog Training/Agility

Puppies, pet dog training, problem dogs, clicker training, socialisation.

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## Bude Bridge Club

Tuesday and Friday evenings, Wednesday afternoons, in the Parkhouse Centre. Details from [www.bridgewebs.com/Bude](http://www.bridgewebs.com/Bude) or ring 01237 471111.

## Poundstock Guildhouse

You can hire the Guildhouse for events from meetings to parties and wedding receptions. Call 01288 341537 or visit [www.poundstockguildhouse.co.uk](http://www.poundstockguildhouse.co.uk).

# Diary Dates

## December

- 4 Bude Christmas Fair, 11-4 (see p. 15)
- 5 Scouts Christmas Evening, Scout Hut, 6.30 (see p. 17)
- 7 Widemouth Residents Christmas Supper, 6 pm (see p. 41)
- 16 Nine Lessons and Carols, Widemouth Bay, 2.30 (see p. 9)
- 17 Bude Choral Society Carols, St Michael's, Bude, 7.30
- 18 Carols in the Warm and Dry, St Winwaloe's, 2.30 (see p. 9)
- 25 Christmas Communion, St Winwaloe's, 9.30
- 25 Christmas Day Swim, Crooklets Beach, 11.00 (warm-up from 10.45)

## January

- 24 Juliotter Gardening Club, 'Planting a medicinal garden', Diana Lee, 7.30
- 29 Candlemas: lunch and service, Poundstock Gildhouse, 12.00

## FREE ADVERTISING FOR LOCAL EVENTS

The Packet will always advertise local community and charity events free of charge. As circumstances allow meetings and events to take place, we all hope to get back to a more normal pattern of life with a lot more going on. But we don't 'just know' what's happening – you have to tell us!

Our deadline for the February and March edition is 20 January.

## **DON'T FORGET: TELL THE PACKET!**

## Defibrillators in the parish

**Widemouth Bay:** next to the Summerhouse (by the church, Leverlake Road); near the top of Long Park Drive by the entrance to Pencarra and Bellair, just below the junction with Edith Walk; at the back of the public toilets just above Widemouth beach. The RNLI lifeguards also have a defibrillator, available at their hut above the beach when they are on duty.

**Treskinnick Cross:** just off the A39, in the old phone box.

# Poundstock Parish Council

**[www.poundstock-pc.gov.uk](http://www.poundstock-pc.gov.uk)**

*Chairman* Robert Gavin    [robert.gavin@poundstock-pc.gov.uk](mailto:robert.gavin@poundstock-pc.gov.uk)

*Vice-chair*    *vacant*

*Councillors*

Stephen Blake    [stephen.blake@poundstock-pc.gov.uk](mailto:stephen.blake@poundstock-pc.gov.uk)

Michelle Carter    [michelle.carter@poundstock-pc.gov.uk](mailto:michelle.carter@poundstock-pc.gov.uk)

Max Faulkner    [max.faulkner@poundstock-pc.gov.uk](mailto:max.faulkner@poundstock-pc.gov.uk)

Eric Harris    [eric.harris@poundstock-pc.gov.uk](mailto:eric.harris@poundstock-pc.gov.uk)

Steve Haynes    [steve.haynes@poundstock-pc.gov.uk](mailto:steve.haynes@poundstock-pc.gov.uk)

Pamela Idelson    [pamela.idelson@poundstock-pc.gov.uk](mailto:pamela.idelson@poundstock-pc.gov.uk)

Tom O'Sullivan    [tom.osullivan@poundstock-pc.gov.uk](mailto:tom.osullivan@poundstock-pc.gov.uk)

*Parish clerk*

Lynn Pluess    [clerk@poundstock-pc.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@poundstock-pc.gov.uk)

07768 100 560

The parish council website carries agendas, full minutes and other documents, as well as information about the Neighbourhood Development Plan and the parish cemetery. At present, council meetings take place at 7 pm on the last Thursday evening of each month at Poundstock Gildhouse.



## **Poundstock Neighbourhood Plan Committee**

Chairman: Matthew Blows

Vice Chair: Brenda Alison

Secretary: Lyn Smith

Members: Sara Beckett, Stephen Blake, Robert Gavin, Robbie Pearce, Barry Rogers, Nicky Vereker, Phyllis Ward

Contact: email : [ndp-sg@poundstock-pc.gov.uk](mailto:ndp-sg@poundstock-pc.gov.uk)

or by post to: St Marwenne, Combe Lane, Widemouth Bay, EX23 0AA





## Jacobstow WI

Members enjoyed a talk from the Medical Detection Dogs charity in October when we learnt about how dogs are able to detect the odour of some human diseases including cancer, Parkinson's disease,

malaria and Covid-19. The dogs can provide early patient diagnosis and may also be used to prevent the wider spread of infectious diseases. The charity also trains medical alert assistance dogs to improve the quality of life of individuals with life-threatening medical conditions. Animal welfare is at the heart of all of this work and the no-kennel policy means all the dogs live in a home with staff members or volunteers.



**HAPPY BIRTHDAY** Jacobstow WI's birthday was celebrated at Trethorne Hotel in October with a carvery lunch and raffle. We've already starting planning for our 85<sup>th</sup> birthday in 2023!

In November, local author Jane Holland entertained us with stories from her literary life, which started when she was checking the publisher's proofs of her mother's novels from the age of 10! Jane writes under a variety of pseudonyms and first became known to members for her 'Cornish Girls' wartime series of books under the name of Betty Walker, but she enjoys much success writing thrillers, young adult novels, romances, poetry and spy stories. A funny and inspiring speaker, she gave us a broad insight into the world of writing and publishing.



At the end of November we're looking forward to a craft morning making Christmas table decorations with winter foliage and painted glass tea-light holders. We'll then round off this year's activities with our Christmas Party on 8 December. Looking further ahead, on 12 January we'll be hearing about the history of Wroes department stores.

*Jill Baker*



*Jacobstow WI wishes everyone  
a very Merry Christmas & a happy New Year*

Answers to the mini-quiz on p. 11: 1 (b); 2 (c); 3 (a); 4 (d); 5 All of them!



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## The Farming Column: Poor Old Geese!

Poor old geese! We've had to lock away our birds like everyone else and we were worried how they would cope with being inside and the lack of light etc. However, the alternative was to have them put down, so in they came. We only have a pair and they are coping so far. We hope we'll be allowed to let them out in the early spring as they need to be outside.

I looked on the government sites to see what all the fuss is about, after all, we can make do with a few less turkeys, can't we? The guidance says that it is important that we do not touch dead or sick birds. We should call the Defra helpline on 03459 33 55 77 if we find dead wild birds. Currently, in Great Britain, we are encouraged to report findings of a single dead bird of prey (including owls), three or more dead wild waterfowl (swans, geese or ducks) or gulls, or five or more dead birds of any species. Reports to the Defra Helpline of found dead wild birds are triaged and not all birds will be collected.

If avian influenza is confirmed in wild birds, UKHSA will put in place measures to reduce the risk to people who have encountered the dead birds. I didn't realise there was a risk to us, the NHS warns about 4 strains that have caused concern in recent years. They are H5N1 (since 1997), H7N9 (since 2013), H5N6 (since 2014) and H5N8 (since 2016). Although H5N1, H7N9 and H5N6 don't infect people easily and aren't usually spread from human to human, several people have been infected around the world, leading to a number of deaths. H5N8 and H5N1 bird flu have been found in some poultry, other captive birds and wild birds in the UK.

So, bird flu is spread by close contact with an infected bird (dead or alive). This includes touching infected birds, touching droppings or bedding or killing or preparing infected poultry for cooking, but importantly, we can't catch bird flu through eating fully cooked poultry or eggs. You can read the latest bird flu updates on GOV.UK. Let's hope that we find a way of safely living with these viruses and our poultry can, once again, range free.



*Sheepish farmer*

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# Our Night Sky in December

By the end of December Venus and Mercury will set soon after the Sun, but Saturn will linger until 9 pm and Jupiter until 1 am. Meanwhile, Mars will be rising in the East soon after sunset, glowing steadily and red by the Pleiades, followed by Orion, dominating the night sky after Jupiter has set. Here I must apologise for the lack of a mention of Mars last time. On a clear dark night I wrongly identified the bright orange object near Taurus as Aldebaran, which is also red but much fainter, and twinkles, unlike a planet. So, embarrassment for your humble scribe and promises to be more rigorous in consulting my planetarium!

NASA's DART (Double Asteroid Redirection Test) mission, aimed at altering the orbit time of Dimorphos round its parent asteroid Didymos, was a tremendous success. Analysis of the data obtained shows the spacecraft's kinetic impact with its target, Didymos, successfully altered the asteroid's orbit by a greater time than expected. This marks humanity's first attempt at purposely changing the motion of a celestial object, and the first full-scale demonstration of asteroid deflection technology. Images from a number of telescopes helped scientists calculate the orbit change resulting from DART's impact. The images sent back just before impact show a rubble-littered surface, suggesting Dimorphos was probably a loose collection of rocks rather than a solid object like Didymos. If you have not seen the astonishing videos, do visit NASA's website.

The search for the mysterious dark matter and dark energy continues. We know how much dark energy there is because we know how it affects the universe's expansion. Other than that, it is a complete mystery. But it is an important mystery. Roughly 68 per cent of the universe is dark energy, while dark matter makes up about 27 per cent. We are much more certain of what dark matter is not than what it is. First, it is dark, so not in the form of stars and planets that we see. Second, it is not in the form of dark clouds of normal matter, matter made up of particles called baryons. Third, it is not antimatter, because we do not see the unique gamma rays produced when antimatter meets matter. Finally, we can rule out large galaxy-sized black holes; high concentrations of matter bend light passing near them from objects further away, but we do not see enough lensing events to suggest that such objects make up the required dark matter contribution. The rest – everything on Earth, everything ever observed with all of our instruments – adds up to less than 5 per cent of the universe. Efforts to explain these two mysterious contributors to the Universe continue to stretch scientists of all persuasions, and there will be Nobel prizes available to anyone able to convincingly explain either or both.

Meanwhile, I wish all my readers and fellow sky watchers a very Happy Christmas and 2023.

*Bill Turnill*



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## From the Parish Council Chairman



As I sit here today writing this, I feel very sad and let down yet again by Cornwall County Council, this time the Strategic Planning Committee, who have just this morning approved the planning application for the crematorium in Poundstock. The panel clearly did not listen to the parish. Or indeed consider the mountain of reports against the application.

As to where we go from here, the matter will be discussed further, and this parish council will do all in its power to continue to support the parish however it can.

I would like personally to thank Councillor Watton for the huge amount of work that she has done over the last few years and will I'm sure continue in. And to all those that aided her in the endeavour. Several councillors have spent a long time and effort speaking out against this application including Councillor O'Sullivan and thanks go out to them as well. Indeed, all of those in the community that helped. Thank you.

Nick Cole from Bude has approached the Council to ask for members of the public with knowledge of local history, or knowledge of local footpaths and their history, to contact him at [wallescentre@gmail.com](mailto:wallescentre@gmail.com). Nick is developing [www.pathwaysofdiscovery.co.uk](http://www.pathwaysofdiscovery.co.uk), a website that digitalises our history and, where possible, links this with local footpaths. All tourism outlets will be encouraged to use a link to the website when servicing visitor enquiries, giving visitors the chance to read about our area before they come. They will also be able to download the walks when they are on holiday. The hope is twofold: to encourage visitors with broader interests over a longer season and to spread the visitor spend across local villages. Again, if you feel you can help Nick, please contact him directly.

The drainage at Widemouth Bay toilets has nearly been completed, with a small number of items still to be rectified, and these should be completed in early December. Also quotes are now underway to replace the roof, it is hoped in early spring. You will of course be kept advised about progress.

As we approach Christmas, I wish the whole community a very happy Christmas, and my prayers go with you for an enjoyable and healthy one. Let us all remember those around us this time of year and continue to offer our support to our neighbours who may be alone.

Happy Christmas and New Year.

*Robert Gavin*



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## Solstice

When I was a wee lad, my teacher explained what the winter and summer solstice is. He said the sun stood still over the Tropic of Capricorn on 21 December and over the Tropic of Cancer on 21 June. For many years, I wanted to stand on those lines of latitude on those dates and watch the sun stand still in the sky.

Only latterly did I understand what he meant. The sun on 21 December doesn't climb any higher over the Tropic of Capricorn. So, the next day, it climbs not quite so high. And this is why our days start to get longer after 21 December.

Far, far back, thousands of years ago, people noticed the lengthening days after 21 December. And they celebrated because the life-giving sun seemed to be reborn. Mid-winter festivals became a big thing because life was starting anew: seeds could be got ready for planting and lambs would soon arrive. The feasting was a peasant ritual. *Pagus* in Latin meant *countryside*. From that came the French word *paysan* which means *peasant* and *pagan*. The mid-winter carousing was a *peasant* or *pagan* festival.



*Me walking to a Saturnalia festival*

The Romans came to Britain in AD 43 and by AD 343 were mostly Christian. The Romans always wanted to get along with the people, so they celebrated Christ's birth at the pagan mid-winter festival. They knew it as the Saturnalia: a pagan festival celebrating the god of agriculture – Saturn. It involved wreaths, candles and the exchange of presents. And it evolved into Christmas.

And do bear in mind that the days lengthen after the winter solstice. *Nil desperandum!*

*Christopher Asbury*

### Candlemas at Poundstock Church and Gildhouse

Following the Benefice service on Sunday 29 January 2023  
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# Bude Canal and Harbour

With next July marking 200 years since the Bude Canal and Harbour Company began trading with Holsworthy, the Bude, Stratton and District Old Cornwall Society welcomed Chris Jewell, of the Bude Harbour and Canal Society. The mineral-rich sands of Summerleaze and the earliest canal engineers, James Green and Lansdown resident George Casebourne, were all important, with the original concept of a Bude Canal coming from Cornishman John Edyvean in 1774. With two others, he successfully put a proposal to Parliament, and royal assent was given to an Act creating the canal on 25 May, though not without dissent from local landowners, who objected to their acres being taken by law.

The first breakwater, proposed in 1818, was destroyed by a strong storm in 1838, not the last time the Atlantic Ocean would have a deciding say in the ups and downs of this coast-to-countryside project, covering an awesome 35½ miles. Cornwall Council are now responsible for the upkeep of Bude Canal and Harbour, while BCHS members play an essential role in volunteering, fundraising and organising events to raise awareness of the canal, its beautiful tow-paths, the unique inclined plain and the magnificent sea lock, one of only two in the whole of the British Isles. The BCHS's photograph collection clearly shows the catastrophic damage to the lock gates inflicted by a storm in February 1997, and the new lock gates that replaced them, using six metric tonnes of South American greenheart hardwood. June 2001 saw the opening of this new Bude sea lock, with an array of dignitaries in attendance alongside the (then) Grand Bard of the Gorsedh Kernow, John Bolitho of Bude. Sadly, however, May 2019 saw the gates fail to open completely following further damage. A specialist company was called in, and by 2021 the gates had been reset, with new walkway and handrails added and the balance beam refitted. Although the gates themselves are still in full working order, repair of damage from further storms is estimated to need some £1 million pounds. This summer's drought, the worst for decades, caused water to evaporate from the canal at an alarming rate, and while recent rainfall has much improved the situation, essential repairs are needed and a 'Revise and Re-management' plan is in place.

Anyone who would like to help preserve this nationally loved Bude creation is invited to join the Bude Canal and Harbour Society.

*Helen Bartrop Hocking, Bude, Stratton and District Old Cornwall Society*



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**Present:** Cllrs Robert Gavin (Chair), Stephen Blake, Michelle Carter, Max Faulkner, Eric Harris, Steve Haynes, Tom O’Sullivan, Gemma Watton (Vice-Chair); the Clerk; County Councillor Nicky Chopak; two members of the public. **Apologies:** Cllr Pamela Idelson.

**Planning matters:** PA22/08537, 3 Swelle Cottages, application for planning permission for siting of a log cabin for annexe accommodation purposes, previously carried out without consent; at 3 Swelle Cottages, Poundstock, Bude, Cornwall. Following lengthy discussions, it was resolved to object because this proposal represents a residential unit of accommodation in the countryside where no special justification has been satisfactorily demonstrated.

**Finance:** (e) Resolved to approve the updated Asset Register noting that the value of the village hall has been restated to the required price, with the addition of the adjacent land for the sole purpose of vehicle parking.

**Agenda items:** (a) Widemouth Bay toilets: drainage works will begin on 7 November. The Chair is seeking quotes for the repair/replacement of the roof. Repairs to the hand washer/dryers are still ongoing.

(d) The Hedgehog Highway Project: resolved to purchase a Hedgehog Highway Project Box of 50 at a cost of £150.00.

(h) Two benches in Widemouth Bay car park: resolved that the benches be located on the existing concrete base adjacent to the beach café and will be installed by Widemouth Task Force.

**Reports:** (a) Poundstock Ward Member’s Report: Cllr Chopak thanked planning portfolios holders Cllrs Watton and O’Sullivan for their thorough reports on planning applications. She spoke on the imminent changes to the commercial bus services affecting several routes. A ‘Mayor for Cornwall’ is still undecided but she reaffirmed there is firm commitment from most town/parish councils to oppose this. Cllr Chopak spoke again of the £62 million deficit facing Cornwall Council next year; statutory services would need to be prioritised and they may need to reconsider which services which they do not have a statutory duty to provide. She spoke of grant funding opportunities for a new community hall that may become available in the future. With everyone very concerned at the soaring cost of living for families she explained she has a small pot of funds within the Community Chest Fund which may be able to assist. The Jubilee Tree she spoke of earlier for the parish will become available soon.

**Meeting closed:** 21.19.



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## Excerpts from Community Hall I Committee Minutes

A meeting of the Community Hall Committee was held on 10 November 2022 in the Gildhouse.

**Voting members present:** Cllrs Tom O'Sullivan, Stephen Blake, Eric Harris and Steve Haynes

**Others:** L Pluess (Parish Clerk); Cornwall Cllr Nicky Chopak.

**Apologies:** Cllrs Max Faulkner, Robert Gavin (PC Chair), Gemma Watton.

**Matters arising** (from minutes of 13 October 2022): noted that it was agreed the site of the old parish hall was not considered to be a suitable location for a new community centre.

**Agenda items:** (a) To discuss any response received from Cornwall Council and to consider communication with Scott Mann MP to seek support with the possible Treskinnick Cross land offer: resolved to engage planning consultant Richard White to give his opinion on the chances of getting planning consent for a community hall on the land at Treskinnick Cross, with costs up to £200.00. Also resolved to engage in a public consultation with the residents of Treskinnick Cross to establish whether or not they would be in favour of a new community hall being built in the hamlet, questions to be asked will be agreed amongst members. Resolved that the Chair write to the office of Scott Mann MP to seek support for the possible transfer of the land at Treskinnick Cross.

(b) Preliminary matters relating to drawing up a business plan for a new hall: agreed to investigate business plans for further discussion at the next meeting.

(c) Possible alternative funding opportunities: Cllr Stephen Blake has been investigating funding options to provide a new community hall, with the most positive response coming from the National Lottery Community Fund.

(d) Matters of concern following the sale of Bangors Hall: resolved that the Chair write to Webbers with a view to contacting the new owners to enquire if they would be interested in selling rather than developing the site.

e) Valuations of the old hall: resolved to recommend to full Council to apply for outline planning permission to demolish the hall and replace with two houses.

**Next meeting:** 8 December 2022.

**Meeting closed:** 20.29



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The Packet team  
wish all our readers  
a very happy Christmas  
and  
a healthy, peaceful 2023

**WIDEMOUTH BAY**  
**RESIDENTS**  
**CHRISTMAS SUPPER**  
WEDNESDAY DECEMBER 7<sup>TH</sup>  
6PM FOR 6.30PM  
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A colorful illustration of a village scene with various houses, a church spire, and a snow-covered ground.A large red circular graphic with white stars, serving as a background for the event information.

Bude  
Choral  
Society

**Christmas  
Carols**

17th December 2022  
7.30pm  
St Michael's Church  
Bude

Admission  
FREE

Retiring collection in aid of  
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