

The Word around Muxton



FREE

7th Edition

Friday 1st Dec 2023



Aerial photo of the Vicarage taken about 1960

St Matthews Donnington Wood Old Vicarage, Muxton

It was a late summer's afternoon when I was cordially greeted by Philippa Huelin at the St Matthew's Donnington Wood Old Vicarage in Muxton. As I arrived, she was out in the garden tending to her 2 dogs and one wayward chicken, which was hiding underneath the foliage on the front porch.

'The Vicarage was almost certainly part of a farm in the past and was gifted to the church by the then Duke of Sutherland in 1845,' she said. The oldest part of the house possibly predates the Tudor period. When it was taken over by the Church, an extension was built at the front to accommodate a drawing room and the Vicar's Study. It was sold by the church to its first private owner in the mid-1980s.

Philippa and her late husband, Roger, did extensive upgrades after taking ownership in December 1990, during which they found a bread oven, complete with shovel still in it, a wash boiler and

a 2-seater privy.

When the property was still being used as a Vicarage, there were stories of garden parties which took place on the front lawn. The weeping ash was used as a boy's changing room as they prepared for the many fun races they had. Since then, the tennis lawn and soft fruit areas of the garden have been divided off for another property built next door.



Philippa (pictured) in the oldest part of the Vicarage with the rocking horse she bought for her grandchildren

Peace Candle Lights the World

While on holiday in South Australia I popped into the local church – Walkerville Uniting Church, Adelaide, it was lovely to meet new friends and join in the worship. Just before leaving, I was given a gift to bring back to St. John's Church, here in Muxton, it was a Peace Candle – pictured.

In 1986 a group of American Christians from York, Pennsylvania visited a

number of churches in the Soviet Union. Following one service, an elderly woman placed three rubbles in the hand of the American Pastor and asked him to buy a candle for



the church he served, to be lit as a symbol of Peace during the Service. For more than fourteen years, the Peace Candle burned each Sunday at the First Presbyterian Church in York. In the fall of 1986, the York congregation decided to pass the light of their candle on to 100 other churches and since that time its light has gone all over the world including to St John's Church Muxton.

Written by Val Whybrow

In this season of Advent, St John's Community Choir are delighted to bring you Graham Kendrick's

RUMOURS OF ANGELS

Venue St John's Church, Saltwells Drive
9th Dec 7.30pm

01952 670033
www.stjohnsmuxton.org.uk
admin@stjohnsmuxton.org.uk

Granny's Christmas Pudding – A Traditional Family Favourite

One of my earliest memories is of my grandmother making Christmas puddings in August each year, as she could leave the back door open to allow the steam to escape during the lengthy cooking process.

My grandmother's Christmas pudding was legendary and she always attributed its rich-flavoured yet light-textured deliciousness to the use of breadcrumbs rather than flour.

The recipe quantities were relatively large (4lb dried fruit and 10 eggs, for example), as she used to make a number of puddings in various sizes for other people as well as our larger family version for Christmas Day. When my mother took over the preparation, she cut the 12-hour steaming time dramatically with the use of a pressure cooker, maintaining the flavour but changing the texture slightly.

I am not sure where the recipe originally came from, but it was on one of the many random



handwritten sheets stored in my grandmother's Radiation cookery book, which was first published in 1927 for regulo controlled gas cookers. Although somewhat battered, the book survives (see photo) and is now in the care of my 91-year-old mother. It remains a fascinating insight into changes in home cookery over an extended period, as well as holding special memories for our family.

For more detailed recipes for her Christmas pudding and pastry, including metric quantities, please visit www.stjohnsmuxton.org.uk/theword.

Written by: Moira Fenn



Article and pictured:
Rev. Matthew Lefroy

It's only recently that I have come to enjoy the light displays that go up around many houses for the Christmas season. Perhaps this is because my parents always insisted on having candles instead of electric lights on our Christmas tree. When we lit the candles the scene was magical, although we always had a couple of buckets of water standing by in case of an accident!

Light is vital for our existence, we would find it very difficult to function without it. This is true for physical light which enables us to see where we are and what we are doing. It is also true for spiritual light which helps us to know whether what we do in life is good or bad and what is the difference between right and wrong.

At Christmas, we celebrate the birth of somebody who brought spiritual light into people's lives wherever he went. So great was the impact he had on those who knew him that Jesus of Nazareth was known by the title "the Light of the World." At St John's Church this Christmas, we are holding a festival celebrating the light that he brought to us. You can find out about all the events throughout this edition.

Please accept this as an invitation to come to as many events as you are able.

I wish you a happy and peaceful Christ

Matthew

Christmas Word Search

ANGELS BELLS CANDLES CRACKERS JOY MANGEI
MERRY MISTLETOE PRESENTS REINDEER SANTA
SHEPHERDS SLEIGH SNOW SNOWMAN STABLE STAR
STOCKINGS CAROLS



"The Word Around Muxton": a newspaper written by locals for locals. Contributions are welcome from all ages. Please email The Editor if you have an item for our next edition: Theword@Stjohnsmuxton.org.uk or visit www.stjohnsmuxton.org.uk/theword

A blast from the past...

By way of introduction to this new segment we are pleased to include memories from the Johnson family of Muxton. Mr A. W. C. Johnson will be remembered as the chemistry teacher at Newport Adams' Grammar School.



Igloos at No. 43 Muxton Lane, Stephen & Martin Johnson, March 1963

We rarely saw much snow, but the winter of January to March 1963 was an exception. We managed to build two igloos, as this photo proves, with the snow on our three lawns. The intense cold (it reached -10C or -11C some days, I recall), put the wild life under pressure, and the pigeons found Dad's brussel sprouts a treat. He tried putting nets over the brussels but the birds found their way through. Then one day in exasperation, he got out his 12-bore and blazed away from about 20 or 30 yards. The result was the brussel sprouts had even more holes in them, and you had to watch out for lead shot when eating.

We were a family of five boys, born between 1944 and 1954, and lived at No. 6 Muxton until about 1959, when the house was re-numbered No. 43 Muxton Lane, following the building of all the new houses on the field.

Written by Martin Johnson

Caring for your Christmas Tree

Christmas is approaching rapidly and here's a thought for those of you who intend to have a real Christmas tree this year (one with its roots still on) is to remember that the tree will have prepared itself for winter and in effect closed down. When you bring it into the house the tree will assume, given the warm conditions, that spring, or even summer, has arrived. You need, therefore, to gradually introduce the tree to its new environment. Put it into the garage for a few days first, then into a cool room, and finally into its festive position.

If possible do not make this position next to a radiator - think how you would feel if you had to stand next to a hot radiator all day, and for days on end! Also remember that it is a living thing and cannot survive without water (this point also applies to a tree with its roots cut).

Once the festive season is over, reverse the process to remove the tree and again think how you would feel if one day you were standing next to a hot radiator only to suddenly find yourself outside, probably with freezing temperatures. Following these simple rules should result in you having a tree that does not drop its needles all over the carpet and can be planted in the garden ready for next year.

Written by Richard, Lilyhurst Plant Centre.

Sing carols, enjoy mulled wine and mince pies and meet the author of Christmas!

Carols & Candles

15th Dec 8pm

St John's Church, Saltwells Drive

01952 670033
www.stjohnsmuxton.org.uk
admin@stjohnsmuxton.org.uk



Fun, short service for families with walk-on nativity

Crib Service

**Christmas Eve
24th Dec 3.30pm**

St John's Church, Saltwells Drive

01952 670033
www.stjohnsmuxton.org.uk
admin@stjohnsmuxton.org.uk



CHRISTMAS FAYRE
St John's Church Muxton
**Saturday
2nd December 2023
3pm-6pm**
Mulled Wine, Hot Drinks,
Children's Crafts,
Entertainment, Stalls, and
much more
*Come along and join us as we kick off
the festive season together*

For Crossword Solution and Results from July 2023 Edition please visit our webpage at:

www.stjohnsmuxton.org.uk/theword

Local girls make their 'mark'



Last year Newport Rugby Club started a women's rugby section for girls aged 11-18. Initially interest was quite low but over the past year the group has significantly grown. We are proud to say we were at the first ever session and continue to go on a weekly basis developing new skills.

Each training session brings a new challenge, through which we are supported by our coaching team who are extremely dedicated to helping each girl reach her full potential as a rugby player. Everyone learns how to play in a variety of positions, learning techniques needed for all areas and more specific ones only required by a few people on the pitch e.g. kicking.

Even though the section is small there is opportunity to develop as a player through games. The club merges with the Shropshire Barbarians, a team made up of players from clubs all over the local area. In the future, the section intends to link with Oswestry Rugby Club to play in the national cup, the final of which is played at Twickenham (the home of England Rugby).

The club is aiming to have girl's and women's teams for all age groups. We encourage girls and women to come along and have a go. The sport is inclusive and everyone is very friendly! If you are interested, training is on a Friday night at Newport Salop RUFC from 7:00-8:30. Anyone between the ages of 11-18 is invited and is welcome.

Written by: Bekah T and Leah R (Pictured)

Don't let debt ruin your life

Jonathan and Suzanne were a middle-aged couple with two teenage children. They owned their own house although the mortgage had some years to run and despite Suzanne's intermittent mental health issues, were coping well supporting their children and elderly relatives.

Jonathan had been employed since he was 16 in various different companies from manual labour to factory work and was until recently a rep for a well-known company, sadly an injury forced him to give up work. They had never really saved (loving to spend money on their children and the annual foreign holiday) so the huge drop in income came as a shock. Benefits were difficult to apply for, there was a long wait to receive them and the amounts were very small in comparison to his previous income. Debts started to mount up very quickly.

Someone told them about Christians Against Poverty (CAP), a place they could get help and advice on dealing with their debts. St John's Muxton is one of four churches in Telford that together run the Telford CAP debt centre. Jonathan and Suzanne are not out of the woods yet but are receiving advice and much needed emotional support and encouragement from the debt centre staff and volunteers.

Suzanne said 'we had nearly given up hope, we didn't know where to turn. Thank you so much for helping us. Our lives are different now that our debts are being sorted and we can face the future.'

This is a fictional story based on the experience of many situations being dealt with by Telford CAP Debt Centre over the last 8 years. If you need help with debt phone 0800 328 0006 or visit www.capuk.org.

Written by: Vicky Yates



GIFTS: A book by LAURA BARNETT

The cover of this book is enticing as a Christmas read, with the book itself a series of simple short stories where the main characters are interlinked through family ties or friendship.

The stories are set in December 2021 when we were all taking initial steps to restart "normal" life after the Pandemic. Some of the sad consequences of Covid are mentioned in the background and serve as a reminder of times we have all recently experienced that affected so many of our precious relationships.

The twelve characters are looking for the ideal gift for the much loved, but not always easy-going, people in their lives. Maddy owns the local bookshop. She is intent on choosing a gift for her old school friend Peter, who has returned to the area after his divorce. Peter, in his turn, is having difficulty in choosing a gift for his teenage daughter Chloe, who he suspects he doesn't really know any more. Chloe looks for a gift for her beloved Grandmother Irene, who desperately wants to think of a gift for her exceptional Carer, Alina.....The characters are not developed to any great depth, but just enough to give a flavour of the kind of people they are.

This simple book is one you can comfortably read a little at a time as you wrap those carefully chosen gifts for the people you love who make such a difference to your life.

Written by Trish Baynham-Hughes

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