

# Link

February 2025

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New time of 4:30pm  
19 January, 16 February  
and 16 March

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New time for  
Evensong



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A smartphone free  
childhood?



Please give to St Boniface  
to maintain this beautiful  
church building

A magazine for the parishes of  
Bunbury and Tilstone Fearnall



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## URGENT REQUEST

for warm winter  
clothing (2-12 years)

Since reopening on the Monday after Christmas, KidsBank have already received thirty referrals for families struggling to provide warm winter clothing for their children.

They are currently short of stock leaving them unable to help until donations come in.

If you are able to help, they would be enormously grateful for your support. They need clothing for boys age two to seven years and girls age two to twelve years:

long sleeve tops  
warm trousers  
warm knits and hoodies  
warm coats & hats

These really are essential in cold weather.

Thank you

KidsBank are open 10:00am — 3:00pm, Monday to Friday  
21-23 Garden Lane, Chester, CH1 4EU

# Who we are

## TIM HAYWARD - Vicar

St Boniface, St Jude, Calveley Chapel  
01829 261511

revtimhayward@stbonifacebunbury.org

### Associate Minister

Rev Claire Wilson

claire.wilson@stbonifacebunbury.org

### Parish administrator

Kay Carson

parishadmin@stbonifacebunbury.org

### Pastoral team leader

Amber Middlemiss

01829 261437

amber.middlemiss@stbonifacebunbury.org

## St Boniface

### Churchwarden

Sean Augustin-Wood

sean.augustin@stbonifacebunbury.org

### Vice-Chair

Elaine Crotty

elaine.crotty@stbonifacebunbury.org

### Treasurer

Yvonne Wood 01270 528442

### Secretary

John Mason 01829 733971

## St Jude's

### Churchwardens

Elizabeth Marren 01270 528556

Mike Lightfoot 01829 732611

### Organist

Ann Badrock 01829 260343

## Calveley

### Churchwarden

Sean Augustin-Wood

sean.augustin@stbonifacebunbury.org

### Secretary

Yvonne Wood 01270 528442

## The Link

Please contact us to advertise your business or to send us your news, views and pictures.

### Advertising:

parishlinkads@stbonifacebunbury.org

### Editorial:

Elaine Crotty

t: 01829 260648 or 07860 128427

parishlinkeditor@stbonifacebunbury.org

### Graphic design:

Kay Carson

You can also read The Link online at:

www.stbonifacebunbury.org

# Community news

Congratulations to Hilary and Mike Watson who celebrated their Golden 50th anniversary on 28 December with both families including six grandsons. Irrepressible Hilary sharing the news said: "You get less for murder!! Spending the inheritance and making memories!!"



Evensong at **St Boniface church** is held on the third Sunday of each month but its time has changed to 4:30pm from January to March, inclusive. Evensong will then revert to 6:00pm from April to October, inclusive.

**Bunbury WI** meets on the second Thursday of the month at Bunbury Playing Fields Pavilion at 7:30pm. Speakers at meetings on 13 February and 13 March will be Age UK Cheshire East, "Scams Awareness", and Kate Huet, "Use and Enjoyment of Herbs". We warmly welcome new members and guests. For further information contact Lynda Davies 01829 863781.

**Bunbury Gardening Club** The meeting on 18 February will be a talk by Marcus Chaloner on "Landscapes of the Canal River Trust" at 7:30pm at the Bunbury Village Hall. New members always welcome; see Bunbury Gardening Face book page or contact our secretary at mjbourn249@tiscali.co.uk.

On Saturday 22 March **The Swinging Woodpeckers Big Band** are delivering a Big Band Night at the Bunbury

Village Hall. An evening of music from past years, in particular music from the Swing and Big Band era. This will be the third time The Swinging Woodpeckers have performed in Bunbury (having visited a couple of times before at the invitation of the Bunbury WI).

**ALIVE** — the Bunbury Warm Hub is open: **Monday to Friday from 10:30am**. Elderly villagers are welcome to enjoy a free hot cup of tea or coffee with biscuits in a warm and friendly environment.

**Pub Crawl** Thinking about the big issues of life over a pint with Rev Tim on **Thursdays from 7:30pm**. The January meeting has come and gone, but the next one will be at The Nags, Bunbury, on 13 February. Look out for the posters on our noticeboards or on our website for all the 2025 dates.

### Lent Series 2025

See Rev Tim's column on page 3 for more details.



**LENT SERIES**

Nick Page's witty and wonderful book *The Badly Behaved Bible* will shape this year's Lent series. A series of 5 short reflections following the 10am Midweek Communion service at St Boniface.

Wed 5th March - the men wrote the word  
Wed 12th March - a land of story  
Wed 19th March - the not so good book  
Wed 2nd April - the joy of doubt  
Wed 9th April - it ain't necessarily so

**Support Bunbury Beavers, Cubs and Scouts every time you shop at the Co-op with just a few clicks!** Did you know that the Co-op puts its profits back into local communities? As a Co-op customer you get to choose a cause that's close to your heart and



## A word from the editor

Welcome back to a New Year that was cold, but very seasonable.

Share your passion — Do you have an interest, hobby, passion or specialist knowledge that you would be prepared to share in a short article for this publication? A few people have already contributed such diverse topics as tomato growing, Morris dancing and Gothic architecture, but the list is potentially endless. It could be work-related or entirely separate, and detailed knowledge is not really the point as we have the internet for that, but hearing your personal experience of things and why you enjoy them makes for interesting reading for most people. Anything between 400 and 700 words is probably ideal but other lengths will be considered, though may be subject to editing due to space constraints. Be brave and get writing — we'd love to hear from you! It can be anonymous but it's better if you include your name then people can talk to you more about if they see you. My email is [parishlinkeditor@stbonifacebunbury.org](mailto:parishlinkeditor@stbonifacebunbury.org)

they will get a share of a Local Community Fund. 25th SW Cheshire Bunbury & District Scout Group (aka Bunbury Beavers, Cubs and Scouts) has recently become one of the causes you can support with just a few clicks! If you are a Coop Member, simply visit <https://membership.coop.co.uk/causes> where you can select the group. Alternatively, if you have the Coop App on your smart phone then click on "Community" on the home page and choose the group there.



**St Boniface Church**

# **Evensong**

**New time of 4:30pm**  
**19 January, 16 February**  
**and 16 March**

Evensong is a traditional Anglican service that creates a calm space in a bustling world. Music is at the heart of this service and everyone is encouraged to join in all the singing

EVENSONG IS HELD MONTHLY ON EVERY THIRD SUNDAY

The copy deadline for the March issue is Friday 14 February. The magazine should be delivered from Saturday 1 March. Please send notices to [parishlinkeditor@stbonifacebunbury.org](mailto:parishlinkeditor@stbonifacebunbury.org)



## The badly behaved Bible

In 1916 the German theologian Karl Barth cleared his throat, adjusted his lederhosen and gave what was to become a hugely influential talk. It began like this:

"We are to attempt to find an answer to the question, What is there within the Bible? What sort of house is it to which the Bible is the door? What sort of country is spread before our eyes when we throw the Bible open?"

The talk was later reprinted as *The Strange New World Within the Bible*, and what I like about this image is that it takes us away from the idea of study and catapults us into the language of exploration and encounter. We start to see the Bible not as a book, but as a land, a location.

For this year's Lent Series we will be exploring Nick Page's witty and wonderful book: *"The Badly Behaved Bible"*. There are lots of us who know what they should think about the Bible, but who actually think something quite different. As William Blake once said:

"Both read the Bible day and night,  
But thou read'st black, where I read white."

We're told the Bible is the inspired word of God; then we read bits which are violent, disgusting or utterly weird. We're told it should fill us with joy and gratitude; only to encounter significant chunks that seem irrelevant, incomprehensible or just a bit dull. So, despite what we are told, we end up feeling rather bad about the Bible. The problem is we've been misinformed.

The Bible is not safe. The Bible is a book that can transform us, empower us, liberate us. But in order for it to do that we have to stop trying to control it, to tame it, domesticate it, make it support what we want it to say. That might shock us, or challenge us. It might transform us. To open the Bible is to risk our theology, our presuppositions, our deepest held beliefs. The fact is, the Bible is a very badly behaved book.

You are most welcome to join me on the following Wednesdays 10:00am for a short BCP communion service (20 minutes) followed by a reflection (approximately 15 minutes) on **"The Badly Behaved Bible"**. Coffee and refreshments will also be served.

- 5 March — The men who wrote the word**
- 12 March — A land of story**
- 19 March — The not so good book**
- 2 April — The joy of doubt**
- 19 April — It ain't necessarily so**

Tom Crotty  
*Lay Reader at St Boniface church*

## New Year's resolutions



Have you made some good challenging New Year resolutions? Or maybe like me, you've got to the stage where many years of abject failure and back tracking have got you to a point where they're no longer worth making.

Most New Year resolutions tend to be of the "self improvement" variety. I'm going to read more, I'm going to lose weight, I'm going to get fit etc. The current trend for expensive gyms relies on this principle that we humans are irrepressible optimists who firmly believe that last year's failures can be put behind us to be replaced with a renewed commitment on 1 January to the point where gym membership apparently leaps in January, accompanied by good levels of attendance, only to tail off sharply by February. The gym's business model, of course, relies on this. They sign you up for a full year's membership knowing that most people will only come for a few weeks and then lapse into idleness, allowing them to continue collecting your monthly subscription without the inconvenience of having you dripping sweat over all their expensive equipment.

So if these commitments to physical self improvement are so difficult, maybe we need to think about a whole new type of New Year resolution. How about a resolution for our spiritual lives? A spiritual new start for 2025? How about a resolution to get out there and tell people the Good News that Christ was sent by God to save them.

In these politically correct times, this is a tough call. It's just not the accepted thing to go around shouting about religion too loudly. We might offend someone but right now we have a further barrier to overcome and that is the difficulty of proclaiming our faith at a time when the church is under fire and under scrutiny. This is as a result of the resignation of Justin Welby as Archbishop of Canterbury and the subsequent criticism of Stephen Cottrell as Archbishop of York.

In the long interim period before a new Archbishop is appointed for Canterbury, Stephen takes effective control of the Church of England and the Anglican community but he has also been criticised for perceived failures in his ministry in relation to disgraced former priest David Tudor when he became Bishop of Chelmsford in 2010.

As the incoming bishop, Stephen inherited a very difficult problem in that his predecessors had allowed Tudor to continue officiating as priest whilst banning him from contact with children. When a new complaint was raised against Tudor in 2019, Stephen reacted swiftly, suspended him and reported him to a tribunal who then banned him from the priesthood for life.

Stephen's critics argue that he should have acted sooner and had Tudor removed from the priesthood as soon as he

inherited him but the counter argument is that he had no legal basis on which to do that.

We now find ourselves in the difficult position where Stephen is having to take on the mantle of the church from someone who resigned for a failure on safeguarding whilst being accused of the same himself. One wonders where this ends and I am reminded of the famous phrase in John 8:7, "Let he who is without sin, cast the first stone". Which paragon of perfection who has never made a single error of judgement can we find to lead us?

This feeding frenzy from the media is a gift to all of those who want to knock the church and who see it as a sure sign of our terminal decline into a secular world. These are the people who I would love to see exposed to what I would call the real church. This isn't the church of Lambeth Palace or Bishophthorpe Palace. This is the real church where totally dedicated Christians, both clergy and laity, strive daily to spread the Good News of Christ.

This is the church that Stephen Cottrell himself saw when he came to St Boniface before Christmas and sat outside toasting marshmallows with our young people in our Forest Church. This is the church that was filled to the rafters with music at our carol service when this wonderful old building of ours was crammed with worshippers. This is the real church and it is alive and well in spite of all the naysayers.

Stephen himself recognised that this is the real church in his recent letter to clergy and laity on taking on the difficult mantle of leadership for the Church of England. He said that the unstinting witness and service of parish churches, chaplaincies and other Christian communities brings hope and light, embodying the message of the gospel, a message of peace and new beginnings that is needed so urgently in our world as well as our church.

He went on to recognise the failings of the church in the past and to apologise for them but returns to the core message that the mission of discipleship should be at the heart of our faith.

## Our prayers

*Dear Father,  
Teach us to love you with all our heart, with all our soul, with all our mind, and with all our strength, and to love our neighbour as ourselves. Give us faith to accept the Good News of forgiveness and rebirth, and to tell the world what you have done for us.  
Amen*



Amber Middlemiss  
Pastoral Worker at St Boniface  
church

## Do not be afraid

In the gospels we hear about Jesus being interrogated by the high priests and then Pontius Pilate before his crucifixion. What strikes me is his calmness in a very frightening situation that he knows is going to end badly.

I heard somewhere that the injunction to not be afraid is recorded 365 times in the Bible; I have not tried to verify this personally! But I wonder at its meaning; we are humans, made of flesh and blood, susceptible to pain and injury, and facing inevitable death; we are dependent on other vulnerable beings — how can we not be afraid? Looking at Jesus's example it seems to me there is a distinction between being afraid in moments when danger looms suddenly (a natural consequence of being human), and being in a state of constant anxiety.

When I worked as a counsellor in the NHS I learned the importance of being able to distinguish between thoughts and feelings, and to see how one can drive the other. If we think negative, anxious thoughts they trigger a bodily response producing symptoms such as rapid heartbeat,

shallow breathing, nausea, light-headedness and sweating (the 'fight or flight' response), which feels very unpleasant and causes us to think less rationally. This drives behaviours and thoughts which generate further anxiety, and so the cycle is perpetuated. My CBT colleagues (cognitive behavioural therapy) had a mantra; "thoughts are not facts, they are opinions". CBT teaches us to notice our unhelpful thoughts, and to find ways of replacing them with healthier ones. It could be very helpful for all of us to practise, as our minds are often occupied by repetitive, circular thoughts that can dominate our lives.

I recently saw Ruby Wax at the Storyhouse, reliving her recent episode of severe depression and anxiety; she stressed that when we are really poorly with anxiety, we cannot think our way out of it. We have to find a way to stop thinking, so far as we can, and dwell only on simple, comforting things; this resonates with another of Paul's urgings; "think about such things as are noble, right, lovely, admirable, excellent and praiseworthy, and the God of peace will be with you". This may seem like sugar-coating reality, but it is actually a vital strategy for those times when we are overwhelmed.

I don't mean that we play down very real difficulties that may need our careful attention; I am advocating learning to notice when anxiety is becoming a way of life. If we step back from compulsive thinking we become more fully in the present; practising mindfulness is one way we can do this, or having quiet contemplative periods where we detach a little from our thoughts and let God have space to work in us. St Paul in 2 Corinthians urges us to "take captive every thought", and elsewhere he says "do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer, petition and thanksgiving, present your requests to God" — this is the idea of doing something (praying in this case) and then letting the worry go.

Being anxious is not something we should beat ourselves up about, but there are ways we can help ourselves and others, which may include seeking professional help. Taking medication is sometimes very helpful too. Ecclesiasticus says; "the Lord has created remedies from the earth, and a sensible person will not disparage them (...) by means of them the doctor relieves pain, and the pharmacist compounds his mixtures." God doesn't intend us to be overwhelmed with anxiety, and Jesus exemplified how not to be. He, his disciples and the prophets before him have left us messages of practical use, validated by modern healing methods, to help us to live more fearlessly and constructively.

### Church diary for February

Sunday 2 February	8:00am BCP Communion 9:30am Morning Worship 10:30am Holy Communion and Forest Church	St Boniface St Jude St Boniface
Wednesday 5 February	10:00am BCP Communion	St Boniface
Sunday 9 February	09:30am BCP Communion 10:30am Morning Worship 11:30 Morning Worship	St Jude St Boniface Calveley
Wednesday 12 February	10:00am BCP Communion	St Boniface
Sunday 16 February	9:30am Holy Communion 10:30am Third Sunday Brunch 4:30pm Evensong	St Jude St Boniface  St Boniface
Wednesday 19 February	10:00am BCP Communion	St Boniface
Sunday 23 February	9:30am Morning Worship 10:30am Holy Communion	St Jude St Boniface
Wednesday 26 February	10:00am BCP Communion	St Boniface



# Bunbury School news



## Smartphone-free childhood: a growing movement at Bunbury Primary School

In today's digital age, the pervasive presence of smartphones in our lives has become undeniable. While technology offers many benefits, educators, parents, and researchers are increasingly recognising the importance of limiting screen time for children, particularly in their formative years. Bunbury Aldersey CE Primary and Nursery School has taken a proactive step in this direction by embracing and supporting the "smartphone-free childhood" movement.

As a school, we have taken a number of measures to ensure that we educate the children as well as introduce procedures to limit and discourage children from using screens. This movement aims to encourage parents to talk about smartphones, social media and their impact on our children's lives. And to empower us to change the norm, so that parents don't feel like they need to provide their children with smartphones, just because everyone else does.

Research has shown that too much exposure to screens can impact attention spans, sleep patterns, and even physical activity levels. At Bunbury Primary, the focus is on creating an environment where children can thrive without the distractions of digital devices, encouraging creativity, outdoor play, and face-to-face interactions.

### How the initiative works

The smartphone-free approach at Bunbury Primary involves several key components:

- **Encouraging device-free zones:** the school is a designated device-free zone and from September 2024 we asked all parents and carers to not answer or make any calls whilst on school property. As role models for our children we want to encourage the children to engage fully in their surroundings and build meaningful relationships with peers.

- **Educating families:** workshops and information letters are regularly shared to guide parents on managing screen time at home. These sessions provide practical tips on balancing technology use while ensuring children have time for physical activities, hobbies, and family interactions. We are regularly visited by PC Andrew Cornall who presents to parents the latest information on Keeping Children Safe Online.
- **Role modelling by staff:** teachers and staff lead by example, demonstrating limited use of phones during school hours. This reinforces the school's commitment to the initiative and sets a positive example for the children.

The success of the smartphone-free childhood movement at Bunbury Primary has been bolstered by strong community support from our parents. A number of parents have signed the Smartphone Free Childhood pact. Bunbury Primary School is currently ranked second in Cheshire East for its smartphone-free initiative, with 77 families having signed the pact to date. If this is of interest, we would love to hear from you — please get in touch — [sfcbunbury@gmail.com](mailto:sfcbunbury@gmail.com).

As the smartphone-free movement continues to grow, Bunbury Aldersey Primary School hopes to inspire other parents within our community to take similar steps. By prioritising real-world connections and experiences over screen-based distractions, the school is helping to nurture a generation of well-rounded, resilient, and socially adept individuals.

To learn more about the initiative or get involved, please visit the Smartphone Free Childhood website: <https://smartphonefreechildhood.co.uk/>

Together, we can build a future where childhood is cherished for its simplicity and wonder, free from the constant pull of screens.

**Nic Badger**  
Principal

# Forest Church news



Yes, the weather was cold and dreary, but that only made our time at Forest Church more inviting. We built shelters and gathered around a warm fire to keep cosy, while crafting sugary snowflakes and making popcorn, all topped off with hot chocolate. As we enjoyed these simple pleasures, we reflected on how we can encounter God's presence in the everyday moments of life.



# Sky Notes for February

## Brilliant Venus in the west

Venus is the “star” of the show this month, providing a real treat for all. If you can view it through a small telescope or large binoculars held really steady — perhaps by leaning against the wall of a building — you will see it as a crescent. The crescent will become thinner as February progresses. Although Venus is brilliant in the western sky all evening, setting around 9:00pm, you can actually pick it up before the sky is properly dark. This is actually a good time to turn a telescope towards it as the sky still appears blue and the planet is not quite as dazzling as it would be against a black sky later. This makes it a bit easier to gaze at. Note: wait until the Sun has disappeared, otherwise you are liable to damage your eyes if you stumble across it.

On 1 February Venus lies close to the narrow crescent Moon, providing a stunning pairing. If that were not all, then Saturn is just below them, but very much fainter than Venus.

On 19 February, Venus is at its brightest. In fact, it is so bright all month that it can cast a shadow if you stand in a dark spot.

## Jupiter and Mars

Another planet putting on a show this month is Jove: the giant planet Jupiter. It lies in the constellation of Taurus the Bull. It is visible from sunset until it sets around 3:00am. This is another planet worth turning a small telescope towards. You will see the planet's slightly oval disc and up to four of its moons. The Moon passes nearby Jupiter, the planet to its left, on 6 February.

Mars is also bright this month. It lies east of Jupiter, in Gemini, and the two planets make quite a colour contrast. Mars is distinctly orange or red, whilst Jupiter is yellowish white (the precise colours seen vary from one person's eyes to another).

Let's hope for clear skies on 9 February as at 7:00pm the Moon skims past Mars. The two will be very close indeed. Enjoy with your naked eyes, binoculars or a small telescope.

## Orion, the hunter

February is a great time to spot the most famous of our winter constellations: Orion. According to the ancient Greeks, Orion was a formidable hunter. His left shoulder is marked by the bright star Betelgeuse, which is orange in colour. Orion's other bright star is Rigel, which is blue-white. Lying between these stars, but somewhat fainter, are the three stars that make up

Orion's famous belt: Alnitak, Alnilam and Mintaka. And if the sky is dark, away from streetlights, look just below the belt to see the Great Orion Nebula. This appears as a misty patch to the naked eye. And binoculars show it as a glowing cloud. It is made up of hydrogen gas and is the birthplace of new stars.

## The Celestial “G”

Until a few days ago, I hadn't heard of the Celestial “G” grouping of stars. These stars are actually located in a variety of different constellations across the sky. Unlike the official 88 constellations in the night sky, this grouping is not formally recognised by the International Astronomical Union. Nevertheless, the Celestial “G” is well worth a look and includes some of the objects I just mentioned. This grouping, or asterism, starts with Aldebaran in Taurus before moving up to

Capella in Auriga. From there it moves to Castor and Pollux in Gemini and then on to Procyon in Canis Minor. The final section starts with Sirius in Canis Major before moving on to Rigel, Bellatrix and finally Betelgeuse in Orion to form the final part of the “G”. The accompanying image was taken by British Astronomical Association (BAA) member, Steve Brown on Christmas Day. The scene includes both Mars and Jupiter (note that in February, Mars will have moved a little to the right compared with this photograph).



*The Celestial “G” (credit: Steve Brown, BAA)*

If you look carefully at Steve's photo, taken with a Sony A7S digital camera and 14mm lens, you can spot the misty “star” that is the Orion nebula, in the lower half of the constellation. Also marked on the image are the Pleiades star cluster, also known as the Seven Sisters. A superb sight in binoculars.

Why not have a look for the Celestial “G” during February? All you needs is a cloudless sky and your eyes!

## Northern Lights

There have been a few displays of the Northern Lights, or aurorae, in recent weeks. The Sun is still very active, so there might well be more. To check if an aurora is likely, keep an eye on the Aurora Watch website: <https://aurorawatch.lancs.ac.uk/>. You can also sign up there for alerts to be emailed to you automatically if an aurora is possible.

Clear skies to all!

**Bunbury Stargazer**

# Bunbury Medical Practice

## February news

### New Year ... New Resolutions!

Many of us start each New Year with health-related resolutions, with some of us keeping those resolutions better than others. One simple resolution which takes minimal effort, is to take up any offers of NHS screening, be this for bowel, breast, cervical or diabetes checks; screening is provided by the NHS and may save your life as early detection of a problem gives patients the best chance of a full recovery. Sadly, we receive many notifications from the various screening organisations that our patients have not responded to invites.

If there is one resolution that is easy to keep .. let this be it!

### Dispensary news our dispensary manager,

Vicky has been reflecting on changes made since she arrived six months ago. Our dispensary staff have settled into the process changes, resulting in prescription wait times being reduced to five working days. Stock shortages are also being more efficiently resolved through improved communication with patients.

### Training days for 2025

The practice will be closed from 1:00pm on the following dates; it will reopen the following working day at 8:00am

Tuesday 4 February	Wednesday 12 March
Tuesday 1 April	Wednesday 14 May
Tuesday 3 June	Wednesday 16 July
Tuesday 9 September	Wednesday 8 October
Tuesday 4 November	

All Training Days for 2025 can be seen on our website.

### Birth month reviews (BMRs)

If you are a Bunbury patient with a chronic condition (e.g. asthma, diabetes, COPD, hypertension, heart failure) you will be contacted for a birth month review on an annual basis, as the name suggests, this will generally be around your birth month. If you have not had a review of your condition in the

last 12 months, please contact reception to book an appointment.

### Flu vaccinations

It is not too late to have your winter flu vaccination done here at the surgery. Appointments will be available until 31 March.

### A message from our doctors

One main problem per appointment, please! It would be very helpful if patients would not store up lots of problems and questions for one appointment. As patients will appreciate, it is difficult to deal with multiple issues in a 10 — 15 minute appointment, and therefore provide a thorough assessment of the main problem. Dealing with multiple problems can also result in appointments running 30 — 60 minutes late by the end of the day.

### Patient Participation Group (PPG)

Would you like to help shape your GP practice?

A Patient Participation Group is a group of people who are patients of the practice, who want to help it work as well as it can for patients, doctors and staff. The NHS requires that every practice has a PPG.

Different patient experiences matter and members can bring different ideas to the practice to help us treat patients better or to improve how the practice operates. Being a member of a PPG will also provide a better understanding of the NHS and members can provide feedback from other patients.

Bunbury Medical Practice PPG is always keen to accept new members. If you would like further information, our current PPG members would be happy to answer any questions or provide further information; please email: [cmicb-cheshire.bunburyppg@nhs.net](mailto:cmicb-cheshire.bunburyppg@nhs.net)

## The Bunbury Village Day team honours Karen Gill

The Bunbury Village Day Team have made a donation to Macmillan Cancer Support to honour Karen Gill, a much-loved member of the team who died last year. We all miss her greatly.

The donation will assist Macmillan in continuing to do whatever it takes to help people with cancer, with everything from information about their treatment, to help with money worries and support with how they are feeling, so that they can live life as fully as they can.

If you want to find out about local bereavement support, information and support centres, or would like to talk, call Macmillan on 0808 808 00 00. They are open seven days a week, including bank holidays, from 8:00am-8:00pm.





# "Just one thing" for a healthier life

*We have chosen to continue with this series of articles based on the popular podcast by the late Dr Michael Mosley as testament to his life's work and passion for educating and helping people, which is what we believe he would have wanted.*



## Have a Cup of Tea

In the UK we drink millions of cups of tea a day. Ordinary (black) tea comes from the same plant as green tea, *Camellia sinensis*, an evergreen shrub native to Asia, but is processed differently. It is packed full of polyphenols which seem to help protect against osteoporosis; a study following elderly women drinking three or more cups of tea a day found they were thirty per cent less likely to suffer bone fractures than non-tea drinkers. Tea also contains theanine, a bioactive amino acid which improves memory and reaction time if consumed with caffeine (also present in tea). It increases the activity of alpha brainwaves which make us calmer, more alert, creative, and better able to absorb new information.

Professor Andrew Steptoe of UCL did a double blind randomised placebo control trial with two groups of people for six weeks, both of whom incorporated the lifestyle factor of sitting down and relaxing with a hot drink, but only one of which contained the active ingredients of tea. His team measured blood pressure and stress hormones before and after a stressful task that they were then asked to do e.g. give an impromptu speech. Both groups' stress responses increased during the task but the tea group had a much better post-stress adaptation and recovery. Theanine seems to interact with GABA, a neurotransmitter involved in non-excitatory pathways in the brain, helping to down-regulate stress and increase relaxation.

Tea also seems to increase longevity; a UK study following half a million people who drank 2 or more cups a day found they had a significantly lower risk of dying during the eleven year study than non-tea drinkers, due to less cardiovascular and coronary heart disease. Reduced inflammation and less unhealthy platelet-clumping were observed after six weeks of tea drinking compared with the non-tea group, and these are known to be important factors in the reduction of cardiovascular and heart disease.

So drink tea for improved bone density, reduced heart disease, and a gentle stimulating effect which also relaxes you, but drink coffee if you want a large caffeine hit, e.g. to improve your performance in a workout.

## Write it Out

Expressive writing about your thoughts, feelings or worries for fifteen minutes a day can improve your sleep quality and brain power and reduce symptoms of asthma and arthritis. It is especially beneficial for people who have a lot on their minds, and can be done on paper or electronically, ideally at least three times per week. This can reduce the frequency of negative thoughts and boost mood in people with low-level anxiety.

It can also improve your physical health; a study in New

Zealand got medical students to write about a traumatic event the day before vaccination and found that six months later they had a much higher level of those antibodies than the control group.

Randomised controlled trials show that asthma patients use less medication and arthritis patients report less pain if they do expressive writing, and a group of people recovering from early cancer treatments had fewer coughs, headaches and stomach upsets and less pain than a control group, when they wrote about their experiences.

In the 1980s Prof. James Pennebaker of the University of Texas started researching some of the mechanisms involved; his team got some volunteers to write about upsetting things they hadn't talked about much, or things that worried them or kept recurring in their minds, and then tracked them over the next few months. They found that sleep and working memory improved in the writing group, and they went to the doctor far less than the control group. His techniques also involved doing punch biopsies in the skin and measuring how quickly they heal; the group that wrote about deeper rather than superficial experiences healed more quickly. People's social interactions also improved; writing gets these upsetting experiences out of your mind which means you can be more present with other people.

The exact technique isn't important — find ten or fifteen minutes three days a week and write continuously without worrying about grammar or spelling. You can throw it away or delete it afterwards if you wish; it's not meant for rereading, but is the process itself which can be beneficial. If you have had a recent significant trauma or are feeling very overwhelmed then this technique may not be appropriate, you are advised to consult a GP or health professional.

*Liv Weller*

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# Remembering Phyllis Cowap

It is with great sadness we mourn the death of Phyllis Cowap, formerly of Church Row Bunbury, who passed away peacefully on 11 December, aged 100 years, at Wrenbury Nursing Home where she was looked after so well.

Phyllis was a much loved wife, mum, nan, great-nan, and friend to many who celebrated her life at her funeral on January 6 in St Boniface Church Bunbury, where she had worshipped for over 75 years. After the funeral Phyllis was finally laid to rest in the cemetery beside her beloved husband Ernest.



## Poppy Appeal 2024



On behalf of the members of the Bunbury branch of the Royal British Legion, I would like to take this opportunity to thank, once again, the residents and businesses of Bunbury for their generosity and support during the 2024 Poppy Appeal.

As a village we donated a grand total of £4,793.94, considerably more than last year. This included a door-to-door collection (many apologies if we didn't catch you in and grateful thanks to those who helped to collect!), static boxes in various businesses and pubs in and around the village, and the church collection on Remembrance Sunday. It also included several independent donations and the money raised through the sale of poppy wreaths for various groups in the village. The wreaths were laid at the War Memorial on the church gates on Remembrance Sunday. Thanks also to the pupils and staff of Bunbury School who also gave generously.

It was lovely to be able to have the support of the Scouting and Guiding groups once again this year. Not only did they march proudly alongside the members of the Royal British Legion at church on Remembrance Sunday, they also placed a poppy on each of the War Graves in the cemetery. A few of

the Scouts, with their Scout Leader, Andy Fairclough, successfully and enthusiastically collected outside Bunbury Co-op one Saturday morning in aid of the Poppy Appeal.

The total amount collected has been sent to the National HQ of the Royal British Legion and will help to provide important and life-changing support for individuals and families in our Armed Forces Community.

Thank you all once again for your invaluable support.

**Mairi Harris, Poppy Appeal Organiser  
RBL Bunbury Branch**





# Remembering Joan Burrows: a family tribute

Joan Elizabeth Burrows, formally Hall, was born and raised in Bunbury, a summer baby, who could genuinely brighten up a room with her mischievous laugh. Her parents William & Hilda gave her three siblings: Marjorie, Mag & Sheila.

Joan was fortunate to be surrounded by her extended family in the village and enjoyed spending time with them all, especially her Auntie Elsie who was like an additional parent and who she loved deeply.

Joan loved to cook and bake, when she joined the over 60's club, Joan and Marjorie supplied the baked goods. When Joan was young the Hall household gained additional residents when the Hughes family stayed with them for a while. For Joan this was a very special time as now her best friend Frances was living with her. They did so much together, biking over to Tarporley to either: have a coffee, go to a dance or attend the cinema at the top of the high street. Joan spoke fondly of those times and the fun they had.

Frances went on to marry Dennis Burrows, but sadly she died when their daughter Denise was very young. Dennis could clearly see the goodness in Joan, and a while after Frances had passed away, Joan and Dennis became a couple.

As well as becoming stepmother to Denise, not long after came Alison then David, completing the Burrows sibling trio.

Joan made sure the children never wanted for anything, displaying how much she cared for them in simple gestures such as knitting matching jumpers for Alison and Denise and putting delicious food on the table for them.

Through their lives they would hear their mum say: "That's not for the likes of us", but Dennis wouldn't let her get her way. Despite her worrying about money, Dennis would treat them to all the new household advances, a microwave, a VHS recorder, colour TV, as well as holidays, and the big move to Sunnysdene. Sunnysdene is where Joan created a much-loved home for her children. Joan and Dennis could be seen as pioneers of their generation, they went on lovely holidays to Rome, Paris and Corfu, even though Joan didn't enjoy flying. They had many favourite places they would regularly visit: Guernsey, Grassington, and later in life, Llandudno, where they made some good friends.



The apartment in Tenerife, has been a wonderful holiday home for the family. However, their absolute favourite place was Canada; they loved their visits to see Derek, Maxine and their family. They went one year for Joan's birthday, exploring Vancouver, as well as making the journey down to California to go to Disneyland. In their journal they wrote "We went to church and then for lunch...and then we went to look at some property. As we might be leaving Bunbury and living here." However, they already had three grandchildren at that time and they were the reason Joan and Dennis stayed in the village. Joan loved her grandchildren and great grandchildren dearly,

treating them all the same. Dennis and Joan would do a lot together — a big part of their lives was watching Manchester United, even spending Denise's twenty-first at the FA Cup final, and when it was their surprise fiftieth wedding anniversary party, the tables were named after the United players that Joan liked. Jo had great memories of going with Joan to the football, although she did have to make sure not to sing the swear words in front of her.

At the crematorium, as requested by Joan, the family played one of her favourite songs: "You'll Never Walk Alone", despite their hatred for Liverpool FC, she loved this song from Carousel, the words

speak volumes as to how she'll always be with the family.

Joan provided so many incredible memories for those around her. She had the most wicked sense of humour, her one liners and come backs were incredibly quick. As much as she didn't want to leave her home, the move to Iddenshall provided the additional care she needed: she loved the girls there, and they cared for her as best as they could. Joan never had the opportunity to feel lonely and the care home embraced the chaos of all the family and friends that came to visit. The family have some lovely memories of their visits there and are truly thankful for all their help, especially Hetty who provided us with lots of laughter — even though Uncle David tried to terrorise her, she gave him just as much back.

Joan created a beautiful family, who will always be there for each other. Thank you for being part of our lives and, with Grandad, this isn't goodbye but for now: "Goodnight and God Bless".



# NANTWICH HISTORY MUSEUM

## "Villages around Nantwich" Exhibition — Appeal for Information and Objects

Every year Nantwich Museum's researchers develop an exhibition for display in the Museum's Millennium Gallery during the summer. The focus of the 2025 exhibition will be villages close to Nantwich. The final list of villages to be featured has not yet been decided and we are currently gathering information.

We would now like to hear from both residents and organisations in nearby villages to help us with the following:

- Are there any interesting local stories, myths or legends associated with the village?
- Were there, or are there any unusual events, festivals or ceremonies held in the village?
- Are there any unusual buildings in the village, and if so what makes them interesting?
- Does the village have an intriguing history?
- Were any well-known people born in the village, or perhaps lived there for a number of years?
- If so, what were they famous for? Is there anything else which makes your village different or special?
- Do you have any objects or pictures (including photographs) which you would be willing to loan to the Museum for the exhibition?

We can't guarantee that everything we receive will be included in the exhibition, but all relevant information will help us as we build our knowledge about the local area for future reference.

The museum is open from 10:00am - 4:00pm (Tuesday — Saturday).

For further information contact: Nantwich Museum on [enquiries@nantwichmuseum.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@nantwichmuseum.org.uk)



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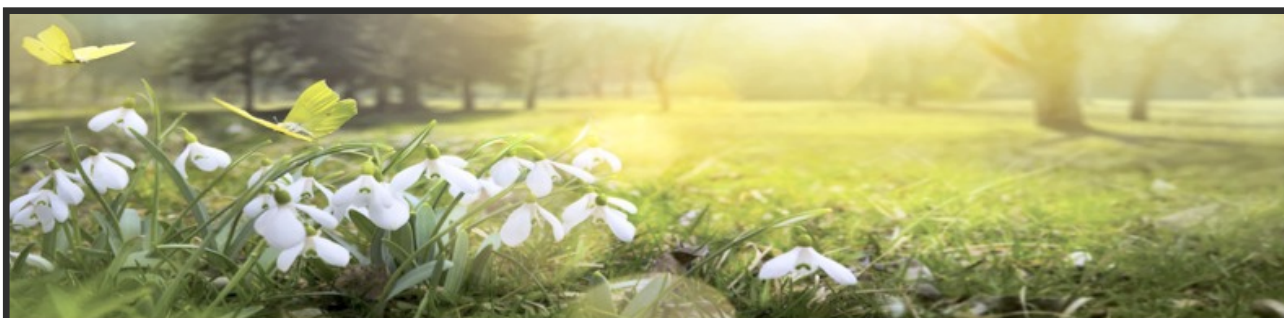
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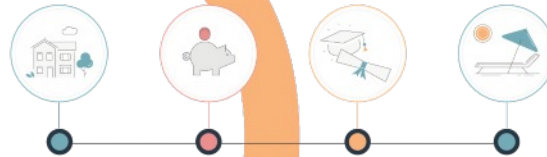
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