

The Welwyn Magazine



December 2020 / January 2021

www.welwyn.org.uk

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**December 2020 /
January 2021**

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Peter Branchflower

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Editor's Note:

We normally publish reports on activities and meetings occurring in the village but these activities have inevitably been cancelled due to Covid-19. Hence, therefore, there is little to report!

We would welcome any articles on local matters from our readers. Please send details on e:mail to:

EDITOR'S NOTES

Articles by the 1st of the month preceding publication, see details above.

The Editors reserve the right to shorten or omit articles or refuse advertisements.

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The Rector's Letter

Dear Friends

I write this just as Boris Johnson has announced the latest nationwide lockdown. I have not looked at the detail yet, and anyway by the time you read this hopefully we might be looking towards Christmas and a lifting of restrictions.

There has, therefore, been a lot of talk about us 'saving Christmas'. But, of course, traditionally Christians have believed not that we need to save Christmas, but that Christmas might just save us: *'Born so long ago to save us.'*

The idea of 'being saved', which is where we get the English words 'salvation' and 'Saviour' from, does need unpacking in this day and age – after all we perhaps do not feel like we need to be saved, and it is not clear exactly what we need to be saved from.

But leaving aside those details, I think it is important to acknowledge the more basic

point that if God is a word which means anything, then he is the one who takes the initiative.

Ultimately if there is a God, then the universe is not a democracy – he is in charge. Now generally we do not like to be told that someone else is in charge. We do not like being told what to do, and like to imagine ourselves in charge of our own destiny. But particularly in a time of crisis, perhaps we need to let go, stop believing that we are going to 'save Christmas' or indeed the world, and that ultimately the fate of all of us rests with a God who is perfect love, perfect peace and perfect joy.

Yours



David

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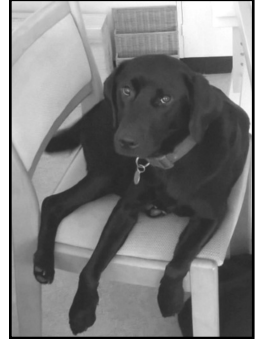
Dear Friends

I am sitting on the sofa just absorbing the news that we are going back into 'lockdown.' I am not entirely sure what that means. I know some people will be very unhappy. But for us dogs it isn't so bad. Master and Mistress will be home most of the time, there isn't apparently much to do but eat, and exercise is still allowed. I think the work stuff that you humans do is overrated, though I do find it increasingly difficult to get onto the computer, to write my articles, and carry out vital dog-centred research. So my advice to you is to find a canine friend, cuddle up or go out for a walk. If you haven't got one, borrow a

neighbour's. I

read somewhere that in Italy when there was a very strict lockdown, and walking a dog was about the only reason you were allowed out, apparently my Italian cousins were entirely knackered at being walked by all and sundry, all day, every day. Well we Labradors like a lot of exercise so what are you waiting for?

Jess



THE CROCODILE

Crocodiles are the biggest reptiles in the world. They can grow up to 6 metres and weigh more than a ton, although there is a dwarf version (*osteolaemus tetraspis*) which grows to about 1.5 metres. They really do produce tears, but this is because whilst eating they swallow too much air, which then touches the lachrymal glands and forces tears to flow. Their night vision is good and they are mostly nocturnal hunters. Crocodiles do not chew their food and they often swallow stones to act as ballast to balance their bodies and assist in crushing food. They can be found in all inhabited continents with the exception of Europe.

So what is this one doing on Singler's Marsh?





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DREAMING OF A WHITE CHRISTMAS ?

Today it is one of those lovely days of 'autumn mist and mellow fruitfulness' yet getting colder, time to find that warm coat from the back of the cupboard. But when you read this shall we already be in the grip of winter, heating on and hunkered down?

Four hundred years ago exactly, a frost fair was held on the Thames. Fifteen years later in 1635 the Thames froze over again, between 1662-67 skating was launched on the Thames for the pleasure of King Charles II, and by 1677 the freezing of the Thames was recorded as a 'regular occurrence'.

While it is unlikely the Thames will freeze in 2020-2021, London always being slightly warmer due to the traffic and centrally heated buildings, memories of severe winters in living memory abound. Especially it seems, 1947 and 1962-3. Only this morning, a friend on the phone told me his earliest memory as a three-year old: *'We lived in Canterbury and in 1947 the snow reached the upstairs windows. It was very dark downstairs and my dad had to dig out from the front door to tunnel up and out.'*

Since March, along with many of you, I have enjoyed chatting over WhatsApp with various groups, and one in particular has been a wonderful source of Memories. Here are some of winter days...

Starting with the cold winter of 1947, Jasmine writes: *'I recall the milkman and horse drawn van having a big problem on our road holding back from slipping; no traffic so great fun going downhill at*

speed on the sledge with my father; my parents being concerned about frozen pipes; at school our one-third pint milk bottles had ice on top, while at home the blue tits got the foil tops off the milk bottles outside; my father skating with me on Barnet Park's frozen pond. Later, at boarding school we had no heat at all in our dorms, astonishing in these days. We girls put our underclothes under our eiderdown to be warm for dressing in the freezing cold dorms next day. Snowmen lasted many days and snowball fights were huge fun.'

Daphne's abiding memory of 1947 is huge icicles dangling from the gutters: *'I had to walk about four miles to school as there was no public transport and my sister, aged three, nearly died of pneumonia as there was no central heating in those days.'*

Beth remembers that winter in Wales: *'Our canteen was about 200 yards from the school and you could smell the cabbage from the school, but we were usually so hungry and so cold in the winter of '47. At home having to look for something in the garden to break the ice in the outside toilet. We used to go down steep slopes on ladders with the big boys if they would let us on (my mother would have had a fit had she known).'*

Daphne again: *'In the absence of sledges, we used to hurtle down snowy banks on tea trays. So glad that Health and Safety hadn't been invented!'*

Yes, sledging could be dangerous, as John remembers from 1980: *'When doing aircrew survival training in*



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DREAMING OF A WHITE CHRISTMAS *continued from p.7*

Otterburn in January we used polythene sacks until one chap hit a hidden rock and broke his ankle.'

Happily Elaine recalls '47 as a gentler time: *'My father made me a simple wooden sledge. How precious are the things that are handmade for us.'*

Gay's memory of '47 is sad: *'My grandfather was vicar of Hinton Parva, a village in Wiltshire, I lived with my grandparents and my aunt through the war. In 1947 during a time of heavy snow my grandfather died. The ambulance could not reach him, so the driver and paramedic had to trek across the fields with a stretcher. My grandmother was given three months to leave the rectory. She came to live with us as my father was then working for the Air Ministry and was given accommodation.'*

Not surprising so many remember 1947 as very cold; here is an observation from the Met-Office: On no day in February 1947 did the temperature at Kew Observatory top 4.4C, and only twice in the month was the night minimum temperature above 0C.

Jenny does not remember 1947 any more than I do... it was the year of her birth and I was only one. Jenny says: *'My mum told me '47 was an extremely cold winter and very hot summer. I remember the winter of 63, with 6ft snow drifts and the only water was from a standpipe in the main road which was taken up every evening, as all the smaller water mains froze solid. My father told me that 1947 was much worse.'*

In 1962-63 I was at boarding school, we

used to have to run around the buildings before breakfast (which was at 7.30 am) on paths cleared of snow, with only blazers over our uniforms. I felt tremendously sorry for the prefects who had to stand on duty, to make sure we younger ones kept running! My memory started an hilarious exchange of memories of the bitter cold and Victorian conditions in the boarding schools of the 1940's, 50s and 60s... lack of any heating, ice inside the windows, dressing under bedclothes, cold Lino on dormitory floors, someone even commented: *'You were lucky to have Lino, our dormitories just had bare floorboards! We forget now how awful it was to be permanently cold!'* Our comments were beginning to resemble a Monty Python sketch!

Jasmine again: *'1962/3 was bitter, snow melted then froze solid for 6 weeks, we had power cuts for up to 4 hours and cooked supper at times over our Baxi fire. Those were the days in our first home!'*

The Met-Office report about 1963 recalls: *A blizzard over South West England, and South Wales in late December, brought snowdrifts 6m deep. Villages were cut off, power lines were brought down, trains were cancelled, farmers couldn't reach livestock, and many starved to death. Extremely tragic.* From Boxing Day 1962 to early March 1963, much of England was under snow continuously, 3 months of snow.

Many thanks to friends in the Bible Discovery WhatsApp group for sharing many memories to help us get through some long days of lockdown.

So, are you still dreaming of a White Christmas?

Vernonne Allan



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Feeling lonely? You are not alone

Most people feel lonely sometimes, for many different reasons. During the current pandemic, feelings of loneliness have been even more common. If loneliness is affecting your life, there are things you can try that may help even if you are not able to meet other people face to face. Explore ways to spend time together. If you can meet up with, or visit friends or family, make sure you always follow social distancing guidelines when you are outside your home. Perhaps a walk in the park would be good, as spending time in green spaces can help our wellbeing.

If you are staying at home, you can still spend time with others. Lots of people are doing things together online, like watching films, playing Scrabble or having dinner together.

Check in regularly

Creating a regular routine of checking in with others is good, as it can make it easier to reach out at the time you feel lonely. Regular phone calls, messages or even writing letters are lovely ways to keep in touch when we have to stay at home.

Share your feelings

Being able to share your feelings with others can help with loneliness, and hearing a familiar voice or seeing a friendly face makes us feel less isolated. Telling someone you trust that you are feeling lonely can help.

Do more things you enjoy

Filling your time doing more things you like

can stop you from focusing on feelings of loneliness. If you are staying home, entertaining radio shows or podcasts are a good way to occupy your mind and keep you company. You can also listen to audio books, and join an online book club to talk about it with others. There are also lots of comedy clubs online, so search for something that will make you laugh. Exercise can lift your mood and help take your mind off things. If you want something more calming, try a free mental wellbeing audio guide, or give a relaxation or mindfulness app a go.

Look after yourself

Feeling lonely can be very stressful and can have a big impact on your general wellbeing, which might make it even harder to make positive steps to feeling better. Ask yourself if you are getting enough sleep, eating well and getting enough physical exercise?

Social Prescriber

If you are feeling lonely you may benefit from meeting the Social Prescriber at Bridge Cottage Surgery who can offer further guidance and advice. If you would like to make an appointment with the Social Prescriber then please phone the surgery 01438 715044.

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CHRISTMAS GIVING

A huge thank you for your generous response to our **Harvest Appeal** and to the **"Bike'n'Hike"**. Sponsorship for those cycling and walking, including Giftaid, exceeded £2000 while the Harvest Appeal total for Christian Aid exceeded £1000.

As in previous years, we will be supporting a charity with our Christmas Service collections. As it may not be appropriate to attend church "in the flesh", there will be plenty of opportunity for everybody to support this year's excellent cause on-line.

The work of the **Whitechapel Mission** is well known to many of us. it provides hot meals, clothing, blankets and sleeping bags to hundreds of homeless people. Winter is always the most difficult time for the homeless, especially this year when most other providers have had to close (including **Crisis at Christmas**). The

Whitechapel doors will be open every day this winter as the numbers requiring a hot meal, shower and a change of clothing (not to mention a kind word or some advice) will be increased due to the current pandemic, including its economic effects. Our gifts this Christmas really can transform lives!

It is currently unclear how "normal" Christmas 2020 will be. Hopefully our much-loved traditional Christmas services will go ahead in one form or another, subject to the rules applicable at the time.

If services are allowed, there will be designated 'gift aid' envelopes available in church. For those not attending, there will be a link on www.welwyn.org.uk to facilitate your Christmas gift.

Thank you once more for your wonderful generosity, it makes a huge difference.

Jo Fozzard

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VOLUNTEERING AT WHIPSNADE ZOO

Since August I have been a Navigator Volunteer at Whipsnade Zoo. I had been going to the zoo as a visitor for many years. I became a member some 20 or so years ago, and was then offered a fellowship after I had been a member for several years. This year, during “lockdown”, when the zoo needed funds urgently, I signed up as a patron, and so I was able to visit the zoo again as soon as it re-opened in June.

It quickly became apparent that the new regulations, necessary to inhibit the spread of the virus, meant that more volunteers were needed to look after queues and generally manage visitor numbers as they moved around the zoo. I volunteered, was interviewed, my references were taken up and I was offered a post as Navigator Volunteer.

Whipsnade is huge (over 600 acres), so there are many areas where visitors can move about perfectly freely, but there are “pinch points” at some exhibits and that is where the volunteer presence was most needed. The role of Navigator Volunteer was created to meet this need. We assist visitors in maintaining proper social distance when queuing to get into the zoo or visiting any of the enclosed

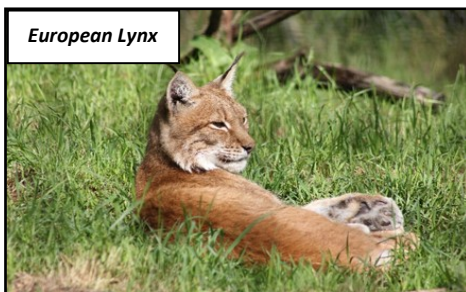
areas, such as the penguins, the giraffes, the lions, the aquarium and butterfly house or the elephant house. While people are queuing, we can also tell them about the animals they are waiting to see and, as they leave, we can tell them the best way to get to the next animals they want to visit.

Since I have been volunteering, I have learnt a huge amount about the zoo and the animals it looks after. When I started, I didn’t even know that three of our four lions are males. Because they don’t have manes, I had always assumed they were all females! Max, Neo and Toto would probably object to being called lionesses and, now I know they are males, I can quite clearly see the differences. It is fun to point this out to visitors, too, many of whom also think all our lions are females. If you want to know more, come to the zoo and ask. Any of the volunteers on duty will be delighted to give you a full explanation and point out which lion is which.

So, what is a day volunteering like? Interesting, tiring, great fun, hot, cold, wet A typical day starts just before 9.30 am when those who are working all



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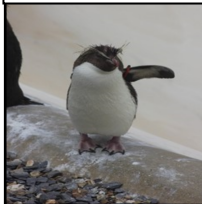
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VOLUNTEERING AT WHIPSNADE ZOO *continued from p15*

Rockhopper Penguin



day, or the morning shift, arrive in the volunteer mess room and sign in. At the same time a volunteer coordinator arrives and hands out the rotas for the day and gives out

any notices, such as new arrivals (17 guinea pig babies) or departures (Freya, the wolverine kite, is off to Germany). Rotas in hand, we collect our radios and wander off to our assigned duties. The zoo opens at 10.00 am.

Generally, volunteers spend an hour in an area before moving on somewhere else. For example, one day last week, I had an hour and a quarter in the Visitors' Centre from 9.45 – 11.00 am, managing the queue at the entrance to the zoo, then I went to the penguins for an hour and at 12.00 noon I had a half hour coffee break. After that, I had lions (I love the lions), then lunch, followed by giraffes, butterflies and finishing up with penguins again. Given the size of the zoo, it is easy to walk four or more miles a day moving from one area to another and you have to remember to give yourself enough time to get to where you are going. A half hour coffee break may sound exceptionally generous, but not if you have to walk 20 minutes to the nearest

Patagonian Mara



loo! In bad weather, wearing enough layers and making sure the top layer is wind and water proof is absolutely vital unless you want to spend the whole day miserably cold and wet.

Most of the duties involve the volunteers being outside in all weathers. Our day ends when the zoo closes. Last entry to the exhibits is half an hour before closing and the exhibits are supposed to close 15 minutes before the zoo does, in order to give the visitors enough time to walk back to the entrance. Once the last visitor has left our area, we can radio the keepers to come and lock up and then walk back to the mess room to sign out. ZSL has been recruiting as many new volunteers as possible, and so the role of **Engagement Volunteer** has now come about. This was first mooted in Spring before the pandemic hit and everything was put on hold for months. **Engagement Volunteers** spend more time talking to visitors and explaining about the animals kept at the zoo. They are stationed anywhere throughout the zoo where some extra information might enhance a visitor's experience of the zoo. After further training I am hoping to become an **Engagement Volunteer**.

Rita McNeill



Przewalski's horse family – mother, baby and father (from the left)



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2020: A year of growth for OWL

You probably will not be surprised to learn that **Neighbourhood Watch** support in Welwyn has grown this year with more people signing up for the **OWL** online system and therefore are receiving warnings about crimes and “scams” in the area.

OWL now covers 47% of households in Welwyn East and West wards. Given that about 8% of households in the UK do not have access to the internet, and therefore cannot join an online system, this is quite an impressive figure and makes a significant impact on the awareness of crime in our neighbourhood.

Our members tell us they appreciate being kept up to date with the latest crimes they should be watching out for, and there have been a lot of worrying (and quite convincing) scams this year. **OWL** members also say they value the regular reminders to be very cautious about unexpected contacts whether by email, text, telephone or someone calling at their door. We get a lot of ‘thank you’ messages!

Residents who are not registered with **OWL** miss out on these warnings and could be vulnerable to scams, confidence tricksters and rogue traders. If you are one of these people and have access to the internet at

home why not join us? It will only take a few moments to register via the website below, and the more members we have looking out for scams and criminals, the safer we all are.

If you are an **OWL** member and appreciate the messages you receive, do please spread the word. It is quite likely that one of your neighbours is a non-member who is missing out. Next time you are having a socially distanced chat with them, perhaps you could enquire?

When you read your **OWL** messages, please think of local friends and neighbours who do not have internet access, and pass on any warnings that might be appropriate. We are very much aware that the people who are unable to join **OWL** may also be amongst the most vulnerable in our area.

We would like to wish everyone to have a very safe and Happy Christmas. Our thanks to all the **OWL** members who have made us aware of new scams and crimes so that we can share them with others.

Valerie Richards and John Mitchell
www.owl.co.uk/herts

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ETHIOPIA Part 2. The historical background

The Rift Valley and the south.

The great **Rift Valley** runs diagonally across Africa from the Red Sea, first passing through Ethiopia. It contains a series of tranquil lakes, and wild life abounds. Visitors can take trips out on the lakes to see crocodiles and exotic birds. The countryside becomes much more fertile towards the south, and the Rift Valley wine industry is beginning to thrive.

At the head of the Rift Valley are two interesting towns. **Dire Dawa** has an outdoor railway museum dedicated to the French, who built the first and only railway, linking Addis Ababa with the Red Sea, a distance of approximately 725 miles. It was built just prior to the 1st World War, but fell into disrepair after the 2nd World War due to competition from the roads. Old rolling stock and railway carriages can be seen, also the platform and the turn-table for engines – a marvel in engineering as it could be turned by one or two men pushing it.

The other town well worth a visit is **Harar**. This is an elevated, walled city with five entrances and about 360 narrow, very colourful alley-ways. easy to get lost in without a local guide.

The town is the only remaining stronghold of the Islamic influence which swept through Africa. Like many other Ethiopian towns, the centre is a blaze of colour with the local market, in which absolutely anything can be purchased. Fantastic, coloured beadwork is a local speciality made into plates and often displayed on walls for decoration.

The soil, very stony in the north, becomes sandy and quite red further south, indicating the presence of iron. However, a lack of fuel has prevented the ore being extracted. Trees are the only precious source of domestic and light industrial fuel, and so to enhance it, the fast-growing eucalyptus tree has been introduced.

Travelling on an African dust road is a unique experience. Overtaking and passing vehicles send up a cloud of dust which takes at least half a minute



ETHIOPIA Part 2. The historical background



to abate. The driver takes no notice, confident that the road is straight!!

Two other hazards: children, deprived of company and often bored, will way-lay vehicles seeking attention; and will slow moving herds of cattle and, goats on the move between

grazing land or watering holes will halt traffic indefinitely.

Farmers used to be simply herdsman, but for many years the herds have been diminishing due to natural global warming, so much so that the farmers have had to diversify and now a



ETHIOPIA Part 2. The historical background

thriving agricultural landscape meets the eye. Coffee, maize, sorghum, oil seeds, lentils and numerous vegetables can be seen growing in neatly cultivated fields. Much of this produce is exported, including skins and hides. The country has certainly recovered well from the devastating famine of the mid-nineteen eighties, when the rains failed to come.

Much further south, bordering Kenya, the tribes exist as they have done ever since life began. With the help of a local guide, it is not difficult to arrange a visit to one of them to experience their way of life. The men occasionally go hunting for food, but spend much time sitting around, or guarding the site. Women do all the usual household chores and rear the children; they also dismantle and rebuild their abodes when land has been fully exploited and new pastures are sought. Here, the people are much darker-skinned and their features more typically African than those who live further north.

Visitors may, if lucky, experience a bull-jumping ceremony. This is a family celebration to announce that a young man is now ready to get married. Most of the day is spent in dancing and singing led by the young girls. Youths who have already undergone the ceremony are on hand and can be selected by a female who invites him to whip her. If he does not fancy her

much, the whip lands on clothing, but otherwise, she bears the full brunt of lash marks on her back.

Finally, at sunset, the herd of bulls which have been roaming in a near-by field are brought in and the girls continue their dancing around them. The bulls protest, and as the men try to



line them up, many escape through the crowds. A few bulls are eventually lined up and held in place whilst the young man takes a running jump, fully naked, onto the back of one and runs along to the end, repeating this back and forth several times before skulking away into a bush to collapse!!!

Daphne Skinner

RIP - BOBBY WILSON

22 November 1935 – 21 September 2020

Wimbledon and Davis Cup Tennis Player

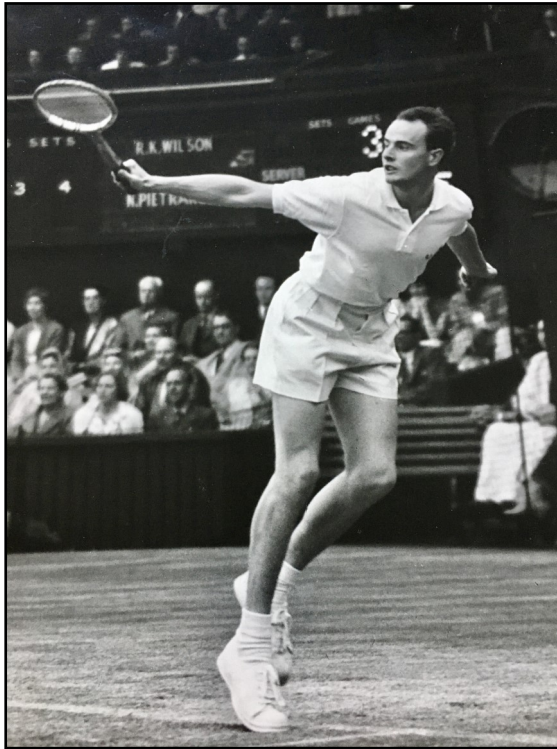
Bobby and Elizabeth Wilson moved to Welwyn from Totteridge in 2013 and until ill-health in 2018 Bobby

continued to coach at the Chandos Tennis Club in Hendon where he had worked for years as Head Coach following the end of his playing career in 1977. Bobby was a regular member of the congregation at St Mary's Church and could often be found at the Saturday

Fairtrade Café in Church House. He was a modest and unassuming man, always delighted to engage in conversation about tennis, especially with those who remembered seeing him play.

From the 1950s through until 1977, Bobby reached the quarter finals of seven Grand Slam singles

tournaments and made 26 consecutive appearances at Wimbledon, which remains a record. He was widely known as the most stylish and naturally talented British tennis player of his generation and was a great favourite with the Wimbledon



crowd. He won a junior Wimbledon title in 1952 aged 17 and became one of Britain's most successful Davis Cup players of all time, appearing in a record 34 Davis Cup ties, and still retains the title of most-capped Davis

22 November 1935 – 21 September 2020
Wimbledon and Davis Cup Tennis Player

Club player in Great Britain.

His start in tennis was slightly unorthodox, coached by his mother

Jesse who was an average club player with no coaching qualifications. However, she had a love of the game and the desire and tenacity to make her quiet sporty son into a champion. Tennis in his era was entirely different to

the tennis of today.

Wimbledon only turned professional in 1968 and whilst today's successful players are chauffeured to matches and paid large sums of money, Bobby used to

turn up by tube and bus and organise his own travel to overseas matches.

His employer at the time, Dunlop

Rubber Company, allowed him one third of the year off to play tennis, but the rest of the time he had to work to earn a living.

Sadly, due to Covid-19, only 30 people were able to attend his funeral at St Mary's Church. He will be

remembered fondly for the twinkle in his eye and great interest in what others had to say.

Jane Carr



CHRISTINGLE SERVICE



Sunday 13th December at 3.30 pm (livestream)

This family-orientated service is much enjoyed by young and old alike. The Christingle tradition started in 1747 and became popular in 1968 as a fund-raiser for the Children's Society. Ever since it has been an annual fixture in the church calendar and remains an important stream of income for the charity.

This year, due to the numbers involved, it will not be possible to hold it with a congregation in our team churches. So instead we will distribute instructions and kits via our churches and local primary schools.

The Reverends David and Susannah will livestream the Christingle service via YouTube during which they will show you how to make your Christingle at home while you are watching. We suspect you might make a better job of it than them!

If you do not have access to a kit via a primary-school child, you will need:

An orange

A candle

A piece of tin foil

Some red tape or ribbon to go around the orange

Four cocktail sticks

Sweets

*..... and if you don't have all those things, feel free
to be as ingenious as you like!*

Please note even if you receive a kit you will need an orange!

The livestream details are available via the Christingle link on www.welwyn.org.uk

The Children's Society supports children in many different settings and difficulties in the UK. As this year there will not be an opportunity to fill a candle with money or bring a donation to the service, please consider donating online to our fund raising page in aid of the Children's Society to support the vital work they do.

CHRISTMAS SERVICES

This year things will be very different due to the ongoing coronavirus pandemic restrictions, but the churches continue to find ways of enabling people to engage in worship and to enjoy the traditions loved by many.

Numbers of people in church are severely restricted due to social distancing and therefore many of the more popular services will be by ticket only, with regular members of the congregations having an opportunity in advance to request the free tickets.

However, services will also be livestreamed via *YouTube* for everyone to participate in, and the links and orders of service can be found on our website www.welwyn.org.uk together with details of any tickets that may become available nearer the time.

St Mary's Welwyn: tickets required for all these services

- Carol Service: 6.30 pm - Sunday 20th December *(also livestreamed)*
- Carol Service: 6.30 pm - Monday 21st December *(if there is demand)*
- Crib Service: 2.00 pm - Christmas Eve *(if there is demand)*
- Crib Service: 4.00 pm - Christmas Eve *(also livestreamed)*
- Midnight Mass: 11.00 pm - Christmas Eve *(also livestreamed)*
- Christmas Day: 9.30 am *(not livestreamed)*

St Michael's Woolmer Green

- Carol Service: 4.00 pm - Sunday 20th December *(ticket required)*
- Crib Service: 3.30 pm - Christmas Eve *(ticket required)*
- Christmas Day: 9.30 am *(ticket not required)*

Ayat St Peter

- Carol Service: 11.15 am - Sunday 13th December *(ticket required)*
- Carol Service: 3.00 pm - Sunday 13th December *(ticket required)*
- Crib Service: 11.15 am - Sunday 20th December *(ticket not required)*
- Christmas Day: 11.15 am *(ticket not required)*

A Christmas Day service at 10.00 am will be livestreamed from
St Peter's Tewin for all the Welwyn Team churches

WOOLMER GREEN PARISH COUNCIL

Entech site

Ashe Construction is on track to finish the building works of the shops and office complex by the end of the year or early in 2021, and we hope to see retail tenants in the first few months of the new year. There is no official confirmation of the tenancy of the convenience store.

Hall Opening and Closing for events

From 5th November most activities that had been able to resume have had to stop once again. However, there are a few limited exceptions where use of the hall is permitted. Booking enquiries can be made: bookings@woolmergreenpc.org.uk

Woolmer Green Farmers' Market

The Woolmer Green Farmers' Market had a successful October market with pumpkin carving outside the hall. As advertised last month, there were plans for the rest of the year but please keep an eye on the Woolmer Green Farmers' Market Facebook page for updates. The Christmas Fair is scheduled for Sunday 13th December and we hope that this will be able to take place.

Congratulations to local gallery Art @ MG

For the third year running, Art @ MG, an

artist led gallery in Datchworth has won a major Certificate of Excellence from Trip Advisor, putting it *"in the top 10% of attractions worldwide"*. Owned since 2016



by Stevenage artist Marilyn Comparetto, with help and support from her husband Ignazio, the gallery has been going from strength to strength, though with a break due to Covid 19. The Certificate of *"Travellers' Choice 2020"* was presented to Marilyn at the Gallery on 21 August by the Mayor of Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council, Cllr Roger Trigg. Based at Mardleybury Farm, in Woolmer Green, **Art @ MG** has 24 artists exhibiting, with a large range of paintings plus glass, ceramics and jewellery.

Sarah Hall

sarah.hall@woolmergreenpc.org.uk

Parish Registers

St Mary's Welwyn

Baptisms

11th October Beau Christopher Molyneux
Ted Joseph Christopher Copson

Funeral & Cremation

1st October Richard Basil Walker
2nd October Patricia Ann Cox (*Cremation*)
8th October Bobby Wilson





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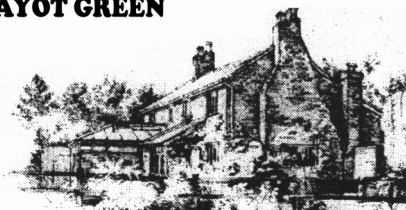
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WELWYN PARISH COUNCIL



I am writing this article at the end of October for the December/January edition. I am

finding it difficult to know what to write as none of us know what will be happening when the Welwyn Magazine is published in December. What a difficult year it has been for so many people.

It has been lovely to see the community spirit coming to the fore in our Parish and also that people's sense of humour has not failed them.

Welwyn Parish Council has continued to have its meetings on Zoom and while this is not as ideal as having face to face discussions it has allowed us to continue our business in an efficient manner.

The Parish has had some cheerful events. Well done to all the businesses and private residents who decorated their premises for Halloween. This time of the year is for children as well as young at heart adults and they will have enjoyed the village looking so colourful, if spooky, during October.

Once again Bill Morris and his volunteers have spent many hours sorting out the Christmas lights and when you read this they will be hanging (the lights, not Bill and helpers!)

throughout the Parish to give some Christmas cheer. Although, sadly, we will not be able to have our usual switching on event at St Mary's church this year, Caroline our Clerk has organised for the children to take part in a Christmas card competition. The winning entry will receive a prize and have his or her card displayed in the village.

The Council together with interested residents has been in discussion with Hertfordshire County Council about replacing the barriers in the village with planters. At the time of writing I do not know the outcome of the discussion but I hope when you read this the village will have planters, which will make it pretty and welcoming. Thank you to our Hertfordshire County Council's member Richard Smith, Welwyn Planning and Amenities Group (WPAG), Jane Carr and other residents for their ideas and help.

Several times I have mentioned the Neighbourhood Plan. We have not forgotten our intent to start the work on producing one. The survey is ready to send out but we needed to apply for a Grant. This has taken longer than expected and we are not allowed to move forward until we have the application for a Grant approved.

We were delighted in September to be able to open some of our facilities to hirers, the large hall in the Civic Centre and one in the Whitehill Centre. Thank

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WELWYN PARISH COUNCIL *continued from p30*

you to all of our staff who have worked hard to make the premises safe and followed all the COVID guidance. We will of course be reviewing this when circumstances allow.

Our Planning Committee has been busy with responses to consultations including the Government's White Paper '*Planning for the Future*', the proposed development of the Sandylands Site, the Hertfordshire County Council's Speed Management Strategy which is a supporting document to the Local Transport Plan, WPC's comment on Green Belt release and several consultations on Luton Airport proposals. Our responses to

these and other issues can be read on our website under the Planning Committee minutes. Discussions and responses have taken a lot of Councillors' time. Special thanks to the Planning Committee and its members for the time they have given to this work.

May I take this opportunity to wish you all a very Merry Christmas, however we are able to spend it, and a Healthy, Happy 2021 which I hope will be better for everyone than 2020. Look after yourselves and others.

Marj Otty

Chairman, Welwyn Parish Council

CHRISTMAS and NEW YEAR QUIZ

1. Were Santa's reindeer all male, all female or a mix of the two? Give a reason for your answer.
2. According to the New Testament, how many wise men were there?
3. What was the traditional Christmas dinner for Victorians?
4. Who, according to tradition, brought the first Christmas trees to England?
5. When is St Nicholas' Day?
6. How many Sundays are there in Advent?
7. Who wrote "Twas the night before Christmas..."?
8. Why might people in England in 1645 have found it hard to celebrate Christmas?
9. When did Dickens write "A Christmas Carol"?
10. How many ghosts specifically visited Scrooge? For an extra point, name them in order of their visits.
11. Who played Scrooge in "A Muppet Christmas Carol"?
12. What do Spanish people traditionally do as the clocks strike midnight on New Year's Eve?
13. Who celebrates Hogmanay?
14. Name five countries where New Year's Eve is called Silvester.
15. When does the Christmas season begin and end?

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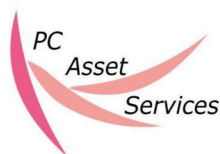
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CHRISTMAS and NEW YEAR QUIZ - ANSWERS

1. All female. Male reindeer lose their antlers in winter and all of Santa's reindeer are always pictured with antlers.
2. More than one, but no specific number is ever mentioned "There were wise men ..." The number three comes from the gifts they brought, but we are never told how many magi/wise men/kings there were.
3. Roast goose
4. Prince Albert
5. 6th December
6. Four
7. Clement Clarke Moore. Its official title is "A visit from St. Nicholas".
8. Because Oliver Cromwell and Parliament banned it (along with Easter and Whitsun) in 1644. It remained banned until the Reformation, so celebrating Christmas in 1645 was illegal.
9. 1843
10. Four: Jacob Marley; Christmas Past; Christmas Present; Christmas Yet to Come.
11. Michael Caine (I will resist the temptation to say "Not a lot of people know that.")
12. They eat 12 grapes, one each time the clock strikes. It is supposed to ensure a happy, healthy and prosperous new year.
13. Scottish people
14. Austria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Czech Republic, France, Germany, Hungary, Israel, Italy, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Poland, Slovakia, Switzerland, and Slovenia.
15. Contentious one to finish with: Begins EITHER Christmas Eve 24th December OR Christmas Day 25th December. Ends EITHER Twelfth Night (6th January) OR Candlemas (2nd February).

SPONSORSHIP

During lockdown, one of St Mary's Church congregation, and a PCC member, Joan Shelley, felt she needed more exercise, and on a regular visit to her husband's grave in Codicote churchyard, she decided to walk around the churchyard. Joan set herself a target of 20 laps. Following a chat with Rev'd David Munchin on the increased costs incurred in the current situation (sanitisers, masks, gloves, visors etc) Joan wondered if she

could secure sponsorship for these items by walking the churchyard with a target of 1200 laps. She is now well on her way to her target.

Yes, there have been lots of appeals recently but if you would like to support Joan click on the Donate button on www.welwyn.org.uk and mention 'Joan' in the message section of your donation.

Thank you

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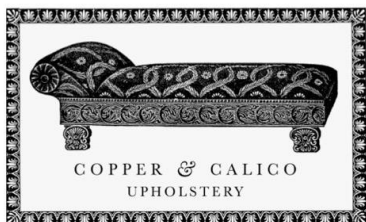
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MEN'S BREAKFAST - October 2020

The Men's Breakfast is back – but not as we know it! Only one breakfast at Church House had been held this year before the lock-down in March. After a number of false hopes that it might be possible to resume, it became clear that contact between the many men, who enjoyed the fellowship and an eclectic programme of speakers, would have to be brought together in a different way. So, in October a meeting was held on Zoom with 23 participants. Breakfast was enjoyed at home with a 9am Saturday start preceded by greeting long lost friends!

Gerry and Jacqui Murphy presented *'Walking the El Camino de Santiago'*.

They are keen walkers and with their friend Tony from Canada they walked the 120km section of the route in north west Spain from Soria to the shrine of St James in the cathedral of Santiago. St James was the son of Zebedee and was one of the Twelve Apostles. He was beheaded by Herod in 44AD. His remains are reputed to have been taken from Jerusalem by sea to Santiago. He is the patron saint of Spain.

Many of those walking the **Camino**, stay in hotels and guest houses booked for them along the route. The accommodation is generously priced and many restaurants

have a fair "Camino" menu. The Camino logo based on a scallop shell is to be seen

everywhere along the route. The Caballeros de Santiago knights who protected pilgrims built many churches along the way. Some are simple outside but beautiful inside. Others are more substantial, some with castellated walls. Other notable features are statues in each village and in the countryside, corn crib structures built several feet above the ground to dry corn.

Some 250,000 pilgrims walk the **Camino** each year. They come from all over the world. Gerry and Jacqui met walkers from the Philippines, Japan and Malaysia: all in good spirits and very friendly. The pilgrims all have their reasons for making the journey. Some are coming to terms with difficulties in their lives. Some are lively little groups. Others are single and some are silent.

After five days of delightful walking in good weather, Gerry and Jacqui arrived in Santiago. Their room was in a simple but comfortable former monastery with a superb view of the Cathedral and its busy square thronged with people. They had



their pilgrim's passport stamped along the way and received

a **Camino "Compostela" Certificate** for walking over 100km.

Their talk was eloquently presented, beautifully illustrated and it generated many questions.

If you are not on the Men's Breakfast list and would like be notified of future speakers please email:

jimread55@gmail.com

Peter Lee





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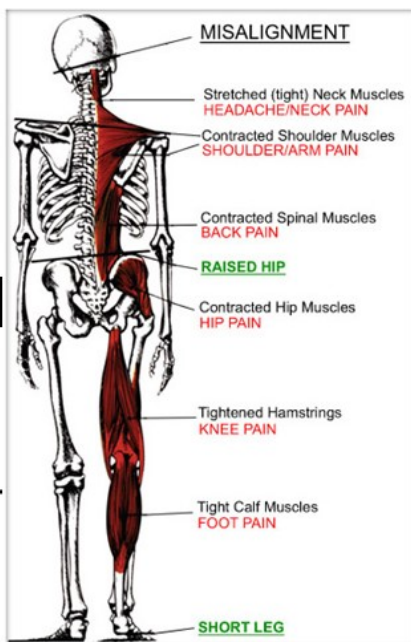
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Find these 30 words. They can go in any direction, but always in a straight line.

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| RUDOLPH | MYRRH | GOLD | STABLE | HANGOVER |
| MANGER | MARY | HOGMANAY | FRANKINCENSE | NEWYEAR |
| SLEIGH | CAROLS | GABRIEL | SAUSAGEROLLS | STOCKING |
| ANGELS | JOSEPH | SHEPHERDS | PUDDING | CRACKERS |
| PRESENTS | BABYJESUS | FIREWORKS | BRANDYBUTTER | SANTA |
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NEWS FROM AYOT ST PETER



After clarification from the government just before the start of the four-week lockdown, we were pleased that we could hold our Remembrance Day service after all. Twenty names

from the **First World War** are inscribed on our war memorial, which was unveiled in 1919, the year when the Spanish 'flu epidemic was finally waning.

Our 2020 Remembrance was a delightful open-air service led by Colin Hull. Everyone gathered around the war memorial at an appropriate distance from one another to remember the local men who gave their lives for their country. We were fortunate that it was a fine and mild November day. Our tradition is that the names of the fallen are read aloud after the church clock strikes eleven. This year the clock chimes were out of action and we were grateful to David, our bell ringer, for striking the hour with the church bells. A family plot in our churchyard includes the grave of Patricia Dora Adam, a **World War Two** casualty, and her name is also read out each year although (as she was not local) she is not listed on the memorial.

We are hoping that lockdown will indeed be limited to four weeks, which will allow the planned Christmas services to go ahead. Our Carol Service will be on Sunday 13th December. This is always a

very popular event which follows the classic 'carols and lessons' format. The service will be led by Revd David Munchin with the St Peter's Singers providing a selection of contemporary and traditional Christmas music.

In past years this service has filled the church. To comply with social distancing, this year we have to leave alternate pews empty, so the numbers attending must be limited. We are asking everyone who would like to join us to **reserve their seats in advance** by e-mailing

church@ayotstpeter.com stating the number of people in their party. We are expecting that the available space will fill quickly, so a second, identical, service has been arranged on the same day, in the afternoon. The times of the services will be 11.15am and 3.00pm.

On the following Sunday, 20 December, we will be holding the Crib Service. This is for the children and tells the nativity story in words and music, with children being invited to come forward and put the figures in the crib as the narrative unfolds. For adults we recommend The Rev'd David Munchin's mischievous interaction with the children, particularly when he humorously relates the story to modern day equivalents to check they are paying attention. The service starts at 11.15am.

Finally, on Christmas Day, Holy Communion will be celebrated, at the usual time of 11.15am.

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FRIENDS OF DANESBURY & QVM HOSPITAL

It was such a pity that our charity shop had to close again due to full lockdown on 5th November after only two and a half months trading, but we are looking forward to re-opening. Just prior to lockdown Georgia Shaw, the relief manager, once again excelled herself with a wonderful window display honouring all those who suffered during the two world wars.



Our Charity shop will hopefully be open again at the beginning of December and the *Friends* hope to benefit from all the seasonal goodwill. The shop has a great selection of inexpensive gift ideas together with a range of Christmas cards using designs created by people connected with the charity. All our cards are produced at Danesbury, so every penny raised comes straight to us. By buying anything from the shop you are helping us to support the work of Danesbury and QVM. We also have a selection of festive face coverings which are locally made and donated to us. They have proven to be a popular item this year.

Since mid-October the shop has been holding a *Christmas Hamper* raffle and we

will continue running the raffle throughout the first half of December. Tickets are only £1, and all donations will be going to the *Danesbury & QVM* hospitals.

The *Friends* are delighted to report that the shop is still running at a small operating profit, augmented by eBay sales. Thank you to all our customers and donors, without you the *Friends* would not be able to offer

such good and invaluable support to all the patients at the *Danesbury Neurological Centre* and the *QVM* hospital.

We welcome and need good quality donations and these are received in an area located behind the shop, but space is limited so it is best to bring anything you wish to donate in the morning. Once open again, the shop hours will be between 10.00 am and 3.00 pm Tuesday to Saturday so please do pop in.

Do help us support this important local charity at a time when the NHS needs support more than ever. If you wish to become more involved with the charity, we are always looking to welcome new Trustees., please contact:

daneshuryqvm@btconnect.com

Everyone involved with the *Friends* wishes you all a Very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. Let us hope 2021 will bring with it some sense of normality, as well as good health and happiness!

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Church Notice Board

Worship has now resumed in our churches.

*Please continue to follow the social distancing guidelines,
use of hand sanitiser and the wearing of face coverings is mandatory, unless you are exempt.*

Details about Virtual Church, which continues at 9.30 am each Sunday, can be found at:

www.welwyn.org.uk

Sunday Services

| | |
|---------|------------------------------------|
| | ST MARY'S - Welwyn |
| 8.00 am | Holy Communion |
| 9.30 am | Parish Communion / Junior Church |
| 6.30 pm | Evensong (2nd , 4th & 5th Sundays) |



| | |
|----------|-------------------------------------|
| | ST MICHAEL'S - Woolmer Green |
| 11.15 am | Parish Eucharist (1st & 4th Sunday) |
| | Family Service (2nd Sunday) |
| | All Age Eucharist (3rd Sunday) |
| | Morning Prayer (5th Sunday) |



Weekday Services

ST MARY'S - Welwyn

Current week's services are on the notice sheet
in church and on the website www.welwyn.org.uk

| | | |
|-----------|---------|----------------------------|
| Tuesday | 8.00 am | Morning Prayer (St Mary's) |
| Wednesday | 9.00 am | Morning Prayer (St Mary's) |
| Wednesday | 9.30 am | Holy Communion (St Mary's) |
| Saturday | 9.00 am | Parish Prayers (St Mary's) |

ST GILES - Codicote

| | | |
|---------|---------|---------------------------|
| Tuesday | 8.30 am | Morning Prayer (St Giles) |
|---------|---------|---------------------------|

Common Worship used at all Communion Services except where stated

Children

ST MARY'S - Welwyn

| | |
|--------|---|
| 3.30pm | Craftea (see Diary on back cover for dates) |
|--------|---|

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| | |
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Church Notice Board *continued from p44*

ALL SAINTS' DATCHWORTH

09.30 Sundays Holy Communion
 18.30 1st Sunday Sacred Space
 11.15 4th Sunday Family Service
 17.00 Thursday Evening Prayer



ST PETER'S TEWIN

09.30 Sundays Holy Communion
 11.15 3rd Sunday Family Service
 18.30 3rd Sunday Holy communion
 17.00 Monday Evening Prayer



AYOT ST PETER

11.15 Sundays
 1st: Matins:
(Book of Common Prayer, King James' Bible)
 2nd: Holy Communion
(Book of Common Prayer, King James' Bible)
 3rd: Family Service
(Common Worship, NRSV Bible)
 4th: Parish Communion
(Common Worship, NRSV Bible)
 5th: Holy Communion *(BCP, King James' Bible)*

ST GILES' CODICOTE

08.45 Sundays Holy Communion
 09.30 1st Sunday Worship 4U at Peace Memorial Hall
 10.30 2nd,4th Sun Informal Worship
 3rd Sunday Informal Worship with Communion

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 18.30 Sunday *ditto*
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MEDITATION

Uncertain Times – Nothing New?

Well! What a year it has been. The whole world thrown upside down! So many plans changed and many losses, struggles and even heartbreak. Separation from family and friends. Holidays and travel plans interrupted.

As we head towards Christmas, we have no idea how we will be able to celebrate the birth of the Christ Child. Differently from usual, that's for sure. And what will the next year bring? How can we plan and move forward when so much that we have known before has changed so radically?

Mary – Well! What a year it has been. Engaged to my childhood sweetheart and planning our wedding, it would have been a huge village affair. Then my whole world was thrown upside-down by the visit from that angel. No wonder Joseph did not believe a word I was saying. Wedding off, then back on, just a small family event. We were happy just to be together, birth plan written, and local midwife booked. Then a mad and exhausting trek to Bethlehem after the government called for a census. Just what I needed with my due date so near. We were worried but sure that we could sort out some help once we

reached our destination, but no such luck. It all happened so suddenly but the local women rushed around to help with our emergency. At least they got some of the animals moved out before the baby came.

Such anticipation about going back home to Nazareth now after all this time. I feel like we have been away from our families for ever. Joseph will hopefully have a chance now to restart his business; we lost so much when we had to flee to Egypt. At least we have each other, and my son is still alive. So many plans that Joseph and I had made together and yet not one thing has turned out as we expected. We do not know how our lives will be once things become more settled for us. We have given up planning too much, but we know that Yahweh is with us and His hand is on us and this wonderful gift that He has entrusted to our care. How will we celebrate the birth of the Christ Child?

We will walk forward one step at a time into whatever this next year brings!

Jo Fozzard