

# STOCKTON'S NEWS

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February 2024

Issue 163

**Magazine Deadline:-** 15th of the month

**emails:** *Magazine Items* - [stocktons.news@gmail.com](mailto:stocktons.news@gmail.com)

*Adverts* - [stockton.ads@gmail.com](mailto:stockton.ads@gmail.com)

**Web Page:-** [www.stocktonsnews.org.uk](http://www.stocktonsnews.org.uk)



Remains of a well unearthed by workmen who were installing the new  
**George Street Verge Protection**

*Photo taken by Lee Harrison*

**Printed by:- Stockton's News**

# Stockton Football & Cricket Club

Napton Road, Stockton CV47 8JU **Facebook:** @StocktonFCCC  
**Email** Stocktonfccc@outlook.com

**About Us:** We are a non-profit, Community Amateur Sports Club, run by a team of volunteers for its members & the wider community.

## The Club House

Recently extended to include disabled facilities and additional changing rooms.  
**Well stocked bar with Sky Sports & BT Sports.** Pop into the clubhouse or see Facebook for information on upcoming **events** or to become a member.

## **Our Teams:**

**Stockton Football**  
**(Mens, Girls & Boys)**  
**Stockton Stars Cricket,**  
**Stockton Ladies Netball,**  
**Stockton Petanque,**  
**Warwickshire Grizzlies**  
**Baseball,**  
**SFCC Darts Team**



## **THE NELSON CLUB at STOCKTON**

**Napton Road, Stockton Tel: 01926 812613**

**OPENING HOURS:-** Mon - Thurs:- 5pm - 11pm Friday 4pm - 12.30am  
Sat 2.00pm - 12.30am Sun 12 Noon - 11pm

**BREWED AWAKENING ~ 9.30am til 12 noon ~ Every Tuesday - 13th & 27th**

**AFTERNOON BINGO ~ 2.00pm ~ Alt. Thursdays - 1st, 15th & 29th**

**EVENING BINGO ~ Every Saturday ~ Eyes down 8.00pm (Top Room)**

**CHARITY QUIZ NIGHT ~ Last Friday every month - 7.30pm**

**FOLK NIGHT ~ Last Tuesday of the month ~ 8pm**

**10th GARYOKE**

**24th LIQUID INSANITY - 9pm til late**

Join us for sporting events with BT and Sky Sports

For last minute events or changes to the current planned events please see the following:

**Web page:** <http://nelsonclub.co.uk/index.html>

Find us on **Facebook & Twitter**



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**Mob: 07900431644**  
**Home: 01926245700**

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contact@pullinsmemorials.co.uk

### Magazine Policy

Deadline for articles **15th** of the month and can only be accepted if in the form of a typed/written copy to Stockton's News Editorial Team or email [stocktons.news@gmail.com](mailto:stocktons.news@gmail.com). The Editorial Team 1.) Reserve the right to withhold or shorten items as views expressed are not necessarily those of the Editorial Team. 2.) Contributors can request that their names be withheld but the team cannot accept anonymous items for publication. 3.) Reserve the right to edit each edition of the magazine to be put on the Web. 4.) No Liability will be accepted for loss or damage caused by error or omission from advertisements or content. 5.) Income is aimed at covering all costs generated by the production/circulation of Stockton's News. 6.) Any surplus funds will be distributed within the Parish of Stockton. Village groups are invited to apply for funds to the betterment of our community.

*Copy of Magazine Guide Lines reinstated from the 1980's Parish Mag*

8.) We will try to print anything that wont land us up in court 9.) We do not endorse ALL the views expressed. 10.) We don't judge between those in dispute. 11.) We want to provide news, views, opinions and reports. We do not want to be unfair, biased, censorious or condemnatory.

Airing a view is an opinion but a continual airing of that view and/or it's opposite becomes an argument.

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## VILLAGER OF THE YEAR 2023

The Parish Council is asking for nominations for Villager of the Year.

This could be somebody who has worked hard for the village or who has provided support for another person who may have needed help.

Please send you nominations by **28th February** with your reasons to

The Parish Clerk  
74 George Street

or email  
[clerk@stockton-warks-pc.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@stockton-warks-pc.gov.uk).

Previous winners page 35

Many thanks to all those who have already contributed towards  
the cost of producing **Stockton's News**  
it is great to have your support.

If you wish to make a donation you can do so by **Bank Transfer** to -

**Account:** Stocktons News **Sort Code:** 40-42-15

**Acc. No.** 91456652 **Reference it as** *SNews*

**Cash/Cheque** in envelope addressed to Stockton's News to -  
Steve Kittendorf - The Limes, Marion Stringer - 12 George Street  
Wendy Rumsey - 1 St. Michael's Crescent.

**The magazine is run entirely by volunteers  
and any surplus monies are used for the benefit of the village.**

Click on the link for this month's magazine.

<http://stocktonsnews.org.uk>



## Village Calendar



### Regular Weekly Village Events

#### **Monday** :~

Senior Day Centre: Village Hall ~ 9.00am - 3.00pm

Knit & Natter: Church ~ 2 - 4pm

#### **Tuesday** :~

Create & Play: Church 9.30 - 11.00 am ~

Clubbercise: Village Hall ~ 7.00 - 8.00pm

#### **Wednesday** :~

Chess Club: Nelson Club ~ 5.30 - 7.30pm

Lazy Cat Yoga: Village Hall ~ 7.30 - 9.00pm

#### **Thursday** :~

#### **Friday** :~

Toddlersaurus: Village Hall ~ 9.30 - 11.30am

W.I. Craft Morning: Football Club ~ 10 - 12noon

#### **Saturday** :~

Bingo: Eyes down 8.00pm ~ Nelson Club (Top Room)

### Regular Monthly Village Events

#### **Monday**

Women's Institute: 1st Monday of Month ~ Nelson Club ~ 7.30pm ~

Parish Council Meetings: 3rd Monday of Month ~ Village Hall ~ 7.15pm ~

#### **Tuesday**

Brewed Awakening: Nelson Club ~ 9.30am - 12Noon - **13th & 27th**

Folk Night: Last Tuesday of the month ~ Nelson Club ~ 8.00pm ~

#### **Wednesday**

Church Lunch: Every 3rd Wednesday ~ 12noon ~

Friends Lunch; Every 2nd Wednesday ~ The Crown ~ 12.30pm ~ **14th**

#### **Thursday**

Afternoon Bingo ~ Alt. Thursdays ~ Nelson Club ~ 2.00pm ~ **1st, 15th & 29th**

#### **Friday**

Charity Fun Quiz Night: Every last Friday ~ Nelson Club ~ 8.00pm ~

#### **Saturday**

Coffee Morning & Library: Every 1st Saturday ~ Village Hall ~ **3rd**

Whist Drive: Every 2nd Saturday ~ Village Hall ~ 7.30pm start ~

Stockton Cinema: Every last Saturday ~ Village Hall ~ 7.00pm ~ **24th**

## WHO'S WHO

Parish Council	Chairman	Howard Collerson	813181
	Clerk	Robbie Robinson	814094
	Councillors	John Emberton	814267
		Helen Kittendorf	815376
		Chris Millidge	812991
		Terry Warner	813424
		Wendy Rumsey	813730
District/County Councillor Member of Parliament	Andy Crump	815745	
	Jeremy Wright	01926 853650	
St. Michaels	Priest in Charge		
	Administrator	Susan Holloway	812383
	Church Warden	Wendy Turner	812694
	Church Flowers	Wendy Turner	812694
Village Hall Bookings		Helen Kittendorf	815376
Stockton School	Head Teacher	Mrs. Ann Bedgood	812483
Little Acorns			813789
Toddlersaurs		Jo Harvey	811120
Group Scout Leader		Jo Brough	07568 653158
Scouts		Andrew Griffiths	07877 881012
Cubs		Emily Howard	07410 137037
Beavers		Jo Brough	07568 653158
Women's Institute	President	Sue Gill	460278
	Secretary	Joan Ford	810220
Football		Rick Musson	813018
Football Club House		Luke Cole	07710 864192
Magazine Editorial Team		Wendy Rumsey	813730
		Marion Stringer	812887
Advertising Editor		Steve Kittendorf	815376
Magazine Treasurer		Steve Kittendorf	815376



# Stockton church

Methodist and Anglicans in unity

The Bridges Group of Parishes  
email:admin@thebridgesgroup.org.uk

www.thebridgesgroup.org.uk  
Tel:01926 812383

BCP – Book of Common Prayer    CW – Common Worship

THE BRIDGES GROUP	04.01.24 2 <sup>nd</sup> before Lent Green	11.02.24 1 <sup>st</sup> before Lent Green	14.02.24 ASH WED Purple	18.02.24 Lent 1 Purple	25.02.24 Lent 2 Purple
PRIORS HARDWICK	Morning Worship 9.00am	Evensong 5.00pm	TBA	Holy Comm BCP 9.00am	
PRIORS MARSTON	Morning Worship 10.30am	Holy Comm CW 10.30am	TBA	Morning Worship 10.30am	‘4 <sup>TH</sup> Sunday’
WORMLEIGHTON			TBA		Morning Worship 10.30am
NAPTON	Holy Comm CW 10.30am	Morning Worship 10.30am	TBA	Holy Comm CW 10.30am	Evenson g 5.00pm
STOCKTON	Morning Worship Lay Led 10.30am	Holy Comm In the Methodist Tradition 10.30am	TBA	Messy Church 4.00pm Venue tbc	Morning Worship 10.30am tbc
LOWER SHUCKBURGH			TBA		Holy Comm BCP 9.00am

# The Bridges group NOTICE BOARD

LOWER SHUCKBURGH, NAPTON, STOCKTON  
Priors Marston, Priors Hardwick & Wormlington

## Programme for Children and Youth

**Create & Play:** Tuesday mornings from 9.30 – 10.45am (term times) in Stockton Church – for further details, contact: Deborah Dutton on 01926 819016 or [deborahduttoncreative@gmail.com](mailto:deborahduttoncreative@gmail.com)

**Babies & Toddlers Group:** Monday mornings from 9.30 – 11am (term times) in Napton Village Hall – for further details, contact: Helen Eadon on 07811 010440

**Messy Church** – on 3<sup>rd</sup> Sundays of the month at 4pm – venues TBC

## Mid-week programme for Adults - Home Bible Study Groups

The following groups meet for Bible study, prayer and fellowship. If you would like to join, please contact the Vicar or a Group leader:

Every Wednesday at 8pm in Stockton	Wendy	01926 812694
	Rachel	07915 056184
1 <sup>st</sup> & 3 <sup>rd</sup> Thursdays at 2.30pm in Stockton	Jan	01926 817991
Every Thursday at 8pm in Napton	Julia	01926 811476
Weekly (day varies) at 7.30pm in Napton	Angie	01926 812225

## Social get-togethers

Knit & Natter: Mondays at 2pm in Stockton Church	Jan	01926 817991
Knit & Natter: Mondays at 2pm in Napton	Jayne	01926 813227
Coffee & Chat: 1 <sup>st</sup> Thursdays at 10am in Priors Hall	Anna	07870 685124

## Parish enquiries

For initial enquiries about baptisms, weddings, funerals and graveyard matters etc, please contact Susan, our Group Administrator, on 01926 812383 or email: [admin@thebridgesgroup.org.uk](mailto:admin@thebridgesgroup.org.uk). Please note that Susan works part-time but she will get back to you as quickly as she can.

See elsewhere in the magazine for details of other church activities & events or visit our website: [www.thebridgesgroup.org.uk](http://www.thebridgesgroup.org.uk)

## LOCAL EVENTS

*Events and News from Our Neighbouring Villages*

### RESOURCING TO RISK

**We want to hear from you!**

Consultation  
now open

WFRS is consulting on a proposed change to its service delivery model as part of its Resourcing to Risk approach.

Our aim is to optimise the distribution of fire appliances, firefighters and supporting resources so that they better align to risk and demand.

We want hear your views on these proposals.



For all the detail on the proposal and to share your views, please visit [ask.warwickshire.gov.uk](http://ask.warwickshire.gov.uk)  
The consultation is open until 30 March 2024.

[wfrs2@warwickshire.gov.uk](mailto:wfrs2@warwickshire.gov.uk)



WARWICKSHIRE  
Fire & Rescue Service

We are holding five events in the new year – one each in Stratford, Kenilworth, Atherstone, Bedworth and Southam - to give the public an opportunity to learn more about the proposals. Places at the events must be booked and tickets went live last week on our Eventbrite page.

The sessions are as follows:  
Stratford on Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> Jan 24 at 6.30pm

Kenilworth on Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> Jan 24 at 6.30pm

Bedworth on Monday 29<sup>th</sup> Jan 24 at 6.30pm

Atherstone on Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> Feb 24 at 6.30pm

**Southam** on Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> Feb 24 at 6.30pm



### Southam Gardening Club

[thesouthamgardeningclub.blogspot.co.uk](http://thesouthamgardeningclub.blogspot.co.uk)

Tel: 01926 813986 or 815086.



### Rodney Weston

will give an illustrated talk on

**‘Talking Rot – an introduction to Home Composting’**

at 7.30pm on **Monday 19<sup>th</sup> February**

at the Catholic Church Hall, next to Wood St car park.

All are welcome. Non-members £4.50. Refreshments included.  
Further information: [thesouthamgardeningclub.blogspot.co.uk](http://thesouthamgardeningclub.blogspot.co.uk)  
or tel 01926 813986 or 815086.

# Community Hub and Café

Next to Galanos House, Banbury Road, Southam CV47 2BL

Café open daily 9am - 5pm.

For a full list of events visit our facebook page: [@RBLCommunityHub](#)  
or contact us on 01926 812185 Ext 5365

## **Warm Hub - FREE - Every Monday, 2:30pm - 4pm**

Drop-in and have a cup of tea with us, stay as little or as long as you like. With a warm welcoming atmosphere, the community hub is a place where people feel safe and there's always someone to talk to, if you want to. Each week we will have various groups joining us. Open to everyone.

## **Chatty Café Table – FREE - Every Tuesday, 10 -11:30am**

Our café is warm and welcoming every day, but we are privileged to have wonderful volunteers who will be hosting our chatty table on Tuesday mornings. You can find our 'Chatty' table over on our comfy chairs by the window. Our Chatty Table volunteers will be wearing yellow. Why not drop-in, have a cup of tea with us, stay 5 minutes or an hour. We have a real community feel here and everyone is welcome.

## **Armed Forces Veteran's Breakfast Club**

*Last Wednesday and Saturday of every month - 10am - 12noon*

Come along, purchase your own Hub Breakfast, and join in with the banter

## **Musical Memories – FREE - Last Friday of every month, 2:30-4pm**

A dementia friendly music café with support, music and refreshments

Open to everyone, come along on the day.

## **Sporting Memories – FREE - 2nd Wednesday of each month, 10:30-12:30pm**

Reminisce about all things 'sport' and some gentle exercise with guest speakers.

Open to everyone, come along on the day.

## **Silver Sunday – FREE - Second Sunday of each month, 2:30pm**

Join us, bring a friend, and have a dance. The Harvesters will be here to entertain us. Everyone is welcome to come along. Please telephone 01926 812185 Ext 5365 to book your place. Every other month.

## **Nosh and Natter**

Cost £10.00 - 2 Course homemade hot lunch and dessert.

Everyone is welcome to come along, booking is essential.

First Wednesday of every month.

Please telephone 01926 812185 Ext 5365 to place book your place.

\*Free transport available from Southam library to the Community Hub – Please book

Collection outside Southam Library: 11:45 Return to Southam Library: 14:00

For a full list of events please follow us on Facebook [@RBLCommunityHub](#)

## **Regular External Groups**

### **Stitch by Stitch – Open to everyone**

Every Thursday 3-4:30pm and 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of the month 7-9pm

### **Laura Moore - podiatrist**

Every Monday Call to book 07920141214

### **Admiral Nurse**

(Free Dementia Advice for the Armed Forces community)

Dates: Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> February, Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> March, Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> April, Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> May, Tuesday 11th June.

### **Southam Spiritualists**

Mediumship Evening, Fortnightly on Sunday 7-9pm (£5 entry fee)

Meditation & Development Circle, Fortnightly on Tuesday 7-9pm (£5 entry fee)

Open to everyone - call Miranda to book

### **Southam Youth Community Theatre Group**

Every Friday, starting 2<sup>nd</sup> Feb 6:3-7:30pm

Cost: £15 per month (first session is free to see if you like it )

Interactive session where children can learn new skills, improvisation, script writing and a place to feel comfortable and express yourself

To find out more information or book your trial session.

Please contact Emma 07388345752 or Andrea 07766234146

[SYCTG2024@outlook.com](mailto:SYCTG2024@outlook.com)

### **Galanos House Recruitment Fayre**

Friday 16<sup>th</sup> and Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> Feb, 9-5pm

### **Southam Business Community**

Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> Feb, 10-12noon

Open to all local business – Call to find out more 07802 228125

## **Long Itchington History Group**

***Meeting at Community Centre 7.30pm***

***Www.longitchingtonhistory.org.uk***

**WEDNESDAY 14th FEBRUARY STARTING AT 7.30.**

“2000 Years of British Coinage” - Colin Clay

For further details and to request transport  
please contact David Williams 01926 812573

*Programmes available on request*



## DIARY DATES

*Include your village event for free*



### February 2024

- 3rd** Coffee Morning & Stockton's Archives – 10am – 12noon – Village Hall
- 12th - 16th** **Half Term**
- 18th** Dogs for Good Fundraiser Breakfast
- 21st** NEW Branch of Royal British Legion meeting - Galanos Hub - 7.00pm
- 24th** Film Night ~ Village Hall ~ 7.00pm

### BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES

**Happy Birthday wishes** go to Emilia Tolley, Ian Cooper, Wendy Rumsey and Janet Cox with **special wishes to Edna Noon** who is **80yrs** young this month.

*To include birthdays/anniversary please contact magazine.  
Tel: 01926 813730/812887 or email before 15th of month*

### Refuse & Recycling

**Food Waste - Weekly** - Every Friday **Grey Lid Bin - 3 weekly - 9th, 1st Mar.**  
**Blue Lid Bin & Green Bin - 2 weekly - 9th & 23rd**

Missed Bins Tel: 01789 260616

**Stockton Recycling Centre:** To book a slot over the phone please ring  
01926 410410 - Customer Services at W.C.C .

### Mobile Library

**Stockton Church 2.10 - 2.30pm 2nd & 1st March**

For further information, ring Mobile Library enquiries on 01926 851031  
or Mobile Library on-line at [www.warwickshire.gov.uk/mobilelibraries](http://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/mobilelibraries).

**Southam Pharmacy ~ Post Code CV47 0HE**

**Tel: 812287 email [southam.pharmacy@dudley](mailto:southam.pharmacy@dudley)**

**Opening Hours:- Monday ~ Friday 8.30am - 6.15 pm**

**Saturday ~ 9.am - 5.00pm**

**Sunday ~ Closed**



**Wheelchair Short-term Loan:-**

**Stockton Church - 812383**

**Stockton's News - 813730/812887**



### Lions Furniture Sales

**2nd Saturday of the month 8.30am - 11.30am**

**Behind Southam Co-op**



**VILLAGE MATTERS**  
To have your news included please  
Contact by email - [stocktons.news@gmail.com](mailto:stocktons.news@gmail.com)  
or by hard copy to Editorial Team



**SUNDAY 11 FEBRUARY 2.00 - 5.00PM**  
**5 POST OFFICE LANE**

We will celebrate my auspicious birthday (21) and anyone who would like to drop in for a cuppa and a piece of cake will be most welcome.

Look forward to seeing you

No presents thank you.

**Margaret Powell**

### **Can you help us?**

Our congregation at your Village Church is made up mainly of the elderly who are finding it difficult to maintain the cleaning of this lovely building. Are you able to do a little dusting, polishing or hoovering every two to three months and so help to keep your Church looking its best for services that villagers ask us to arrange for them – weddings, baptisms, funerals? It is not strenuous work; we just need a few of you who we can add to our list of helpers. All materials are provided.

We know so many of you don't want to see our beautiful Church deteriorate so we are asking you to consider helping us. We would be very grateful.

**To volunteer please ring: 01926 813845**

THANK YOU.



### **BIG DOGS BREAKFAST!**



Join us at Stockton Football Club for our annual Dogs for Good fundraiser!

**Sunday 18th February.**

The dog walk starts at 9.30am leaving from the club.

Breakfast served from 10am.

£10 for a full English breakfast!

Everyone welcome, with or without a furry friend!

## **NEW Royal British Legion Branch opens at Galanos House**

We are thrilled to announce the opening of the Royal British Legion Branch at Galanos House, Southam. The official branch name will be Galanos Branch BR4049.

Anyone can join (12–18-year-olds can join for free) you don't have to be in the forces, or a military veteran to join. Our next meeting will be on **Wednesday 21st February at 7.00 pm in the Hub** – both members and guests are welcome. Details of the new Branch and how to become a RBL member will be available on the day. A member of the Branch management committee will be available every Monday from 2.00 pm -5.00.pm in the Hub (excluding Bank Holidays) to anyone who would like information on the branch or the wider RBL.

The RBL Branch at Galanos House is the very first branch to exist alongside a care home. There are approximately 2,500 Royal British Legion branches across the UK and overseas, and we are therefore delighted to have secured the new Southam branch in Warwickshire. RBL branches are focal points for social activity, Remembrance and in supporting the Armed Forces community. In Southam and the surrounding area the branch will play an important role in supporting and finding veterans and families.

For more information, please contact us at [Galanos.Chairman@rbl.community](mailto:Galanos.Chairman@rbl.community)

**Please support our  
Advertisers**





## STOCKTON PARISH COUNCIL

Meetings held every 3rd Monday in Village Hall 7.15pm.

*Full copies of approved minutes available from Clerk to Parish Council*

*Mr. W.J. Robinson Tel: 01926 814094 or*

*website .www.stockton-warks-pc.gov.uk*

### STOCKTON PARISH COUNCIL - DECEMBER 2023 MEETING

These notes are informal. For a full record please refer to the authorised minutes on our website.

**County and District Matters: Warwickshire Fire and Rescue Service consultation** - the service are proposing a reorganisation that would increase the availability of fire engines when they are most needed. The Southam Station would remain open but would be manned by full-time fire staff 8am - 10 pm and then covered by other appliances based elsewhere. The consultation will run from December until March 2024. A public meeting is being arranged at The Grange, Southam on 27 February 2024. Details of the meeting will be made available in the New Year. The County have approved a **20 MPH speed limit** on the main road through Southam. **Next year's WCC Budget** - the County will not be declaring bankruptcy like some other authorities but the council tax increase will be higher than previous years.

**Village facilities: George Street Verge Protection** - this work has been completed and has been paid for out of Councillor Andy Crump's delegated highways budget - many thanks to Andy. The parish council will now consider ways in which the rest of the verge can be dealt with. **Village grass mowing** - the three year contract for the village mowing including the playing field and the cemetery has been open to tenders and closed on 31 December. The council will now appoint a contractor. **Street sweeping** - now that all the leaves have fallen WCC will be asked to send in their street sweepers. **Volunteer Drivers Scheme** - the parish council has agreed to join the Southam Transport Scheme that can take residents to medical appointments at a cost to the user of 45p per mile. Details are elsewhere in the magazine.

**Parish Council Budget for 2024/5** - Expenditure for the current year is expected to be in line with the 2023/4 budget but the energy prices for street lighting have, as yet, not increased to the level that the council was advised, so the parish council will keep this under review. It was agreed that the precept (which is the amount collected by Stratford on our behalf) should be increased by £1,000 from £30,000 to £31,000 to take account of inflation in prices and represents an increase of approximately 3.3%. In 2023/4 we were 36th highest out of 86 parishes and this should not change very much.

Next Meeting - 7.15 pm on Monday 15 January 2024 in the village hall.

*Howard Collerson (chairman)*

## JANUARY 2024 MEETING

*These are informal notes only, for formal record please refer to the authorised minutes on our website.*

**County and District Council Matters:** Stratford Council have approved in principle the use of **hydrotreated vegetable oil (HVO)** for use in their refuse collection fleet and will establish a trial period. Stratford Council's increase in the **Council Tax** for next year will be 2.99%. As reported in the December magazine the County are consulting on changes to the way that the **Fire and Rescue Service** uses staffing resources. A rural service like ours had traditionally relied on volunteers (on-call staff) but in recent times the availability of these volunteers for call out has reduced particularly during the day when most of the incidents occur. The proposal locally is that the Southam Station will be fully staffed between 8am and 10pm and at night any incidents will be dealt with by back-up (surge) stations, such as Rugby and Leamington. Villagers are encouraged to make their views known through the consultation process that runs until the 10th March 2024, on the WCC website and accessing "Resource to Risk". The parish council accepted the Chief Officer's conclusion that their proposals were the best solution to a difficult decision.

**Planning Matters: (23/02911) The Crown Inn**, new retractable canopy - permission refused. The Parish Council disagrees with this decision by the planning officer acting under delegated powers, the reasons given that the extension was a discordant addition to the building and would cause unacceptable harm to the character and appearance of the area. Up until now with minor planning application like this the parish council, when asked for its views, has generally commented "No Representation" rather than support or object. If it had made a "support" decision in this case then the application would have gone before that Planning Committee where a range of views could have been expressed. In future when the parish council is asked for its views it will give more thought to each case and attempt to reach "support" or "reject" comment. National Planning guidelines support "decisions that create conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt", and also enable "the retention and development of community facilities such as public houses". The parish council's view is that these national policies were not given enough weight in reaching the decision.

**Grass Cutting Contract:** The parish council recently sought quotes from contractors for its grass cutting contract to cover the next three years and has awarded the contract to Frank Mann. The council would like to thank Gary Farmer who has fulfilled the previous contract.

**Southam Council Voluntary Drivers Scheme:** the parish council now contributes to this scheme that arranges transport for medical appointments. Contact 01926 814004 for details.

**Community Orchard Fund:** the parish council was invited to apply for a grant to set up a community orchard but this was declined because no land was readily available and community support was not apparent.

**Climate Emergency Policy:** the parish council is aware that it has become fashionable for other councils to adopt a climate emergency or net-zero policy but agreed that it had made a significant contribution by converting all its street lights to low energy LED lights, and that various other bodies already provide a wide range of advice on reducing people's personal carbon footprints. It decided no further action was needed.

**Reminder of the Month: Please don't take grit form the roadside grit bins to use on your property - they are for use on the highway.**

**Next Meeting:** Monday 19 February 2024 @ 7.15 pm.  
*Howard Collerson* (Chairman)



### **News From Andy Crump**

**WCC Councillor for Southam, Stockton & Napton**  
**SDC Councillor for Southam Central and East and Stockton**

**Mobile: 07771335273 - [cllrcrump@warwickshire.gov.uk](mailto:cllrcrump@warwickshire.gov.uk)**  
**[andrew.crump@stratford-dc.gov.uk](mailto:andrew.crump@stratford-dc.gov.uk)**

As well as contributing to Stockton News, I am often in the village and I, also, provide weekly updates on the 3 main local Stockton Facebook pages. I try to ensure that my posts are based on facts, evidence etc however sometimes readers interpret them (and other information) in an interesting way or make unusual assumptions.

I do smile when I see comments on Facebook about people not liking the tone of a response, yet they had previously commented in what could be perceived as an aggressive manner. Whilst being an elected representative for Southam, Stockton and Napton, I reserve the right to respond robustly and in a forthright way, if I receive what I perceive to be unfair criticism or a comment that is devoid of facts. I know at least one other local councillor who feels the same.

Most weeks, I post some sort of safety update e.g. fire, flooding, driving related, food, rogue traders etc – they are not meant to be patronising and I apologise if

they are interpreted that way. Below, there will be several flooding and weather related ones – the other week we had a Mercedes stuck in Kenilworth, with the occupants having to be rescued by the Fire Service, I believe. Not only did they put themselves at risk, but their rescuers too.

### **Verges in George Street**

Some of you may be aware that I've used some of my delegated Highways budget to improve the parking/verges and I've received positive feedback – I will see what else can be done to the verges nearer the Napton Road

### **Resourcing to Risk Consultation**

Warwickshire Fire and Rescue is looking at its service delivery model as part of the Resourcing to Risk approach.

Please read about the need for change and comment on the proposals at: <https://ask.warwickshire.gov.uk/insights-service/wfrs-r2r/>

Southam Consultation – click below

[https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/o/warwickshire-fire-and-rescue-76075908553?fbclid=IwAR38mJ-HsQyD\\_drIBC9fqom7hk3-nhLNPJQqycKDKPsGRqLu5IxLh3zRGUM](https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/o/warwickshire-fire-and-rescue-76075908553?fbclid=IwAR38mJ-HsQyD_drIBC9fqom7hk3-nhLNPJQqycKDKPsGRqLu5IxLh3zRGUM)

**Streetlights** – one or two in the village , again, have been reported to me but again these mainly belong to the parish council. Clerk - Stockton PC

[clerk@stockton-warks-pc.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@stockton-warks-pc.gov.uk)

### **Cold weather safety**

With colder weather forecast to continue over the coming days, Warwickshire Fire and Rescue Service is asking residents to prioritise safety for both their wellbeing and the wellbeing of others.

Read more: <https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/news/article/4912/residents-urged-to-be-careful-as-freezing-temperatures-expected-this-week>

### **Warwickshire Legal Services: Trainee Solicitors**

Warwickshire Legal Services has launched four exciting new positions for aspiring trainee solicitors to join their award-winning, motivated, and nationally recognised team.

Find out more: <https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/news/article/4915/new-opportunity-for-trainee-solicitors-to-join-warwickshire-legal-services>

### **Director of Public Health annual report**

This year's annual report from Warwickshire's Director of Public Health, Dr. Shade Agboola, has now been published and has a focus on domestic abuse.

Find out more: <https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/news/article/4916/director-of-public-health-annual-report-launched->

### **Five ways to wellbeing**

To improve your health and wellbeing, and overall feelings of happiness, try to introduce at least one of the five ways to wellbeing into your routine: keep learning, give, be active, connect and take notice.

For more information, visit <http://warwickshire.gov.uk/5ways>

### **Bus services in Warwickshire** Trust the Bus.

Buses are a safe, reliable, and stress-free way for your children to get to and from school. This can help them become more independent and confident, too!

Find out more about bus timetables, routes, and more on the website: <http://warwickshire.gov.uk/buses>

### **Report it: Flooding and drainage issues**

Council officers are out across the county clearing our blocked gullies and drains following the recent flooding. If you spot any issues with blocked drains or gullies in your local community, please report it at <https://warwickshire.gov.uk/reportit> and click on report flooding or drainage issue.

### **Flooding advice**

If flood water enters your home it can be a very stressful experience, but before you start clearing up:

- take photos of any damage and the flood water line
- speak to your insurance company about what you can move and throw away

For more information: <https://warwickshire.gov.uk/flooding/advice-flooding>

### **Flooding advice – Water entering homes**

There are flood warnings still in place across Warwickshire.

If flood water enters your home, unplug electrical goods and move them to a higher level if you can.

Don't use any mains powered electrical items until advised by a registered electrician that it's safe to do so.

### **Flooding Advice – Driving**

Water levels are still high in Warwickshire. Please stay safe and only travel if it is necessary.

Do not drive through flood water – it puts you and your passengers at risk of harm, as well as those who come to rescue you. Don't take the risk!

### **Cold weather advice – Driving**

The storm this week has left a lot of standing water around the County. Temperatures are forecast to drop, which means there is an increased risk of ice. Warwickshire's gritters will be out, but residents are urged to take extra care when out and about.

### **Bin Collection Calendar**

SDC no longer post out the A5 bin collection calendar as a matter of course.

<https://www.stratford.gov.uk/waste-recycling>

A pdf can also be downloaded or printed

Paper copies can be requested still either by emailing [info@stratford-dc.gov.uk](mailto:info@stratford-dc.gov.uk)

or ringing 01789 267575. Residents in my ward of Stockton and Southam

Central and East can use my contact details ( [andrew.crump@stratford-](mailto:andrew.crump@stratford-dc.gov.uk)

[dc.gov.uk](mailto:dc.gov.uk)) or 07771335273 if they need my assistance.

### **Help from Warwickshire County Council**

If you are struggling with money and need help now, Warwickshire County Council can help with:

- food, energy and water bills
- money advice

- aspects of family life
- accessing emergency food
- mental health support

Find help here: <https://costoflivingwarwickshire.co.uk/home/i-need-urgent-help>

## **Updates from SDC**

Stratford-on-Avon District Council's Cabinet approves use of alternative fuel for refuse vehicles On Monday 15 January, Stratford-on-Avon District Council's Cabinet approved in principle, the use of hydrotreated vegetable oil (HVO) for the refuse collection fleet.

The change is subject to the approval of the 2024/25 Revenue Budget, with the expected additional cost of changing to HVO being up to £250,000 a year

**Everyone Active - which runs Stratford Leisure Centre, Southam Leisure Centre, Shipston Leisure Centre, Studley Leisure Centre and The Greig Leisure Centre in partnership with Stratford-on-Avon District Council - has put together its top hacks to help you get active.**

Richard Bell, Everyone Active's contract manager, said: "We welcome everyone to our sites, whether they are new, returning or existing members.

"We want people in the local community to be able to work out when and how they want to, and we will support them to achieve their fitness goals.

"No matter what your age, interests or ability, there is an activity for you at our centres."

### **1 - Identify quiet times to go to the gym**

Take a few weeks to identify when the best times are to visit your gym. No two centres are the same, so head along at different times to see what fits you best.

The post-work window is usually busy, so maybe rising early, a lunchtime session or a mid-evening slot could be the answer.

If you have free time on weekdays, you will likely get your pick of the equipment during normal working hours.

### **2 - Virtual classes**

Group exercise classes can be highly subscribed, but virtual classes are a great way to beat the rush.

There are usually spots free, allowing you to join classes at the last minute and work up a sweat whenever is convenient.

For many people, virtual classes also help to tackle the anxiety they may initially feel about exercising in front of others.

### **3 - Try a different activity**

Getting fit doesn't have to be all about the gym. Sometimes it's a good motivation-builder - and a change of pace - to throw in something different.

Perhaps you'd enjoy swimming a few lengths, or staying on land for a game of badminton or a yoga class.

Doing different activities will enhance your all-round fitness and keep your interest levels high.

### **4 - Work out at home**

The Great British weather may not be at its finest at this time of year, but you don't have to leave your own home to be active.

Everyone on Demand - available within the Everyone Active app - allows you to access a wide range of fitness options from the comfort of your living room. From fitness and personal training to wellness, there's a service or session to support everyone.

**Following last week's floods, Stratford-on-Avon District Council would like to thank everyone who came together to monitor and provide a response to a rapidly changing situation.**

The effects of storm Henk on already saturated ground led to widespread surface water flooding across the district with some roads impassable.

The District Council is also advising all those affected by internal flooding to report this using a dedicated [WCC website link](#).

Throughout the incident, officers from the District Council maintained a watching brief working with Warwickshire Resilience Forum, a multi-agency partnership including emergency services, local authorities, the Environment Agency and utility providers.

Once the water receded, the Forum moved into the recovery phase and partners are now working through a programme of street cleaning, removal of debris and gully jetting.

Members of Warwickshire Resilience Forum are in the process of contacting households, commercial premises and landowners known to have been affected by flooding to ensure they are aware of the services and assistance available to them.

If your home has been affected by flooding during Storm Henk (2-5 January), it's important that you report it to Warwickshire County Council and to your insurance company.

Report this via Warwickshire County Council's [Flood Risk Management online tool](#).

Reporting flooding to the County Council may help secure Government funding to help you recover from the effects of the flood, and will help local authorities plan future flood prevention measures. Warwickshire has not yet reached the required threshold of 50 properties confirmed as flooded, to be eligible for this Government funding, so it's crucial that you report flooding to help us secure this support for you.

**Reporting highways issues – or let me know !!**

**[cllrcrump@warwickshire.gov.uk](mailto:cllrcrump@warwickshire.gov.uk)**

Warwickshire County Council is urging residents to report any Highways faults that they encounter while driving or walking in the county via its website.

Read more: <https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/news/article/4085/warwickshire-county-council-encourages-residents-to-report-road-issues>

**Missed Bins** – please continue to report to SDC – the App is very useful for doing so and **make a note of your reference**. It helps SDC hold the Contractor to account. **Missed bins contacts** are [streetscene@stratford-dc.gov.uk](mailto:streetscene@stratford-dc.gov.uk) or Telephone: 01789 260616 Or download the app.

<https://www.stratford.gov.uk/online-forms/missed-bin-report-form.cfm>

[fbclid=IwAR3vkf03zQgXUeEHH04ODeqfid1b1msbwpVg8DG6nQn47HoAcw  
mw5LL9Joc](https://www.stratford.gov.uk/online-forms/missed-bin-report-form.cfm)

<https://www.stratford.gov.uk/online-forms/missed-bin-report-form.cfm>

**PAVEMENT PARKING/PARK IT RIGHT – the excuse, I won't be long isn't sufficient – it only takes a few seconds for a collision to occur. THINK ABOUT OTHERS NOT JUST YOURSELF**

Every week, I get reports of some terrible parking – with cars blocking pavements (especially dropped kerbs), making it impossible for people with mobility scooters or with push chairs to get by, without going into the road. In some cases, too, emergency services vehicles (particularly fire appliances) would struggle to pass. **PLEASE THINK OF OTHER PEOPLE, NOT JUST YOURSELF**

**PLEASE REPORT ANY ASB** , however trivial it may seem. Small incidents can lead to bigger ones, so better to stop them before they escalate .Also, the more calls/incidents the Police have, the sooner they will realise there is a problem in a certain area. **PLEASE ALSO ENSURE YOUR PROPERTY AND CAR IS LOCKED AND SECURE.**

Reporting out of hours highways issues can be challenging, the best number for that is 01926 415000.

[streetlighting@warwickshire.gov.uk](mailto:streetlighting@warwickshire.gov.uk) or 01926 412515 (not all are currently owned by WCC – some owned by town or parish council.)

<https://www.fixmystreet.com/reports/Warwickshire>

It is worth noting for future reference that anything immediately dangerous on the highway should be reported direct to the Police on 999, which is the same process for any pressing issue Out of Hours.

During normal office hours - 8:30am to 4:30pm, WCC call centre is best on 01926 412515

**Councillor groans –**

I used to work for the local council trimming all the hedges along the roads.

Unfortunately they've just made me redundant due to all the cutbacks!

We have a 99 year old man in our darts team so as a surprise we are going to fulfil his wish of spending his centenary birthday in the Caribbean.

He's going to be 100 in Haiti

Someone asked me what I knew about atoms. Very little.

As the optician handed over my new glasses he said "These are the special James Bond model".

I said "Why James Bond?"

"Because they're for your eyes...."

*Kind regards*

*Andy*





## Garden Jottings

from Bridge Nursery - your local Hardy Plant Specialists



*Christine Dakin, Bridge Nursery  
Tomlow Road, Napton.*

*Tel: 01926 812737  
[www.bridge-nursery.co.uk](http://www.bridge-nursery.co.uk)*

¼ mile from Crossroads Garage – look for our Tourist Sign

### FLOWERS FOR FEBRUARY

Most of us will be looking forward to the spring, we've had enough of the winter wet and cold so anything which will make us feel cheerful will be welcome. Snowdrops, hellebores and early daffodils will be most commonly seen. Primroses and violets look wonderful grown together and multiply easily. Slightly more unusual are some of the winter flowering shrubs. *Viburnum botnantense* 'Dawn', *V. tinus* and *Lonicera fragrantissima* are all likely to flower right through the winter. Hazel catkins are developing at this time of year and look good in a vase with daffodils. To see a much wider range take yourself to any of the botanic gardens where there will be an abundance of winter colour.

Now is a good time to buy seed potatoes and onion sets. Sow sweet peas and broad beans in cell trays and put out of reach of hungry mice. Towards the end of the month you can start to cut down any ornamental grasses and other herbaceous plants. And prune dogwoods by removing two thirds of all stems to the ground.

***Christine***

## STOCKTON VILLAGE HALL

**Bookings** - Helen Kittendorf Tel: 815376

[helenkittendorf@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:helenkittendorf@hotmail.co.uk)

*Hourly Rate £9*

February, Really, Wow, what happened to January .....or were we all hibernating from the cold!.

Our amazing **Coffee Morning** will continue throughout 2024, with the next one being **February 3rd** 10.00 -Noon- why not pop a long for a slice of cake & a cuppa with the option to eat in or take away, perfect start to the weekend! We do so love seeing everyone, and it is always a pleasant morning spent with friendly faces old and new. We also have Stockton's News making their regular appearance with the **Village Archives** for people to browse our history and see how the village has grown and changed over the years, its always lovely to look through old photographs and take a trip down memory lane.

The **Friends' Lunch** at the Crown will be **14th February** at 12.30pm and comes highly recommended as a great way to have a nice Carvery meal in the company of friends, with no washing up!! ....no-one should feel lonely at any time especially on Valentine's day. To book your place please phone Val on 814640.

**Cinema Night** will be, as always, on the last Saturday of the month. The date being **24<sup>th</sup> February**. Booking for supper is essential so please contact Helen or Steve on 01926 815376 . Our new style film club at cinema night is working well, and while the film title is no longer advertised around the village, do feel free to contact Steve Kittendorf on 01926 815376 or [stevekittendorf@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:stevekittendorf@hotmail.co.uk) for information on how to join the club or what the film choice is for the month.

**Finally**, the Trustees would like to thank each and every one of you for your support throughout 2023 and hope you will continue to support us throughout 2024.

**Stockton**  
**Pétanque** 

Chairman – Richard Rushton

Administrator – John Emberton 01926 814267





Club Captain – Rich Powell 07957848075

[www.stocktonpetanqueclub.org.uk](http://www.stocktonpetanqueclub.org.uk)

The Club's annual Singles League for 2023 was once again a close ran race, with Sarah Jerger closing out in style with an impressive 21 wins, just ahead of Richard Rushton with 19 wins. A strong performance from Sarah across the whole year with a 70% win ratio

The Club's Winter League started on 7<sup>th</sup> October with Sarah Jerger in the lead with 47 points, closely followed by Anthea Sansom (44 points) and Richard Rushton (42) points

13 players turned up for the January melee for a pleasant New years throw. After three rounds there was just one unbeaten player – Richard Rushton with a +20.. The best of those with two wins was Jeff Rand with +16  
 Our next melees will on be **Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> February**. Everyone is welcome – we will provide the boules and tuition in the rules.

		<b>WOMENS INSTITUTE</b>		
Meeting 7.30pm at Nelson Club first Monday of Month				
President:- Sue Gill Tel: 01926 460278				
Secretary: Joan Ford Tel: 01926 810220				

Our Christmas party took place in December and the members each brought food and what a great spread we had. We were entertained by David Moylan with his unique style of stories and jokes along with songs accompanied by his guitar. We ended our evening with Anthea who sang carols and played ukulele. It was a lovely way to end the evening and everyone joined in. Thank you to all who provided the lovely buffet and helped in any way towards the evening.  
 In January nearly 30 of us went to the Bowling Green for our annual meal. The food was delicious and enjoyed by all.

Congratulations go to our newest member, Charlotte, on the birth of her baby girl, it is not very often I can say that in the W I report!  
 We shall soon be getting back into the swing of normal meetings. Also the darts teams will be discussed in the not too distant future for those members interested in the darts competition.

Our next meeting will be **Monday 5th February 2024** at 7.30 pm, upstairs at the Nelson Club when the speaker is Alan Rogers, A Policeman’s Lot.  
 The Competition is A Writing Pen.

## STOCKTON’S WEATHER STATION - NOVEMBER 2023

		<b>STOCKTON’S WEATHER STATION</b>		
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**Headlines - a sunny month with 30% more sunshine than average.**  
 The **average minimum temperature** was 4.4 deg. C, exactly on the average (4.4 deg. C). The lowest temperature was -3.5 deg. C on the 30th November. The **average maximum temperature** was 10.1 deg. C, just below the average (10.2 deg. C) The highest temperature was 13.5 deg.C on the 18th. **Rainfall**, at 63.5 mm was 95 % of the average (67.5mm). It rained on 14 days. **Sunshine** levels have been 30% higher than the long term averages. The **wind** blew mostly from the north west, west, and south west (23 days).

**Trivia of the month - only 8 Novembers have been sunnier since local**

records began in 1894.

## **DECEMBER 2023**

### **Headlines - a mild, wet and dull month.**

The **average minimum temperature** was 4.5 deg. C, about two degrees above the average (2.2 deg. C). The lowest temperature was -3.5 deg. C on the 3rd December. The **average maximum temperature** was 9.3 deg. C, again about two degrees above the average (7.5 deg. C) The highest temperature was 12.9 deg. C on the 21st. **Rainfall**, at 117.5 mm was more than 80% higher than the average (64.5mm). It rained on 19 days and the wettest day was 3 December with 23mm. **Sunshine** levels have been only about 53% of the long term averages. The **wind** blew mostly from the south west, west, south and south east (23 days).

**Trivia of the month - the wettest December since the 1970's**

## **ANNUAL SUMMARY FOR 2023**

**Hottest day - 30.0 deg C on 25 June**

**Coldest night - -6.0 deg C on 22 January**

**Wettest day - 62 mm on 9 March**

**Wettest month - December with 117.5mm**

**Driest month - February with 4.5mm**

**Annual rainfall - 781mm**

**Lowest daytime maximum - 0.7 deg C on 8 March**

**Warmest night - 19.4 deg C on 9 September**

**First ground frost - 14 October**

**First air frost - 25 November**

The year started with an exceptionally dry and sunny February but March brought a change with a dull, wet month with snow on the 8th,9th and 10th making it the wettest March since 1947. By May a high pressure system had established itself off the north of Scotland bringing a dry but cool spell. A spell of 30 dry days from 11 May until 10 June ended with 53mm of rain on the 11th. July and August didn't feel like summer months but September was a definite improvement and was sunnier and warmer than the July or August. While storms and floods affected much of the country in Stockton in October we managed to escape with a typical autumn month. November was one of the sunniest on record but December ended the year with dull, wet weather that resulted in the highest annual rainfall since 2012 locally.

## **The Weather Monitor**

# Stockton's Archives

## Stockton and I By Victor Neal 1896 -1978

### *Part Three*

Well, father met my mother out that way, they married and Wal was born, and he brings the family to Stockton. *His* father, ensconced at The Wharf, was running several boats on the canal, providing extra horses for working all those locks up to Hatton, where I understand he had another stable to house them pending their hire in the opposite direction. If you are no boatman, this service was called for by the fact that the boats usually ran in pairs, which could be managed by one horse comfortable enough over the longer pounds, but where the locks were close and numerous – and at that time they accommodated only one boat at a time – it would have been a tremendously time-consuming task to keep coupling and uncoupling the horse at each lock. I believe that at this same time he was sub-contracting for some of the haulage for the canal's great competitor-to-be, the railway branch line being constructed not much further from one side of his house than the canal was on the other. All this enabled him to find employment for more than his own family, and this latter finished up pretty substantial, too: ten boys and two girls. Let's check them: Albert, Fred, Tom, Wal, Arthur, Alfred, Charlie, Jack, Frank and Bill, Harriett and Carrie. Too numerous for me to be sure, off-hand, of their correct order, but ten sons of course not losing their name on marriage, and some of *them* having big families too, it becomes easy to understand the predominance of the Neals in the village where there were none of that name until my grandfather's arrival from Banbury. We must closely rival the Bicknells (one of whom Neville married) who had the advantage of being mentioned in that old book my friend Sam Warner lent me to peruse – *The Stockton Award* – a delightful manuscript of the time of land enclosure, which after several evenings' swotting nearly got me on my head, and puzzled my wife who was too sane to study it, until, in spite of my struggles to locate at least one of the fields, long before the paragraph ended I had lost whatever its beginning was about, and retired beaten. I did manage to gather that the gentlemen responsible held their meetings at 'the house of John Jones known by the name of the sign of the Griffin in Southam, etc', and that there were Bicknells in the village in those days.

I wouldn't suggest for one moment that Neville was deliberately motivated by the fact, but his marriage was quite a strategic move in this numerical rivalry, depriving the Bicknells of one member and at the same time adding one to the Neals. Between them they have added another – little Lawrence James.

Mavis, our daughter, unable through no fault of her own to add to the Neals of

Stockton, takes herself off to Broadwell two miles away to see what she can do for the Faulkners, and her little Neil (still doing her best for the Neals, you see) Byron is no sooner born than he gets himself, photo and all, into the local paper, being the fifth generation of living Faulkners.

But we are wandering away from my grandfather at The Wharf – and here I'd better say that strictly The Wharf is just outside our parish, the boundary post appearing to give us just a slice of the garden, in fact it is often known as Birdingbury Wharf, which may confuse you, especially when I tell you its fourth name after my uncle Tom took over, when it became known as Mary Ann's, a tribute to his wife and my aunt who was another good'un, and could throw a dart or turn a domino with the best.

My grandfather did some rash things besides establishing the Neals so securely in the district (not that I'm saying that was bound to be a rash thing), for instance there was the occasion of the 'outride' (I've never learnt whether other districts knew their travellers, particularly brewery travellers, by this name, but we locally did) on one of his visits. These visits seemed to be known or sensed in advance, for a crowd usually gathered, in part for the fun generally expected, and perhaps in greater part because it was apparently the custom for the 'outride' to stand drinks all round.

Anyway this freezing morning was putting a thin skimming of ice on the canal when the gentleman arrived. 'A pound to the first man to cross,' he cries. 'Now, Tom, my lad.' Tom, my lad, my grandfather, without a second's hesitation plunges in and across. Old 'Baggie' Paine, odd-job man, who was usually close on my grandfather's heels, didn't break his rule here. Instantly he followed, maybe half dutifully and half expecting his reward too, in which respect he knew he was seldom disappointed.

My father used to tell of the dreadful occasions when Gramp was forced to dress up for some special event. If ever there was one thing that exasperated him, it was those vexing non-slip ties in those daft high starched double collars. The number he had angrily torn to pieces and flung on the fire! and the number of unnecessary words torn to pieces at the same time!

I get mixed up as to whether it was my grandfather or uncle Fred – they both achieved some weight-lifting renown locally – who would stand in a bushel measure and get a half-quarter of wheat on his back – 252 lbs or 2¼ cwts – and no hand-hold on the stuff in a sack; I've tried it, have you? I often think this sort of thing was the last remnant of the days when we (and I'm using this in the past tense) used to amuse ourselves by swankingly running up and down the granary steps with half-quarters on our backs in a good healthy competitive spirit with each other. It seems to make our modern amusements – radio, TV, etc – very feminine and tame, doesn't it? I don't think my ten stones advocate a return to such a drastic

alternative now. No, personally, I prefer jogging along on an old push-bike.

My grandfather belonged to Banbury and I should think a slice of Banbury

belonged to him. For we must have been in the money in those days. I gather he owned quite a number of canal boats and had the bulk of the coal business in the town. Some great-aunt of mine – her name slips my mind, which it didn't ought, for it was a good old-fashioned name – was reputed to own practically all of Grimsbury (an area of north Banbury) at one time.

My father's uncle Jack, my Wharf grandfather's brother, came into the bulk of his father's business, I suppose, and report had it – in fact one of the old Banbury gentlemen told me himself – if ever a man painted a town red, he did. Must have been the smartest, high-stepping trotters in town; he finally stepped so high and painted so red that the town couldn't hold him and he went off to America or Canada. The last rumour we heard was that he had turned over the proverbial new leaf and was doing well.

My father was advised at one time to go and spend a few days with them in Banbury to consider a job in the business. He was told, 'Just the man we want, one we can trust. We've got some good chaps, but they are too honest. You can make a bob or two for yourself and a bit for us as well,' by the simple expedient, it was explained, of carrying two weight-tickets, one something under the ton, which would be correct, the other something over the ton. 'But be sure you remember which pocket each is in. If you are pulled up, of course give them the right one, but once in the cellar, you're safe: there's usually a heap left and no-one can check on it.'

To my father's everlasting credit, he refused both this offer and the high-stepping and town-painting temptations which had been exhibited, perhaps as ground bait, so lavishly to him, and hastened home (not that I have ever heard that there was any dishonesty in my great-grandfather's time).

This coal episode makes me chuckle afresh to remember a kindred affair, over which we chuckled plenty at the time. One of our local coal merchants brought his horse-drawn vehicle into the Blue Lias Inn yard, another canal-side inn again about half a mile from the village on the Long Itchington side, which was then kept by my uncle Fred or (I can't be sure) his widow Ada, who kept it from after his death to her own. Their son, my cousin Fred, happened to be in one of the stables and, peeping through the window, saw the coalman remove several lumps of coal from each of the five sacks he had left and hide them under his heap of empty sacks. Now our coalman was generally liked but also generally suspected, and again generally fond of a pint or so, so this could be a very tempting situation. As the coalman goes in for his drink, Fred dashes out and drops the coal he had hidden over the nearby yard wall just to make sure his mother had full weight when she bought the five cwts.

His mother, suspiciously wary too, and knowing nothing of Fred's contribution, bluffs the coalman by telling him she can manage for coal this time, but some boat-woman had asked her to get 5 cwts for her, to be tipped near the canal. 'Make sure,' she says, 'she's got her weight; she's awfully fussy and is bound to weigh it to make sure.' This must have had the desired effect and convinced our dealer in coals, temporarily at least, that honesty is the best policy

for, wiping his mouth, he comes out and surreptitiously searches his heap of empties for the missing lumps, sending Fred into ecstasies at the stable window by his bewilderment. Fred steps out then and says, 'What're you looking for?' but he only gets a muttered answer about thinking a lump of coal had rolled that way, and our puzzled dealer had to take his chance and tip his five sacks just as they were.

That's jumping ahead again, though, so back to my great-grandfather, which is about as far back as we can go at present. I have threatened that if ever these days of hurrying-to-no-effect leave me time, I might do a bit of research amongst the registers, etc, in Banbury town, which could be an intriguing pastime.

On my mother's side I can say much less. The way of things so often tends to the ladies drifting, particularly on marriage, away from their home quarters, and my mother was no exception. She began as Sarah Jane (Jenny) Terry, out Wolverhampton way, I rather think Bilston, then Willenhall; four or five sisters and brother Joe, who could quote his Shakespeare to suit all occasions and had an excellent voice, according to my mother. I believe he must have died as a young man, and I never met him, but I did meet two of the sisters. My aunt Florrie we knew best as she often visited us; on the other hand mother and I visited aunt Emily twice at Stafford. I remember the first time as a boy of ten or twelve being somewhat bewildered, for apparently mother had not notified auntie of our intended visit in time to get a reply before we were on the way. My aunt had been carrying on her late husband's bakery business at Penkridge, and I remember my mother's blank look when she saw another name over the shop, but luckily the new people could tell us aunt's new address in Stafford, not many miles away, so all was well. Mother's parents must have died pretty young, too, as we children never knew them.

To get back to Stockton, my mother had migrated as a children's nursemaid through several places to a family at Polesworth. Barker must have been the name of the people, for she used to tell us of the times she had overheard the village maidens' stage whispers, 'There's that Barker's wench.'

The Rev Canon Trotter married my father and 'that Barker's wench' on March 25th 1891 and they lived at a house in Cockspur, a part of Polesworth, I gather so named from the renowned old cock-fighter, Billy Gilliver who lived or had live there. Speaking of a part of Polesworth makes me wonder if strictly I should have said that the canal-side house where the Crowshaws reared my father so well was situated at Glascote. (*Between Polesworth and Tamworth*)

On coming to settle in Stockton, my parents with baby Wal, it appears, spent a short time with my uncle Fred, at that time living in a house about a mile from the village across some fields, until they got hold of rooms with the Smiths and, upon the latter's demise, took on the whole house wherein Ern and I were born and which, after renting it from Mr John Cleaver of the Barley Mow, they finally bought on their landlord's death.



*School House, where Victor Neal was born in 1896*



**STOCKTON'S NEWS FROM THE PAST -  
NO. 7 - DROWNING IN THE CANAL**

**From a newspaper report of November 1864 - Coroner's Inquest**

An inquest was held at the King's Head, Napton on Wednesday before Mr W Henderson, Deputy Coroner, touching the death of George Hales, a native of Stockton.

After viewing the body the Coroner took the evidence of John Keen who identified it as that of George Hales of Stockton, labourer, aged about 44.

William Chadwick, boatman, said that on Monday afternoon, November 24th, he was steering a boat on the Oxford Canal, and, when passing under a bridge called Coventry Bridge, near the Napton Junction, he saw in the water the body of the deceased and afterwards, on getting assistance, they drew it out.

William Shelton, labourer, said he was in the company of the deceased at the King's Head, Napton on the 7th November last (day of the South Warwickshire election). They had some conversation and some beer together. Deceased was hard up and asked witness to buy a shirt, which he declined to do but he gave him 6d for a slop. He saw deceased buy a loaf and eat the greater part of it. He told witness that he should drown himself that night. He heard deceased talk of his wife and heard him joke about his wife living with another man. He went away about nine o'clock, but did not seem much the worse for beer.

Thomas Hales, labourer, Stockton, said deceased was his younger brother. He was married but had lived apart from his wife for some years and had led a wandering sort of life. Witness had only known him return to this neighbourhood on three occasions during the last six years.

Richard Shelton, a labourer, produced a cap which he found on top of the bridge on the morning of the 8th and similar to the one the deceased had worn.

It was generally supposed that the deceased committed suicide, but as there was no evidence as to how he got into the water a verdict of "Found Drowned" was returned.

## PREVIOUS VILLAGERS OF THE YEAR

- 1992 A. Bishop
- 1993 Mrs. B. Benbow
- 1994 Mrs. M. Griffin
- 1995 Ron Cairns
- 1996 Mrs. Frances Fish
- 1997 Mrs. Ruth Noon
- 1998 Rev. P. Jackson
- 1999 Mrs. E. Jarvis
- 2000 Dot Davies
- 2001 Margaret Powell
- 2002 Dave Stanley
- 2003 Howard Collerson
- 2004 Steve Ward
- 2005 Heather Owen
- 2006 Tim Busby
- 2007 Dave Rudge
- 2008 Trudy Windsor
- 2009 Sheila & Denis Stevens
- 2010 Wendy Rumsey, Marion Stringer & Steve Kittendorf
- 2011 MaryLee
- 2012 Richard Musson
- 2013 Pat Alsop
- 2014 Zoe Taylor
- 2015 Irene Harkins
- 2016 Val Leg
- 2017 Sue & Ron Flegg
- 2018 Bill Robinson
- 2019 Ashley Leeman
- 2020 Stockton Covid Heroes
- 2021 Sue Coutts
- 2022 Luke Coles

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