

Local Talk Back

MARCH 2021

ISSUE 513



Trees at Westonbirt casting an icy shadow . Photo: Claire Broomsgrove, Acton Turville



A MAGAZINE WITH NEWS, VIEWS AND REPORTS FOR THE RESIDENTS
OF ACTON TURVILLE, BADMINTON AND LITTLE BADMINTON

EDITORIAL MARCH 2021

Technology's great isn't it? This week I've been on a course with work. In the past, courses meant a few days out of the office. If we were lucky we'd be sent on a residential course, staying in a pleasant hotel with all meals provided, including the obligatory full English breakfast. The people running the courses quickly realised it was easier to gain a good reputation by going to town on the catering front rather than concentrating on the quality of the course material, and the courses with the longest waiting lists were invariably those which did a good job feeding their students. Naturally management eventually cottoned on to that particular ruse, and training became a far more frugal affair. The days of the residential courses were numbered, with more and more courses delivered in bland, corporate offices where lunch comprised whatever you could lure out of the fridge at home that particular morning. Of course, putting a dozen people in an office to train them up is not an option just now, and the Covid restrictions have forced a re-think on the way courses are being delivered. For my course this week, I've had to travel all the way to the spare room, where I log onto my computer to be greeted by a chap in Brighton who also sitting in his spare room. He's the course tutor, before you get the wrong idea. Most of the course attendees are sitting in spare rooms in various parts of the UK, but we also have students in Eastern Europe, China and India. It's very cosmopolitan. It sounds like a cliché, but you really could imagine they were in the room next door.

Back in the 1970s I remember my mother phoning her brother in Australia. It was a big event, normally reserved for birthdays and Christmas. Despite my father insisting that she wrote a list of topics that she wanted to talk about (he always had one eye firmly on the phone bill), the conversation invariably descended into idle chit-chat, regularly punctuated with phrases such as "can you say that again" (when the line became too poor to hear him) or "no, sorry, you talk" caused by the delay on the line when they both inevitably found themselves speaking at the same time. Ultimately the reward was hearing the voice of a loved one many thousands of miles away, but as a means of exchanging information it was less than perfect.

As I sit here, working with people separated physically by thousands of miles but connected seamlessly by the internet, I can marvel at just how far technology has moved forward since those days. Yes, technology is indeed great, I think we can all agree on that. During the current lockdown it has allowed people to communicate and businesses to operate in a way which would have been impossible just five years ago. But I get uncomfortable when people say this is the new way of living, the new way or working - the new normal. However good it might be, communicating with people via a computer is not the same as being with people - real people. As we move into spring, we are seeing the early signs that we may be about to start emerging from a long and difficult winter into a period when once again we will have the freedom to mix with friends and families, to visit places that for too long have been out of bounds. But what will we do with our new-found technology? Already there is a debate about the need for people to return to the office: having staff working from home has worked well so why pay for expensive office space? How about shopping, are the days of the High Street finally over as we turn to deliveries from the likes of Amazon, Tesco and Just Eat? I hope not. Just because we can doesn't mean we should. I'm not yet ready to relocate to the virtual world. I miss people. Real people.

Until the next time

IAN CARTER

Local Talk Back is printed by

SPRINT PRINT, 33 STATION ROAD, YATE, BS37 4PS

Tel: 01454 852255 or email: info@sprint-print.co.uk

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DONATIONS RECEIVED THIS MONTH

We have received the following donations this month for which we are most grateful:

Anonymous - £50

Bridget Hope - £100

Thank you!

We very much appreciate all donations as it helps to keep the Local Talk Back being delivered to your doors.

There are Local Talk Back collection boxes in Acton Turville Stores and Badminton Stores.

*To donate by cheque, please make payable to
LOCAL TALK BACK and send to:
The Treasurer, Local Talk Back,
Church Farm House, The Street, Acton
Turville, Badminton, S-Glos, GL9 1HL*

TIM HOPE 1926-2021

Our family thanks all who sent kind messages and good wishes. Tim died peacefully at home after 46 happy years in Acton Turville. Our grateful thanks to those who prepared St Mary's Church and graveyard for the Funeral Service, and who helped in many ways. Bridget

LOCAL TALK BACK ON-LINE

Did you know Local Talk Back is now just a click away?

Copies are available from the Acton Turville Information website at the following address:

<http://actonturville.info/talkback/>

Help!

ACTON TURVILLE SPEED WATCH

Community Speed Watch is a partnership between the Community, the Police and Local Authorities.

The scheme gives local people the opportunity to improve road safety by monitoring the speed of traffic passing through their neighbourhoods. The aim of Community Speed Watch is to make motorists who speed through residential areas aware of the impact their actions have on local residents, or the danger they pose to other road users and pedestrians.

The Acton Turville Speed Watch Team are looking for volunteers who are willing to give up a small amount of time each week to monitor the speed of traffic in our village. Anyone interested in volunteering should first click on the link to watch a short video and answer a series of questions based on the video. You will then be invited to provide personal details to register your interest and consent to the basic Police check.

The link for volunteers is as follows:

<https://www.avonandsomerset.police.uk/apply/community-speedwatch/community-speedwatch-knowledge-check/>

Computers for Pupils

Who has an unused computer, preferably a laptop but not necessarily so, preferably working but not necessarily so, that they would like to donate for schools and pupils who need them?

Lions Club of Chipping Sodbury are collecting and wish to thank those who have managed to find machines for us to get electronically cleaned, ready to pass on.

We have also bought a refurbished machine from our own funds.

So if you have any kit to move on, please let Dick Elford know on 218362.

We and the recipients would be very grateful.

ACTON TURVILLE PARISH COUNCIL

Help wanted

The Parish Council are looking for a **team of volunteers to mow the playing field** and play area during the summer months, so it is kept up to its usual high standard and everyone, including the children, can continue to enjoy it.

If you like working outdoors and can spare a couple of hours (and you are prepared to put up with a little rain now and then) - this is for you!

Perhaps you have some friends who would like to join you? Training will be given and it will help us maintain a very important part the village. Give it a go, you might enjoy it!

Applicants should be 18+ Please contact the Clerk on:-01454 218675

or email actonturvillepc@aol.com for further details.

Gate Tying



You might recall we asked in last month's Local Talk Back whether anyone was familiar with the tradition of gate tying. The story went that, after a wedding, local children would tie a length of bailer twine across the path leading from the church, preventing the bride and groom from leaving. The bridegroom would then throw some coins to the children and cut the twine while they were scooping up their ill gotten gains. It sounds like the stories were indeed true - and we have pictures to prove it.

Clearly there were one or two variations on the theme. Pictured left we see a newly-married Yvonne Nettles being lifted over the stile at St Mary's Church in Burton by her proud husband Pat in 1973. The unconventional exit was down to the church gates being tied closed, but Yvonne doesn't remember any children tying the gate or money being involved.

The pictures below are from the wedding of Alastair Gilbert and his lovely bride Emmie. The year is 1984, the venue is St Mary's Church in Acton Turville, and the pictures suggest that maybe we've been too quick to blame the children for tying the gates!

Thanks to Yvonne and Alastair for providing us with such great pictures.



THE HISTORY OF THE BEAUFORT HUNT POINT-TO-POINT RACES

BY RAY BIRD, ACTON TURVILLE

On the first Saturday in March thousands of horse racing fans head for Didmarton for the annual Duke of Beaufort Hunt Point-Point Races. Ray Bird has been researching the fascinating history of this event.

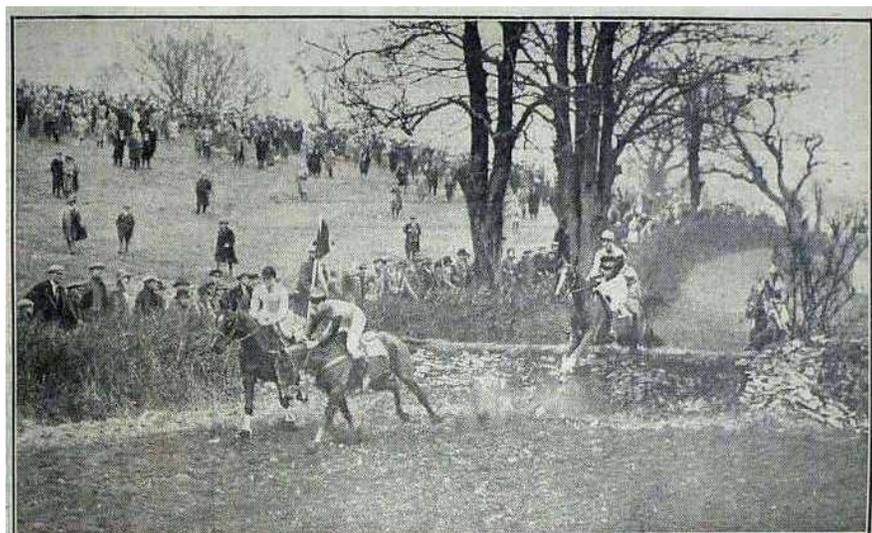
As the name Point-Point suggests, its origins came from racing between two points. As church steeples were historically the highest landmarks in the countryside, races took place between two village steeples - hence the sport's common name of Steeplechasing. In the early days the races seem to have varied in distance depending how far the next steeple was, and although participants could take whichever route they wanted, and could jump whatever obstacle they encountered en-route, it seems the one rule was they had to keep the finishing steeple in view at all times. While races between riders on horseback date back centuries, it is generally accepted that the first verified Point-Point Hunt race took place in 1752 with a challenge between two neighbours riding their hunters from steeple to steeple over a distance of approximately four-and-a-half miles.



Didmarton P-P Course notable landmark of the Barn 1984

The research on the history of the Beaufort Hunt Point-Point was rather complicated due to there also being a National Hunt meeting held in Beaufort hunting country that involved the hunt organisers, hence making it difficult to differentiate the early Point-Point venues from the National Hunt ones. Although I cannot be certain of total accuracy on some points of the early venues, according to documentation I found, the earliest venue for the National Hunt meeting was in 1867 when it was held in Westbury, Wiltshire. It then moved to several other places including Little Sodbury, Dauntsey and Charlton Park. In 1888 a permanent racecourse was set up in fields that ran behind the village of Alderton towards Sherston. These races continued through until 1956 (excluding war years) except for 1894 when for some unknown reason the meeting was held in Acton Turville: the exact location of the racecourse has yet to be established. It seems that many of the top jockeys, both professional and amateurs of the time rode at the meeting, and it was popular with racegoers.

In the late 1800's there is evidence that the Sodbury Vale area was home to several Point-Point events.



THE BEAUFORT POINT-TO-POINT RACES
Competitors taking the wall in the Buck's Club and Inter-clubs' race at the Duke of Beaufort's Hunt Point-to-Point Races at Leighterton, Gloucestershire. Major G. Phipps-Hornby, the winner (on Ross) is the left of the leading pair. There was a record attendance of both spectators and competitors. The Duchess of Beaufort presented the prizes.

Beaufort Hunt Point-Point races at Leighterton in the 1930's

Whether these were run between church steeples or on a circular "modern" type course is unknown, but if the former, given the number of church steeples to be found in that area, it sounds a feasible location. The first definitive reference I found was for 1908 when it was held at Grittenham, nr Brinkworth. From then, through until 1930 (except the WW1 years) it was held annually at a different venue in Beaufort hunting country. In 1930 it was held at Leighterton, and it remained there until 1939 when it ceased for WW2. While nothing is known of those earlier courses, Leighterton is thought to have been a circular type course, and certainly included both walls and hedges. In 1947 the event restarted at Didmarton where it remains to this day.

In common with equestrian sports in general, the overall standard of Point-Point racing has improved greatly since its earlier days. However, for many people, it still retains at its heart the fun element of "racing over the sticks" where you don't necessary have to be that rich to be the owner of a runner in a race, and where amateur jockeys can experience the thrill of race riding. If you're both the owner and rider then it's a double tick from your bucket list!

Among those who have participated in Beaufort Point-Point races as a rider or owner are several members of the Royal family. Edward, Prince of Wales (later King Edward VIII) rode when the races were at Leighterton, Princess Michael of Kent at Didmarton, while the Queen Mother owned a runner at Didmarton.

Many horses that have run at Didmarton have gone on to greater success, some while remaining "amateurs" and running in hunter chases. These include Hope Again, who as well as becoming a regular Didmarton winner went on to win the 1971 Foxhunters Chase at the Cheltenham Festival when ridden by local jockey Richard Smith. Earthmover, who went on to win the same Cheltenham classic in both 1998 and 2004 was also a former runner at Didmarton. Another major race in the amateurs calender is the Foxhunters Chase at Aintree over the big Grand National fences. Winners at Didmarton that went on to win that race included Juan (1968) and Lords Fortune (1974).



THE PRINCE WATCHES STEEPLECHASING.
The Prince of Wales watching a race at the Duke of Beaufort's Steeplechase meeting at Tetbury. Lord Worcester and Lady Mary Cambridge, whose engagement was announced recently, are with the Prince.

Edward, Prince of Wales watching P-P racing with the 10th Duke of Beaufort



Local horse and rider Sabaria & John Smith (centre)

While most Point-Point horses remain "amateurs", some have gone on to enjoy success at the highest level in "Professional" races. These have included The Dikler, who, having finished 2nd at Didmarton in 1969, went on to enjoy numerous successes including winning the King George VI Chase at Sandown Park in 1971 and the Cheltenham Gold Cup in 1973. In 2017 a horse named Santini won a maiden race at Didmarton. Santini has since become one of the top chasers in the country, including finishing 2nd in last years (2020) Cheltenham Gold Cup with surely much more to come. Of local interest was a horse called Sabaria that was owned by John Smith of New House Farm. After numerous Point-Point races when ridden by various members of the Smith family it went to the racing yard of Bob Turnell, one of the top National Hunt trainers of that era.

While there, its races included the 1960 and 1961 Grand Nationals, finishing 5th and 13th respectively. Like many ex-racehorses once his racing career was over Sabaria enjoyed his retirement back out in the hunting field.

As well as Point-Point racing being a good schooling ground for many horses that have gone on to better things, a number of jockeys also began their racing career riding at Point-Points before later turning professional. One such rider that regularly rode at Didmarton was local rider Richard Smith of New House Farm, whose exploits as a jockey you may recall we featured in Local Talk Back last year.



Charlie Deutsch in 2004 - now one of the country's top jockeys

Ray Bird Photography

CONTINUED OVER

THE HISTORY OF THE BEAUFORT HUNT POINT-TO-POINT RACES CONTINUED

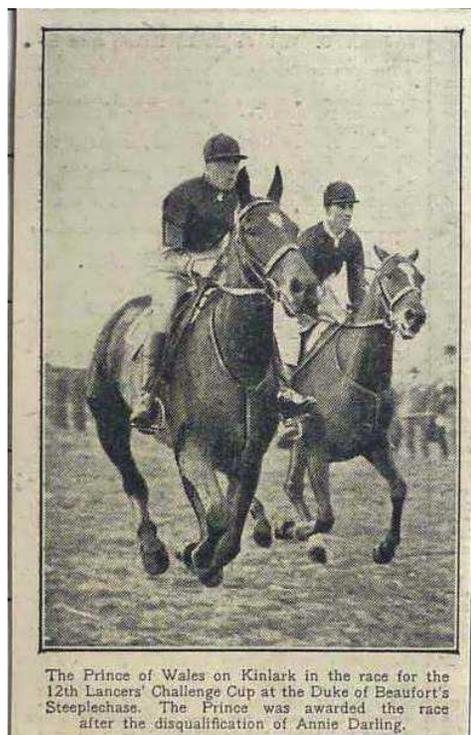
A final word must go to the Beaufort Hunt itself, for it is thanks to them that many horses who started their life in the hunting field would go on to become racehorses. The same applies to many jockeys who learned the basic skills of riding and jumping on their ponies while following their local hunt. For the Beaufort Hunt these included Richard Smith, and the hunts latest prodigy to become a professional National Hunt jockey in Charlie Deutsch, who is now first stable jockey to top trainer Venetia Williams, and who has already ridden well over 100 winners, and barring any major incidents will I am sure enjoy many more successes in the coming years.

Footnote - if you know of any further history of the Beaufort Hunt Point-Point races, or have any special memories of Didmarton races, whether it be as an owner, jockey or in any other capacity, then please contact the LTB team.



Denman (leading) out with Beaufort Hunt

Ray Bird Photography



The Prince of Wales on Kinlark in the race for the 12th Lancers' Challenge Cup at the Duke of Beaufort's Steeplechase. The Prince was awarded the race after the disqualification of Annie Darling.

Clockwise from top left:

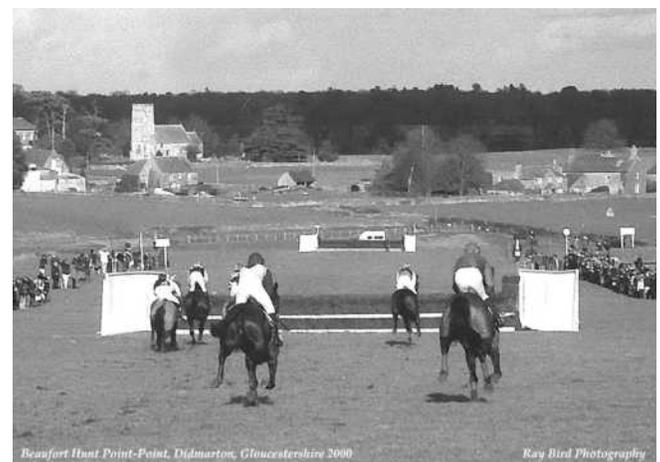
One of countries best N.H racehorses of all time - Denman (leading), enjoying a day out with the Beaufort Hunt after retirement.

Richard Smith on Hope Again after winning the 1971 Foxhunters Chase at the Cheltenham Festival.

Santini - seen here winning a Maiden race at Didmarton in 2017.

General view of Didmarton P-P Course with Oldbury-on-the-hill Church in the background.

Edward, Prince of Wales (L) riding in P-P race 1930's.



Beaufort Hunt Point-Point, Didmarton, Gloucestershire 2000

Ray Bird Photography

FROM THE ARCHIVES

Our first picture, taken outside Badminton School around 1945, provides a fascinating insight into the social history of our villages. It was kindly sent in by Austin Reid, with further information provided by Roy Marklove. He's one of the children in the photograph. We'll let him take up the story: "We kept a pig in a sty which was next to the school garden. When it was time, it was slaughtered and butchered by Mr Foster the village Butcher who lived next door to the school. We all had a joint of meat to take home which I am sure was very welcome in the post war year." Such Pig Clubs, as they were known, were quite common in Britain during the Second World War. The schemes were actively encouraged to maintain the supply of pork which had been hit by restrictions on imported animal feed.

How times have changed.



Back Row, Left to Right:
Vivian Bird, Mavis Edmonds, Geoffrey Oakes, Peggy Gulwell, One hidden, Margaret Boucher, Mervyn Barrett, George Pratt, Gordon Hammond.

Front Row:
Roy Marklove, Brian Hayes, Pete Salt, Ann Hays, Jean Mullens, Malcolm Peters, David Perks, Ronnie Salt, David Ricketts.

Our second picture shows the Acton Turville Football Team from 1920/21, photographed outside the Fox & Hounds public house. Thanks to Doreen Shortall for sending it in. We always enjoy old photographs showing life in our villages. If you have any that you'd be willing to share, please get in touch with us here at Local Talk Back.



Back: *Rev Foster, Sheddy Brown, Roy Bird, Billy Newman, Billy Butt, Fred West (trainer), Mr Fisher, Rod Holmes.*

Middle: *Archie Fisher, Harry Ralph, Arthur Brown.*

Front: *Charlie Edmonds, Charlie Dunne, Arthur Bushell, Jack Bushell, Arthur Andrews.*

The Beginnings of the Valentine Club – from 1980/81



Lady Caroline Somerset cutting the cake at the first Senior Citizen's Christmas Party in 1980



Very difficult to see on this old photograph but there is a painted mural, including columns on the back wall of the stage. It is not certain when that disappeared.



June 1981 – Lady Caroline Somerset, President of the Valentine Club, hosted a cheese and wine party for the club's charity 'Guide Dogs for the Blind'. On the right is Chairman Gloria Gibson.



The younger members keeping fit, watched over by the 'more mature' ones.



Picture Gallery



I think it's fair to say there was an audible gasp in the Talk Back offices when we saw these pictures sent in by Ray Bird from Acton Turville. Ray had put crusts out for the birds in his garden but he didn't expect to see this magnificent fox feeding on them not five yards from the house. Fortunately for us Ray had his camera at the ready and captured these exceptional pictures.



ACTON TURVILLE PARISH COUNCIL

***Please!** No Dogs are allowed on the playing field or in the play area.*

All gates must be kept shut. No vehicles are allowed in or on the playing field except by permission of the Parish Council. Please put all litter in the bins provided. Thank you.

February 2021

Playing Field

Ash Tree – this has now been successfully removed.

Boundary Wall

Following our request for someone to repair the boundary wall we have been given the name of a contractor who has been asked to contact us who we hope, will be able to carry out the necessary repairs.

Grass cutting – request for volunteers – An advert regarding this is posted in Talk Back this month.

Tennis Court

Due to on-going Covid-19 restrictions the Tennis Court remains closed until further notice.

Parish Council Website

You may notice our website has recently been rebuilt by a local provider with the aid of a Grant secured from South Gloucestershire Council. We hope you will find it both useful and informative.

Meetings

To report any issues, forward questions or attend a meeting please contact the Clerk via email. Details below. Thank you.

Parish Councillors: Sybil Haddrell (Acting Chair) 218772, Sally Smith 218510, Chris Bennett 218550,
Toby Evans 219116, Ian Carter 219129

Next meeting: Monday 8 March 2021 @ 7.00 pm Parish Clerk: Sue Radford-Hancock Tel: 218675
Email: actonturvillepc@aol.com Website: www.actonturvilleparishcouncil.org

ST. MARY'S CHURCH, ACTON TURVILLE

100 Club

WINNERS FOR FEBRUARY 2021

Eileen Orton

Bridget Hope

Diane Cummins

Congratulations to all our winners!

J J'S GARDENING BLOG



There are plenty of buds ready to fill our gardens with colour; crocus, early daffodils, and tulips waiting in the wings. The hellebores too which provide pollen for the bumble bees which are emerging. If planning to plant new trees or large shrubs, now is the moment.

Jobs for this Month

If the ground is workable, keep attacking the weeds. This is the last time to prune the roses, buddleas, remove last year's hydrangea flowers. Check the supports for any climbing plants. Make paper flower pots, plant sweet pea seeds in them (two to a pot) either inside or outside, then when soil has warmed up they can be planted out, paper pot and all, so no disturbance. Then make the serious decision, which young plant to leave and which to remove! Check the dahlias in the shed. Any that are soft should be disposed of.

Plant of the Month

Have people forgotten what good bushes escallonias are? Evergreen, flowers, smallish leaves, tough and can be a hedge, specimen, or clipped against a wall. An all round goodie.

And Finally...

Plants are just ready to burst forth. Happy gardening!

Sudoku

March's challenge set by Neil Fozard.

To solve the puzzle, each row, column and 3x3 box must contain each of the numbers 1 to 9.

EASY !!

		6			3			
9			3	4				8
3				6				7
			8					
	9		1	3		7		
7	3				2		6	
2			1					5
8			9	5	7			1
		7			8			

NOT SO EASY !!

	5						9	
4				9				8
9	6	1					2	4
5			2	8				4
6			9	1				3
1	4	7					5	8
2				1				6
	3							1

Answers to the February quizzes:

'Easy'

6	5	1	9	4	8	2	3	7
9	4	7	3	2	6	8	5	1
2	3	8	5	7	1	4	9	6
7	6	5	4	1	2	9	8	3
3	9	2	6	8	5	1	7	4
1	8	4	7	9	3	6	2	5
5	2	9	1	3	4	7	6	8
4	7	3	8	6	9	5	1	2
8	1	6	2	5	7	3	4	9

'Not so Easy'

8	5	2	3	6	1	7	9	4
9	4	1	7	2	8	6	5	3
6	3	7	4	5	9	8	2	1
3	8	5	6	4	7	9	1	2
4	1	6	2	9	3	5	7	8
7	2	9	1	8	5	3	4	6
5	7	3	8	1	4	2	6	9
2	9	4	5	3	6	1	8	7
1	6	8	9	7	2	4	3	5

Church Matters

March 2021 Letter from the Vicar

Dear Parishioners,

We are now in the period of Lent. For those who have been isolating or shielding, then what I am about to say may make no sense whatsoever.

Lent was inaugurated by Our Lord going into the wilderness. The wilderness is a metaphor in the Bible for being with God. That is where God starts things, where Abram is called, where Hagar receives her angelic visitation, where Jesus begins his public ministry, where the people of Israel wander before they arrive in Canaan.

It is a place of wildness and desolation, of emptiness and simplicity, of devils and physicality, of heat in the day and coldness at night. A place of temptations and rebellion. A place where you wander around, without any particular aim in mind, save that of speaking with God.

It is not a place to go if you want to seek comfort or company, entertainment or feasts. It is a wilderness, a desert. This is where Jesus goes to prepare for his ministry. Where He is tested to his core. To discover whether his ministry will be all about his worldly glory, or whether it will be truly about God's call.

Lockdown has forced many into an uncomfortable solitude. Gone have been the distractions of shopping, visiting friends and driving. Yet, Lockdown has also been a busy time for some, staring into their screens and seeing many more people than usual.

So Lent offers the opportunity to go into the wilderness.

Perhaps, this means turning off our computers, our phones and our TVs. Holding less meetings, talking less, spending more time with God.

I read the other day: Foolish are those who forget they will die. So, make the most of the moment! Poetry, art, solitude, prayer – these are some of the ways to be in the wilderness.

Richard

Richard Thomson

Contact details:

Priest in charge, Withymoor Vicarage, Old Down Rd. Badminton GL9 1EU

Benefice website: www.badmintonchurch.org.uk

Email: revrichardthomson@gmail.com

Tel. 01454 219236

Mobile 077 177 91858

Badminton Benefice Rota for March 2021

Sunday	Broadcast Date	Time	Parish	Service
3 rd Sunday of Lent	7 th March	10AM	From Didmarton	www.youtube.com/c/badmintonbenefice
Lent 4 Mothering Sunday	14 th March	10AM	From Leighterton	www.youtube.com/c/badmintonbenefice
5 th Sunday of Lent	21 st March	10AM	From Acton Turville	www.youtube.com/c/badmintonbenefice
Palm Sunday	28 th March	10AM	From Lasborough	www.youtube.com/c/badmintonbenefice

*Mid week service and Lent group on Zoom BCP MATINS Wednesday at 9.30AM Lent 4
Meditation groups - please contact Vicar.*

PLEASE CHECK WEBSITE FOR DETAILS OF ANY SERVICES RE-COMMENCING IN MARCH

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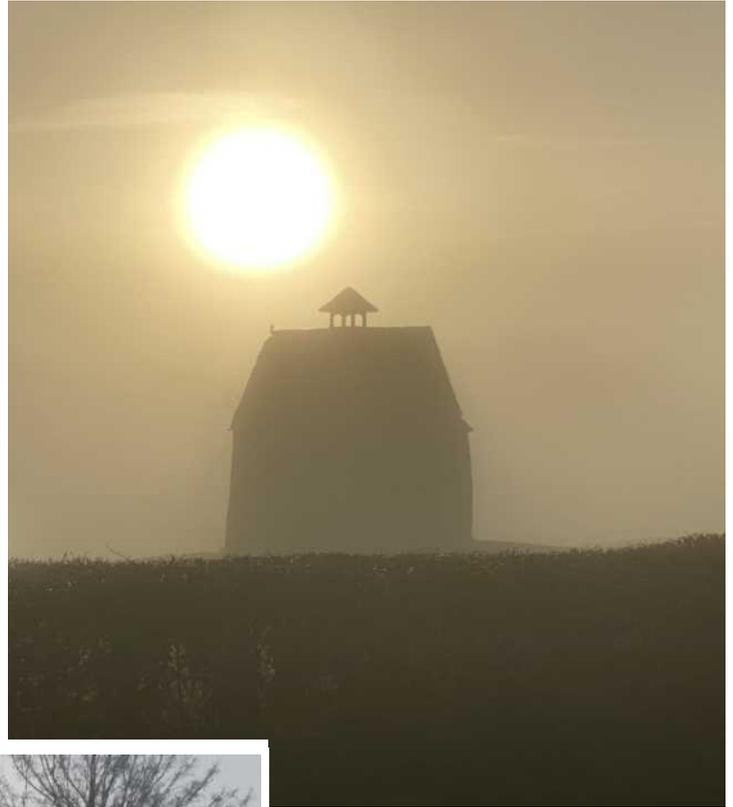


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Picture Gallery



We've got Little Badminton residents Yvonne Nettles and Piers Talalla to thank for the final pictures in this month's Local Talk Back. Piers' picture above of the sun burning through the clouds shows the Badminton dove cote in an eerie light. Yvonne's avenue of trees provide a similarly wintry scene. The pictures of snowdrops provide a positive sign that the seasons are changing, as do the starlings, taking a break before heading off to their night time roosts.

