

Local Talk Back

JULY 2024

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

ISSUE 550



Summer Skies. *Picture by Yvonne Nettles, Little Badminton*



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

EDITORIAL JULY 2024

It's the end of June. This edition of Local Talk Back should have been with the printers several days ago, but here I am, staring at a blank screen, wondering what to write as an editorial. For inspiration, I've been leafing through some back issues and was rather startled to find that it's exactly five years since I started working on the newsletter (not this edition, although it rather feels like it at the moment). Interestingly, the July 2019 editorial, written by Sandra, Sally and Yvonne, says I've been brought on board to "collate the pages ready for the printers" which is the job I thought I'd signed up to do. I'm not sure at what point I was promoted to editor, but my legal team will shortly be looking into it.

I always enjoy leafing through the old copies of Talk Back. Some bring back fond memories, others make me wish I'd lived here many years ago, and a few of the articles make me wonder what the editors were thinking when they thought it was a good idea to published them! I remember one exchange about church attendance, where someone lamented that at a recent church service, there was just one other person in the congregation (and they weren't from the village). A lively debate followed which seemed to hinge on the suggestion that the letter writer was just unfortunate to catch them on a bad week. I mention that because of the interesting and thought-provoking article by Michael Silvey in this month's Talk Back. As a member of the Parochial Church Council (PCC) for St Mary's, Michael is only too aware of the costs associated with maintaining such an historic building. His article asks a very pertinent question – is it enough for a church to be a place of worship or, in this day and age, does it need to serve a wider purpose and engage with a wider community in order to generate additional income? It's a very good question and one that is rather likely to polarise opinions, but we congratulate Michael on throwing the question out there and opening the debate to a wider audience.

It wasn't very long ago that we viewed old buildings as something to be discarded. Grand country houses in particular were stripped of their valuable fixtures and fittings before being bulldozed into the ground, and many national landmarks suffered the same fate as we rushed to modernise our cities. Thankfully public opinion gradually changed as the conservation movement highlighted the extent of the destruction, and these days we are far more aware of the importance of maintaining our architectural heritage. That can sometimes involve some quite innovative thinking though, and more and more buildings are re-purposed to meet a changing demand; preserving in aspic is not always the best solution. Perhaps the pet service on July 7th, when you can take your favourite furry friend to be blessed by the Rev Thomson, is the start of something bigger. Whatever your views, please take the time to feed them back to Michael or us here at Talk Back and we'll keep you informed of developments.

Locally on the social front it's been a busy few weeks. The second of this year's Badminton House Open Garden events was once again hugely popular and the gardens themselves looked pristine. Then, to mark the 80th Anniversary of D-Day, our villages came together for an event which started with a formal service of remembrance at St Mary's before heading to the Fox & Hounds for something a bit more laid back and relaxing. It was great to see such a good turnout, in particular from the children of Trinity School who had leading roles in the church service and again when they sang with the D-Day Dollies at the Fox & Hounds. And finally, the Acton Turville Social team presented an evening of wonderful food and sparkling entertainment at a very enjoyable Summer Party, which this year was blessed with perfect weather. Thanks to everyone who made these events happen.

Meeting up with villagers at one of these social events is always fun, and invariably the conversation turns to the events of years gone by. People will talk about the charity cricket matches at Badminton where teams of celebrities from the world of sport and entertainment would appear, or the bonfire and firework displays in Acton Turville which would delight the children and horrify the people living in the adjacent houses in equal measures. This year, someone mentioned the annual coach trips organised by the Acton Turville Village Association which were well before my time, so when I got home I dug out some old Talk Backs to see what I could find about them. And there they were – on the 19th July 1987, 90 villagers set off on two coaches for Bournemouth, stopping at the Beaulieu motor museum on the way down and making it home by 10.30pm. In 1988, the destination was Weymouth, with a stop at the Bovington Tank Museum, then in 1989 the coaches headed to Dawlish. I think that's a tradition that needs to be resurrected! Who's feeling brave?

Until the next time

IAN CARTER

Items for Local Talk Back email to: localtalkback1975@gmail.com Tel: 01454 218267

To advertise in Local Talk Back, please email Pauline on: LocalTalkBackAds@gmail.com

PLEASE SUBMIT ARTICLES FOR PUBLICATION IN THE AUGUST EDITION OF LOCAL TALK BACK BY 15TH JULY 2024.
THANK YOU.

DATES FOR THE DIARY

July 2024

Fri 5th Acton Turville Social Coffee Morning, Fox & Hounds
 Fri 5th Acton Aid, Iron Acton Meadows, with Nearly Elton and Joey & the Lips (see last month's LTB for details)
 Sat 6th Acton Aid, Iron Acton Meadows, with Leslie Garrett and the Bristol Ensemble (see last month's LTB for details)
 Sun 7th Pet Service, St Mary's Church, Acton Turville, 3pm
 Mon 8th Acton Turville Parish Council Meeting, Trinity School, 7pm
 Wed 10th Luncheon Club, Fox & Hounds
 Fri 12th Didmarton Rural Cinema, The Colour Purple (12A)
 Sun 21st Car Boot Sale, Castle Combe Circuit
 Thurs 25th Woodlands of Worcester Lodge Tour, Badminton Estate, 1.30pm – 3.30pm
 Sun 28th Beaufort Hunt Terrier Show & Family Fun Day, The Kennels, Badminton

Aug 2024

Fri 2nd Acton Turville Social Coffee Morning, Fox & Hounds
 Wed 14th Luncheon Club, Fox & Hounds
 Wed 14th Badminton Hunt Supporters Club
 Sat 31st Hawkesbury Show, Hawkesbury Upton

*****Please check with venues before setting off*****

Please let Local Talk Back know if you're planning an event and we'll add it to our dates for the diary.

DONATIONS RECEIVED THIS MONTH

We have received donations this month from or which we are most grateful:

Jackie Crook

The Royal British Legion

Many thanks to you both.

In addition, £12 was very generously donated in the local shop boxes.

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,
6 Hollybush Close, Acton Turville,
Badminton, South Glos, GL9 1JJ***

ST. MARY'S CHURCH, ACTON TURVILLE

100 Club

WINNERS FOR JUNE 2024

Eileen Stephens
 Christine Griffin
 Tim Penney

Congratulations!



In Memoriam

We were very sad to hear that two members of our local community had recently passed away.

ELAINE COLLINS from Acton Turville. Elaine died after a short illness. We offer our heartfelt condolences to Richard and the family at this difficult time.

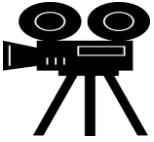
RAY BIRD from Badminton. Ray worked for many years as a shepherd on the Badminton Estate. To Sylv, Mike, Mandy and Karen, and the family, we are so sorry for your loss.

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SPRINT PRINT, 22 STATION ROAD, YATE, BS37 4PS

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

WHAT'S ON



DIDMARTON RURAL CINEMA

Didmarton Village Hall, Friday 12th July 2024

THE COLOUR PURPLE

(2023, Cert 12A), drama, musical

Starring: Fantasia Barrino, Danielle Brooks, Colman Domingo, Taraji Henson

Director: Blitz Bazawule

A story of love and resilience based on the novel and the Broadway musical, THE COLOR PURPLE is a decades-spanning tale of one woman's journey to independence. Celie faces many hardships in her life, but ultimately finds extraordinary strength and hope in the unbreakable bonds of sisterhood.

Doors open at 6.30pm, film starts 7.30pm

Tickets £5, cash bar

Please let us know in advance if you intend attending so we can ensure that sufficient seating is available

jenny.body1@gmail.com



Acton Turville, nr Badminton
GL9 1HW

01454 218224

Fox & Hounds Luncheon Club

Wednesday 10th July

Tea/Coffee on arrival

Two Course Lunch (main course + dessert)

£12.00 per head

Everyone welcome!

*The Fox & Hounds Luncheon Club meets the
2nd Wednesday of every month.*



BADMINTON ESTATE

THE WOODLANDS OF WORCESTER LODGE FAMILY TOUR

THURSDAY 25th JULY, 1.30PM – 3:30PM

BRING THE WHOLE FAMILY FOR A FUN AND EDUCATIONAL 2-HOUR WALK THROUGH THE PRIVATE WOODLANDS OF THE HISTORIC BADMINTON ESTATE. LOCAL CONSERVATIONIST STEVE ENGLAND WILL BE YOUR GUIDE, SHARING FASCINATING STORIES ABOUT LOCAL WILDLIFE AND THE RICH HISTORY OF THE AREA.

THE ADVENTURE CONCLUDES WITH A VISIT INSIDE THE HISTORIC WORCESTER LODGE, A GRADE I LISTED BUILDING DESIGNED BY WILLIAM KENT. ENJOY A DRINK AND DELICIOUS CAKE WHILE TAKING IN THE STUNNING VIEWS ACROSS THE PARK TOWARDS BADMINTON HOUSE.



TOUGH MUDDER

SATURDAY 10th AUGUST

TOUGH MUDDER CREATES hardcore obstacle courses designed to test your all-round strength, stamina, and mental grit. With the most innovative 5K & 15K courses and millions of participants worldwide to date, it is the premier challenge series in the world. This isn't just an event – It's a calling.

DO YOU HAVE WHAT IT TAKES?

See <https://www.badmintonestate.com/events/> for full details

From The Archives - Ragged Castle

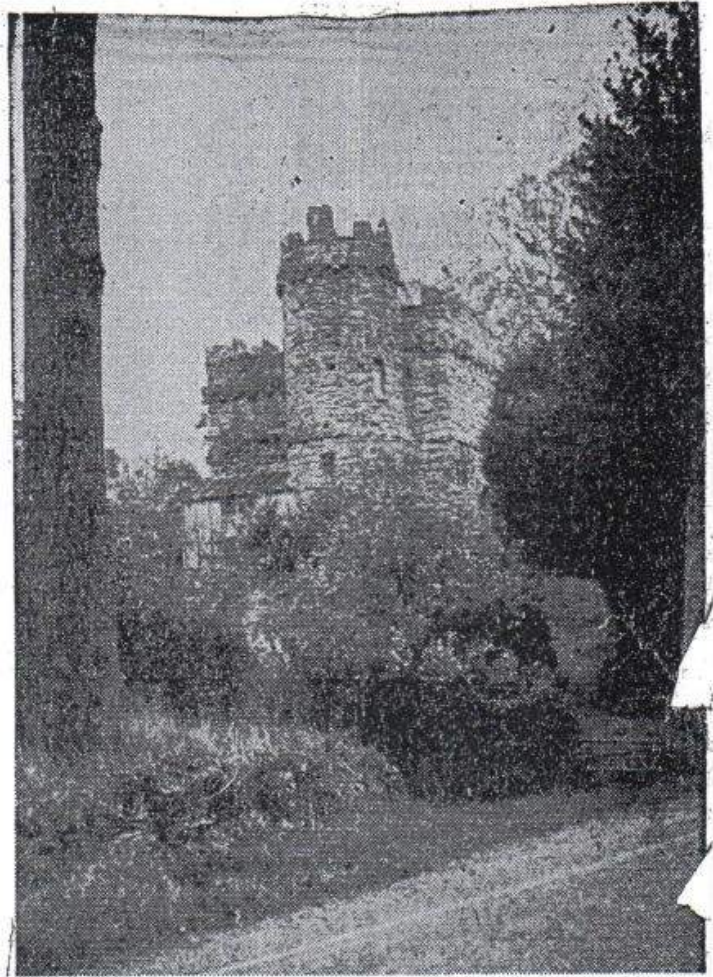
Previously published in the May 2006 edition of Local Talk Back

Extracts from a newspaper article dated 1958 'Lonely Little Woman in a Lamp-Lit Castle'

'There are all kinds of castles.....but there's only one Ragged Castle -manned by a woman - and that, really, isn't a castle at all!

...high up on the right-side bank, we first caught sight of an unevenly battlemented tower complete with slit windows. It could well be mistaken for something belonging to the days when knights were bold and barons were bad except that it was so ridiculously small'

'I soon discovered that it was inhabited by a most pleasant little woman. Miss Hester Pirt, aged 62, was at home. There was no gas, electricity, or piped water, no radio or television and no good sanitation. There are also no near neighbours for the Castle is sited on a comparatively lonely highway passing through vast forest plantations forming part of the Duke of Beaufort's estate. The Ragged Castle is a miniature affair perched high on a roadside bank and seems to be growing out of the woodland setting. The fronting tower, complete with its slit windows, is joined to the little square castle and the whole structure is of roughly dressed stone that came from a local quarry. In the main building there are two small windows - one up and one down....entrance is by a very old wooden door heavily studded with hand-made iron nails. Here I found an almost obliterated date, and after some time, deciphered it as 1777.'



A picture of the castle on the hedge that is a woman's lonely home.

'The living-room is barely 11 to 12 feet across. A narrow twisting stairway leads up to two bedrooms, neither of which is large enough to take a double bed. Nevertheless Hester has contrived to endow this little castle on a hedge with the atmosphere of home life. A couple of chairs, a table and certain other items of furniture well nigh fill the kitchen. There is a small dilapidated iron range on which Hester makes do. "You have to watch it" she confesses "for its either too fierce or won't go at all. Often the meat starts to burn before it's cooked".

'And how about the water? "Oh that's quite handy" Hester replies. "You'll find it just outside". I accompanied her to the well - it's 100 yards or more to the rear of the castle along a narrow, winding pathway. Eventually we reached the well with it's 30 ft. of chain to which is attached an iron bucket of interesting age.'.... 'I suppose I might say she is bravely happy in her Castle home, loves the independence it gives her and even the 20 minute walk to Didmarton where she does most of her shopping. She has many friends here as well as in Badminton, three miles away, and takes every opportunity of joining in their social activities.'

'In Winter evenings, after reading the newspaper [which is delivered] she retires early to bed - there is little else to do. She told me "There are times when the howling of the winds round the Castle walls makes sleep almost impossible."

'Her father, who was for many years second horseman at the Duke of Beaufort stables, at Badminton, had served nobility in various parts of the country during the course of his long life. He became a tenant at the Castle in 1945 and remained there up to the time of his death at the age of 92, in April last. (1958) There was little he did not know about horses and harness and he was also a grand shot. Up to the age of 87 he cycled regularly to Didmarton. During the last 12 months of his life he was completely bedridden and during this time, his daughter, Hester, was almost constantly by his side.

Cont'd over

Ragged Castle (Cont'd)

Ragged Castle cont..

One of six children, of whom all survive, she has found great joy in attending to the needs of the aged and infirm. In different parts of the country, where her father's work took him, she very soon found someone whose burden of illness could be lightened by a visit.'

'No one is quite sure when the Ragged Castle was built: a traditional tale is told, with variations on the same theme, to the effect that it was the outcome of a wager by a former Duke. According to this source it all came about when the building of the seven-mile wall around the Estate was being discussed. The question arose as to whether the local quarry would yield sufficient stone for this purpose. Seemingly the Duke had no doubt and wagered that there would be enough not only to complete the wall but to build a castle too! The size of the castle suggests that the wager was only just won!'

If you know any more Ragged Castle stories please pass them on to LTB.



A hundred yards or so from the castle along a narrow winding path of rank vegetation, is the well which supplies Mrs. Pirt with her water. G. and H.

Sudoku

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

NOT SO EASY !!

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

Answers to the June quizzes:

'Easy'

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

'Not so Easy'

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

WHAT SHOULD BE DONE WITH ST MARY'S CHURCH, ACTON TURVILLE?

The church of St Mary's in Acton Turville provides the village with one of its most recognisable landmarks. Although it has been heavily modified over the years, the church still retains many original features including an exquisite bell turret which is believed to have formed part of a pre-Norman sanctuary that was located near to what is now the centre of the village. Responsibility for maintaining St Mary's rests with the Parochial Church Council (the PCC) which is currently looking to identify opportunities to encourage greater use of the church to supplement its traditional role as a place of worship. In this article, PCC member Michael Silvey explains why this review is taking place and why he believes it is vitally important that the whole community be given an opportunity to present their own views on the future role of the building. Please take the time to read his article and to provide feedback which will help inform the decision made by the PCC

This article is primarily addressed to readers who live in Acton Turville, but anyone with an interest in the future of our village church is urged to express an opinion, however outrageous or radical that may be. What I am seeking are the genuine views of anyone interested in this subject and, whilst I can't guarantee that all suggestions will be implemented, I can reassure you that they will be considered with equal merit by the PCC as part of its on-going review.

The history of St Mary's has been well researched over the years, and Eileen Stephens, in her capacity as Secretary to the PCC, has compiled a booklet which documents what is known about our church. The evidence shows there has been a place of worship on the current site since Saxon times, and by the twelfth century there was a chancel and nave, with doorways in the South wall of the chancel and north and south walls of the nave. The evidence also suggests it was probably well used throughout this time. In her 'History of St Mary's', Eileen notes that "minor alterations were made in the thirteenth century and again in the fifteenth. In those days the building was probably one of the most conspicuous in the hamlet, being built on the highest point, and it may have served as a refuge in times of strife or bad weather as well as a place for village meetings. It must have been valued by villagers, for in 1853 (under the direction of architect T H Wyatt) it was considerably enlarged by the addition of a north aisle and vestry. A second major renovation (under the direction of architect W D Caroe) was begun in 1912 when the oak pulpit, panelling and choir stalls were added along with the organ (originally blown by hand) and six new stained glass windows".

This extract from Eileen's booklet, together with the work of cleaning and flower decorating by villagers which continues to this day, shows that (unlike in some villages and towns) our church is not unloved. It is just, in common with many churches throughout the country, not loved enough to be financially viable. And throughout the country there is debate on what should be done.

For several years your PCC has considered how revenue might be raised to meet the ever-mounting costs of building and graveyard maintenance (apart from paying a share towards the cost of our priest who serves the seven parishes in the Benefice).



A more contemporary view of St Mary's. The yews to the right are the same ones that appear on the old postcard.



The gates, stone pillars and wall seen on this old postcard have long since gone and the view of the church is now dominated by those two small yews either side of the footpath.

There are members on our committee with strong views that the church should be used primarily for prayer and worship but today we all recognise it has to raise revenue by being more useful to its community (the village it is there for). That recognition is general and funds are widely available to adapt churches to make them more useful. The problem is those funds are only available to PCCs with plans that are demonstrably supported by their wider communities. In this case, you!

WHAT SHOULD BE DONE WITH ST MARY'S CHURCH, ACTON TURVILLE? (CONT'D)

So 'Come on and tell us what you think St Mary's might be used for'.

To give an idea of what may be feasible, some churches are being converted for hosting meetings (Acton Turville doesn't have a village hall), or providing a venue for keep fit classes, pre-school play groups (there isn't one in Acton Turville), or musical events (apparently our organ is highly regarded).

Maybe you think we should seek to hand St Mary's over to a Trust that looks after disused churches (such as has happened with St Arild's in Oldbury). Most viable schemes would require substantial investment but that could well be available. Just Google Church Re-ordering and see.

Surely we are up to doing something imaginative just like villagers before us did?

Please put your thoughts in an email to me michael@silveyholdings.com or to Local Talk Back at localtalkback1975@gmail.com

If you think it's appropriate, I have a local architect who I'm sure would be prepared to attend a meeting in the church to hear suggestions and draw up plans.



We just need to get some ideas and the interest in doing something!

*Michael Silvey
Acton Turville*

ACTON TURVILLE PARISH COUNCIL

JULY 2024 REPORT

Police Update – The Parish Council has recently engaged with our local Police team to see what action they intend to take in response to the series of break-ins and vehicle thefts that have been reported in our village. We were informed that the Police are now patrolling the area overnight, when most of these crimes have occurred, and are working with forces in other areas to see whether they could be linked to other similar thefts. In addition, a Mobile Police Station will be making regular visits to the area, providing villagers with an opportunity to discuss issues with the local team. The next scheduled visit will be on Friday July 12th from 11am to 12:30 on the Littleton Drew Road near to the school. On Monday 22nd July, they visit Badminton High Street between 9am and 10:30.

Traffic – The speed of traffic through and around Acton Turville remains a major cause for concern, with a number of speed-related near misses being reported along The Street (particularly adjacent to The Well where the road narrows) and outside the Fox & Hounds public house where pedestrians cross the Burton road. We are liaising with the Police to see what more may be done to address the issue. In the meantime, we would welcome feedback and suggestions from villagers.

D-Day Event – The D-Day remembrance event held on the 7th June was a huge success and we offer our thanks to Alastair Gilbert and the Royal British Legion team for making it happen. The monies raised will be distributed to several local good causes and charities.

Meetings – Parishioners are reminded that Parish Council meetings are held at Trinity School with a start time of 7.00pm. Parishioners are always welcome to attend meetings but must inform the Parish Clerk beforehand if they wish to raise any specific issues.

Parish Councillors:

Chair: Sybil Haddrell 218772, Vice Chair: Ian Carter 07789 057168, Sally Smith 218510,

Claire Broomsgrove 218433, Mark Studden 07885 791314

Next Meeting: Monday 8th July 2024 @ 7.00pm. Venue: Trinity School, Acton Turville.

Details on Parish Notice Board/Website

Parish Clerk: Sue Radford-Hancock Tel: 01249 650052

Email: actonturvillepc@aol.com Website: www.actonturvilleparishcouncil.org

BROKEN ARROW

For many years, Yvonne Nettles and her husband Pat have visited the picturesque Spanish town of Mojacar. Nestling on the south-east coast of Spain, the town and its surrounding areas presents a compelling mix of history and culture in an idyllic setting where rugged mountains lead down to golden sands and the warm, blue waters of the Mediterranean. Although not traditionally a holiday destination, in recent years Mojacar has seen the number of visitors increase dramatically. To cope with the demand, the whole area is now undergoing major redevelopment as new hotels, villas and restaurants spring up everywhere. Whilst holiday makers are lured by the stunning scenes presented in the travel brochures, there is another aspect which the brochures are less likely to mention. It relates to events which occurred almost 60 years ago, and it involves bombs. Nuclear bombs. In recent months, television documentaries have been telling the story of a tragic accident that happened only a few miles along the coast from Mojacar, an event which had at the time had a massive impact on so many lives, and which even today has consequences on the area. Yvonne takes up the story.

It was 58 years ago on the 17th January 1966, in the midst of the 'Cold War', that a tragic accident occurred off the coast of Almeria. A US Air Force B-52 bomber had taken off from Seymour Johnson Air Force Base in North Carolina, on a 'Cold War' airborne alert mission named *Chrome Dome*. Such flights were considered routine, and B-52s were continuously flown on 24-hour missions, crossing the Atlantic to the east coast of Italy before turning back to the US. To make such a long flight, the bombers had to be re-fuelled in the air by KC-135 re-fuelling tankers, and it was during such an operation that the accident happened. Flying at 31,000 feet above south eastern Spain, en-route back to the US, the B-52 attempted to link up with the huge KC-135 Stratotanker. As they manoeuvred into position, the aircraft touched, causing a massive explosion. Both planes crashed to the ground killing all four crew members of the Stratotanker and three out of the seven crew of the B-52 bomber. The four surviving crew members managed to parachute to safety, some landing in the sea and being rescued by fishing boats. Huge pieces of flaming metal rained down on the village but luckily did not cause any civilian deaths.



What made this accident so significant was the payload of the American bomber. The B-52 was carrying four Thermonuclear Hydrogen bombs, more powerful than those dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki in WW2. The bombs were fitted with parachutes, designed to ensure they would fall to earth gently in the event of an accident. They worked perfectly on two of the bombs which landed without exploding, one just outside of the village of Palomares, and one lost in the sea, but the parachutes on the other two failed to open. When these two bombs struck the ground, the consequences were far more severe. Thankfully neither of the bombs had been armed by the crew so there was no nuclear explosion, but the conventional part of the weapon did explode. This created a "dirty bomb", a non-nuclear explosion that spread the highly-toxic nuclear payload of the weapon, amounting to almost 3kg of highly-radioactive Plutonium 239, over a huge area. In total, two square kilometres of the village and surrounding area were affected. Luckily no deaths occurred on land but residential, farmland and woodlands were affected, especially the tomato farms.

US President Lyndon Johnson was immediately informed of the accident and the Pentagon and White House were cabled the code name '**Broken Arrow**'. He was constantly updated as the situation developed and was told that the 16th Nuclear Disaster Team had been sent to investigate.

The clean-up of the area took three months and involved the work of hundreds of US specialists. Using hand-held Geiger counters to locate areas where there was a significant level of contamination, it is reported that in excess of 1,700 tons of radio-active soil was removed from the land, sealed into barrels and shipped to South Carolina. Much of the work was undertaken using simple hand tools.

BROKEN ARROW (cont'd)

In other areas where contamination was located but not at such significant levels, the top layer of soil was simply mixed to a depth of 12-inches using a combination of ploughing and harrowing.



Villagers survey the wreckage of the two aircraft

The fairly new Spanish Tourist Industry was concerned they would lose trade so the Spanish Minister for Tourism and the American Ambassador went for a swim in the sea in front of photographers, to prove the waters were safe – see below.

The small agricultural and fishing community didn't understand the full impact of the contamination. Villagers were not evacuated and no-one made a fuss. Bits of bombs and other fallout were collected as souvenirs by the people. Some parts of the land remained fenced off and untouched for years. Whilst there were supposedly some farmers who made a lot of money from the US government by not farming their ground, in other areas there appeared to be few restrictions on how the contaminated land could be used. Many parts continued to be used for agricultural purposes and buildings were erected with no consideration of the potential health risks..

By the year 2000, the focus had shifted from the events of 1966 and Mojacar had a different imperative. The area was on a wave of expansion, driven by its emergence as one of the prime holiday destinations in Europe. The cost of land skyrocketed and developers were falling over each other to capture the best plots, ignoring the potential risk of contamination as they sought to maximise their returns. Mojacar and the surrounding coastline was being engulfed by housing developments and golf courses, and it wasn't long before plans for holiday villas spread to Palomares.



Many believe the risks from contamination have been managed and the levels of radiation in the area are no longer sufficiently high to be of concern, but others are not convinced. 30 years after the accident, tests revealed high levels of contamination in 50,000 cubic metres of earth, and in 2004 the US government agreed to pay for decontamination of the ground and the cost of removal. In 2011, fully seven years later, that work had yet to be undertaken, leading to an agreement in 2015 for the Spain and the United States to further discuss the cleanup. Over the last 58 years there have been many other developments in this ongoing saga, and no doubt they will continue for many years to come.

Cont'd over

BROKEN ARROW (cont'd)

From a personal perspective, we are pleased that we discovered the region when we did, long before it became such a popular holiday destination. We feel blessed to have made so many life-long friends over the years, and shared so many happy memories for which we will be forever grateful. We do wonder though how many of the people picking up the keys to their luxury holiday villas are aware of the events of the 17th January 1966, and whether they would have made the same decision if they had known about them!

THE AFTERMATH

Two of the empty casings (with parachute attached) of the B28 nuclear bombs involved in the Palomares incident are on display at the National Museum of Nuclear Science and History in Albuquerque, New Mexico (left).

The agricultural produce especially the tomatoes had to be sold under false labels, tourism to the village has been badly affected and the clear-up programme costing about \$30 million has not gone ahead. Palomares has a street named '17 January 1966', but mostly the people of the village want to forget the incident.



Our Connection to a Second “Broken Arrow” Incident.

On researching the details of this accident, I have found that Palomares is not the only place that Pat and I have visited where there has been a lost nuclear bomb. Another such “Broken Arrow” incident occurred in the southern US state of Georgia in a place called Tybee Island, just across a bridge from Savannah. While visiting our Nettles friends Jim and Gail, we decided to stay overnight in Savannah and began looking for suitable accommodation. We ended up driving across the bridge to Tybee Island where we found a perfect place to stay, spending a lovely evening in a piano bar chatting and dancing with the locals.

Little did we know that in 1958 there had been a mid-air collision between an F-86 Sabre fighter plane and a B-47 bomber during a practice exercise which resulted in the loss of a 7600lb (3400kg) Mk 15 nuclear bomb. The fighter crashed after the pilot ejected but the damaged bomber remained airborne, plummeting 18,000ft before the pilot managed to regain control. To prevent the bomb exploding during an emergency landing, the crew requested permission to jettison it over the sea. Permission was granted, the bomb was jettisoned, and although the crew saw it splash into the water, they were relieved when there was no explosion as the bomb struck the water. The Air Force Explosive Ordnance Disposal Squadron and more than 100 Navy personnel mounted a thorough search but two months later it was announced that the search was unsuccessful. Following several further unsuccessful searches, the bomb was presumed

lost somewhere in Wassaw Sound, off shore from Tybee Island, buried deep in the silt on the bottom of the sea bed. A monitoring programme was established to check for signs of radiation from the buried weapon, but by 2007, no undue levels of unnatural radioactive contamination had been detected.

Then, more than 50 years after the incident, a couple of Canadian tourists who were on vacation and scuba diving in Wassaw Sound came across a part-buried large cylindrical item. On examining their find, they discovered an inscription. It read “Mk-15 Nuclear Bomb”. They immediately called the emergency services and more than 20 ships and 1500 men were deployed to the area. The location of the 3.8 megaton bomb was quickly established and an unmanned sub was sent to determine its condition before explosives experts were sent to disarm it. After many hours of strenuous work, Navy Seals finally deactivated the warhead, allowing the bomb to be successfully recovered from the spot where it had fallen all those years previously.



Yvonne Nettles

Church Matters

July 2024 Letter from the Vicar

Dear Friends,

It was a great privilege to be invited to take part in various D Day services and events around the parishes last week. And great to see so many children from the schools involved also. Passing on a respect for those who have died for this country is SO important. We all take it for granted, but unless children learn to understand the sacrifice our forebears made for this country, then so many spiritual lessons will be lost.

It really worries me that we are not very good at passing on the traditions that we have been brought up with, to the next generation. And with that failure, goes much of what undergirds our way of life and spirituality. So often we sentimentalise the past and lament the passing of customs and traditions that have gone. When we should do all in our power to keep them going. A 'spirituality-adrift' society is what we have become. I am not blaming anyone in particular, though I do blame Tony Blair for liberalising so much of our commerce, especially on Sundays. Gone are the days when Church was not competing with rugby clubs and shopping. And the choirs were full and everyone joined in with the festal processions. And we all had the same day off! I was impressed just 20 years ago, that in Edinburgh rugby for kids did not start till the Sunday afternoon, just so that people could go to church in the morning!

We need our churches, our village halls and our community events. And in the countryside, they are more vital than ever, as we are so few. So well done those of you who were responsible for organising all those D Day events. And thank you.

Have a lovely July,

Richard

Priest in charge, Badminton Benefice website: www.badmintonbenefice.com

Email: revrichardthomson@gmail.com

Home:01454 219236/ Mob:07717791858

Church Services for July 2024

Date	Time	Parish	Service	Minister
7 th July Trinity 6	9.30am	Lasborough	Matins	Lay Led
	9.30am	Hawkesbury	Parish Communion	Rev R Thomson
	11.15am	Didmarton	Matins	Rev R Thomson
	3.00pm	Acton Turville	Family Service	Rev R Thomson
	6.00pm	Sopworth	Evening Prayer	Lay Led
14 th July Trinity 7	9.30am	Lasborough	Holy Communion Prayer Book	P Cheeseman
	9.30am	Leighterton	Holy Communion Prayer Book	Rev R Thomson
	11.15am	Little Badminton	Matins	Rev R Thomson
	6.00pm	Hawkesbury	Evensong	Rev R Thomson
21 st July Trinity 8 Mary Magdalene	8.30am	Didmarton	Holy Communion BCP	Rev J Wilson
	10.00am	Hawkesbury	Pet Service	H Cooke Meth LP
	11.15am	Sopworth	Matins	Rev J Wilson
	6.00pm	Acton Turville	Evening Prayer	Lay Led
28 th July Trinity 9	9.30am	Lasborough	Holy Communion and Baptism	Rev J Hunnisett
	11.15am	Little Badminton	Matins	Rev J Hunnisett
	6.00pm	Hawkesbury	Evensong	Rev L Maydew (Meth Min)

See Benefice website for readings: badmintonbenefice.com



St Mary's Church, Acton Turville

Pet Service

Do come along to the Pet Service at the church on July 7th at 3.00pm. Bring your dog, cat, guinea pig, rabbit, horse(!), iguana, or even your stick insect. Each one will be blessed by Rev Thomson and he will conduct a short service. Children, parents, friends – all welcome. It will be a fun occasion!

J J'S GARDENING BLOG



What a lovely show of flowers on the roses this spring/summer. I know some roses are packed with flowers and hardly any leaves, which is not very attractive, but my suggestion is not to panic, try giving them a feed and some TLC. I believe it has been caused by those very cold two days we had recently. In several cases I have seen roses side-by-side where one has few leaves and the other is giving the best show in a long time. It is part of the fun of growing things - you or nature, who does best? Maybe pick some roses and bring them inside, add some alchemical mollis to the vase and enjoy the arrangement.

Start Picking

Fruit and vegetables you can start picking, beans, courgettes, lettuce, radishes. Harvest while vegetables are young and tender. Try and remember to plant seeds little and often, so there is always a tender morsel to pick. Try growing something new to you.

Get Out and About!

This is the main time to go garden visiting. Pick up a copy of the National Garden Scheme booklet from any nursery or garden centre and go and explore. It is a handy book to have if you are holidaying in the UK.

This Month's Top Tips

Keep an eye on tree ties and other plant supports. You don't want ties to be cutting in to growth.

Any early flowering shrubs can be tidied up and cut back to base, leaving two or three of the oldest branches. Add in a good feed and this should rejuvenate the shrub. Enjoy hydrangeas, this is their moment. Cut off old leaves of pulmonaria.

Plants that slugs and snails leave alone: most grey leaved plants, French marigolds, foxgloves, epimediums and others.

And Finally

Make time to sit and enjoy your garden.



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Local Villages Mark the 80th Anniversary of D-Day

On Friday the 7th June, the villages of Acton Turville, Badminton and Little Badminton came together to mark the 80th anniversary of the D-Day landings. The event, organised by local Royal British Legion stalwart Alastair Gilbert with support from Trinity School and Acton Turville Parish Council, started with a service of remembrance at St Mary's church at which Peter Moss presented a very personal account of the landings, written by his own father-in-law. That was followed by further readings from the children of Trinity School, delivered with a maturity and solemnity that belied their young ages. After the service, everyone filed across to the Fox & Hounds for refreshments, displays from the military and emergency services, and musical entertainment from the D-Day Dollies. The pub even very generously offered meals at special prices to mark the event, which proved very popular!

Everyone agreed that the day of remembrance was a huge success. Alastair Gilbert, who put a huge amount of effort into organising it, was delighted to see so many in attendance. "Please can I thank the Village Parish Council and Trinity School for all their hard work and support, and thanks to everyone who helped with the displays which were all very interesting. Thanks also to the D-Day Dollies who were fantastic!" said Alastair. "I'd also like to say thank you to everyone that sponsored the event and donated raffle donations to make the day a great success, and a personal thank you to Ian, Will, Toby and Dom for helping me to set up for the day. And of course a big thanks for all those who attended."



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