

# THE BRADFIELD GRAPEVINE



**May 2021**

**192**

Well, here we are again – it really doesn't seem five minutes! It's fair to say, Spring has well and truly sprung now. The trees and blossom are truly looking beautiful and the birds are singing loudly morning and night.

It's good to see that our new PCC will soon be having their first joint annual meeting with our benefice neighbours and formally electing Church Wardens and other vacancies.

Sharon reflected on the passing of Prince Phillip and the value of laughter in our lives. Pat has written an article on her meeting with Prince Philip that reflects not only the pomp and circumstance surrounding such visits but Prince Philip's humour too.

John Kirk has provided a brief update on the Village Hall – that gives us a timely reminder for the upcoming County Council election taking place on **Thursday 6 May** in the Village Hall.

Keith tells we haven't had much rain and all you gardeners and farmers must be hoping for some rainfall soon. Let's just hope it's balanced – we must be careful what we wish for 😊

**Margaret Lovick**  
**Tel: 01284 386662**

**Debbie Thomas**  
**Tel: 01284 386302**  
**Email: [debbie\\_thomas60@hotmail.com](mailto:debbie_thomas60@hotmail.com)**

## LETTER FROM THE RECTORY

Dear Friends

We were all expecting to have a quiet week after Easter, and then the news of the death of Prince Philip came on the Friday of Easter week. Our thoughts and prayers were of course with our Queen, who has lost a husband and a consort, but not only that, her life-long companion who it seems had the ability to make her laugh. Laughter is hugely important to us as human beings, and as a society. We use humour in many ways, and a good laugh is always guaranteed to lift our spirits. A sense of humour is needed for most roles in life, and I'm sure that Queen Elizabeth – who apparently has a very quick wit herself – appreciated her husband's gift for making her smile.

The Easter season finishes on Ascension Day on Thursday May 13th – and we will be celebrating Jesus going to the Father with a service at Gedding Church at 7pm. All are welcome.

We shall also be holding our Annual Parochial Church Meeting on Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> May at 7pm at Cockfield Church. This is a joint APCM of all our churches in the benefice which we will be able to hold in person. Everyone is welcome to attend, and it is at this meeting that we elect Churchwardens and Parochial Church Council Members. The meeting also hears about what has been happening over the past year both in the individual parishes and as a benefice. Obviously 2020 was a very unusual year, and at St Clare we now have nominations for Churchwardens and other vacancies, which is tremendous. If you would like any more information about the APCM then please do not hesitate to contact me, the more people we have supporting our local churches the better!

Yours in Christ

*Sharon*

Revd Canon Sharon Potter

[Revsharon2@gmail.com](mailto:Revsharon2@gmail.com) 01284 828599 or 07825 086063

## Cockfield Benefice Services – May 2021

**please see website for up-to-date information**

*All services are conducted in line with the coronavirus guidance issued by the Church of England, for more information visit <https://www.churchofengland.org/resources/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance>*

All 10am services will be made available on the benefice facebook page at <a href="https://www.facebook.com/cockfieldbenefice">https://www.facebook.com/cockfieldbenefice</a>	
Sunday 2 <sup>nd</sup> May – Easter 5	10am Communion – Cockfield
Sunday 9 <sup>th</sup> May – Easter 6	10am Morning Prayer - Cockfield
Thursday 13 <sup>th</sup> May – Ascension Day	7pm Ascension Day Communion – Gedding
Sunday 16 <sup>th</sup> May – Easter 7	10am Family@Church - Cockfield
Wednesday 19 <sup>th</sup> May	2pm Prayer Group meets via zoom for ‘Thy Kingdom Come’*
Sunday 23 <sup>rd</sup> May - Pentecost	10am Worshipping Together – Bradfield St George

\*zoom details for prayer group:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86736217904?pwd=Y2VGK0UvQlpkZHFzTFE4NkE4bHFxQT09> (Meeting ID: 867 3621 7904, Passcode: 456146 if needed).

A service of Celtic Morning Prayer is held every Tuesday at Cockfield at 9am

*Please note these services may be subject to change – for up-to-date service times see the benefice website at [www.cockfieldbenefice.com](http://www.cockfieldbenefice.com)*

## ‘AN ENCOUNTER WITH PRINCE PHILLIP’ – PAT HIPWELL

In April 1959, Prince Phillip came alone on a ‘feeling the waters’ visit to India. Partition has only happened a little over 10 years previously and feelings were still running very high in many places and there was considerable unrest. Although the Queen had been invited on a state visit (I think she eventually went in the early to mid 60’s) it was unclear what sort of reception she would receive, so Phillip came as the warm up act!

First stop was Bombay. We lived there and were duly trotted out, along with other ex-pats to form a welcoming party. Now April, just pre-monsoon (it usually breaks late May) was unseasonably hot and humid and I was eight months pregnant! In true British fashion we all had to be present and correct (men in dark grey suits, collar and tie and PROPER shoes, women in stockings, no tights yet, and court shoes, white gloves and hats) at least three hours before the touchdown at the Santa Cruz Airport. The roads to the airport were clogged for twenty five miles. We had to stand in the basking mid-day heat and humidity on the length of the long red carpet, no shade for miles – you get the picture? Prince Phillip arrived looking cool and relaxed, on a non-stop flight from the UK in a Comet, but of course, all air conditioned with all mod cons – very charming and outrageously good looking. He greeted all the men with ‘What are you all doing here skiving off work? Why aren’t you slaving away in your offices etc etc. slightly deflating but typical Prince Phillip.

The next day, a garden party/reception was held at the British High Commissioner’s in Government House, swords and medals, bells and whistles – what could be nicer. Well, pre-monsoon, as regular as clockwork at 4pm there would be a short sharp deluge of rain for approximately ten minutes and then an abrupt stop and the sun would shine again. Now do you think it would be possible to start the event after 4pm? No, Mad Dogs and Englishmen etc - a garden party begins at 3pm.

I had an enormous royal blue tent as a maternity dress, same colour hat and shoes, (all that I had worn the previous day as well) – so to jazz it up a bit I went to the local bazaar and brought some artificial flowers which I had placed at intervals on the said hat – very fetching!

Anyway, long reception line in beautiful gardens, lots of shade this time – 4pm, as predicted, DOWNPOUR and we all got soaking wet. Unbeknown to me the blue dye in the flowers on my hat had run down onto my face and there I was covered in blue streaks. Prince Phillip appears, shaking hands and exchanging ‘bon mots’ and when he got to me said ‘Oh! I thought I was the only one with blue blood! I blushed scarlet so I must have looked like a Union Jack – red, white and blue – very patriotic.

Incidentally, showing his more thoughtful inclusive side, on discovering that several of the young expats had done their National Service in the Navy like Peter, he asked if we could all be included at a dinner given by the Indian Navy in his honour on one of their Navy ships – how could they refuse? I think the Indian Navy was more British than the British and Commander Nunda, the host had served with him at Dartmouth, so I think about eighteen of us went - it was wonderful but to his horror (we knew) no booze of any kind, the Forces were all ‘dry’ as was Bombay State – if you were wise you took a hipflask with you or a “perfume bottle” in your evening bag. We had to register as ‘Alcoholics’ to get a ration book which allowed us two bottles of spirits and nine bottles of beer a month – not much when you were expected to entertain! Indian whisky was revolting, Carews Gin and the Tiger beer were OK!



### **Bradfield St Clare Church – Update**

Church opening has begun and will continue until the Autumn.  
A fuller update in next Month’s magazine after the joint APCM

### **THE VILLAGE HALL**

**AND COVID19**  
**2021 UPDATE Number Two**

Dear Parishioner,

I hope that you are well and keeping safe and enjoying life a little more as restrictions are lifted.

As I mentioned previously, there are conditions and guidelines relating to the closure and reopening of Village Halls, etc. which are preventing us from opening our Village Hall as we are still unable to meet or fulfil these requirements and ensure the safety of users.

However, you may already be aware that the Hall will be open for the elections to be held on **Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> May**. This has only been made possible by the implementation of a number of conditions to be met by the hirer, i.e. West Suffolk Council who have been extremely helpful and cooperative in formulating and agreeing them.

However, regarding the reopening of the Village Hall on a regular basis, unfortunately, I still cannot say when we might be able to do this. I understand that in May further restrictions might be lifted and the rules changed. Also, as the programme of Vaccinations is going well with many now having their second vaccination this may help. We continue to monitor the situation.

Again, the committee thanks you all for your patience and for your continued support and looks forward to getting back to normal.

John Kirk - Chairman

## MARCH BIN COLLECTIONS

<b>THURSDAY 6 MAY</b> (Bank Holiday) Wednesday 12 May Tuesday 18 May Wednesday 19 May Wednesday 26 May	Blue bin Black bin Brown bin Blue bin Black bin
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**Margaret Lovick is pleased to report another £100 has been raised for the church in April. Grateful thanks for all donations – you make the difference.**

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## MAY

The month of May was named for the Roman fertility goddess Maia, the mother of Mercury. The Romans, like many other ancient people, celebrated the beginning of summer on 1<sup>st</sup> May. They marked the occasion over two millennia ago with a ceremony lasting five days. The Romans also used to match make on this day by having young people pull names out of a hat to become their husband or wife. Despite the Roman connection, however, it is believed that the May Day celebrations originated in agricultural rituals intended to ensure fertility for crops.

May Sayings:

*“Cast not a clout till May is out”*

*“Who doffs his coat on a winter’s day  
Will gladly put it on in May”*

How lovely it has been to see so many things springing to life and beginning to flower. As in almost every year, however, as soon as the blackthorn blossom appears the weather becomes very cold with biting easterly winds. Many of the older country folk would refer to this as a “Blackthorn Winter” and the flowers certainly mimic the springtime snow in hedgerows. The wood anemones are beautiful in Bradfield Woods right now as are the primroses and violets but as I write this (18<sup>th</sup> April) it is too soon for the bluebells. However, by the time you read this they should be in flower.

Another sight that is always welcome are the cowslips. I always believed they were so called because the flowers resembled ‘cows lips’ but in fact the name came from ‘cow slops’ (or cowpats as we know them) due to the fact they were often found where cows grazed. We are lucky to have a few patches around

our village but they were once commonplace everywhere. So much so that people would gather them in their thousands to make cowslip wine. They are closely associated with English folklore and were used to make the garlands for May Day and also strewn on church paths for weddings. Now they have been protected under the Wildlife Order of 1985. Their decline is due to the reduction of our wildflower meadows (we have lost 97% of our wildflower meadows since the 1930's, that's 7.5 million acres)! Right now there is a survey to find out how our cowslips are faring. If you would like to take part visit the website [www.plantlife.org.uk](http://www.plantlife.org.uk) and follow the instructions.

It is always a little sad once the cowslips and primroses start to die but they make way for other delights. Already I have seen the lovely little white flowers of stitchwort appearing in the long grass and have seen a clump of kingcups in the ditch along the footpath opposite the church. Soon the cow parsley, loathed by motorists but a cheery sight nonetheless, will appear like clouds across the countryside. I love the sentiments expressed by Robert Lynd in this observation:

*“There is, perhaps a special pleasure in re-learning the names of many of the flowers every spring. It is like re-reading a book that one has almost forgotten ... Once more I shall see the world as a garden through the eyes of a stranger, my breath taken away with surprise by the painted fields.”*

Val Nunn

## News from Homefield



If all goes well this could be the first writings from the polytunnel. I think (more like hope) that it is going to rain, one of the editors is starting to talk about deadlines and stuff (quite aggressive!) (**Editors note:** I think the writer has misspelt adorable!) and it's quiet and warm in here. I keep the sheep feed in a bin in the tunnel so they had to be bribed for the quiet bit as they seem to think that every time I come down here they are going to be fed!

Lucy and Treacle both appear to be in lamb and judging by their size there should be at least twenty lambs each. Hopefully, it's only their wool, they both have very long wool. I will settle for one medium lamb each, all fit and healthy and Mum's the same. They could have been scanned to see if they were in lamb and how many they were carrying but that's a lot of effort for three sheep, so I just looked into their eyes, that is until I noticed a person leaning on the gate watching this old rural practice passed down over the generations, time for a bit of modern technology I think. If all is right then Lucy should lamb in the first week of May, then

Treacle a week later and who knows about Lola, she doesn't seem to be showing much.

The allotment is now being drilled up with early potatoes, parsnips, carrots, beetroot, spinach, turnips, lettuce, spring onions and radish so far. We still have a few beetroot and leeks to eat (and some spring onions that got left from last year, they taste like spring onions but are double strength – you certainly find out who your friends are). We still have a bag of last year's potatoes in the container and they have kept really well, only now just starting to sprout. As we get to the bottom of the bag. I tip the remains of one bag into the next – so we are eating a cosmopolitan variety of potatoes at the moment, Charlotte, Rocket, with a hint of King Edwards for colour. We have one plant of purple sprouting that has just decided to 'sprout' – it's wonderfully tender and the first rhubarb is tasting beautiful. The whole allotment needs a nice warm rain, without the night frosts and the cold winds, but my last writings were about the allotment being under snow, so we are moving in the right direction.

In the polytunnel I've just replanted some sweetcorn, the first setting was apparently a daily ready meal for a mouse who has now moved on. The sweetpeas seem to have been untouched by the mice and the runner beans and dwarf beans are coming on well. The tomatoes are a bit intermittent, but there is still plenty of time.

All the silage bales have gone now. and the cultivator has pulled up the wheel tracks on the field, from where it was so wet for loading the trailers. It was then harrowed, seeded and rolled. I would like to say you can't see where the wheel marks were, but you can, maybe this good warm rain which I have forecasted will make the grass grow.

The answer to the question everybody is asking is no, it didn't rain but how else could I Justify sitting in a warm polytunnel for an afternoon 😊. Glyn

## **BRADFIELD ST CLARE WEATHER**



**“When April steps aside for May, like diamonds all the raindrops glisten; fresh violets open every day: to some new bird each day we listen.”**

### **Lucy Larcom**

The latter days of March were generally sunny, very windy and with only a little more rain, I recorded a total of 34.5mm for the month, just below our average of 37.2mm.

April started somewhat unsettled with a couple of very warm days, followed by some windy days with a flurry or two of snow, then a few sunny, but still cold days. All this with the odd rain shower! Mid-month we woke one morning to a covering of snow with a frost. Since then it has been frosty mornings followed by clear sunny days but still quite cold. It needs a brave soul to have taken advantage of the easing of restrictions, to patronise a pub in its garden, although today, as I write, it has in fact been warm enough to sit outside in comfort. It has certainly been extremely dry, with only 3mm of rain against our average for April at 38.6mm.

Keith Payne 20th April 2021

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Bradfield St Clare Book Club/Village Hall Bookings	Mrs Val Nunn - 01284 388830
Bradfield Grapevine Magazine	Mrs Debbie Thomas - 01284 386302 <a href="mailto:Debbie_thomas60@hotmail.com">Debbie_thomas60@hotmail.com</a> Mrs Margaret Lovick - 01284 386662
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Suffolk County Council Switchboard	01473 583000
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Neighbourhood Watch Contact	Mrs Dianne Bullard - 01284 386598
Parish Council Clerk	Mrs Nicola Sturgeon - 07817170906
Parish Council Website	<a href="http://bradfieldstclare.one">http://bradfieldstclare.one</a> Suffolk.net
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