

NORTH ASTON

NEWS

December 2019

#350



Merry
Christmas

NORTH ASTON NEWS

DECEMBER 2019, No:350

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Out of Hours Doctor: 111 or 08453 458 995

Notes from the Chair

With Christmas fast approaching I thought that I would tell everyone what wonderful things we have happening in our little village leading up to it.

Nicholson's Christmas Fair

This will be on the 7th December, always a great place to find those last few gifts for your loved ones and perhaps a cheeky little present for yourself.

The Wassail

... will be on the 16th December, meeting in the Bakehouse at 4pm. Please do come along! It is a wonderful way to get into the Christmas spirit.

Carols on The Green

... will be returning on The Green on Christmas Eve at 6pm. This always proves to be a popular event in North Aston's calendar ... mulled wine, mince pies and Christmas carols ... what's not to love?

Children's Christmas Party

If anyone with young children would like the village to have a Children's Christmas Party this year, please do get in touch with me. If the demand is there then I will get something planned.

The Lights Fantastic!

I would like to thank Eileen and Norman West for another fantastic display of lights. The children (and adults!) love it, and what a wonderful reminder that Christmas is on its way!

And finally, I would like to take this opportunity to wish everyone in the village a very merry Christmas and a prosperous New Year!

You can telephone Lucinda on 340588
or email: chair@north-aston.co.uk

Lucinda

Village Meeting & AGM

January 9th 2020

The Old Bakery from 7:30 pm

The Village Meeting & AGM will take place on Thursday 9th January. This is the only official gathering of the year, and is vital for the "independence" of the North Aston Parish Meeting. It is also the time when the Officers to the Meeting are elected ... or re-elected.

Every year the posts of *Chair*, *Secretary* and *Treasurer* are declared. Please bear in mind that, if the village fails to elect anyone to these positions, North Aston's Village Meeting could not continue, so we need to be very appreciative, and grateful, to those who volunteer each January to serve our community in this way. This year it is hoped that the current incumbents may choose to stay on, but it is not a foregone conclusion. However, if you would like to be considered for any of these vital posts, please contact Lucinda by calling 340588 or emailing her at chair@north-aston.co.uk.

The election of officers will be followed by a full Village Meeting. This will include the setting of the Precept, as well as discussions on topics set by the Agenda, such as a review of Christmas events. If you have any subject you'd like to raise, please contact Lucinda (as above). The Agenda will be published on the Noticeboard in early January.

Front cover: Former North Aston resident Ben Jones suggested several of his photos as possible front-cover images, and this frosty morning view across the valley seemed appropriate. The inset shows one of the stained glass windows from St Mary's Church in North Aston, with the Three Wise Men preparing their gifts for the young Christ.

Events & Notices

Christmas at NICHOLSONS Saturday December 7th

The Nicholson's Christmas Fair takes place on Saturday, December 7th, starting at 10 am. On past form, this will be a lovely day filled with entertainment, food, drink and crafty shopping. There will be more than 50 local artisan-inspired gift, seasonal food and beverage stalls, as well as live music and festivities. This will be Christmas shopping in a unique and relaxed atmosphere, right here on your doorstep. A wonderful opportunity for the whole family to enjoy.

In addition, there will be Nicholson's own Christmas shop and showroom, featuring handcrafted ROSARA furniture and gifts, including The Oxford Christmas Company's 2019 decoration and accessories range. You can choose your own very special, named Christmas tree and The Oxford Christmas Company will deliver it for you on a date that you choose.

The event will be open from 10:00 am through to 6:00 pm. There will also be Christmas wreath workshops during the week following the Fair ... booking essential.

Heyford Park Christmas Bazaar

The sixth annual Heyford Park Christmas Bazaar also takes place on the 7th December from 10.30 – 3pm. Venue is The Chapel, Brice Road, Heyford Park, OX25 5TE.

There will be over 30 stalls, including tombola, raffle and Santa's Grotto, as well as teas, coffees & refreshments. All proceeds are donated to community groups based on Heyford Park.

More info: <https://annarosewell.wixsite.com/christmasbazaar>

North Aston Choir

The North Aston Choir has been busy rehearsing for this year's Carol Service, which will be on Sunday December 22nd, starting at 3pm. Rehearsals continue, and take place each Monday at 6:30 pm at The Old Vicarage. It may not be too late to join in! Please contact Miranda on 340625.

Carol Service

22nd December

100 CLUB **Nov'r 2019**

The winners of the October draw:

1st Prize (£10): Richard Boss (#104)

2nd Prize (£5): Iris Busby (#8)

The 100 Club continues to pay out! The top prize was £25 this month. For further information, please contact Bev on 347434. Remember, remember ...

You've got to be in it to win it!

December Birthdays

Paul Brown
Clementine Le Clercq
Stefan Liberadski
Joyce Morley
Joshua Potts
Tony Rees
Caroline West & Peter West



Many Happy Returns to all the North Aston residents who celebrate birthdays this month. If you're not listed, or know someone who should be, please let us know.

Announcements

Planning Applications

Notice of the following announcement relating to Planning Applications have been received from Cherwell District Council:

Nicholson Nurseries, The Park, Middle Aston Road, North Aston, OX25 6HL. Applicant: Mr Niel Nicholson. The application for the construction of a New Steel Barn at Nicholson's Horticultural Nursery and Contracting Yard, to be constructed in the south-western corner of the main nursery site using insulated green steel wall and roof panels to match existing barn. Any comments to reach CDC Planning department no later than 23 December 2019 quoting Reference 19 / 02599 / FB.

Deddington Farmers' Market

Named "Farmers' Market of the Year 2020" in the Oxfordshire Prestige Awards, this month's Festive Farmers' Market will take place on December 21st - the perfect opportunity to stock up on seasonal vegetables from our own North Aston Organics ... as well as all the very best in local produce, from beer and bread, to fish, fruit and meat. 9 am to 12:30 pm.

North Aston Wassail

The North Aston Carol Singers will be wassailing around the Parish again this month and raising money for charity.

The Wassail will take place on Sunday 16th December, starting with a gathering in the Old Bakery at 4.00pm, to which all residents of outlying properties are warmly invited.

Anyone can join the singers, either at the start or at any point along the way.



North Aston Notes

With Stephen Rees

On a July morning in 1978 I woke up early to find my Mum and Dad and Big Sis all stood in my bedroom, looking out of the window across The Green.

Jumping out of bed, I could see blue flashing lights everywhere and police all over the place. It was suddenly all very exciting! School time soon came around and the children from down the bottom of the village had a police escort to the bus. By this time we had found out that a man, David Brain, had broken into one of the cottages in the old school and taken a woman and little boy hostage. The occupier, Richard Bowyer, worked on the Hitchen's farm and had shotguns in the house, so it all went a bit turbo. There were armed police everywhere, and by the time we got home television crews were all lined up by Deirdre's house.



A cutting from The Sun, 15th July 1978

and it was hilarious to see. We kids loved it. One of us would shout out "Yahoo! Here comes the Colonel. Look out!"

In the end the man threw the gun out of the window and the police brought him out an hour later. Soon, the TV crews and the police had all gone, and North Aston went back to normal. It was all very exciting though, for a few days!

All the best, Steve, Wendy & Penny



A cutting from The Banbury Cake, 20th July 1978

So the stand off went on for, I think, five days, with the man in the bedroom pointing a shotgun out of the window and the police occupying the house next door. There were several snipers around the village, their sights trained on the windows of the cottage.

I remember one day Brain got really angry, and smashed one of the windows and started pointing the gun out across The Green. The police went mad! They made us all lie down, and the TV crews and cameramen hid behind trees and cars. I was 13 years-old at the time, and couldn't believe this was happening right in our village!

Every night it was all in the News, and we saw ourselves, stood watching and sitting together on The Green.

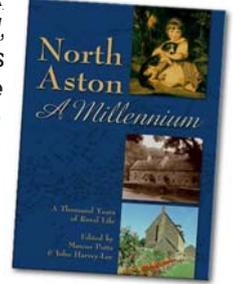
The road through the village was closed off, and any cars had to go around the far side of The Green.

I remember it was really hot and dry that year, and the cameramen kept moaning about the dust on their lenses, especially when the Colonel, Jeremy's Dad, came along in his car. He drove like a real looney (sorry Jeremy and James)



A cutting from The Daily Express, 15th July 1978

There is quite a detailed account of The North Aston Siege in "The Book". If you still don't have a copy ... why not! You can buy **North Aston - A Millennium** from 2 School Cottages for the special resident's price of just £10 per copy - email info@north-aston.co.uk for details. It would also make a great Christmas present for a friend or relative. Inside you can find out more about David Brain, his son Mark the young girl, Elizabeth, and the friend, David Pearson, who agreed to swap places with Liz on the Friday afternoon. The Siege lasted from Thursday 13th July through to Wednesday 19th. It was covered extensively in the national press, as well as on television. Some of the press cuttings have been used here to illustrate Stephen's account.



North Aston Views



Many thanks to Chloe Woodhead (*above*) and Tony Buxton (*below*) for these striking views that vividly show the extent of last month's floods across the Cherwell Valley. Subscribers to the emailed version will enjoy the benefit of full colour here!



Older People's Housing Survey

The Mid-Cherwell Neighbourhood Plan was formally approved by Cherwell District Council's Executive in March this year, and is now an integral part of the local Development Plan.

The role of the Forum, however, has not ended, and over the coming years will continue to look into the well-being and future prosperity of the eleven parishes, including North Aston, that pooled their resources to create the Plan.

This month a new survey will be distributed, door to door, that seeks to assess the needs for housing and care options for older people living in our area. The survey looks at the demand for both small-scale sheltered housing developments in a village setting and also for a larger extra-care housing scheme for 40 or 45 residents where more facilities can be provided.

When the survey drops through your letterbox, sometime over the next few days, please take a moment to read it through, complete the form, and return it in the Freepost envelope provided. We all grow old, and one day, the results of this survey could impact on you and your welfare.

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REBEL FOR LIFE

Extinction Rebellion is campaigning for local & national governments to recognise & act on the climate crisis.



ACT NOW

If you'd like to get involved, join like-minded individuals, in North Aston on Tuesday 17th December, 6:30-8pm

contact NAREbels@protonmail.com for info.



NON VIOLENT



BEYOND POLITICS



Collecting used POSTAGE STAMPS for charity

We don't get so many letters through the post these days, but we do still receive more cards at Christmas than at any other time of the year. Don't throw away the envelopes until you've first cut off the stamps, leaving 5mm of clear paper around each one. Collect as many as you can to pass on to Deirdre (14 The Green) who will take them to Katharine House Hospice. Each kilo is worth £11.00. It takes a lot to make up this quantity but, with everyone's help, it can be worthwhile. They'll also accept foreign currency and old greetings cards.

Ringing the Changes

The North Aston Ringers are still in need of fresh recruits!

The sound of church bells, at a wedding, or heralding in the New Year, is synonymous with the English country church, and it can be a very satisfying art to master. Learn a new skill - and no previous experience necessary! Call Jeremy on 340105 for more information.



Bridge

Would you like to play in a friendly environment with advice from experienced Bridge players and teachers?

Join us every Thursday 2.00 pm to 4.00 pm at the Kingsmere Community Centre, Bicester OX26 1EG

£5 per session with tea and coffee provided.

More details at: www.bridgewebs.com/bicesterlearning

Please call David Tarsky on 07867126188



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North Aston Village Forum

Thursday 14th November 2019 ~ The Minutes

Officers present: Chair Lucinda Fuoco (LF), Treasurer Sue Hatzigeorgiou (SH), Secretary Annie Savage (AS) .

Those present: James Taylor (JDT), David Hanna (DH), Niel Nicholson (NN), Marcus Potts (MP), Jane Durnin (JD), Trudy Busby (TB), Clive Busby (CB), Les Parry (LP), Robert Hite (RH), Mary Healy (MH), Jeremy Taylor (JT), Mark Stay (MS), Ginny Stay (GS), Bev Rees (BR), Tony Rees (TR).

1. Harvest Lunch

LF welcomed everyone to the meeting and started by offering thanks to Mary Healey and the team for providing such a wonderful lunch, and to Niel and Liz for the generous use of the barn.

She asked if the timing was still felt to be the best for all, as previous discussions had been held around the possibility of moving to the evening, but everyone felt lunch was still the preferred option. The number of people coming to the lunch was higher than last year, which was good, but some people expressed disappointment that some older members of the village hadn't attended.

Thanks were offered to NN for car parking facilities and NN expressed his gratitude to everyone who came for closing the gates behind them.

2. Kerbing

LF raised the issue of kerbing, as the financial implications of this need to be considered alongside the agenda item following. NN said that now the installation was not to be managed alongside the heating scheme, the cost of kerbing The Green would be considerably higher than the £11,000 originally indicated. MP advised he had not received clarification from OCC that the work could be carried out.

3. Village Shed

LF and GS have been investigating options of erecting a modest building in an area of the village in order to provide a community space for people to meet. Social occasions such as the *Aunt Sally* have been much appreciated by many people, but it is only possible in summer months when the weather permits.

There is interest and support for the idea of a village "shed" and the proposal is for this to be sited on The Green close to where the Nissen Hut originally stood.

LF has spoken to CDC who are willing to come and visit, although they may be unwilling to permit a permanent structure to be sited in such a prominent position. Various thoughts on the nature of a permanent building were expressed and LF indicated the budget was likely to be between £6,000 and £8,000.

SH confirmed that the current bank balances are £11,503 in the Village Forum and £4,201 in the Village Meeting accounts.

LF asked the meeting if anyone objected in principle to the proposal and no-one expressed a negative view, although concerns around appearance and screening were raised.

4. Speeding

LP had finally received a reply to his letter to Thames Valley Police, and they had carried out an unannounced speed check and reported that, of the 41 motorists screened, only one was exceeding 30mph. It was, however, agreed, that as the checks were well signed and very visible, it was unlikely anyone would speed, so the event was a waste of time and the residents who live on The Green continue to be very frustrated at the increase in speeding vehicles.

LP in particular noted how much worse things had become over the past two years. TR cited Bucknell as an effectively protected village due to the humps. CB confirmed that the batteries in the monitors continued to have problems and he is waiting for the suppliers to assist with technical support. It was generally agreed the monitors help.

The meeting again discussed using cars as chicanes, but TR pointed out that when vehicles were parked close to the junction past Norman West's house, a blind spot is created. Chicanes need to be lit and raised bumps can cause challenges for ambulances.

RH agreed to organise training sessions for new monitor users and a number of people volunteered to participate. (LF/Vinnie Fuoco in absentia/LP/AS/Tony Buxton in absentia).

5. Carols on The Green

This will start at 6pm on Christmas Eve, 24th December. AS was concerned to ensure we comply with the insurance conditions. She will contact the authorities to advise at least 7 days in advance. No third party property can be within 20 metres of the bonfire and Liz Nicholson will carry out a risk assessment. CB also confirmed if there is an easterly wind, there will be no bonfire. GS offered to be a First Aider and AS will ask Lynn if she is happy to be present. NN will supply a fire extinguisher.

NN asked for people to provide the mulled wine and it was agreed that £30 will be given to six people who will supply. Volunteers: LF MP, LP, MS, NN, AS.

6. Wassail

It was agreed to hold this on Sunday December 16th from 4pm. Singers to meet in the Bakehouse.

The meeting discussed the donations and it was agreed that a discussion will be held at the AGM in January as to which charities will receive donations. *Restore Banbury* and a tree planting charity were proposed.

7. Children's Christmas party

The subject of a children's party was raised and LF confirmed she was happy to organise one if it was felt people would appreciate the event.

8. District Heating System

JDT confirmed this was approximately two months behind schedule due to the rain. They are anxious to get the fieldwork and boiler room completed prior to Christmas. He confirmed the ducting will still be available for the fibre installation.

At this point, MP confirmed the response to the Broadband questionnaire had been positive but it would be very helpful if those who have not yet completed the form could do so.

9. Mowing

The Green has been kept very tidy by Clive and Hal, who have cut the grass 25 times. The meeting agreed that he should be paid £250 for this and CB confirmed he will supply an invoice.

Proposer: SH. Seconded JDT.

10. North Aston News

Although MP spends many hours each month editing and publishing the *News*, he has not charged. The meeting felt strongly that his work should be recognised and voted to advance him £250. Proposer NN/Secunder JDT

11. Nottingham Knockers

Although unwelcome, these people continue to visit the village, and the Facebook pages in North Aston, Somerton, Duns Tew and Steeple Aston announce and warn. It was reported that one 'Knocker' became aggressive in Somerton during the last visit but there is nothing which can be formally done.

CB also reported that a house at Danes Hill had been burgled and jewellery stolen.

12. Acknowledgements

LF expressed thanks to those people who do such a lot to support the village. We are particularly grateful to Norman (West), who has delivered the *North Aston News* for such a long time. It has been hugely appreciated and she offered thanks to Clive for agreeing to take on the responsibility.

LF also extended gratitude to:

Marcus for editing the *News* every month and to Niel and Liz for the continued effort and cost of printing it.

Clive and Hal for mowing the green and verges, managing the speed monitors and so many other things around the village.

Bev for running the North Aston 100 Club.

13. Any Other Business:

1. Dog fouling: AS reported that this was on the increase again and in particular on the path down to the wood and on the footpath near the corner of Middle Aston lane.

The meeting agreed that where possible "stick & flick" was acceptable but it is only courteous and considerate that if this is not possible, bags (biodegradable) are used to remove the mess. The possibility of placing bins at either end of the walk was discussed, and AS agreed to contact the council to investigate the cost of waste collection.

2. PCC - the Parochial Church Council: CB will advise on the dates of future meetings so that clashes with other village events, such as the Discussion Group, can be avoided.

3. Map for Noticeboard. MP confirmed this is close to completion.

4. Marquee Hire. We have been contacted by a parent of a child at Dr. Radcliffes enquiring about the hire of a marquee, and clarification was sought in this regard. The agreement in the past has always been that the marquees are for use by NA residents only.

5. Departures. MS reported Tony and Val Short are leaving the village. It was agreed that they will be missed, and that another family name with a very long association with North Aston will go with them.

6. Piano. JDT confirmed the piano tuner was visiting on 28th November and that he will supply an invoice for the £50 charge.

7. Bellingers. JT asked if anyone would like to join the bellringers, as there were insufficient numbers at present.

8. The Hunt. MP read out a letter he had received from Peta Stanley, who was very angry that the hunt (presumably the Heythrop) were hunting down in the valley between North Aston and Deddington, and the hounds had been out of control.

She was concerned about the stance of the landowner. MP said that, at a previous Meeting, it had been requested that the hunt ought to advise when they were likely to be in and around the village, but several people thought this would be unlikely. MP had advised Ms Stanley that the Forum was an open meeting,

and she was welcome to attend. JT confirmed he will visit to discuss.

9. Obstruction of the footpath by the Manor. A number of people expressed concern regarding the gates which have been installed at the junction of the Manor and North Aston Hall bridleway, which forms part of the *Cherwell Valley Way*.

It is illegal to block a footpath and the gates have been locked. GS said she visited the Manor and Mrs Burrell had explained that drivers had left the gates open, and they were concerned about the escape of animals. New gates with pedestrian access will be installed shortly.

Date of the next Meeting

The next Village Meeting, which will also be the AGM, will take place on Thursday 9th January at 7.30pm. An outline Agenda is published at the front of this edition of the *News*, and a full Agenda will be posted on the Village Noticeboard in early January.



Park Farm
Free Dog Walking

Stuck for time? Let the Park Farm Girls help out with their reliable, friendly and professional dog-walking service. (Weekends only). Please call us on 01869 349922 to set up a dog-walking appointment.



Christmas at
NICHOLSONS

Artisan Stalls | Christmas Food & Beverages | Christmas Trees | Live Music | Gifts

Saturday 7th December, 10am-6pm

The Park, North Aston, OX25 6HL

www.nicholsonsgb.com



From the FIRE STATION

It has been a fairly quiet few weeks for Deddington Fire Station, with activity at the start and end of the month, but little in between – so our little corner of Oxfordshire has been a relatively safe place to be.

The station responded to 10 callouts, comprising three fires, two alarms, two rescues and three standbys.



The first chimney fire of the season was quickly dealt with, and there was little damage to property (remember it is advisable to get your chimney swept annually). A pallet / composting toilet fire was reported, via Facebook, and crews were able to locate and put it out rapidly. The final fire call turned out to be a false alarm, reported with good intent, arising from a strong smell of burning from a property. Crews from Deddington, Banbury and Bicester attended, investigated the property with thermal imaging cameras to try and find the ignition source, ultimately concluding that the smell was due to a faulty electrical appliance. The family had sensibly placed their dog outside in the car before crews attended.

The two rescues listed were for an accident on the M40, and then a crane becoming entwined in live power cables – Deddington assisted the situation with both the Police and Ambulance services.

In November the Deddington crew were involved in a scenario training day at the training college in Moreton-in-Marsh, attended the school firework display, and also represented the Fire Service on Remembrance Sunday.

James Greenwood, FFd
james@cyclogicalshop.co.uk

Leave a Light on!

These long winter nights are the perfect cover for opportunist thieves. If you're going to be out overnight, or tend to get home late from work, leave a light on. Simple plug-in timers are now so cheap - less than a fiver at B&Q or Homebase - and can be enough to deter a would-be burglar.

The village defibrillator

The defibrillator is located in the porch at 4 Somerton Road, opposite the post box. CPR & Defibrillator training sessions are arranged from time to time. For more information, and to book a session, please contact Mark on 347806




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WHAT3WORDS

Using what3words

You probably saw an item about **what3words** on the News a few months ago. This is the easily-remembered and very accurate way of defining a location, using three simple words. Every 3x3 metre square of the world has now been assigned a three-word code, and Oxfordshire Fire & Rescue is now using **what3words** to help locate emergencies. This means if you need to contact the police and are having trouble describing where you are, you can use the app to tell them your exact location.

For example, the three-word address of Nelson's Column in Trafalgar Square is ///this.fantastic.notes. The editor's home address is ///handbag.turns.statement.

All you need to do is download the free **what3words** app to your phone. You'll be able to see and share the 3-word address of your current location and also find out the 3-word address of your home (by typing in your address and selecting the square containing your front door). If you want to make it easy for visitors to locate you, just send them the 3 word address for your property, and they'll be sure to find you ... especially if your postcode goes to the wrong place!

If you don't have a Smartphone, but would still like to have your 3-word address to hand, ask a neighbour (with a phone or computer) to discover yours for you. Alternatively, contact us here at *North Aston News* and we'll do it!



GIGABIT BROADBAND VOUCHER SCHEME

If you still haven't completed and returned your Broadband Questionnaire, please can you do so as soon as possible! If North Aston is to benefit from the possibilities of Full Fibre to the Premises connectivity, we need your voucher.

Great Weekend @TheHolt

Franca and Marcus would like to thank everyone from the village who came to support them last month at the antiques fair they organise with Stephen Rees at The Holt.

The fair is now into its seventh year, and continues to grow steadily. It is already rated as one of the best medium-sized antiques and collectors' fairs in the country, mainly thanks to the high quality achieved by the dealers (most of them local) who are invited to 'stand' at the fair. A full page feature in the *Oxford Times* helped to persuade around 700 people to visit, with many travelling from London and beyond to browse the stalls. The next fair will be in mid-March.

More information from: www.antiques-at-the-holt.co.uk



Heyford Park
Christmas Bazaar

*Over 30 stalls! Santa's grotto! Raffle!
Face painting! Tombola! Burger van!*

FREE ENTRY!

Saturday 7th December, 10:30am - 3pm
The Chapel, Brice Road, Heyford Park, OX25 5TE

All proceeds from the Sixth Annual Christmas Bazaar will be donated to community groups based at Heyford Park.
For further information, email: anna@annasadmin.co.uk

Dr Radcliffe's Christmas Fair

It's going to be a busy Saturday for parents in North Aston and surrounding villages, what with the *Nicholsons Christmas Fair*, the *Heyford Park Christmas Bazaar* and ... the **Dr Radcliffe's Christmas Fair**, all on the same day!

Events at Dr Radcliffe's kick off at 11 am, with the handbell ringers getting into the swing of Christmas. The choir will perform at 12:30. There will be books, toys, craft stalls, festive food, raffles and mulled wine. Entry for adults is 50p. Ends 2pm.

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North Aston (Archive) Views



How things have changed! This photograph shows the back of Bradenstoke Barn and The Coach House, behind The Hall, as they appeared just 35 years ago. This was in 1984, before work commenced on converting the 'new' coach house into a home. The 'old' coach house is where the 'old' school now stands, and the observant can still see the archways in the walls of Meadow Cottage and Number 3. That building had become the 'new' School in 1872, following completion of this replacement Coach House, under the instructions of William Foster-Melliard. The conversion replaced the first proper school, established in 1844, although there had been schooling, of sorts, in North Aston from the mid-18th century. As an educational establishment, the school closed in the late 1950s, with subsequent pupils attending Dr Radcliffe's.



The Church MATTERS



Were you born in a barn?

My childhood was full of such rhetorical questions, as I'd do something stupid or get something wrong, and then be corrected and find myself on the wrong end of yet another traditional saying. I was always very good at leaving doors open, though, so this one - the 'born in the barn' saying - was one that got seared on my soul.

Mind you, these days I tend to feel we could all do with few more open doors in our lives... We listen to those we agree with very easily; but as soon as we work out that someone is saying something we don't like - whether they're on the TV, or FaceBook or Twitter or Instagram or even (shock) in person - we just close off. People who disagree with us are wrong. We withdraw from engaging, from listening, from experiencing the world seen differently.

Speaking of which - with an Election happening during Advent there's a fair bit of disagreement to be expected right now, and a fair bit of withdrawing too! I think I might not be the only one who'd prefer just a chocolate a day to the inevitable news stories that come each morning both before and after Polling Day...

On an Advent Calendar we open something new every morning; but still even in December the doors on our hearts and minds seem to close very easily. And it's a small step from closing them to locking them and throwing away the key. And it's ironic, because if only we can get to Christmas we find that there's a reason we're supposed to open doors and windows and attitudes and hearts and our very selves during this season:

*He came down to earth from heaven,
Who is God and Lord of all,
And His shelter was a stable,
And His cradle was a stall;
With the poor, and mean, and lowly,
Lived on earth our Saviour holy.*

It turns out Jesus was born in a barn. And at Christmas we celebrate the fact that God throws open all the gates to heaven through the birth, life, death and resurrection of Jesus. All we have to do is open our hearts to receive this love - and then keep them open and try to love each other too. The Election will be what it will be, but maybe all of us might live with each other a bit better if we followed the example of the Lord who was born in a barn, who keeps his door always open for us.

Christmas Services

Everyone is welcome to any or all of the North Aston Christmas Services:

The North Aston Carol Service - the essential Christmas Service, with carols, choir and candles. Sunday December 22nd, 3pm.

Carols on the Green - a joyful celebration around the bonfire on the Green, with mulled wine and all your favourite Christmas songs and carols. Christmas Eve, 6pm.

Christmas Family Communion - welcoming Christmas in with communion and carols for all the village family. The perfect start to Christmas Day, 9am.

Rev'd Marcus Green



Any comments about the above are very welcome. More news is always available on our website: www.sntchurch.com

Please email our Rector Marcus Green: steeplerector@hotmail.co.uk or tel: 340 903

You can also email Clive: casb@north-aston.com (tel: 340 470) or Annabel: annabelbevan@hotmail.com (tel: 345153)

Any other member of the PCC will also be very happy to talk, and they are: Richard Bailey, Beryl Greenwood, Vicky Taylor, Ginny Stay, Ted Short, Jeremy Taylor and Norman West.



CHURCH SERVICES

PARISH WORSHIP IN DECEMBER

NORTH ASTON

STEEPLE ASTON

TACKLEY

Sunday December 1st 2019 - 1st Sunday of Advent

9:30 am
Holy Communion
Book of Common Prayer
Revd Marcus Green

11:00 am
Holy Communion
Book of Common Prayer
Revd Marcus Green

5:30 pm
Informal Service for Advent Sunday
**Revd Marcus Green and
Canon Robin Gibbons**

Thursday December 5th 2019

No Service

No Service

3:30 pm
Christingle
Joint Service with Tackley CE School
Revd Marcus Green

Sunday December 8th 2019 - 2nd Sunday of Advent

9:30 am
Family Service
Revd Marcus Green

11:00 am
Family Service
Revd Marcus Green

5:30 pm
Holy Communion
**Revd Marcus Green and
Canon Robin Gibbons**

Sunday December 15th 2019 - 3rd Sunday of Advent

9:30 am
Holy Communion
Revd Marcus Green

11:00 am
Holy Communion
Revd Marcus Green

5:30 pm
Evensong
**Revd Marcus Green and
Canon Robin Gibbons**

Sunday December 22nd 2019 - 4th Sunday of Advent

3:00 pm
Carol Service
Revd Marcus Green

6:00 pm
Carol Service
Revd Marcus Green

5:30 pm
Carol Service
Canon Robin Gibbons

Tuesday December 24th 2019 - Christmas Eve

6:00 pm
Carols on the Green

4:00 pm
Crib Service
Revd Marcus Green

3:00 pm
Crib Service
Canon Robin Gibbons

11:00 pm
Midnight Communion & Carols
Revd Green and Canon Gibbons

Wednesday December 25th 2019 - Christmas Day

9:00 am
Christmas Communion & Carols
Revd Marcus Green

10:30 am
Christmas Communion & Carols
Revd Marcus Green

No Service

Sunday December 29th 2019

No Service

11:00 am
Christmastide
Morning Prayer & Carols
Revd Marcus Green

No Service

Bible Study is on Mondays at 2pm at the Rectory.

Visit the website: www.sntchurch.com

North Aston News

The *North Aston News* is designed and produced by CMC Graphics, printed by Nicholsons of North Aston, and distributed monthly, free of charge, to all the residents of the Parish of North Aston. A full-colour edition in electronic format is also available and is mailed out to an extensive emailing list every month. To be added to that list, please contact the *News*, stating your wish to be added to the mailing list. We welcome contributions, which need to be in an electronic format (except Classifieds and Announcements, which may be hand written). To submit an item, including high resolution photographs suitable for use on the front cover, please email: info@north-aston.co.uk.

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