



March 2021

Wenhaston Warbler

Thorington – a Theatre Near You!

Up to now, “We’re going to the theatre tonight” has meant putting on your glad-rags for a trip to Halesworth, Bungay, Lowestoft or even Norwich. But this summer, you’d be able to walk there!

Thorington Open Air Theatre is taking shape right on our doorstep. It is in a magical setting on Thorington Lane, close to the Roundhouse just off the A12. Built from coppiced chestnuts at the site – sustainability is a prominent theme here - its 350 seats form a horseshoe in the natural amphitheatre of a WWII bomb crater.



The brainchild of Lindy and Mark O’Hare who own the land, work started six months ago. The stage and seating are taking shape under the expert hand of Silas Rayner, who is a musician and also has a background in putting on arts events. The first

scheduled performances in June will be the Shakespeare favourite *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*, followed by an impressive range of shows

catering for most tastes, from *Treasure Island* to *The Spirit of Woodstock* all presented by regionally or nationally-respected theatre companies. Helped by coverage in the national press, Lindy says that the interest has been phenomenal, and they have been approached by many theatre groups.

Anne and I have walked over to see the theatre (in the snow!) and it is indeed in an idyllic spot and does have that 'magical' feel to it. What an asset to our villages ... roll on the end of Lockdown!

The Theatre has an excellent website where you can view the scheduled performances, although bookings won't be taken until March. Of course, much is still dependent on our progress out of Covid rules, but Lindy calculates that even with social-distancing of the audience, it will still seat up to 200. An added bonus will be the plentiful parking in the adjacent field.

Website: thoringtontheatre.co.uk Email: info@thoringtontheatre.co.uk Facebook: **Thorington Theatre in the Woods**

Wil Harvey

**Photo courtesy of Lindy O'Hare, Thorington Theatre*

Village hall and Post Office news

The village hall Management Committee have decided to delay the AGM until Wednesday 31st March at 7pm in the hope that we will be able to hold it in the village hall. We didn't feel that Zoom was appropriate at present as several people and some members wouldn't have been able to participate. There will be a notice up at the village hall nearer the time.

Some maintenance and improvement work has taken place during lockdown whilst the hall is closed and this should all be completed by the middle of February. Unfortunately, as I write, we have had some snow ingress into the ceiling area above the main hall which has melted and resulted in some damage to the ceiling, so another job beckons!

If you would like to be part of the small team of people who run the village hall please contact me as we are still looking for some new volunteers and would very much welcome more helpers.

Sally Amery, Chair, Wenhaston Village Hall
Tel 01502 478847 or email sally.amery@gmail.com

Parish Council Meetings Via Zoom

Please note that because of Covid-19 restrictions the Parish Council is unable to hold 'live' monthly meetings and must continue to meet remotely by Zoom. Continuing with every third Wednesday in each month (unless otherwise informed) residents are welcome to join the meeting from 7pm, when half an hour is devoted to hearing concerns they may have. ***To link up with the meeting on the 17th March please contact the Parish Clerk, Richard Day, on Tel: 07500 210476 or e-mail 1richardday@gmail.com and he will provide you with details on how to join.***

Peter Wildish

Footpath Art – the Results!

In February's issue of the *Warbler*, we invited you to create your own artwork installations along any of the footpaths of Grove Woods (the new umbrella name for Vicarage Grove, Grove Piece and Malster's Little Field) using natural materials, such as twigs, feathers, bark, stones and leaves, and your own imagination. It was something fun to do, either as a family or alone, as we all endured yet another lockdown. Then came February's weather!

Amazingly, people still managed to construct their artworks, battling through snow and ice in the coldest, wettest and, surely, muddiest winter since 2009/10.

Congratulations to everyone who took part. Your artwork has given great pleasure and interest to all of us who walk these paths. They

ranged from the truly beautiful to the witty (we particularly enjoyed the 'steamer').

Some of them are shown here.

The Blyth Woods Group (www.blythwoods.org) will be suggesting more activities for spring, so watch this space.

Spring? The birds know a change is coming and already the green shoots of bluebells are spearing upwards through the earth in Vicarage Grove.



Patricia Elliott

EDITORS NOTE

Readers have been busy during the last month of lockdown, and we've been delighted with all your news and images. Keep them coming! Also, thanks to local artist Ruth McCabe for her lovely mad March hares featured in this issue. Send us copy for April by **15TH March** to wenhastonwarbler@gmail.com

Blyth Valley Environment Network

A second meeting of the network was held via Zoom on the 10th February 2021. Several local environment groups were represented including Earth, Halesworth Sizewell C, as well as Wenhaston-based Commons Group, Blyth Action Group and the Management Planning



network was held February 2021. groups were Friends of the Greens, Stop members from organisations, the Woods, Swift Environment group.

The network has three aims:

1. To provide a forum for different local groups, so they can promote what they are doing and link up with the knowledge and experience of other groups and initiatives.
2. To increase appreciation in our communities of the natural world and its many benefits for our lives. This includes building up work with young people and families.
3. To join in the campaigns which are fighting for action on national and international levels to tackle the climate crisis and issues around climate justice.

If you would like to be involved in the network or be on our mailing list, please contact me at alisonalder@hotmail.co.uk or 01502 478855.

***** Volunteer needed to help us design a webpage to help us promote our work more widely. Please contact me if you can help.**
Revd. Alison Alder Blyth Valley Team Ministry

Words for Wenhaston in times of Covid

By Wendy Mulford

Bach plays the wind
Held in the high trees' chamber
An owl broods- a good soul
Across the seas reminds us
Of the power of love, of faith and truth.
In the old oaks' embrace
Small creatures burrow:
In the shuddering earth, bury themselves
Deeper: the tethered planet groans
For our folly, calls us to waken
Swiftly to mend, amend,
Bring love to each clod, each shoot, each root,
That all may dream
Of hope and spring.



'Matching Hares'

www.ruth-mccabe-artist.co.uk

Mary Fleetham 1956-2021

Through the warbler I would like to thank the village and others further afield so for their kind support. I have had so many lovely cards and messages some from people I don't even know that have brought tears to my eyes. Thank you to for your support of the Pulmonary Hypertension UK charity.

Mary & I first met in the September of 1973 and were married on the 5th April 1980. Covid meant are plans for our 40th anniversary were put on hold, sadly we will not have a 41st. Covid also meant the funeral had to be restricted to close family. I am deeply sorry Mary's friends made over the last nine years living here in Wenhaston could not be present at the service, although I am told there were many friends outside.

It seems to me that in this world there are two types of people, those that give and those that take. Mary was the former. She gave of herself to friends and to colleagues. She gave of herself to her vocation, for nursing and the NHS was her life. She gave of herself to her family & later to our family, to me, to Ellie, Freddie & Charlie.

We have had 9 happy years here but sarcoidosis has stolen the last of our summer wine. At the bitter end, Mary did go gently into that good night after a long, long rage against the dying of the light. May she rest in peace.

David Fleetham

Pottering with Poppy

Poppy and I do like an adventure, and there is nothing like a little snow to make that happen. From the footprints in the snow, it looks like a whole lot of folk got out for snowy adventures and to enjoy the incredible beauty, plus a little danger, in exploring our lanes and footpaths.

Pops and I started with a blizzard walk on Sunday afternoon. Not too much snow but the wind picking it up and throwing it about was interesting! We took in the edge of Blackheath and then crossed the lane to skirt field edges, to where the old chicken houses used to stand. The maize has been cut down relatively recently and in amongst the biting snow laden wind there was a flock of 100 or more little birds, feeding in amongst the stubble and maize cobs. Yellow hammers, chaffinches and reed buntings. There may have been others but we didn't dawdle too long.

Another favourite potter is down Narrow Way and on down the track through the oak tree tunnel, towards the old railway line. There was more snow by then and the blackbirds, robins and chaffinches were scratching at the base of the trees to uncover the delicious creatures that live there, and make a good meal. I briefly caught sight of a sparrow hawk that must have been eyeing up a possible candidate to be breakfast. We went on to the river. It was beautiful morning with the sky blue and almost cloudless. Three snipe got up as we negotiated the icy water by the gate, just before the bridge. Once there it is evident that we were not the first to walk this way as there were fresh human footprints in the overnight snow. No sign of fresh otter prints or spraint but the winters weathering of the reeds has revealed a previously unnoticed tunnel, up through the reeds

from the river to the path. A few yards further on is another “otter” path leading off to the right, and into a ditch that follows the marsh field edge. The water meadows are frozen and under a pristine layer of

snow, and there is a pair of marsh harriers hunting in amongst the tussock grasses in the distance. We just have the road to negotiate to get home to breakfast. *Jo Small*



‘Come Hare’ by Ruth McCabe www.ruth-mccabe-artist.co.uk

A Lockdown Challenge : Flat fell Seams, “Bagging”, Plackets, Buttonholes!

A beautiful piece of Indonesian Batik had been winking at me for some time, a piece of fabric which my son had brought back from Bali a few years ago. I heard myself saying “well if you like I will make you a shirt”. Thinking it would be quite easy, hopefully just a short sleeved casual shirt as my most recent attempts on the sewing machine have mostly been cushion covers, a table runner, a curtain or two. Dresses, even trousers, these were items I used to run up in the seventies, made quickly to be able to wear immediately, no tailoring or even much in the way of neat finishing off. Well for starters a long- sleeved shirt was requested, not a short sleeved Hawaiian version. All I can say is thank goodness for You Tube and so with on- line help I thus managed “bagging” – will this really work – yes indeed it did, plackets, quite tricky, much dexterity needed here and the final hurdle, buttonholes, a little cheating here as to my delight I discovered that in the “tools” box of my sewing machine I had an automatic buttonholer!



Who knew these could be so easy, ok so not as neat as hand sewn, but they will certainly do, after all there are quite a lot on a man’s shirt. **Result!** The sewing machine is now back in the cupboard and a new challenge is being tackled – Life Drawing sessions via Zoom – far more relaxing, although last attempted on foundation course many decades ago it is great to be taking it up again. I can recommend it.

Shirley England

Halesworth Dementia Carers' Fund



Christmas surprise. The HdCF Committee surprised our dementia carer families with a Christmas hamper. Each hamper had a Christmas card and decoration and was wrapped in cellophane and topped with a big red bow. One of our 'Friends of HdCF', who herself is a carer, wanted to donate some

goodies for carers. We were very pleased to accept her kind donations and added more to enable the 27 families who are receiving our respite care to have a Hamper delivered by our Chair, Teresa Fyfe.

Our respite care service continues to offer some respite for family carers looking after loved ones with dementia during the current lockdown. This service is much needed to enable them to be able to have a much needed break from their 24 hour responsibility. HdCF have been able to do this with the wonderful support and care from First Choice Care & Prestige Nursing + Care agencies, for which we are very grateful.

Many enjoy this visit from specially trained support workers who have a particular interest in caring for someone with dementia. With some, the support worker undertakes different activities with them. Art and craft work, jigsaws, music, dominoes or just sitting with them and having a friendly chat. This enables the family carer to have a walk, read a book, listen to music, do the shopping, or just have some "me" time – knowing their loved one is in good hands.

We have been providing this service now for over 6 years. Over that time we have provided 13,182 hours of care at a cost of £216,351.50 – which is amazing. This year (1st May 2020 – 8th February 2021) we have already provided 1127 hours of respite care, costing £20, 926.

Your support to enable us to continue this vital service is really appreciated, along with the grants that we apply for and donations we have received. As we have been unable to fundraise this year due to the pandemic our income is considerably down – please consider a donation to the charity.

A very big “Thank you” for your continued support.

Nikki Sawkins

Music Sessions.

Under the expert leadership of Helen Hayes we recently held a Zoom music session for people affected by dementia, and their carers. The session was great fun, and much enjoyed by all who took part. Our aim is to repeat these music sessions in the months to come.

As well as Helen, thanks are due to the H.D.C.F., our local Alzheimer’s Society support worker and Suffolk Community Foundation for their support in making these sessions possible.

For more information about Halesworth Dementia Carers’ Fund please visit www.halesworthdementia-cf.com or contact us on information.hdcf@btinternet.com

Work on Blackheath

During 2021 further work on Blackheath will be undertaken by Suffolk Wildlife Trust, and, when circumstances permit, Wenhaston Commons Group. This will include mowing with a cut and collect mower hauled by tractor (Rytec), bracken bruising, and gorse clearance principally to create firebreaks, following the serious fires in 2019. At the time of writing all work parties by the Commons Group are suspended, but we will notify volunteers when these will start again. ***Jonathan Alder***

Wenhaston Village Hall 100 Club

- Winners for February 2021 -

The Wenhaston Village Hall 100 Club February draw has been made and we are delighted to announce the winners:

- 1st prize Carol Hudson-Jary (number 2) £37.50
- 2nd prize Alison Alder (number 101) £22.50
- 3rd prize Henry Busiakiewicz (number 160) £15

Well done to all the winners this time!

It's never too late to sign up. A chance to win a prize costs just £1 a month so anyone wishing to join now, the fee is £7 for the year starting from March.

Please pay by cash or cheque, made payable to Wenhaston Village Hall 100 Club, and hand in, clearly marked with your name, in an envelope to the Post Office or either of the promoters, Kirsten West or Trish Gower. ***All enquiries please phone Trish on 478267.***

Wenhaston Resident Works on 'The Dig'

Wenhaston's self-styled intrepid reporter, **Ian Bigwood**, has tracked down the Village's most famous resident (well, famous for 15 minutes at least). He is **Jay Ducker** and he has been a part of the film production team for the recent Netflix drama 'The Dig', the 1930s story of the excavation of the Sutton Hoo burial ground. Ian put these probing questions to him.

IB *How did you come to be involved in the making of the film?*

JD I saw a Facebook post from Screen Suffolk asking if anyone would like to apply for on set film job assisting an actor for two months but

the only catch was that they must have a Suffolk accent. I applied for the job and got a call back and was invited to meet the actor in Aldeburgh, where I was told Ralph Fiennes would be conducting the interview. The meeting went very well and the next day I was offered the role.

IB *What is your contribution to ‘The Dig’?*

JD So my title on set was “Assistant to Mr. Fiennes” and my role was to assist Ralph in helping achieve the best possible performance. Whether that was to grab his meals or practice the Suffolk dialect with him.

IB *What was a typical day on the set like?*

JD A typical day usually involved a lot of mud and a lot of rain. But in all seriousness, it was always an earlier start and a late finish. There would be many takes and a lot of waiting around. It could be quite gruelling at times.

IB *Did all the filming take place at Sutton Hoo?*

JD No, in fact nothing was shot at Sutton Hoo. Most of the filming was shot in Surrey. We only shot in Suffolk for a week.

IB *Did you rub shoulders with any of the stars?*

JD Well, apart from Ralph himself (who I’m still in contact with) there was Carey Mulligan who played Edith Pretty. Carey and I actually have a friend in common and I honestly say she is a lovely person.

IB *When did filming start and when was your contribution complete?*

JD We started shooting in mid-September 2019 and we wrapped in mid-November following.

IB *What do you think of the finished movie?*

JD I loved it! It was quite emotional watching it but more so, for the memories I have of being on set and the friends I made.



IB *Do you have any tips for budding young film makers?*

JD Well, I'd still consider myself a budding film maker, however, what I would say that I've learnt from being on The Dig is to network as much as you can. Collaborate and get involved with the industry and more importantly support other artists and directors.

IB *Do you have any more film projects lined up?*

JD I'm actually working on a film about my great ancestor John Ducker. He was the last man to be publicly hung in Ipswich for supposedly killing a police officer. It's in the very early stages but I'm very excited about where I can take it.

So, Jay's fame may not be just for 15 minutes after all! Thanks to Jay for his time amidst other media interest. We're all looking forward to seeing Jay's name up in lights at the Village Hall cinema.

Ian Bigwood

St Peter's Church

The main news this month is that, following the sad death of our Team Rector, Edward Rennard, in December 2019, the Bishop, the Right Revd. Martin Seeley, has appointed a new Team Rector. The Revd. Dominic Doble will be licensed as Team Rector of the Blyth Valley Team Ministry and Priest in Charge of Heveningham with Ubbeston, Huntingfield and Cookley on August 8th at 7.30pm in Halesworth Church. Dominic is at present at the Watercombe Benefice in the Diocese of Salisbury. We look forward to welcoming him and his wife, Liz, to work among us. We are hoping to have a service in Wenhaston church on Mothering Sunday, March 14th, at 10am and we hope that as many people as possible will join us. The Covid restrictions will still apply unless anything changes in the meantime. The snow was lovely to look at out of the window but lethal underfoot. We hope you all managed and are keeping well and optimistic.

Margaret Bloomfield

Wenhaston Methodist Church

All Sunday Services at 10.30 am

7 Rev Ian McKillop

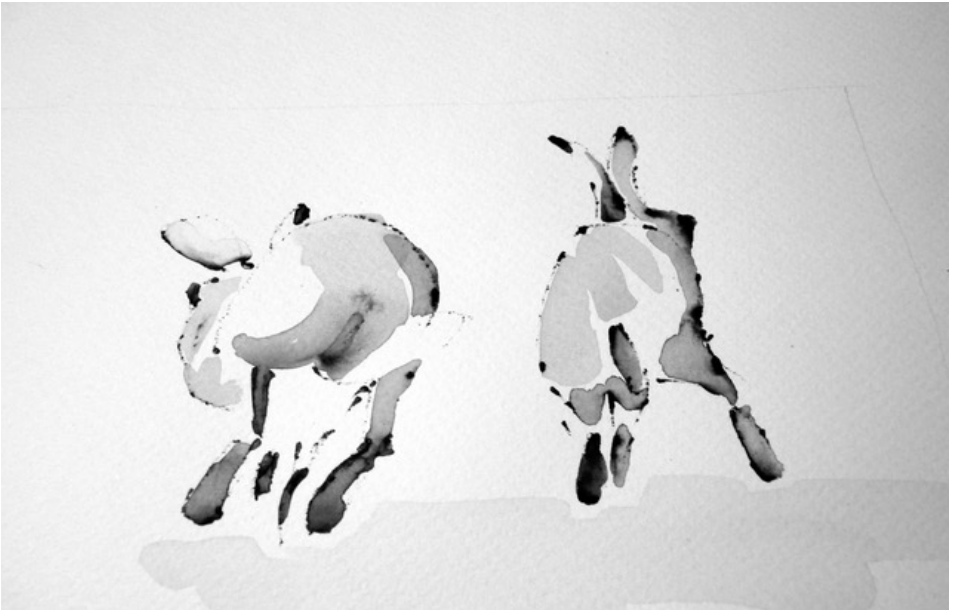
14 Rev Peter Rayson Covenant

21 Rev Robert Saones

28 Re Louise Morrissey HC

The above dates are provisional on the current rules prevailing

A face covering must be worn



'Haring off' Ruth McCabe
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*The Warbler welcomes articles
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*The editors reserve the right to
amend or not to publish articles.*

*All copy to be emailed to
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the 15th March*

*Advertising: £15 p.m. for ¼ column
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