



the Gander

GOXHILL VILLAGE NEWSLETTER

Winter 2020

Goxhill Views
Village Tales
Local People
School Reports
Church Letters
Parish Council
& Much More

*We hope all our readers,
contributors, deliverers
and advertisers have a
Happy Christmas and a
better New Year*

*A stunning Halloween display -
photograph by Steve Scrivener*



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Plans of upcoming events listed on the Noticeboard pages and elsewhere in this issue, and services offered by businesses, could be turned upside down by changes in legislation. So please look out for up to date information on social media and posters around the village and ring to check the latest situations.

Nothing will ever be the same again???

There is no doubting the seriousness of this pandemic. It is having a pretty devastating impact on our every day life, livelihoods, businesses, relationships, families, mental health... It is affecting everyone in many different ways. Worst of all are the many families who have lost loved ones and had their lives turned upside down.

But we will recover from this and there are good things coming out of the adversity.

Many are working beyond the limit to care for those sick and dying, others are doing so much to keep our schools open, keep us stocked with essentials, especially our local shops and businesses and volunteers are reaching out to help those most in need of assistance. It is amazing to see so many doing so much to help us get through this.

Wonderful things have still happened in the village, despite lockdown, as seen in the last two issues of the Gander, and this issue shows off the best Halloween for many years, organised by the school, to keep this great tradition going for the children, whilst abiding by Covid restrictions. See article and photographs on pages 17, 19 and 23.

Another Community Calendar has been produced to show off our beautiful village, see page 11 for information on how to buy the Calendar, all proceeds go to the Church and Chapel.

With the Memorial Hall shut, they still managed to hold a Fotofrolcs competition with some outstanding, cute and amusing entries, see page 15 for the winning entries. Plus they have secured a grant from the **National Grid** for the replacement of windows and new carpets.

The community spirit shown in the village has been wonderful. We can all continue to offer help to our neighbours who might struggle to manage at the moment, the elderly, infirm, vulnerable, shielding members of the village. Every little bit helps.

The Church has managed to reopen for private prayers and online services, though the Chapel has remained closed. They have restricted plans for Christmas Services this year (subject to any changes to the regulations), see page 7 for details.

Work by our Parish Council, Memorial Hall and other groups have managed to continue using video conferencing to keep essential and future plans going.

At the Gander, we thank all our contributors and team of deliverers for their ongoing support. Plus we are so grateful to our advertisers who, despite the severe financial problems caused by the restrictions, have shown great loyalty to enable us to keep the Gander going. We thank them for their support and in return I ask you to use our local businesses whenever possible to ensure they survive.

So many of our local groups and clubs have been equally badly affected, unable to meet, and it is just as important to join in and support them, when activities are able to restart. Otherwise some of these brilliant activities could dwindle and disappear.

Finally, on behalf of the Gander Team, we wish you all as good a Christmas as we can have and that the New Year will see a brighter future and the end of this deadly pandemic. Please maintain social distancing, stay safe, and keep well.

Jeff Teasdale - Editor Phone: 07774 671175

Email: editor@goxhillgander.com Web: www.goxhillgander.com

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North Lincolnshire, DN19 7AW

An amusing online post

No Nativity this year because the 3 Wise Men face a travel ban.

The shepherds have been furloughed.

The Inn keeper has shut under tier 3 regulations and had a slump in bookings.

Santa won't be working as he would break the rule of 6 with Dasher, Dancer, Prancer, Vixen, Donner and Blitzen.

As for Rudolph, with that red nose, he should be isolating and taking a test. 😂😂

The Gander Team

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Please contact any of the above with any queries that you may have regarding the Gander.

Articles should be sent by email to: editor@goxhillgander.com or by hand to the editor.

Comments or opinions expressed in articles printed are not necessarily those of the team.

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LETTER FROM THE CHURCH

Ho! Ho! Who?

It was Christmas Eve but there was little cheer in the North Pole. Father Christmas poked the fire and gazed gloomily into his mulled wine. He was feeling sorry for himself, it has to be admitted. Business was bad. The world was struggling with a virus, lots of people hadn't even given a thought to Christmas, which made his job much harder, three of his best packing elves had announced they were self-isolating, just to be on the safe side and even Rudolf's nose seemed a bit dimmer this year. Father Christmas sighed; perhaps he was getting too old for this after all. He thought of the sled piled high with presents and all those deliveries to make before morning. For the first time in his life he really didn't feel in the mood for this. Would anybody really notice if he just didn't turn up?

His melancholy was disturbed by a very loud knock on his window. Startled, he went to see what was happening and to his amazement he found himself looking into the decidedly irritable face of an extremely cold angel (he could tell it was an angel due to the number of them he'd seen on top of Christmas trees, and anyway, the snow-covered wings were a bit of a give-away). He opened the window and before he could say a word the angel hopped over the sill and stood shivering and dripping with melting snow in Father Christmas's sitting room. "Er - good evening", said Father Christmas, warily. "It's not a good evening at all", said the angel. "What on earth do you think you're doing, sitting here with a face as long as a fortnight on the best night of the year? My Boss (I'm sure I don't need to be more explicit) has sent me to remind you that there's work to do."

"Harumph", said Father Christmas. "I'm not in the mood. Half of them don't believe in me anyway".

The angel raised an eyebrow. "Not sure I do, come to that" he replied, "but tonight isn't about you my friend. Look out of your window".

Father Christmas turned to his window. Instead of the usual snow-covered vista he saw a glorious golden light. At the heart of it stood a battered old trough and in a nest of hay in the trough slept a Baby - and it was from this Child that all the golden light emanated and the light seemed to encompass the whole struggling, suffering world. Father Christmas murmured softly, "The light shines in the darkness and the darkness did not overcome it".

The angel slipped an arm round Father Christmas's shoulders and despite the damp snow, Father Christmas felt warmer inside than he had for weeks.

It's about Him, isn't it?" he said.

"Yes" said the angel. "It's all about Him. And because of Him you have a job to do. How could we ever let Him be forgotten?"

Suddenly, Father Christmas felt fizzing with energy. "I'll get my boots on!" he said "Er - I don't suppose you'd like to come for the ride?"

The angel smiled. "Not tonight, my friend", he said. "Tonight of all nights, it's all hands on stage for the heavenly choir!"

Revd. Liz Brown

LETTER FROM THE CHAPEL

Dear Friends

What a time it has been since I took over from Revd Nichola Jones in September! Church Councils have taken place in 3 different formats (face to face, ZOOM and paper), we have continued to struggle to meet with family and friends, and though churches have been able to re-open, at the Methodist Chapel, we remained closed for a number of reasons. All of us have had to change the way we think and live our lives.

As I write, we are preparing to face a second lockdown later this week. This will cover the time of Remembrance, and who knows what will happen over the Christmas period? At this stage, none of us knows.

One thing I do know, however, is that whilst everything else changes around us, we always have HOPE. HOPE is one of the great Advent themes which we can hang on to all year round. HOPE enables us to carry on each day. HOPE helps us to COPE

Another great Advent theme is that of LIGHT. LIGHT shines through the darkness. LIGHT shows us the way through. LIGHT helps us FIGHT the spirit of gloom.

And a third great them for Advent is that of JOY. JOY raises our spirits. JOY helps us to be thankful for the blessings we have each day. JOY helps us to ENJOY, smile and feel good about those little things we can laugh about.

As we remember those who fought for our freedom, let us hang on to those eternal strengths which will not allow us to be heavy-hearted.

HOPE helps us to COPE

LIGHT helps us to FIGHT the spirit of gloom

JOY helps us to ENJOY the little things of life.

May you know God's Blessing throughout the Festive Season, when we remember the birth of the Prince of Peace.

Sincerely Yours. **Revd Enid Knowles**

Christmas Services are listed on page 7.



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NOTICE BOARD

CHURCHES TOGETHER EVENTS

If anyone had ever told me that a time would come when I would be saying "Sorry we can't hold our usual Christmas services as, we may have too many people in church!" I would never have believed them. Sadly, that is the situation we now find ourselves in.

We are still not able to sing in church, even with our masks on. A Carol Service, without carols is hardly that. So, with regret no Carol Service this year.

Two of my favourite services fall into not being able to hold services. The Christingle Service and the Crib Service. Due to the numbers who attend these two services, sadly it is not possible to go ahead with them.

Christmas wouldn't be the same without some sort of service that reflected on the celebration of Christ's birth. So, on Sunday 13th December at 6pm we are holding a Service of Light. Jesus came to be The Light of the World. It will be a reflective service with Christmas Music, Choral Carols, (on CD as we cannot sing) and reflective readings.

Christmas Services

Sunday 13th December 6pm - All Saints Church
Service of Light.

Sunday 20th December 3pm - the Chapel
a Christmas Service.

Thursday 24th December 11.30pm - Holy Trinity
Barrow, Midnight Service.

Christmas Day 10am - All Saints Church
Holy Communion

We do have a service every Sunday morning at All Saints. On the first Sunday in the month the service is at 8.30am, on the other Sundays it is at 9.30am.

You are welcome to join us.

Christmas Tree Festival

Saturday 5th and Sunday 6th December 1.30-4pm
Again, this is something that will be different this year. Unfortunately, we will not be able to serve refreshments this year. There will be a cake stall with all cakes and buns pre-wrapped.

There will be a one-way system around the Church with markings to keep 2metres apart. Face masks must be worn inside the church and hands sanitised on entry.

Tree's may be from a business or individuals who wish to put in a tree in memory of a loved one.

You may be as creative as you like with your tree it doesn't have to be a typical Christmas tree.

If you wish to put a Christmas Tree in church, or want any further information ring **Sandra on 530065**.

Trees may be brought into church up to 4pm on the Thursday and up to 6pm on Friday.

Needless to say that if there is a change in the Tier we are in, it is possible we may have to cancel this event, so watch for the posters. It is our hope that we will be able go ahead and have a bit of our normal Christmas cheer.

On behalf of Churches Together in Goxhill we wish you all Happy Christmas and stay safe.

GOXHILL WOMEN'S INSTITUTE



Goxhill WI would like to thank all the many people who helped with the **Macmillan Coffee Morning**.

Without your efforts our tables would have groaned less.

Our grateful thanks to the very generous supporters whose contributions raised **£701.28**, in spite of the fact we didn't provide coffee.



Future Meetings - Unfortunately, the WI are not anticipating any further meetings and events this year because of the on going Covid19 regulations. **We wish all our friends in the village the best of times and look forward to a happier 2021.**

GOXHILL'S COMMUNITY LIBRARY

Our library is closed at the moment. For information on future plans and how to use Barton Library, please see article on Page 39.

T'AI CHI

Hopefully, T'ai Chi will resume in the not too distant future. For information tel: Janet: 01482 492513

SCRAP FOR SCHOOL SKIP FORCED TO CLOSE

I have reluctantly had to finish the scrap skip. This is due to personal circumstances and because my landlord has told me that I had to get the skip off the land, as well as any cars that I am storing for people.

We have raised over **£10,500** over the past three and a half years, for our schools, for a number of local charities and people with real needs.

It has been an absolute pleasure to do so.

I would just like to say thank you from the bottom of my heart to everybody that used the skip. **Mark Ogilvie**

Mark came up with a brilliantly simple scheme to raise funds that have helped our schools in a huge way over the last few years, as well as other local charities.

He has fought off attempts by the North Lincs Council to close him down and gone from strength to strength, handing over all the considerable proceeds, making nothing out of it himself.

Being forced to stop at a time when the school and charities are really struggling for vital contributions, because they cannot do fund raising events under current restrictions, is a real blow for all concerned.

As one of those delighted to get rid of my scrap metal at Mark's skip, I am really sad that proceeds from our scrap will no longer go to our local causes.

I have to say an enormous thank you to Mark and his family and wish them all the best in the future! **Editor**

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NOTICE BOARD Part 2

Goxhill 200 Club – latest winners

When an opportunity arose to draw winning numbers at a public event, we caught up with our backlog of quarterly jackpots thanks to Sylvia Taylor at short mat bowling on 7th September. Lucky winners that evening, to complete the draws for 2019/20 were:

March jackpot	57	Harriet Sinden	£120
June jackpot	105	Ann Lawtey	£120
August	14	Jacqui Tucker	£18
	87	Mark Oglesby	£18
	275	Lorraine Gibbins	£18
September	28	Caroline Atkins	£18
	64	Glyn Coppack	£120
	193	Joanne Lawson	£18
October (The first of the new 2020/21 draws)	130	Jessica Boff	£19
	195	Iris Thompson	£19
	256	Peter Dickinson	£19

£1,213 was donated to Goxhill Memorial Hall.

The Goxhill 200 Club is open to anyone interested in supporting the running of our Memorial Hall whilst having a bit of a flutter in a local lottery. Half the money collected in subscriptions is donated to Goxhill Memorial Hall and the other half funds monthly prizes. Accounts for 2019/20 have been published in accordance with the Club's constitution. Many thanks to the collectors - Iris, Ann, Caroline, Janet, Jacqui, Jeff and John – for all the time they put in calling on our membership for subscription renewals.

Prizes for the year October 2020 to September 2021 inclusive will be increasing so look out in the next Gander for a list of winners.

To find out more or join the Goxhill 200 Club just email goxhill.200club@gmail.com or telephone 530363. **Rosemarie Guggiari**

Goxhill 200 Club Accounts

Accounts for 01-Oct-19 to 30-Sep-20

Receipts	£
Subscriptions at £10 each	
237 members	2,370
less	
Expenses	nil
Donation to Goxhill Memorial Hall	(1,185)
Prize Fund	1,185
less	
36 monthly prizes at £18	(648)
4 quarterly jackpots at £120	(480)
Carried forward prize fund	57
Barclays Bank account	
Balance at 30-Sep-20	1,297
less	
uncashed prize cheques	(90)
2020/21 subscriptions	(1,150)
	57

PLANT SALE FOR LIVES

We would like to say a big thank you to our fellow villagers who supported our plant sales during the "lockdown" easing towards the end of May / early June. We decided to hold the sale, instead of waiting to see if the Open Gardens would go ahead. Alas this event was not to be this year.

The footfall down Mill Lane certainly increased and we now know many more dogs by name, as well as their owners.

The **£100** proceeds from the sale have now been forwarded to the **LIVES** organisation.

So thank you once again and we hope that your new plants are happy in their new homes.

Lynne & Martin Taylor, Lynmar Cottage, Mill Lane.

THE CARERS SUPPORT SERVICE

Do You Look After Someone Who Could Not Manage Without You?

You are a Carer if you provide unpaid necessary care by looking after an ill, frail or disabled family member, friend or a child with additional needs who could not manage without your support.

The care you provide can be practical, personal, emotional or supervisory. You may need to help with bathing, toileting, grocery shopping, paying bills, doctors' appointments or just be there on the other end of the phone for reassurance.

The Carers' Support Service is here to help all adult Carers who care for an adult or child with additional needs living in North Lincolnshire.

Staff are providing support to carers all the way through COVID. Staff are either working from the office or at home and continue to support all carers registered with us through the pandemic.

Please call to register.

Carers' Support Service on 01652 650585 or visit our website at www.carerssupportcentre.com.



TO HIRE THE MEMORIAL HALL

Use of the Hall is subject to the latest Covid-19 regulations and may not be available for all activities.

The Hall is here for every one and has excellent facilities for events and a number of activities, including carpet bowls, plus full size snooker tables and table tennis. All enquiries and bookings should be made to

Sam England tel: 01469 531097
email: goxhillmemorialhall@gmail.com

THE METHODIST SCHOOL ROOM

Use of the School Room is subject to the latest Covid-19 regulations and may not be available for activities.

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NOTICE BOARD Part 3

GOXHILL CALENDAR 2021

A huge thank you to everyone that submitted their photographs for next year's calendar and thank you to those of you taking the time to vote for your favourites.

We know that the calendar voting was quite a challenge this year but our grateful appreciation goes to Ferne Carmichael for organising the electronic voting system and we thank the Memorial Hall for allowing the actual display of all the wonderful entries in a window, plus the Co-op and Scissor Box for voting boxes. Thanks also to Jeff Teasdale for all his input into designing the 2021 calendar.

The waiting is over. Congratulations to Lucy Frejszyn for winning the front page position and to Leona Cook who won the junior entry!

Did your photo get voted by the villagers for The Goxhill Village 2021 calendar? You'll have to buy one (or more) of the beautiful, full colour, A4 size, calendars to find out.

The calendar is now hot off the press and costs just **£6.00**. Available at - **The Co-op, the School office and Conifer Cottage, North End.** Or you can order by telephone - **01469 530138** or email to **goxhill.calendar@gmail.com**

Please look out for the posters informing you of any other ways to purchase copies of the calendar, if Covid 19 restrictions allow.

A perfect Christmas present that reflects our beautiful village.

A big thank you to everyone who submitted their fabulous photographs, they were of an exceptionally high standard this year and congratulations to those who are now in print!

Don't forget to keep snapping those beautiful photos in preparation for our next one!!

All proceeds will go to All Saint's Church and Goxhill Methodist Chapel.

Penny Carnell - for Friends of All Saints Church.

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NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE BEEKEEPERS

We do not expect to be able to hold any meetings for the rest of this year.

However, we are hoping to hold our AGM at Broughton Village Hall on Monday 25th January 2021 if circumstances allow. Please check our website, details at the end of this notice.

I will be standing down as Secretary at this meeting but Teresa Graham from the village will continue to keep the readers of the Gander up to date with our activities. Teresa can be contacted on teresagraham.nlbkd@gmail.com

Kevin Seddon - Secretary North Lincolnshire Beekeepers District. Tel 07505 821228

email - kevinbeeseddon@gmail.com
website - www.northlincsbeekeepers.org.uk

Facebook Group -

www.facebook.com/groups/northlincsbeekeepers/

THE SHED PROJECT

I can no longer work due to my disability, so as a hobby, I decided to set up the Shed Project. This project is to raise awareness of young people and adults' suicide and to offer help and support.

To raise funds to set it up and get a shop/workshop as a base, I decided to organise craft/table top fairs and evening social events.

The fairs I am planning for next year at Goxhill are as follows - **24th April, 17th July, 4th December**

So if there are any local crafters and sellers that would like a stall, please get in touch.

I would love it if the wonderful residents of Goxhill will come and support us to get this project started.

Please contact me on **07308149122** or email **shedproject19@gmail.com**

For more information see us on facebook -
THE SHED PROJECT **Tracy Russell**

DEADLINE FOR THE SPRING EDITION OF THE GANDER

Please have submissions in by Mon 1st February for distribution first week of March (for all date sensitive information)
email: editor@goxhillgander.com or contact **Jeff Teasdale** on **07774 671175**

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SHORT AWARD 2020

It is rather ironic and sad that, because of lockdown and subsequent restrictions, we have not been able to present Emma Louise Maynard with her much deserved award, at a suitably important event.

So one day before the second lockdown, I made a low key presentation of her certificate and gift voucher (from a suitable distance).

No doubt just in time for her to be back into full involvement helping those in the village most badly affected by Covid 19. It was her tireless work setting up and running the online support network, at the start of the lockdown in March, that was recognised by the village for this special Community Award.

Her name has also been added to the distinguished list of former winners on the plaque, proudly displayed in the Memorial Hall.

Editor



NOTICE BOARD - Arts & Entertainment

The Ropewalk

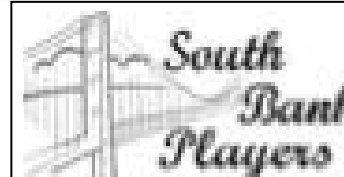
Christmas at The Ropewalk

Why buy online or travel further afield when The Ropewalk's Craft Gallery in Barton can provide that perfect Christmas gift?

The Ropewalk, which has been awarded Good to Go status by Visit Britain, indicating it is following government Covid-19 guidelines and keeping everybody as safe as possible, has plenty of Christmas gift ideas on show that cannot be found on the High Street.

There are displays of jewellery, ceramics, prints, leather goods, textiles, glass and cards at prices to suit all pockets as well as gift vouchers for both The Ropewalk (including the Ropery Coffee Shop) and Ropery Hall. For those who still feel uncomfortable shopping The Ropewalk has expanded its on-line shop and that now includes jewellery, textiles, ceramics, prints and a section dedicated to Barton's heritage.

If on-line shopping isn't for you then give Craft Gallery Manager, Devon, a call and she will do all she can to help. The online shop can be found at <https://www.the-ropewalk.co.uk/shop/> and the number to ring is 01652 660380.



The South Bank Players have been unable to hold indoor rehearsals since March, but we have still managed to produce something!

We have created a radio play version of 'Shelter From the Bombs' which was written by member (and Goxhill resident) Martin James, and performed on stage back in 2018. We made a film version last year (DVDs of this are still available via our website www.sbplayers.co.uk). The new radio play will be broadcast on Barton FM in the near future so listen out for it!

As the Ghost Walk will not be able to go ahead this year, we decided to film it! (In a socially distanced manner of course). We've captured all the stories and effects of the real walk, and the film will be available online soon. Please keep an eye out on our Facebook page for news of where and when. If you've never been on the ghost walk before, this is your chance to take part from the comfort of your own home - no need to get cold! Even if you have seen it before, there are a few new additions that you won't have heard - and you might see some special effects that you missed in the live version (because it's almost impossible to see everything). Our next project will be to record some of the ghost stories for Barton FM.

Even though the adults can only meet remotely at the moment, we would still welcome new adult and junior members. Please email admin@sbplayers.co.uk if you would like further information.

POTTY PANTO PLAYERS

As the name suggests we have been primarily an amateur dramatic group, focusing on pantomimes. Over the last twenty years we have had tremendous fun performing panto's locally and in turn have raised thousands of pounds for the Lindsey Lodge Hospice as well as financially supporting other local causes, L.I.V.E.S. Goxhill Church roof fund, Field View Nursery, Bowmandale School play equipment fund, Wish upon a star, to name a few.

Sadly we have recently decided to give up the pantos, as it has become increasingly difficult (due to age and work commitments) to cast, rehearse and produce these performances.

Having made (and sadly lost) many friends throughout the last twenty years we have acknowledged that we would miss the social side of the group as well as all the fun we have had performing, and so we have decided we will continue as an am dram group and will present the odd comedy nite and comedy plays as and when we can arrange our schedules to allow us to do so.

On behalf of the group we would like to thank everyone who has supported us throughout our "journey" and hope that when we are ready to perform once again, you will continue to do so. Kindest regards **Lynne Brocklesby**



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NOTICE BOARD - Memorial Hall

Goxhill Memorial Hall
 Writing this on the 1st November, I look back at October and see a real mixed bag of highs and lows. At the Memorial Hall, the Short Mat Bowls group decided to take a break from playing. After coming back for a couple of weeks, Tai Chi then chose the same option. All month we've been plagued by hearing about the increasing infection rates everywhere. It's making everyone very nervous. Contacting local stall holders about having a Covid compliant Christmas Craft Fair only elicited six positive replies, resulting in the Fair's cancellation. Plans to re-open the Snooker Room were "snookered" by the ongoing threat of a lockdown.

On the plus side however....we applied for a grant from National Grid for replacement windows and new carpets, and were successful. **A Great Big Thank You to National Grid!** We'll get on with organising that as soon as we can.

The October Fotofrolic competition produced a flurry of late submissions, bringing the numbers up to 150 photos. The winners are shown below. It's a shame we didn't have more child entries, but thank you to everyone who did enter. It was such fun seeing all your memories frozen in time.

Due to the Covid restrictions about meetings, the committee has decided not to hold an AGM this year. Our charter requires us to hold an open AGM, which hasn't been possible for a while. We could hold a virtual meeting using ZOOM, (like we do for committee meetings) but we know there are a lot of people in the village who are not comfortable with such things, nor do they have the right computer equipment. Taking all these issues into account, we have decided to defer the AGM until next year. The minutes of the Memorial Hall's committee meetings are all published on the Memorial Hall website. See <https://ann24239.wixsite.com/goxhillmemorialhall/memorial-hall-committee-minutes>. If there are any issues you would like to raise with the committee in the meantime, please contact us at goxhillmemorialhall@gmail.com.

Finally, as a painless way of donating a small portion of your Christmas bill to your favourite charity we have registered Goxhill Memorial Hall with **Amazon Smile**. If you click on the Amazon Smile link, it will let you select a charity of your choice. If you chose Goxhill Memorial Hall and Recreation Ground, the Hall will receive 0.5% of any purchases you make through Amazon Smile. I know it's not a lot, but since we can't put on craft fairs and such at the moment, every little helps.

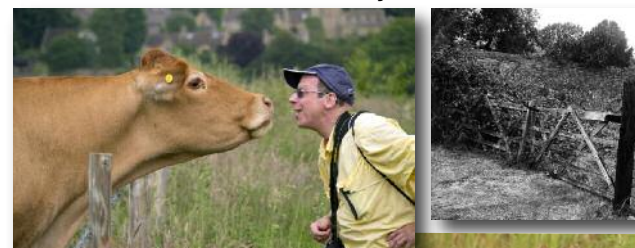
Until next time, stay safe out there. **Ann Carter - Secretary**
 For further information Phone **530635** or email goxhillmemorialhall@gmail.com

WINNERS OF THE FOTOFROLICS COMPETITION

We had a 160 entries across the board but disappointingly very few from children. The high quality and wide variety made it hard for our two judges, working independently, to pick single winners. All the Fotofrolic submissions will be displayed on The Goxhill Grapevine during November. Below are some of the brilliant entries.

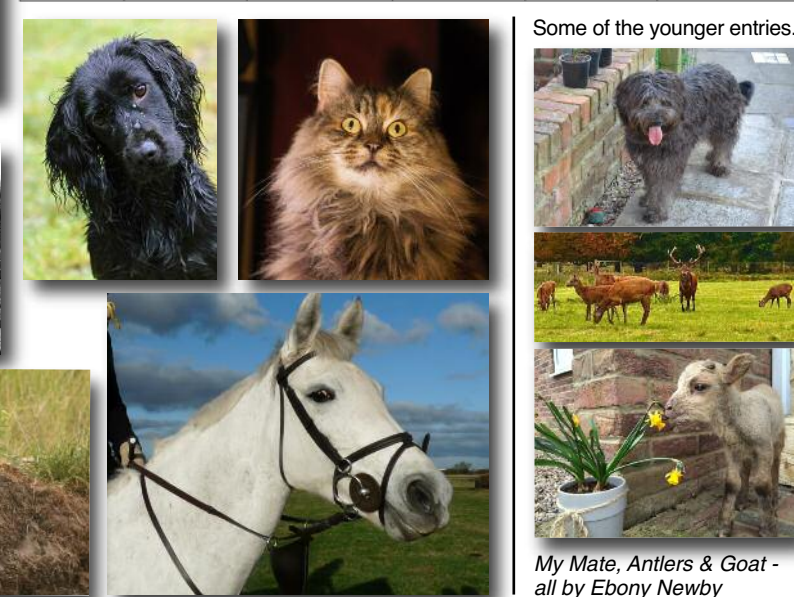


Best in Show - Pastoral Mirror by D Gammon



Photographs clockwise from above - Cow do you do? - by D Gammon, Gateway - by Alex Lowe, Poised - by D J Atkin, Hazel - by Michael Oates, Rosie, ready to go and Fox cubs playing - both by Maureen Douglass.

The Great Outdoors			Pets- Dogs		
16+	D Gammon	Pastoral Mirror	16+	J Atkin	Poised
11-15 yrs	Annouska Lowe	Harvest Time /Staying grounded	11-15 yrs	Ebony Newby	My Mate
Under 11yrs	Alex Lowe	Gateway		Annouska Lowe	Daisy Dreams
Humorous			Under 11	Alex Lowe	Daisy
16+	T Carter	5 swans a-sleeping	Pets - Horses		
	D Gammon	Cow do you do?	16+	Maureen Douglas	Rosie, ready to go
Pets -Cats			Pets -Other animals		
16+	Eva Border	Spring Sunshine	16+	Maureen Douglas	Muntjac deer/Fox cubs
	Michael Oates	Hazel	11-15yrs	Ebony Newby	Antlers/Goat
11-15 yrs	Annouska Lowe	Chillin'			



Some of the younger entries.

My Mate, Antlers & Goat - all by Ebony Newby



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GOXHILL PRIMARY SCHOOL REPORT

It has been a very busy start to the school year and one that has not been without many challenges. Our children and staff across the federation are an absolute credit to our schools and the local communities of which they are a part. It was a delight to welcome the children back into their classes and see the broad range of learning opportunities that have been offered to ensure that they are receiving a full and enriching curriculum. The children have demonstrated great resilience and have coped admirably (with little opportunity for transition) to the new school life that we have all come to know. Ensuring that our children, staff and parents feel safe and supported has been one of our key priorities this term and there will continue to be a huge focus on 'well-being' throughout future challenges and uncertainties that we will inevitably face.

In order to raise spirits both in our schools and local communities and provide a positive focus for all, we are having a huge push on the development of new and exciting fund raising events. This will enable us to reach out further into the community and continue to provide enrichment opportunities that extend beyond the classroom.

Teaching the children to save up for and work as a team for the resources that they would like to purchase, is allowing us the opportunity to teach an invaluable skill that will last a lifetime.

Hayley Twidale (Assistant Head Teacher)

The Halloween Pumpkin Trail, written by Anna Bowskin

The Halloween pumpkin trail was an idea I had once trick or treating wouldn't happen due to Covid-19. I didn't want the children to miss out on a tradition and as we were unable to host a Halloween disco at the school to raise funds, I had to think of something 'Covid friendly'.

Parents and family members were invited to carve a pumpkin to display outside their home, after a plea went out on social media. We had a fantastic response of around 40 pumpkins. A letter would be displayed with each pumpkin that would form a phrase that families would need to work out as they went around the trail.



Pumpkin packs were sold at £2 per child. (these included some Halloween themed activities and a trick or treat bag of sweets). Also included in the packs was a map of the village with approximate positions of pumpkins which detailed a shorter and a longer trail in an attempt to meet the needs of all and an answer sheet.



A total of almost 130 pumpkin packs have been sold to raise funds towards greatly needed new iPads for our school.

Children were invited to wear their Halloween costumes too and the event ran from Thursday 29th October to Sunday 1st November (10am to 8 pm). Families could go out at their leisure and do as much or as little as time will allow and the event has been spread over several days to avoid congestion.

We are looking forward to receiving feedback from this event and seeing lots of photographs (see page 23).

Our next project to support our I-pads fund:

The 'Copper Challenge'

Each year group will have a large jar in their classrooms. Families will be invited to bring in any loose change / coppers to add to this jar. At the end of each term, the money will be counted to see how much each class has raised and a small treat will be awarded.

Once we have purchased enough I-pads, the children (through the school council) will be asked what else they would like to spend the money on that they raise to give them some ownership over the fundraising.



Afternoon Tea Fundraiser

Before lockdown, a homework task was set. How can we raise money within our Federation for I-pads? One pupil suggested we hold a 'Mother's Day afternoon tea'. The date was set and lots of orders were taken. However, due to new rules put in place the week of the event, unfortunately it could not go ahead. The unanimous thought was, during times like these, people would need their spirits lifting and so we decided that we'd deliver the yummy treats to the doors of the families instead. The little packages were full of delicious scones, sausage rolls, a slice of cake and other sweet treats! It was such a great success and the families loved it! The staff may have indulged a little too! We raised over £250 for the Federation.

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School article continued from p 17

We have, therefore, decided to hold another afternoon tea fundraiser (however, these will be collected instead). A Christmas themed afternoon tea with some of your festive favourites! Gingerbread, mince pies and more!

We look forward to sharing these and future events with you and we thank you for your continued support.

PIPs (Parents in Partnership).

Should you wish to join our school fundraising committee (PIPs), please contact the school. We would love to welcome you on board. **01469 530743.**



Christmas Afternoon Tea!

Christmas fundraiser to raise funds for new iPads for our school!

Afternoon tea's will be prepared by our kitchen staff and will be sent home with the children on the last day of term (Thursday 17th December). To secure your yummy treat(s), please ensure you have ordered and paid for them via ParentMail by Tuesday 1st December.

Adult Menu

- Cheese scone with butter & chutney
- 2 mini sausage rolls
- A mince pie
- A mini plum bread
- A slice of tray bake (lemon, plain or chocolate)
- Fudge

Children's Menu

- Cheese scone with Dairy Lea
- 1 mini sausage roll
- Festive cupcake
- Festive biscuit
- Candy cane
- Small chocolate Santa

Prices

Adult.....	£5
Childs.....	£2.50
Family (2 x Adult & 2 x Children).....	£12



Well, did trying to work out the Halloween phrase make your brains hurt? If you're still trying to work it out...don't look right! What a fantastic effort you Goxhillites made of your Halloween displays- it was an utter delight walking round & seeing them all! We sold over 130 pumpkin packs, your generosity was second to none with your donations of sweets for the trick or treat bags!

I took dozens of photos to go on the website. You can see a few on **Page 23!**

And finally, thank you to you to parents, grandparents & family members for taking part in the trail with your children, the feedback has been overwhelming! Stay safe everyone! **Anna Bowskin**

Longer trail (white letters)

**Trick or treat
Bags of sweets
Ghosts are walking down
the streets**

Shorter trail (green letters)

**A haunting we will go!
Now you can all sleep at
night!**

News from Goxhill Methodist Chapel

Advent is supposed to be a time of preparation, but it's very difficult to prepare when we don't really know what the event will look like. Christmas is coming, but what tier of restriction will we be facing? How much earlier than usual do we need to order the turkey or the presents? And what about the elderly relative who'd usually visit but can't leave their home due to coronavirus? After a year of isolation and sacrifice, we all need Christmas – a time when it feels normal to not leave the house, watch TV all hours and, increasingly these days, make many essential purchases online.

For many, church is also a part of their Christmas tradition. For many Goxhill families over so many years, Christmas Eve has meant attending Sandra Smith's lovely Crib service, placing the knitted figures of the Nativity story in their place. Some years we've had approaching 100 people of all ages sharing delight in the greatest story ever told. We are so sad that this year, like so many other things, it cannot take place.

There's just no way we can do social distancing with so many children and such an active service. The law says the chapel is only allowed a maximum of 30 worshippers and

we need to be safe and legal, even if this means not being able to celebrate Christmas in the ways we are used to.

However, we are not doing nothing. There are some things that, with enough time for preparation, we can manage. The chapel has been closed since March, but we will be re-opening at the start of Advent for some special services. Our first service since the spring will be at 10.30am on 29 November, the first day of Advent - which doesn't actually begin on 1 December as the chocolate-filled calendars would have you believe. At 3pm on Sunday 20 December the chapel will host a traditional Christmas service and, even without permission to sing those favourite carols, we will still be able to celebrate Jesus' birthday. We will continue with one service a month at the beginning of 2021, with services on the third Sunday, 17 January and 21 February.

And whether or not we are open for services, our minister **Revd Enid Knowles** is available if needed. Enid can be contacted on **01652 680683** or by email to **eknowles@farnworth.plus.com**

Adam Ellis (aje15782@btinternet.com)

DEADLINE FOR THE SPRING EDITION OF THE GANDER

Please have submissions in by Mon 1st February for distribution first week of March (for all date sensitive information)
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Lincolnshire Charity LIVES proudly celebrates 50 years of saving lives!



This year LIVES, Lincolnshire's Community First Responder Charity, is turning 50! It has come such an incredibly long way from when it was founded all those years ago by DR Cooper and DR Harper-Smith. Today

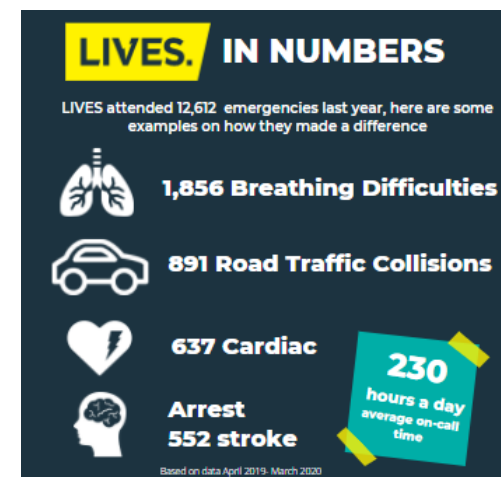


we have an army of dedicated Responders who come from all walks of life but give hundreds of hours each month to respond to 999 medical emergencies in their local community. As we all know Lincolnshire is an incredibly unique county for its rural landscapes and country roads, however this can cause problems for many Ambulance crews trying to respond to a patient in need when time is critical. This is where LIVES Responders make the difference day in and day out. Due to the fact that they are based in the very heart of the communities that they look after they can be at a patient's side, within minutes. More often than not, assessing the patient and delivering the first medical treatment.

Of course we had big plans for celebrating our landmark anniversary this year but unfortunately a global pandemic put pay to that! We were lucky enough though to be able to celebrate at Doddington Hall earlier this year. We were able to invite Responders and supporters alike to join us for a socially distanced celebration and also enjoy some cake. It was lovely to be able to greet people and also hear the stories of their involvement with the charity over the years. Something we look forward to doing a lot more of next year.

Although COVID put a stop to a lot of our plans, it didn't stop our responders from looking after their local communities. As the nation settled in to lock down, large numbers of our Responders signed themselves up to help the Lincolnshire Resilience Forum. This saw them going out to visit the most vulnerable people in their communities and delivering food and medical packages as well as performing welfare checks in full PPE. They were always ready to respond at a moment's notice.

We are very proud of all of our Responders and the work that they do, but we can only continue to do this with the support of people like you. If you would like to find out more about LIVES, then you can visit our website or drop us an email at fundraising@lives.org.uk. You can see more of what we are up to as well as ways that you can support our charity.



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Could you help to save LIVES?

Lincolnshire Integrated Voluntary Emergency Service is a

registered charity (number 1098364) training volunteer First Responders to attend 999 emergencies and offer medical help until an ambulance arrives. Every LIVES volunteer requires a minimum of three things: a genuine desire to help people; use of a car; and a few spare hours each week to be on call. Whilst prior first aid experience would be great; it is not necessary as all training is provided. All equipment and comprehensive training in how to use it are provided at no cost to you. You receive support from experienced responders, probably accompanying one of them to calls until you feel ready to attend solo. Regular debriefing and refresher training ensure that lessons learned and issues encountered by your local team members is shared and peer support available. With responders moving out of the area, new volunteers are regularly needed.

It costs around £3,000 a year to run the local group covering Goxhill, Barrow & New Holland. Expenses include affiliation to LIVES for accreditation and insurance, renewal of medical equipment, replacement of medical consumables as they are used, and the mobile phone bill. So, fundraising on behalf of LIVES is also hugely important and, most recently in this regard, the group is grateful to **Aileen Hanlon-Bennett** and **Lynne and Martin Taylor** (see articles on pages 9 and 33).

If becoming a First Responder or fundraising for the group are of interest to you, please contact Damian Connolly by telephoning **07747499331** or **530656** or emailing connolly.dam@gmail.com to find out more.

John Guggiari



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LANDSCAPING PROPOSALS for the area off Chapel Street leading to Vicar's Bridge

Two plans have been submitted to the Parish Council to make this area a natural asset for the village that will encourage wildlife and insects.

One features areas of flower borders with large grassy areas. The other features large wildflower areas with additional shrubs and cherry trees, plus bird boxes and a bug hotel. Both include seating so it can be enjoyed as a peaceful haven.

The plans are due to be discussed at the December PC meeting so any comments or choices should be made to the clerk to the council before 3rd December or as soon as possible.

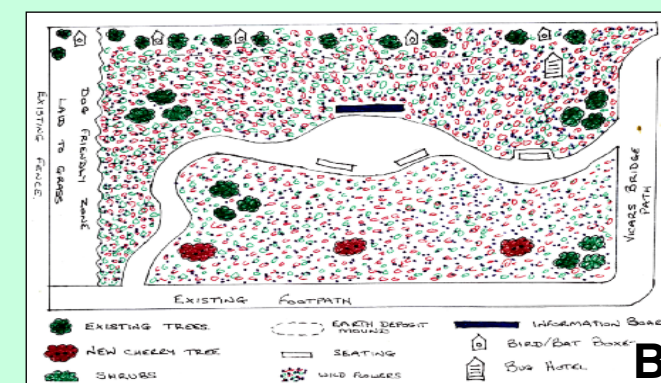
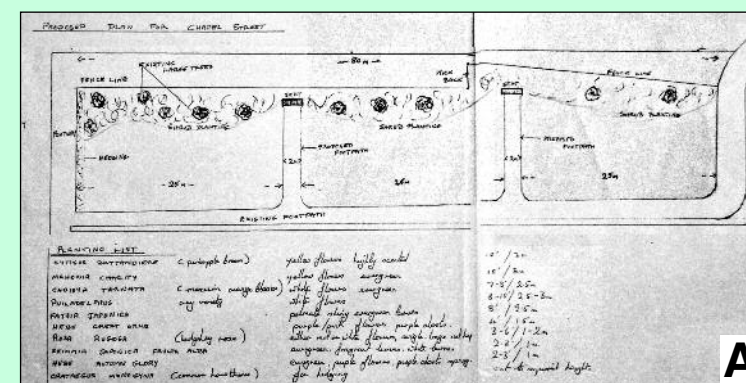
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Email: goxhillparishcouncil@gmail.com

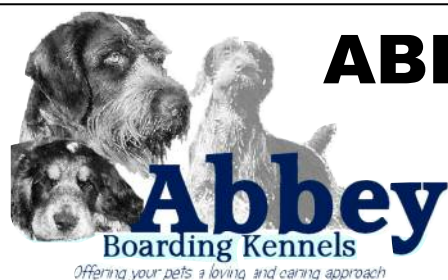


STOP PRESS

Honey Fungus has been discovered on this land. One affected tree has already been removed, more may need to be removed too and remedial work will need to be carried out by NLC in the future. This could delay the timing of the landscaping plans. But please still send any comments / preferences about these two plans into the PC as soon as possible.



A comment from a reader. I was disappointed the Proposal for a Community led, Conservation Wild flower area and an alternative plan by the Parish Council, were not discussed at the November meeting. A Conservation area would be a treasure trove of flora and fauna for a variety of Butterflies and of course Bees which are in decline. The plans are time sensitive so I hope a decision can be made as soon as possible and should the wild flower Conservation Proposal be adopted, ideally it should commence immediately if there is to be a show of flowers next year. **Kevin Seddon**



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2020 - photographs from Goxhill School



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Mixing the secret potion, these Goxhill Witches were busy on 30th Oct 1969. Picture by David Lee Photography for the Lincolnshire Times.

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Bird And Wildlife Sightings by Steve Routledge

Pink-footed Geese & Starlings, East Halton

Another compilation of sightings here from my local birding patch at East Halton/Goxhill on the banks of the Humber Estuary.

Again some great sightings included here, with some impressive numbers of wildfowl, including my highest count of Pink-footed Geese for the local patch and a particularly good day on the 3rd November for witnessing this.



Bar-tailed Godwits, Goxhill Haven

30th October Today I covered the area between Winter's and the Skitter and a decent start first thing at Winter's saw 4611 Pink-footed Geese leaving their roost on Cherry Cobb Sands and heading over to feed for the day, an impressive sight and sound for sure.

On Winter's itself, 466 Greylag were present, a decent count, with 53 Dunlin, 400 Lapwing, 114 Teal and 52 Redshank in the area also.

A walk down the edge of the mitigation area today revealed 2 female Stonechat, a roosting Short-eared Owl and the adult Peregrine was still here, after my initial sighting on the 6th October.

A good wander around the Skitter pools to try and find a Jack Snipe drew a blank, but 3 Water Pipit were flushed, the first of the autumn/winter period and 2 Rock Pipit fed along the shoreline here. Other species observed around the Skitter included a single adult Whooper Swan, possibly the returning individual from the last couple of Winters? a pair of Stonechat, 3 Marsh Harrier (2 juveniles and a 2nd calendar year male), 13 Avocet and 2 Bearded Tit.

1st November Full coverage of the patch was achieved today, albeit in some poor weather at times, but perseverance certainly paid off with a cracking juvenile female Hen Harrier being seen, hunting between the Skitter and Dawson City in the morning and then seen at the Skitter Pools and along the Beck in the afternoon. This bird was carrying a satellite tag and had been ringed in a nest in southwest Scotland. Amazingly 2 days later she was in North Yorkshire, not a great place for a Hen Harrier to be!

Other niceties seen around on today's visit included the adult Peregrine again, on the fields adjacent to the mitigation site and some nice wader counts in the Goxhill Haven area, including 95 Turnstone, 37 Grey Plover and 226 Dunlin.

A flock of 400 Pink-footed Geese gave some lovely views in a grass pasture near Ruins Pond, but had no other species in amongst them unfortunately.

3rd November. I started a little later today, but it was a brilliant visit regarding Wildfowl.

To start the visit I was just getting my gear ready at the car, when 39 Whooper Swan flew overhead and south, followed about 60 minutes later by another 26, just great to see and hear their lovely trumpeting contact calls.

Winter's held very little, with only 9 Tufties for my trouble and 298 Greylag, but a small increase in Robins, Dunnocks and Thrushes was noticeable.

Along Marsh Lane and Skitter Road, the above was again noticeable, with more Robins and Reed Buntings than normal and 2 Lesser redpoll were noted overhead, not a common bird on my patch at all.

A Chiffchaff was seen at East Halton Grange and on the adjacent fields and area 3 Common Buzzard, 78 Carrion Crow and 49 Jackdaw were all logged.

I then concentrated all the rest of my visit in the Skitter to Ruins Pond area, hoping to find something good and it was pretty productive to be fair.

First goodie, was unbelievably another Hen Harrier, this time a juvenile male watched hunting along the Skitter Pools, before disappearing along the beck and inland. This was a much slighter bird than the big female seen on 1st and was great to see.

I could hear a flock of Pink-footed Geese in the near distance, but before I could go and investigate, 6 Barnacle Geese flew in and landed on the mud just off the Skitter and a I took some video before going and looking at the Pink flock. I spent at least an hour looking through this flock grilling them for Graham's Greenland White-front or Bean Goose, but didn't see them. But on a positive note another 5 Barnacle Geese were mixed in with the flock, these were soon joined by the 6 from the Skitter. This flock contained



Male Bearded Tits, Goxhill Marsh

about 3200 birds a decent increase on the 1st.

I also noticed a leucistic Pink-footed Goose in amongst the flock, making for some interesting viewing and after some investigating, this bird has also been seen in Scotland and Norfolk in recent weeks, just going to show how much these feeding and migrating flocks of Pink-footed Geese move about around the country.

Other sighting's in the area included 67



Pink-footed Geese, East Halton

Article continued on p27

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Bird sightings article continued from p25

Avocet, the 3 Water Pipit and 6 Stonechat and as time wore on, the 3200 Pinks from near Ruins Pond flew across the Estuary to roost at Cherry Cobb, followed by flocks of 254, 580, 120, 125 & 2500, the latter flock at last light making for a fantastic end to a brilliant visit, with the sight and sound of these lovely Icelandic visitors summing up perfectly my local birding scene for the winter.

I was able to get out both days of this weekend, which was most probably the last roll of the dice to try and find something 'nice' in the forecasted south easterly airflow over the coming two days. The following is what I saw, with an incredible day on Sunday.

7th November. The forecast of fog wasn't too bad as I arrived at Winter's Pond and I quickly got ready for my day on the patch.

On Winter's first thing, 668 Greylag on the main lake and a flock of 7 Barnacle Geese flying north west, were the forerunner to a decent patch Goose day. As I walked along Marsh Lane and Skitter Road, the usual suspects were encountered and as I reached



Pink-footed & Barnacle Geese, East Halton Grange

East Halton Grange, the lovely sight and sound of at least 4000 Pink-footed Geese were feeding on stubble there. Sure enough the Barnacles had joined them and I carefully scanned through the flock just in case any other species were mixed in with them.

A few other birds around the Grange included 2 Mistle Thrush and a good sized flock of 600 Starling.

The Skitter as always provided some great sighting's, with the best being a stunning male Merlin perched up and then bombing down the becksides after its lunch, a lovely sight indeed.

Other nice sighting's logged included, 3 Water Pipit around the Skitter pools, 5 Stonechat, a juvenile Marsh Harrier, 49 Avocet and a single Rock Pipit

On the Humber, a lone juvenile Gannet flew north, the second record of the year for me.

As time wore on, the spectacular sight of at least 6000 Pink-footed Geese heading to roost was just amazing to watch and hear and was a great end to the day.

8th November. Today's visit has to go down as one of the most incredible days birding I have had on my patch so far and I nearly didn't come down due to fog.

I met up with Jon after arriving a little late and we walked towards the Skitter along the flood bank seeing some great birds on the Mitigation area. This included a new for the year species, Woodcock. The bird was flushed as we walked and we watched as it crashed into undergrowth to roost out the rest of the day.

Other good sightings along here included 4 Stonechat, a juvenile Marsh Harrier, a single Water Pipit and a definite increase in numbers of Meadow Pipits and Reed Buntings. Surely there had to be something good lurking somewhere!



The Rookery, East Marsh Road, Goxhill

A good tramp around the Skitter area revealed a further 4 Water Pipit, 16 Meadow Pipit and 2 Rock Pipit and also another 3 Stonechat.

After saying goodbye to Jon as he headed back to his car, I carried on towards Dawson City, this proved to be a stellar decision.

I was just walking past the entrance to Dawson when an explosive 'Spiz' call made me jump into action as a Pipit flew out of the trees and out into the saltmarsh. There was only one thing in my mind which this could be, but I was inland on my patch not at Spurn!

I set my phonescoping kit up and steadily walked into the saltmarsh and the bird flushed again with two blasts of that distinct 'Spiz' call again, as it dived into a nearby reedbed, this had to be an Olive-backed Pipit!

I took my phone out and went to Hannu Janne's album of Eastern Vagrant birds and quickly selected Olive-backed Pipit. This had the desired affect as the bird flew out of the reedbed and began flying around me with a distinct 'Sitt' call, before flying over to a bankside Hawthorn where I got my first perched views of my first self found 'OBP'.

By this time I was shaking and was fumbling around trying to get my phonescoping kit out and record some video. To be honest, I just could not believe what I was seeing. The bird showed really nicely before being flushed back into the Saltmarsh by dog walkers, as I quietly swore at them to ... go somewhere else. I then left the bird where it had landed and waited for GPC to arrive.

When Graham arrived, we walked the saltmarsh again and the bird flew, this time without calling and dived into another reedbed, not the best views at all, but at least he had seen it.

As we searched for the Pipit, I saw a Phylloscopus flycatching along the reed edge which I didn't really get a 100% look at and I thought it gave a 'tuck' call, but soon lost the bird. I said to Graham I had just had an interesting Phylloscopus, but I couldn't relocate it. Hindsight is a wonderful thing and I should have spent more time looking for this bird, but I was more interested in getting Graham onto the Pipit properly.

By this time it was beginning to get towards dusk and I said goodbye to Graham and began walking back to the car at East Halton and left Graham with the Pipit and the mystery Warbler. Imagine my surprise when Graham rang me to say

that it was a Dusky Warbler!!! and had been calling. Amazing!! There wasn't enough time to walk back for another search before dark, so I carried on towards the car.

The Pipit was mad enough, but 2 Siberian vagrants on my patch together, was just crazy and they were also probably roosting in the same reedbed. As far as I'm aware this is unprecedented on the estuary, with only one other record of Dusky

Warbler at Blacktoft Sands RSPB some time in the 90's.

Graham visited again next day and eventually located the Pipit, some 500 metres from where I had originally found the bird, but no sight or sound of the Dusky was had.

I steadily walked back to the car at Winter's to the sight and sound of flying Pink-footed Geese and still in a daze at what had just happened? ... **Birding bloody hell!**

Steve Routledge <https://brachytron.blogspot.com>



Male Stonechat, Dawson City, Goxhill Haven

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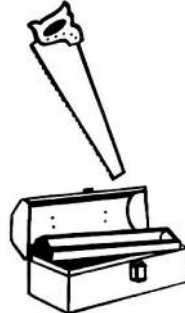
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The stories behind two more names on the Goxhill Memorial WW1 plaque, unravelled.

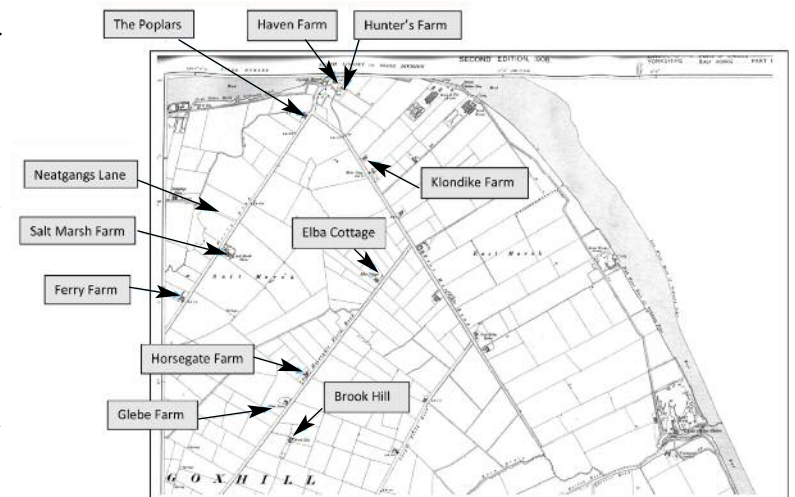
Over the last few weeks I have been helping someone whose step father accidentally bought a box of photographs and cine film at an auction in Carlisle. The only clues were an occasional surname and/or given names which, when investigated, were associated with Hull, Barton and Tealby. He was keen to reunite these valuable items with the right family. At one point he said 'it's like trying to do a 1000 piece jigsaw but with no straight sides'. It has been a bit like that for some of those named on the village WW1 memorials. I'm still working away at George Stephenson Riggall Frost. In the last Gander I said that his mother's address, in Goxhill, after World War 1, was Highfield, Thornton Road. I remembered after I'd submitted the article that I had a copy of a photograph of the Providence Cottage end of Thornton Road. The cottage displays a date stone of 1910. Many house names in the village have changed over the years but perhaps Highfield was one of the houses shown in the photograph. Does anyone know?



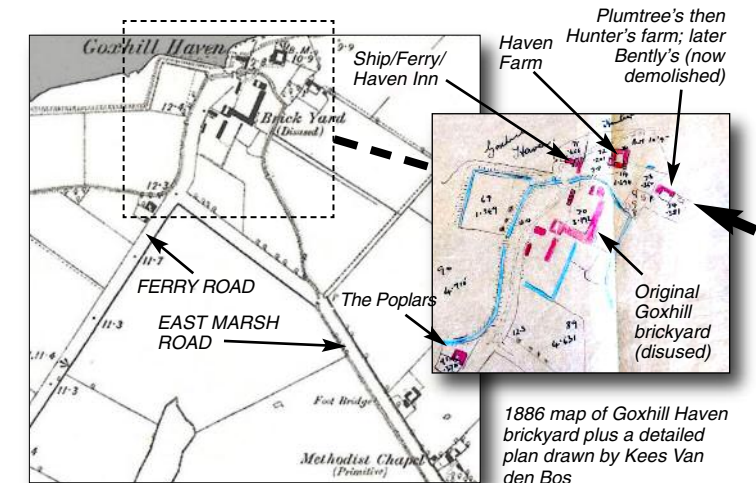
Thornton Road crossroads dated 1913 showing Providence Cottage and other houses on east side of the road. Is one of them Highfield?

Fred Hunter is named on the village war memorials and the initial information in the Gander, Summer 2014, stated that, like George Frost, 'No further information (was) currently available'. A search for 'Hunter' in the 1911 census revealed however that a George William Hunter and his wife Millicent had, within the previous four years, moved his family from Halsham, Yorkshire, which is between Hedon and Withernsea, to a farm in Goxhill Marsh and that one of his eleven children was named John Frederick. A search of military websites detailed the events which led to John Frederick (Fred's) death in France but I was keen to build up a picture of the family and to find out where they had lived.

The 1911 census didn't provide a specific address for the Hunters, just that they were farmers and that the house comprised eight rooms. So the jigsaw puzzle began. The 1911 census of Goxhill (08 and 09) was compiled by two enumerators. This census is divided into two documents, one comprises the individual sheets completed by each household and the other a separate census summary completed by the enumerator, who compiled a list of each head of house, how many males and females there were in the household and also listed business premises and any uninhabited houses. Each enumerator followed a distinctive route which was summarised at the start of the census summary. Each enumerator covered part of the main village then either North or South End, but had 'divided' the Marsh between them.



There were a few small, but useful clues. In census 09 the enumerator stated that he had covered 'all the houses at the Haven excepting Hunters'. It was then that I remembered an uncredited article in Ron Parker's Goxhill Bygones, entitled Reminiscences which stated '...at a farm near Goxhill Haven, first known as Hunters, but in later years known as Bentley's...(the building no longer remains)'. Copies of earlier maps of Goxhill show the original Goxhill Haven brickyard. Other buildings at Goxhill Haven clearly lie to the east of the main drain that runs from East Marsh Road (Bottom Road) and appear to be accessible from a track which runs from East Marsh Road, close to the derelict Klondike Farm. This, I believe, is Hunter's farm and quite possibly the farm in the 1901 census that was the home of the Plumtree family; the 1901 census listed 'all the houses at Goxhill Haven, Dent's house, Plumtree's house' and also records the Plumtrees there in the 1891 census.



Frances Bernice Plumtree married Herbert Moore who is also remembered on the WW1 memorials, and whose CWGC headstone stands in Goxhill churchyard (Gander, Winter 2019).

Fred Hunter worked on his father's farm and, in the fourth quarter of 1914 he married Hannah Mary Easton, who had been born in Goxhill and lived with her parents in South End. I have traced Hannah's family back three further generations to her great grandfather William Easton who married in Goxhill in 1817 and lived



Site of Goxhill Haven brickyard and Hunter's farm (taken from the arrow on the map)

Article continued on p31

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WW1 article continued from p29

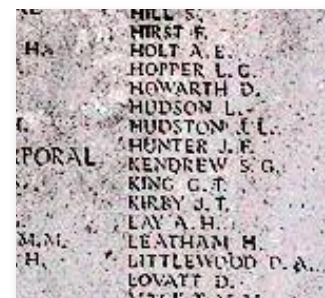
in North End, near Green Ramper. Hannah was one of six surviving children of Charlie and Elizabeth Easton and their only daughter. Whilst interrogating the 1911 census I found that two of her brothers, Jessie and Abel were employed as 'Waggoners' to Frederick Shucksmith, a Farm Foreman at East Marsh Farm, now farmed by Witter Farms.

It is not possible to know where Fred and Hannah lived after their marriage but birth registrations in Gleanford Brigg District show that they had two children, girls named Mary E, born in the second quarter of 1915 and Nancy Millicent, born in the first quarter of 1917 and who was buried in Goxhill churchyard on 23 January 1917. I haven't been able to find any enlistment or pension records relating to Fred Hunter, but I do know that he enlisted in Grimsby, giving his place of residence as Cleethorpes and that he served finally as Private in the 6th Battalion, Leicestershire Regiment.

The record of Fred's effects show that he is 'presumed' to have been 'Killed in Action' on 28 May 1918. His body was never found. He is remembered on the Soissons Memorial, located in the town of Soissons, in the Aisne département of France. The memorial lists 3,887 names of British soldiers with no known grave who were killed in the area from May to August 1918 during the Spring Offensive. This was an offensive by the German army, the third of which commenced on 27 May 1918 and was known as the 'Battle of Aisne'; the German army re-took Soissons in this offensive on 29 May 1918.

Hannah re-married in 1921 and went on to have, I believe, four children with her second husband. She lived eventually in Killingholme, where she and her second husband are buried. Fred's parents, returned, at some point, to Yorkshire, living in the small village of Sproatley, part of the Registration District of Holderness.

John Frederick HUNTER, Private 45600 6th Battalion Leicestershire Regiment. Killed in Action 28 May 1918. Aged 24 years. Born 3 October 1893 Thorngumbald, Nr Ryehill, Yorkshire. Son of George William and Millicent Hunter of East Marsh Road, Goxhill. Husband of Hannah Mary Hunter, possibly of Cleethorpes. No known grave. Commemorated on Soissons Memorial.



Extract from Soissons Memorial - Fred Hunter

Also present in the 1939 census for Sproatley, living between the public house 'Constable Arms' and the butcher's shop, was George and Millicent Hunter's oldest daughter Annie Elizabeth Cockerline. Annie had married, in Goxhill, in the fourth quarter of 1909, indicating that the Hunter family had lived in Goxhill for at least eighteen months prior to the 1911 census. Annie married William (Billy) Cockerline. I can find no evidence that Billy's family had lived in the village; his father, George was listed a Farm Foreman in the 1901 census at Sunk Island, Yorkshire and Billy worked with him as a plough boy. George's death is recorded on 22 February 1911 at Patrington. Billy is recorded in the 1911 Goxhill census with his wife Annie and their son George William, who had been born in 1910. Annie's sister Gertrude Hunter is recorded as a domestic servant. This is where our '1000 piece puzzle with no straight sides' returns, trying to work out where Billy and Annie Cockerline lived, but also realising the impact the war had on the Marsh families.

In the 1911 09 census the enumerator, Joseph Northen, covers much of the main village and North End. At this point there

are a number of entries in Goxhill Marsh which concludes with Israel Hoodless at Totney Hill, John Greetham and James Wilson Birkett on Ferry Road (I'm presuming Ferry Farm and Salt Marsh Farm). Prior to Ferry Road and with my workings the reverse of his, the enumerator has covered the two brickyards to the west of Goxhill Haven, Neatgangs Lane, Hunter's farm and then the Cockerlines. He recorded also, Thomas Gosling, Harry D Milson and Thomas Moore and before that North End; the summary specifically stating that his route included 'Glebe Farm (later to be home of the Foulston Family (Gander, Autumn 2020)), (and) Gosling's Elba Cottage' (now demolished but which stood close to the Horsegate Field Road/East Marsh Road junction).

The 1911 08 enumerator specified that he had covered Brook Hill on the east side of Horsegate Field Road on his census, working down Chapelfield Road from South End then along the 'Bottom', East Marsh Road to Goxhill Haven (missing out Hunter's Farm) but covering everything east of Goxhill Haven.

Billy and Annie Cockerline, I believe, lived at 'The Poplars' on the junction of Ferry Road and East Marsh Road, a house now modernised from how I remember it as a child. Billy and Annie had five sons; George William (b. 17 April 1910), Albert Vernard (b. 25 October 1911), John Frederick (b. 24 February 1913), Cyril Clarence (b. 16 November 1914) and Herbert Kitchener (b. 17 February 1916), all born in Goxhill.

I haven't been able to find any record for Billy's enlistment but know that he served in the 1st Battalion, Lincolnshire Regiment. Billy's medal record card shows that he was in France on 22nd June 1915, meaning he possibly never saw his youngest son. His name is recorded in an online record of those who fought in the Battle of the Somme which commenced on 23 June 1916 with a preliminary artillery bombardment. It is recorded that Billy 'Died of Wounds' on 26 June 1916. He is buried in the Corbie Communal Cemetery Extension, France. The Dependent's Pension records Annie and her five sons living in Goxhill Marsh. There is no further information about Annie or her parents until the 1939 census. However, the 1926 Kelly's Directory lists Cleopas Roper living at The Poplars and a 'Poultry Breeder'. Annie never remarried and her death is recorded in the third quarter of 1949 in the Registration District of Holderness. Her five sons lived into adulthood, living close by, until later in their lives, in the Holderness district.



CWGC headstone of Billy Cockerline at Corbie Communal Cemetery and Extension

William COCKERLINE, Private 15616 1st Battalion, Lincolnshire Regiment. Died of Wounds 26 June 1916. Aged 31 years. Born 15 March 1885 Weeton, Yorkshire. Resident of Goxhill. Son of the late George and Leah Cockerline of Welwick, Patrington. Husband of Annie Elizabeth Cockerline of The Poplars? Ferry Road, Goxhill. Buried Corbie Communal Cemetery Extension, France.

If anyone can provide any further information on any aspect of this article I would be grateful. **Elizabeth Fincham**

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OFF THE HOOF

"I will honour Christmas in my heart and try to keep it all the year." — Charles Dickens

Lockdown - Well here we are again back in lock down for the second time. No one can argue the fact that it has been a very strange year all round. The farmers have struggled to keep up with battling against the elements, which seems to have forced harvesting, haymaking, baling and other crops all to come together, as well as tending any livestock they may have. The knock-on effect is that good clean straw is in short supply and the hay yield could have been of better quality and quantity. Undoubtedly supply and demand will send prices up.

We are still reeling from the first lock down for the pandemic with rules ever changing and being mis-interpreted. More people can be seen wearing masks although I have seen a great increase of litter where masks have been discarded and not put in the bin. This is not just in Goxhill. I am finding that the gel they provide for hand gel or wiping baskets in shops are frequently empty and those in front or behind me make no attempt to use them if they are provided. I thought I would tell a shop assistant, stacking shelves, that both gels were empty and was pleased of the mask hiding my smile at the response "Oh no, not again. People keep using them"!

Fireworks - During the week of bonfire night fireworks have been set off at various homes, obviously because of no social gathering and community displays cannot be had. It amazes me that the number of people that have animals partake in this. Animals, on the whole, do not like them and night after night can be torture for them. I suspect it will be the same at Christmas and New Year, but please have respect for your neighbours and advise them when you will be letting them off, so they have the opportunity to take precautions to safe guard their dog, cats and horses which they may like to bring indoors earlier to avoid distress and possible damage.

Best Kept Village - was written about in the Gander's last edition and I must confess I was embarrassed to read that I was the leader of a band of volunteers. No-one told me otherwise I would have possibly done more, although I set up 23 planters and tended 19 by watering and dead heading. The bath and pig tied for the highest score in the large village section of initiative planting, so an encouraging result with ideas for next year. The scoring and comment sheet showed our weaknesses and those responsible for the areas have taken these on board. At the end of the day it is up to everyone to do their bit to take part and make the village spectacular and alive with colour. Nearer the time perhaps the criteria will be published so everyone knows what we are aiming for. Hanging baskets, window boxes, pots with plants fully maintained, mowed grass and sweep around, all help with the overall appearance. We won by one point over Barrow, who I believe, paid someone to water etc. but it always looks good all year round. I cannot praise the mowing team enough for their expertise and diligence for the way they worked this year and hope it will be repeated next year.

Conservation Area off Chapel Street - for over a year myself and others have been trying to gain permission for use of the green area from Chapel Street to Vicars Bridge. The idea would be a small conservation area set with wild flowers and shrubs and seating areas, bird and bat boxes a large notice board with information of what is potentially living in the area and leave a grass section for the dogs. We have spoken to and agreed the involvement of key people in suitable organisations. The primary school is keen to participate and build a bug hotel and I hope parents will take an active part with their children, if permission is granted. Some of their nature talks could take place there as it is ideally situated from the school. Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust are on hand to give advice and support. I had hoped to confirm permission had been granted in this edition and provide more details as to what would be happening. While it was on the agenda at the last meeting no decision was forthcoming, and it is back on the Parish Council agenda again for their December meeting. Hopefully, at last, we will be given permission to start or they will go with their own plan which I understand to be basically more seating. See article on **page 23** for more details.

Horse and other animal issues - By law all horses, ponies and donkeys in England should now have been microchipped. For Wales and Scotland, the date is February 2021 with everything completed by 28th March 2021. This is an attempt to deter horse thieves and improve traceability. The chip information must appear on the animal's passport.

It has been reported there has been a huge increase in animal welfare cases particularly since the outbreak of COVID-19, where animals have been abandoned or not suitably cared for. Rescue centres are struggling because they are receiving more animals, but donations are down. Recently the RSPCA confiscated, from one person, 100 horses owing to the living conditions and the conditions of the horses, of which two had to be euthanised. In the same raid 100 other animals were also seized.

In the past rescue centres have popped up with good intentions but they all rely on volunteers and donations. Suddenly they are now overwhelmed by too many animals and they cannot support them and that is when things can go horribly wrong. A new code of practice for rescue centres is being trialled in Wales to improve the welfare of animals. Red Wings, World Horse Welfare and the RSPCA are monitoring it to decide if it may be suitable to be rolled out across the rest of the country.

It is well to remember old horses and ponies still need attention, particularly in the winter months to ensure their welfare. Please remember donkeys are native to hot countries so wet and cold conditions may affect their hooves and skin quite quickly. They need to be treated as donkeys and not like a pony.

There is to be a knew Highway Code review looking at

Article continues on p35

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Off the Hoof article continued from p33

those most vulnerable on the road i.e. pedestrians and cyclists. There will be guidance on speed and distancing when overtaking horses included.

Concern has been raised regarding pet owners going online to find a treatment for their ailing pet. Following misdiagnosis, on occasion the remedy has made conditions worse. A veterinary consultation is always advisable. There is a reason why they spend so many years studying for their qualification.

Fundraising - As part of fundraising for our local LIVES, a yard sale was held with great success at my home. We provided a one-way system and social distancing was adhered to as much as possible. This event brought the total raised to £800 so thank you to all those who donated items to sell and to those who gave monetary donations. It is much appreciated and even more welcome in these difficult times. I still have some items of furniture (including a G Plan wall unit), mirrors, dishwasher, etc. which, when sold, will also go to LIVES.



An amazing collection of towels, blankets and clothes for the Pathways hostel.

probably only having the clothes you stand up in; what a difference these items could make. If successful, and many are received, I may go one step further and put them in a gift/bottle bag with something else like soap or shampoo, so again anything along those lines that you have spare. Even bags will make a difference to someone who has nothing at Christmas.

Footpaths - Those who walk our footpaths may be interested to know of an improvement to footpath 53. The broken stile (Ferry road side) has been removed and I have negotiated with North Lincs council to have a 'kissing' gate replace the existing gate. At the other end of this footpath the bridge will be replaced with a wider and safer one with a handrail and the stile removed. There will be a spring on the hand gate to keep it closed. Please remember the countryside code. "If a gate is closed and you go through, please close it securely after you pass". I have had incidents where there is a hand-gate, but people are climbing over the livestock gate adjacent, which damages them, or using the livestock gate and leaving it open. I have had to put padlocks on to safeguard livestock going in the wrong field, which should not be necessary.

Fotofrolic - I am pleased to report that the 'Fotofrolic' photographic competition, organised by the Village Hall Committee, was a great success although, disappointingly, there was a distinct lack of photos of horses. See **page 15** for the winning entries. Hopefully, next year there will be more equine contributions. The next phase is that some of the photos will be produced as notecards and will be sold in packs for the Memorial Hall charity. These are very useful when, last minute, you remember someone's birthday or other occasion or just wanted to say "Hello".

It only remains for me to wish you as good a Christmas as possible under the circumstances and hope everyone stays safe.

Aileen. 01469 530643

PROCEEDS OF THE YARD SALE
The sale of furniture and other paraphernalia raised a fantastic **£800** to go to LIVES.



Aileen presenting the cheque for £800 to Damian Connolly of LIVES.

The amount of donations of bedding, towels and clothes for the homeless at Pathways in Lincoln were also very much appreciated. I would like now to ask for any hats, scarves and gloves that you may have a surplus of, for this charity. Please ask friends and family and gather them up and hold ready for collection, after lockdown, or deliver to Field Farm Foods and possibly the Coop (request being made) where a bin will be available for your deposit. They do not have to be new but if you can imagine being homeless and

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GOXHILL PARISH COUNCIL

Great Expectations

I'm sure that Dickens would forgive me for using one of his titles, but this year it is very apt. The Council, along with many other people and organisations had wonderful plans for remembering, celebration and honouring the 75th anniversary of VE day and VJ day. Decorations, parades, outdoor parties, fetes with outdoor dances to forties music, we discussed it all at great length. Who was doing what where was each amusement to be sighted, all in as much detail as possible.

All our hopes and dreams came to an abrupt end with this horrible pandemic. I know that we are not alone in this disappointment and I'm also aware that to date our area has been very fortunate, but it did nevertheless call a halt to all our good intentions. However, all is not lost in the gloom and despondency, we did have some success this year, we carried out our long term wishes and dreams for the young ones by completing the Skate park, and being able to open the playing field just in time for the completion. We once more won an award for the best kept large village doing even better than last year, thanks to so many for all their hard work, and we only just missed repeating the award for the Cemetery, we know where the fault lay, so we'll try not to repeat the same mistake next year.

Our great expectations did not come to fruition this time, great as they were, so we will carry on regardless 'Zooming' and hopefully in the not so distant future, we might have something more to work on, a project to further enhance the area. Whatever happens we will stay positive.

Playing Field. On this subject I must be more serious, on more than one subject. The soft closing

gate at the entrance to the Playing area is continually being damaged. It is VERY expensive to repair so I would ask that parents do not allow their children to swing on it. I know that it is very tempting but please don't do it.

Secondly, the Skate park signs are being pulled up, litter bins removed, and the behaviour of some young people is not acceptable. So much work has gone into this for their enjoyment, the irresponsible minority should not be allowed to spoil it.

Library Sadly, still closed under restrictions.

Cemetery. Still beautifully maintained by our contractor. The notice board has been repaired and the planting area at the rear will continue to fill and develop.

Millennium Green We have experienced some vandalism to the seats, which were repaired very efficiently by our landscape contractor, for which we are very grateful. A man of many talents. It's nice to see the Green so well used, during this difficult time, a good place to hold distance conversations while walking the dog.

Work will be carried out to the large mature trees on the boundary in the near future, this should ensure safety and allow the smaller trees to develop.

Speedwatch Working well but volunteers are still needed in order to keep up the regular monitoring. Anyone interested please contact the Parish Council Clerk

Freda Dunkley

Useful Contacts for Goxhill Parish Council -

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website: www.goxhillparishcouncil.co.uk

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Community Speed Watch

Community Speed Watch was started in Goxhill, in August of this year.

It has long been called for from concerned villagers who have seen an increase in traffic and speeding of motorists. They are concerned for the safety of Children, who are encouraged to walk to school, the elderly, our postal deliverers, cyclists, horses and pets. Our village roads have either narrow or non-existent footpaths and motorists who exceed the 30 mph limit do not give anyone a chance to find a place of safety.

Humberside Police identified that there was a need for roadside surveillance and since we started we have logged 2,942 vehicles over 15 hours, with 254 registered at 35 mph and over, the highest speed to date being 64 mph! ALL within the 30 mph zone.

We are not there to punish motorists, merely to make motorists aware that the speed limit within the village, is 30 mph. If there are No speed repeater signs and Street Lighting the Speed limit is 30 mph.

We are all volunteers and if you think you can spare an hour or so a month to help, please contact the Parish Clerk for details.

Thanks. Carolyn, Goxhill Community Speed Watch Coordinator.

COMMUNITY SPEED WATCH



In conjunction with
Humberside Police &
Goxhill Parish Council



We're searching for Volunteers

Can you spare a couple of hours a month to make our Parish a Safer Place?

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Warning letters are sent to the registered owner of the offending vehicles with subsequent offending being treated in a stronger way.

If this is something you may be interested in please contact **Parish Clerk – 07834 418338**

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More Information can be found:

**https://www.humberside-pcc.gov.uk/
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GOXHILL BOWLING CLUB

Roll on 2021 to hopefully bowl on

After a lost season of sport for so many of us, Goxhill Bowling Club members are fervently hoping that 2021 will restore lawn bowling to some semblance of normality. Perhaps it's a sport that you've thought about in the past but never managed to find time to try? With that in mind, here's a tale that might tempt you.

A bowls club's top bowler, who had won numerous club and county competitions over the years, was a bit of an enigma both to teammates and opponents. He was well-known for carrying a little black book which he regularly consulted during games but never let anyone else see. Whenever he stood on the mat, with a particularly difficult situation, he would take out this little book and then make a brilliant shot. After he died, so many club members approached the man's widow asking about the legendary book that she agreed with the club treasurer for it to be auctioned off and raise much-needed funds for the club. The auction was held following the next club AGM and, after some very spirited bidding, a member who had often finished runner-up to the now deceased champion, took possession of the much sought after, and now quite expensive, book. He could scarcely wait to take the book home and peruse it but, as he was leafing through the pages, he started to wonder if the widow had cheated him. Every page was blank until he turned the final page to read the words 'Small Circle on the Inside'.

To discover what that punchline's about, find yourself a bowler to tell you or, better still, ask about joining Goxhill Bowling Club to take up bowling in 2021. You can ring me on 530363 or email via our website at <http://goxhill-bowls-club.weebly.com> or by Facebook Messenger. **John Guggiari**

GOXHILL'S COMMUNITY LIBRARY

Virtually as Good as a Book

Unfortunately, the logistics of running a socially-distanced library in such a small space as the Parish Rooms mean that Goxhill Community Library remains closed at the time of writing.

Therefore, if you want to borrow and hold an actual book, your options are limited to visiting one of the larger libraries in North Lincolnshire or making use of the telephone boxes of donated books – one is outside the Parish Rooms on Howe Lane and the other on North End just past the school.

But online it's a different matter, as North Lincolnshire Libraries now offer a host of options free-of-charge. BorrowBox is an e-book and e-audio service available 7 days a week, 24 hours a day. Or if magazines are more your taste then RBdigital offers a wide range of titles - including Auto Express, Good Food, New Scientist and Hello! - to name just a few. These services can be accessed via the North Lincolnshire Council website or downloading the BorrowBox and RBdigital apps.

Free use is provided through your library card number and its associated PIN. If you are not already a library member, or have lost your card, then new library cards can be issued via the North Lincolnshire Libraries Team who can be contacted on library.enquiries@northlincs.gov.uk

John Guggiari



ROTARY CLUB OF BARTON-UPON-HUMBER



Christmas Dinners

Barton Rotary Club can deliver free Christmas Day Dinners to Senior Citizens who may be on their own or have difficulty preparing a meal. Please contact us and we will deliver one to your home on Christmas Day - Turkey and all the trimmings.

Just phone Cynthia Edwards on 07881 650189 with your name and address and telephone number by Thursday 10th December, so that a

club member can contact you to make the delivery arrangements.

AVAILABLE SUBJECT TO THE COVID RESTRICTIONS AT THE TIME.

Encouraging local pupils

Rotary is helping Baysgarth School by donating money to buy vouchers for the school's rewards scheme. The scheme encourages pupils to achieve the school's core values of effort, good attendance, behaviour and respect.

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GIVING BACK TO THE COMMUNITY – This year due to Covid-19 we are supporting Mental Health, raising **£10k to support Fortis Therapy** who are an award-winning organisation to support those in our community whose mental health has been affected, due to stress, anxiety of losing their jobs, their homes and relationships at no cost to them.

The link to our fundraiser is <https://www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/fortistherapyandtraining>

Driver Hire Grimsby and Scunthorpe are again proud to be nominated for an award for our Support in the Community. This is our fourth year in succession that we have been nominated for this award. Jayne O'Flynn has also been nominated for 'Business Woman of the Year' by the Hull and Humber Chamber of Commerce.

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Update from National Grid River Humber Gas Pipeline Replacement Project

By Steve Ellison, Lead Project Manager

Work over the winter

With our replacement gas pipeline installed within our tunnel under the Humber, activity at our Goxhill site is now focused on the finishing touches to prepare the pipeline for operation. Once we have completed our range of tests and connected the new pipeline to the UK's gas network, it will be fully operational, transporting up to 25% of the UK's gas supply.

As you know it's been a phenomenal feat of engineering and a world record breaking one at that. Having that confirmed this month by Guinness World Records at an online award ceremony really was the icing on the cake for all the team.



Steve Ellison with the Guinness World Record

We're on track with the timeframe set out for the project and we expect to finalise the pipeline's commissioning by the end of this year. This is the most significant milestone for our project as it will mark its successful completion of the pipeline and the accumulation of years of hard work and record-breaking engineering.

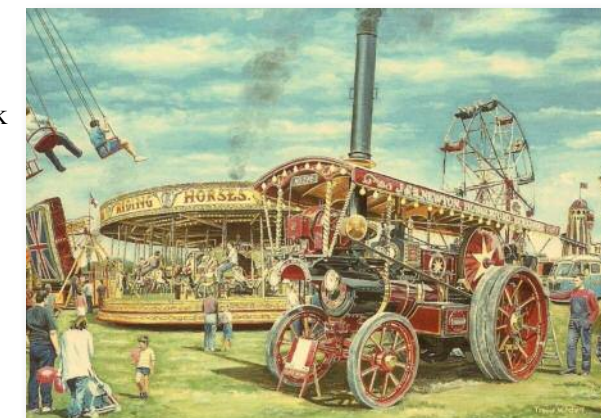
With the new pipeline in operation, the existing pipeline crossing the river can then be decommissioned and retired out of service.

Demobilising our Goxhill site Alongside this engineering, we continue to gradually demobilise our Goxhill site. We removed much of the stone foundations, accommodation buildings and engineering equipment in the autumn and we expect to complete the full demobilisation of our Goxhill site by the end of winter. Once complete, the land will be returned to exactly how it was before we arrived, which should be complete by the end of summer 2021.

Keeping in touch. If you need to get in touch, please contact a member of our community relations team by email at nationalgrid@riverhumberpipeline.com or by telephone on **0800 988 9144**.

GOXHILL FAIR

A few readers will remember at this time of year the annual funfair. This was set up during the late Forties and early Fifties in the paddock on Station Road next to the Brocklesby Hunt (where a bungalow called Fairfield would later be built). We children loved it. I remember well the Swingboats – rather difficult to start but great fun when you got going and most definitely a cut above our home-made garden swing. We always risked a few pennies (old money of course) on the slot machines, but the greatest excitement came from the Dodgems. The cost was a tanner – just think a whole week's sweet ration, but well worth it and a topic of conversation in the school playground instead of the usual adventures of Dick, Jock and Snowy.



Goxhill had its annual fair in much earlier times than this. This took place some seven hundred years ago and was entirely different to the event described above. It was certainly the highlight of village life in the autumn all those years ago. Grimsby and Barton had annual Spring Fairs; so, too, did Lincoln and a few wealthy towns and villages in the Fenlands. That Goxhill received a Royal Charter for a weekly market (each Thursday) and an annual Fair says a lot about the wealth and importance of the village.

The site was in the triangle made by Howe Lane, King Street and Church Street long before these streets names and the present buildings existed. The Fair lasted four days beginning on the 31 October. Villagers would take part in the many religious ceremonies that were part of the Fair, especially on All Saints' Day. How the villagers would welcome the noise, the colour and the bustle. Imagine rubbing shoulders with merchants from Flanders, Italy, the Baltic and the Mediterranean. Wealthy villagers like the de Veres, the de Gousels and, most important of all, the Despensers would buy wines, furs and spices (pepper, cinnamon, ginger and saffron) and sell fish and wool. The king's officials would be present to make sure all taxes were duly paid. Some things never change!

Reprinted from an article in the gander winter 2008 by the late **Russell Cook**

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Parker's Jottings Memories of Otters

Experts claim the Otter is “very nocturnal”, this is not true for they can be seen on summer evenings especially after 7 pm or so until dusk and sometimes during the day at their habitats of derelict Brick pits. During the 1940/50s I saw them a number of times, twice I watch 3 playing in broad daylight, and once at dusk, possibly a Female with 2 Kits each time. There were

several years between sighting, so they were different Otters, though always when unexpected. During those years I was familiar with both their footprints and beds where they slept during hours of rest. Often the first sign of an Otter in residence is a half eaten

Eel left on the side of the pit bank, or one may see a small piece of wood floating in the pit though it will appear to be some what different for it will be travelling into the wind instead of with it, as a piece of driftwood does. They can be seen any time of the day, though mostly in summer due to the short nights. Once back again they will be seen at all times of the day or moonlight nights. On a still night they can be heard by their whistle as they swim on the surface, I believe it is caused as they expel the air from their lungs through their nostrils. I have heard it many times when they could or couldn't be seen. When they are playing in the reed beds they make more noise splashing than a couple of male Coots fighting. They are rarely seen when one goes on an Otter Watch. I believe that many centuries ago they were daylight hunters, but were driven to night hunting and activities due to persecution by man, possibly for their skins.

Other experts claim it was the post war farming that accelerated the decline destroying the habitat and putting more pressure on water resources, I assume this means Irrigation. In post war years little if any irrigation was done in North Lincolnshire, when it did come in later years, it increased their habitat by making the reservoirs for storage of water. The only thing which the Farming industry did for the otters decline in the post war years was to use Chemicals such as Dealdrin, a DDT based chemical along with others, a deadly poison in the form of Sheep Dips and Corn Dressings and the Farmers get the blame, but they used it unaware of what the Chemical manufacturers had loaded them with. When one had finished dipping sheep, the dipper (Bath) had to be emptied and it was usual to bail out the contents into a nearby drain or just throw it on the surrounding ground and let it soak in the soil as done with the conventional dips. If it wasn't thrown in a drain it was washed through the soil when it rained to them. I was personally guilty of this as no-one had been informed any different, maybe the manufacturers hadn't checked it out and didn't know themselves. It then got in the streams and rivers, killing the fish, as they were dying it made them easier for the Otters to catch, which they then ate, killing

them as well. In reality this was a minor contributor to the Otter's decline, doubtful if it killed any as far as Goxhill was concerned for they were only two dippers in the village, Raby's in nipkin [neatsgang] lane and ours in East Marsh road and the amount of dip after the last sheep went through was small and at the end of the dipping session and it was emptied on to ground twenty yards from a dyke. It was the amount of waste toxic chemicals which manufacturers and factories of industry discharged in to the Streams and Rivers, by the ton, poisoning all life in them, including plant life in some extreme cases.



Then there is the Otter Hunting which gets no mention. The Bucks Otter Hounds of Great Linford, Buckinghamshire, used to meet at the Brocklesby Hunt, (Pub) Goxhill, before setting off up the beck and brick-pits within the parish. It was made up of around 16 couples or more of hounds that used to come almost every summer (because the water was too cold in a winter) to North

Lincolnshire until they were banned in 1978 by law, due to the otters decline. The Master and Hunt Servants were dressed in a flat cap, jacket and plus fours and usually with 2 female Servants dressed in skirts and long wool stockings in Royal Blue. All carried a long staff, about 5 foot long, which they used to feel the depth of water before wading into it and egging on the hounds when they found an Otter. I expect it also helped to keep their balance. Way back in the 1930s I heard of an instant where they found an otter in the East Halton Beck and it made a run for the Humber by swimming towards the River, when it reached the sluice the tide was up and the doors closed so the Hounds killed it inside the sluice. A local Farmer told them what he thought of their so called “Sport” in no uncertain terms.

Then in 1934 at Klondike, a derelict brick pit in Goxhill Marsh, the Hunt found an otter which they hunted around the pit and made a kill. It was during the farming recession and the Master passed the cap round (a collection of money to show appreciation) for the Tenant Farmer. On receiving it the farmer gave a speech of thanks and said he had been preserving the Otters for many a year for them to Hunt. When his 10 year old son pushed his way through the Hunters, took one look at the dead Otter in front of the Master and said for all to hear. “It's not as big as the one you shot last week is it, Dad !” I expect he went to bed with a sore backside that night. I remember a dry summer around 1958, give or take a year, when this same pit had almost dried up, only half the normal area reduced to shallow water. The Hunt arrived near the end of June, found and killed 3 otters, in a short space of time, maybe a Mother with 2 Kits, which is usual when 3 are together (they didn't have a chance) and the Hunters departed in all their Glory praising a great days Hunting. A few weeks later I got into trouble for giving my opinion of the event (another story). A few years later no further signs of otter were seen for the poison had taken its toll.

Approximately in the mid 1950s, I was with 2 friends, Fred Simon and the now late Derek Robinson, one Sunday evening as dusk was falling. We were sat on the Langmere

Article continued on p45



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Otter article continued from p43

Bridge which crossed the East Halton Beck talking and watching the close of day approaching as we returned from a walk on the upper beck-side, when we heard a splash several times. Believing it was the fish jumping out after the flies at first, then we had a look over the gable end to see if we could see them, only to see an otter float below us under the bridge in the twilight, then a few seconds later another otter floated under in the current of the beck which was running out fairly fast. We then counted up to 13 otters having passed under us, by this time we knew something didn't add up. Then we realised what was happening, the otters were drifting approximately 40 yards below the bridge and then diving under and swimming into the current as they hunted, they passed under the bridge and then surfaced again approximately the same distance up stream beyond the bridge and floated on the surface under the bridge only to dive again and repeat the performance. As we watched a little longer we counted 3 otters for a few seconds on the surface at the same time, this we believed was a family that was feeding on this short stretch of beck that night. The following night I returned with another associate to see them, we never heard a splash or saw a shadow, only silence, such is the joy of Otter Watching. This Sunday night must have been a viewing of a lifetime, around the same era one day, with Derek Robinson, we approached the Blow Well at South End along side of the beck and heard a splash. We realised we had disturbed an otter, which took up sanctuary in the overflow pipe that was approximately 1 foot in diameter, that runs into the beck. We found a piece of wood about the same size and placed it in the pipe, as it floated through it pushed the otter into the beck and it swam under the clear water down stream for about 50 yards, with us walking on the bank beside it. It turned round and returned to the safety of the pipe with us leaving it in peace..

Way back in approximately 1944/5 the resident in number 8 Council Villas on Thornton Road, shot one in his Chicken Run. A few years later some dogs killed a half grown one in Hogcotes, (the old Pinfold in Goxhill Marsh, now disappeared due to progress of Modern Farming). I believe this one must still be around somewhere for it was set up by a Taxidermist. One is recorded as being shot for killing young lambs on the East Halton Beck, and another in the same area killed with dogs though not intentionally. It was skinned and the skin was cured by a furrier at Grimsby, the skin went to New Zealand later. On the beck-side at the point where the little beck and big beck fork while running towards the river there was a large willow tree there for many years, with a hollow trunk, that had a Holt (otters burrow) in bottom of the hollow, with a track made by the otters from the water into it. I believe they only use their holt for rearing young and much prefer to lay in the warm undergrowth on side of pits and streams.

Today from this point upstream, for almost 2 miles to Thornton Abbey, the habitat of otters has been increased by modern arable farming more than a 1000 fold, deliberate or otherwise, with wild Vegetation, Trees, Willow Coppice, Ponds and Reservoirs. Otters during their restful hours usually curl up in undergrowth along side of a stretch of water were they can slip in if danger threatens, never have they had such a safe haven as this area of the beck.

In 2006 I was told of a sighting by a local resident. As I

was familiar with the area I went and found a Bed where one had rested, though this was not the proof I needed for some expert may of said it was a Cat or Fox. Then in the first week of October of 2008 I found the needed footprints. At my request, the now late Miles Hopper came and confirmed I was correct. Since then I have found them at 3 other sites within the parish. These findings were recorded in my Jottings in the Gander, the Goxhill village Newsletter, Winter issue which was published in December 08. I believe the otter population will never increase enough to become a menace other than raid a few Goldfish Ponds in the village. Many people believe they never leave water, this is not so for they travel on land when ever they wish, often over a mile from it. I once saw the footprints of two following each other in the snow, over a mile from safety of any sizeable area of water.

Before 1960 to the days beyond recall, the otters were part of the wildlife which frequented all the brick-pits on the Humberside, inland rivers, streams and gravel-pits or a sizeable area of water, not only in north Lincolnshire but most counties in the British Isles. It was only a few persons who had the interest to watch for them, many rural dwellers saw them with no more interest than to remark they had seen an otter at a certain location merely out of conversation. I believe the otter population will return with a new generation of otters with less fear of man, for most of them will be Offsprings of those which were bred in captivity by the Otter Trusts and released in the wilds having had contact with the human race. They will not be so shy, and more sightings will be seen due to the Nature Reserves with Hides that have been constructed in recent years. In the past they had always been hunted by man with hounds for sport, some shooters shot them for the sake of saying they had shot an otter, while others shot them for their skins on which they made an extra quid. Until this milestone of near extinction, most of the weekly magazines such as the Shooting Times and Farmers Weekly carried an advert in the Wanted Columns from the Furriers, "Animal Skins Wanted". Otters were included in the list. I expect it was a rarity to have an Otter-Skin Coat as they were so elusive to shoot. Today they have no enemy's other than an accidental encounter with Dogs.

Within the next 20 years they will be an everyday sighting at these reserves and brick-pits, if one is in the right place at the right time.

By the late Ron Parker, with kind permission of his family. December 2009



An otter caught on my wildlife camera in my garden in Goxhill, earlier this year. EDITOR

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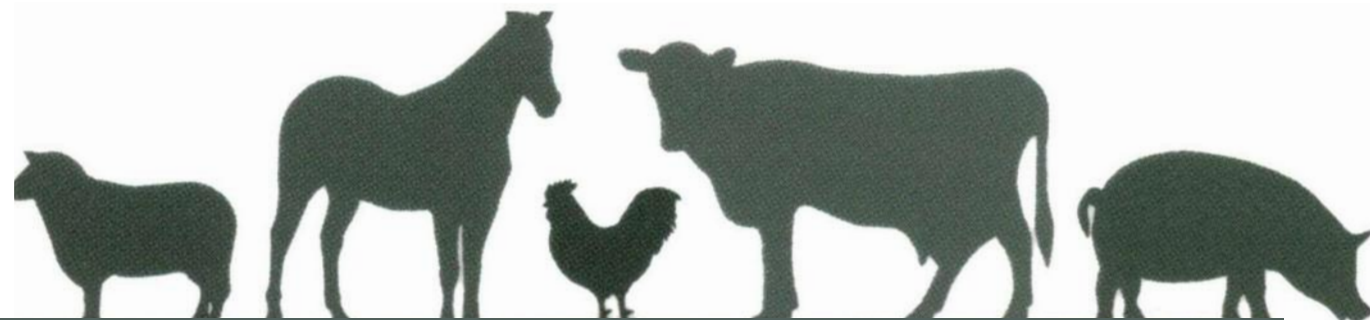
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