



The Grapevine

THE NEWSLETTER OF HAMPTON LUCY, CHARLECOTE AND LOXLEY PARISHES

Issue No: 224

Coronavirus Edition 6

November 2020

A Celebration - 50 Years!

On Sunday, 11 October, 30 parishioners and friends of Ali and Chris Speller gathered at the morning service in St Peter's, Hampton Lucy, to celebrate his remarkable fifty years of service as Verger. It was conducted by Rev'd Andy Larkin and was intended that the Bishop of Coventry, Bishop Christopher, would be there to personally thank Ali and his wife Chris for their long service to the church and the community.

Sadly, at the very last moment, the Bishop's son tested positive for Covid-19 and he and his household were all confined in isolation. However, thanks to the impressive technical and IT skills of Rev'd Andy, the occasion was nevertheless a great success. Sue Lampitt read a charming history of Ali's 50 years written by Anne Corke, widow of the late Rev'd John Corke - a past Rector at St Peter's. Alison Harrison, Chair of the PCC, also spoke describing her long association with Ali and expressing her own and the Parish's appreciation and thanks. He was presented with framed copies of an official certificate marking the occasion and of Anne Corke's tribute, a floribunda rose named *Ali the Verger*, and a very large and appropriate card signed by his fellow parishioners.

For the first time in living memory Ali was almost lost for words but clearly touched by the occasion and the accolades! A shortened *Come and Worship* service was then enjoyed by all, and Ali's two favourite hymns - *Amazing Grace* and *Feed Me Oh Thou Great Redeemer* - were played by organist Robert Stagg. Bishop Christopher appeared on a pre-recorded video - which had only arrived at midnight the night before - expressing his thanks to Ali and Chris and giving the sermon. *Thank you* to all those who contributed to the arrangements - it was memorable and most enjoyable.

AJW





Rev'd Dr Andy Larkin

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From Your Vicar

Dear friends

It is my pleasure to welcome a new member to our ministry team. Revd John Horton has recently moved to Wellesbourne and will be ministering across our six parishes on a part time basis. John is married to Liz, and comes to us with considerable experience from the charity sector with a particular focus on Africa. John's ordained ministry has been mainly in rural parishes in the United Kingdom. I know that you will join me in praying for John as he serves our parishes.

This edition will hopefully have arrived in your hands just before Remembrance Day. As Christians, the subject of war and remembrance might sometimes feel at odds with what we believe. After all, Christ said "Blessed are the peacemakers" and "Love your neighbour as you love yourself". Can peace and love come from the barrel of a gun or the blast of a bomb? This is a hard and complex question.

Pacifism is brave and noble, especially when it actually encounters violence. Whilst some are able to frame their lives with this viewpoint, for others there are situations that require a reaction - situations where inaction could be considered to be giving in to bullying or to letting injustice flourish.

There are wars where we act to protect ourselves, to defend against the aggression of others and then there are wars where we are not endangered but we act to defend a friend or a group of people being unjustly persecuted. Though it is always possible for our leaders to make mistakes, thankfully we don't live in a country that engages in hatred-fuelled, unprovoked acts of aggression.

History shows that love and peace can come after war, if those involved can see past the flawed ideologies that led to the conflict and instead focus on their common humanity. Indeed our present good relationship and economic partnership with Germany is ample testament to this.

With every conflict our nation enters into, there will be those who can see the rationale and those who can't. Once our democratic nation decides to use force alongside diplomacy, there are those amongst us who are told to risk their lives. The financial cost of war is considerable but it is dwarfed by the human cost. A price that has been paid by so many over the years, in order to secure our freedom. Whether we agree or disagree with war, whether we agree or disagree with any particular conflict, 11 November provides us with a time to pause and reflect, a time to remember the lives given in love for this nation.

I'm sure you join me in praying for our armed forces, for their families and for those who have lost loved ones in recent conflicts. Wishing you Christ's peace,

Revd Dr Andy Larkin, Rector

Hampton Lucy Village Hall is open for business

As with all venues used by the public, the Hampton Lucy Village Hall has had to adapt to the limitations and regulations imposed by the COVID19 pandemic. After a lot of hard work by the committee and particularly Paul Barker and Eddie Hoare, we are pleased to announce that the Hall now complies with all Government guidance on COVID safety requirements and is once again available for bookings. The Hall also now benefits from a new efficient heating system that can be managed remotely.

To hire the hall, go to the website, <https://hamptonlucyvillagehall.co.uk/> where you can book and pay online. Events will need to comply with restrictions on numbers and social distancing in force at the time and outlined in the Special Conditions of Hire. Information on safe use of the hall can be obtained by contacting info@hamptonlucyvillagehall.co.uk.

BT

Grapevine Contact Details-NEW

Grapevine copy by the **10th of the month** please, with a contact telephone number, to: The Editor, Bridie Sullivan
Tel: 01789 470977, E-mail: grapevine2@btinternet.com



Wellesbourne & District Lions Club Santa Sleighs 2020

Santa Claus is (still) coming to town!

Santa has been in discussions with the Lions this year to ensure we can see him whilst keeping everyone, including Santa and his helpers, safe from the horrible virus. We are sure you will love seeing Santa and he is looking forward to coming to see you.

Things will be a bit different this year, but Santa can still come and visit your village and wave to you, whilst his sleigh comes round and plays music to cheer you all up. His Elf helpers may look a bit different with their face coverings, but this is to protect you and them and to look after Santa so he can come back and deliver your presents at Christmas.

Santa would like to ask you all to help us by **staying by your front door this year** and not coming out into the road to see him, so you can keep safely apart from Santa and all the Elves. We know you will be excited to see him, but he will have to disappear if people get too close to him.

Santa's tours will start at 6pm and finish at 8pm

The dates and routes will be published in village news, on Wellesbourne Lions' Facebook page and on our website, so please check these at the beginning of December.

[Facebook.com/wdlionsclub](https://www.facebook.com/wdlionsclub)

wellesbourne-lions.org.uk

As usual, we are raising funds to help the groups who volunteer to come along and collect money with us. They are local fundraisers such as guiding, scouting and community groups, as well as charities who all really need our financial support in these difficult times.

For anyone who would rather make a donation to our charities online we have a dedicated JustGiving page for Santa this year: <https://www.justgiving.com/campaign/WellesbourneLionsSanta>

PLANNING FOR A HAPPY AND SAFE CHRISTMAS FROM THE LIONS

Please note - all changes are designed to comply with government and local restrictions as of 6th October 2020 and may be subsequently updated; any further changes will be posted on our website and Facebook page so please do check nearer the time.

CE

Warwickshire Trading Standards alerts

Warwickshire Trading Standards website contains lots of useful information aimed at preventing us from being parted from large sums of money or being the victim of fraud. The website is currently alerting us to scams involving fraudulent on-line traders, scam telephone calls, investment opportunities and even scams involving the Test and Trace system. An additional one to be aware of is given below:



Bogus Puppy Sellers

During lockdown, the popularity of buying a puppy has increased and this has encouraged scammers to take advantage of the increased demand. Buyers have reported attempting to purchase puppies via Internet small advertisements and social media websites where they are often asked to pay hundreds of pounds up front. Prospective owners are shown photographs or video of the puppy before fraudsters then take the money and disappear; no puppy is forthcoming. Buyers should also beware of purchasing illegally bred puppies (including illegal imports) and stolen puppies. Guidance is available from the RSPCA: <https://www.rspca.org.uk/adviceandwelfare/pets/dogs/puppy> and Dogs Trust: <https://www.dogstrust.org.uk/help-advice/buyer-advice/>

If you would like help and advice on any of the above, visit www.warwickshire.gov.uk/tradingstandards

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Honey4Heroes

Locally produced Hampton Lucy Honey in aid of the Royal Marines Charity



You may not be aware that Hampton Lucy is home to two serving Royal Marines Commandos, and the village has been hugely supportive of the boys. As parents we have been raising much needed funds for the Royal Marines Charity for five years now; everything from abseiling down the BT Tower, crawling through tunnels and water filled tubes on the Commando Challenge and the yearly fundraiser, Cakes4Commandos. The charity supports the whole Royal Marines family, during and after military service, and has been especially critical in providing PTSD and combat injury support.

We are keen beekeepers and our lovely bees here in Hampton Lucy produce wonderful Honey4Heroes, available to you now. We ask for donations of around £7.00 per jar with 100% of that donation going directly to the charity. The honey crop is really special this year – very floral and with no rape seed crop it's a lovely deep golden colour. Our honey makes great Christmas presents – local produce and all for a great cause, but we have a limited supply and last year we sold out within a few days.

We can deliver to any address in the village and surrounding areas and we are happy to post out too. Please contact us at mrsmkennal@icloud.com or 07725558582. Thank you for your support. EM

VASA Community Transport

Before coronavirus struck, demand for community transport was rising dramatically in Warwickshire, driven by the needs of some of our most vulnerable residents: those who needed help to get to hospitals and health services, to stroke clubs, dance classes and many more social activities. To do things many of us then took for granted! And until March, when pandemic hit, this was what VASA helped to provide every day. Our services help change people's lives.

In the meantime, we've managed to restart our transport service for medical appointments thanks to our fantastic team of volunteers. Community spirit is at an all time high - and we need you to help us keep up the great work too! We're keen to recruit more drivers as soon as possible, as demand is starting to rise again and more people need to get to medical appointments. Here's how you can help our vulnerable passengers as a volunteer.

For some people, you may be the only person they can chat to that day. Knowing they can rely on someone who'll turn up on time, drive them to the right place and be ready to collect them after their appointment, makes them feel more confident and less stressed. And community transport is usually much cheaper than using taxis.

As a volunteer driver, you'll enjoy flexible hours to suit your lifestyle. The work may be challenging but also great fun! You can make a difference to other people's lives in a very short time - and it can change your life too, giving you new interests and confidence.

We've taken every precaution to make our service as safe and supportive as possible for drivers and passengers alike. This includes providing volunteers with a written agreement, detailed guidance and procedures to follow, PPE (including face masks for drivers and passengers) and practical advice.

Can you join our drive to change lives as a community transport driver? If you're interested in volunteering, please get in touch immediately: call VASA on 01789 262889 or email emma@vasa.org.uk. We'd like to hear from you even if you can't start straight away.



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NEWS FROM CHARLECOTE PARK

If you've visited recently, you'll have noticed that our **Visitor Reception building** has re-opened in the car park with plenty of screens and hand sanitiser in place. As demand for timed tickets is lower at this time of year, you'll often be able to turn up midweek without a booking, bringing back some much-needed spontaneity. However, we can't guarantee entry without pre-booking and we're accepting only card payments if you're not a member. For everyone's safety, please bring a facemask to wear when you come through Visitor Reception, in the café and in the shop. Please note that we're now on **winter hours** and the parkland and car park gates now close at 4.00pm, with last entry at 3pm.

As temperatures drop **the deer rut** gets under way. You'll hear the bucks bellowing in the parkland and at the time of writing we're not sure if we'll need to close West Park in order to accommodate the bucks as they can get very feisty at this time. Please check and follow our signage when you visit.

We've moved **the shop** from the Avenue site next to the car park and into the Orangery where it will be warm and sheltered for our staff and all you visitors over winter. Do come and see our Christmas gifts and warm winter home ranges. From the middle of November to mid-January (more information on the website) we'll have the **Peter Rabbit Winter Adventure** trail for families with young children. There will be different activities around the parkland, so dig out your wellies and brightest bobble hats and come and join the fun inspired by Beatrix Potter's characters. MG



Photograph: Jana Eastwood

Hampton Lucy and Charlecote WI



After last month's successful and well-attended meeting in Hampton Lucy village hall it was disappointing to have to revert to a zoom meeting on 7 October when only a handful of members joined. Once we had finished the formal part of the meeting, we sat back and enjoyed an interesting talk from Terry Barker, a member of Wishaw WI, entitled 'My life as a Script Editor'. Some of our booked speakers have felt that zoom would not do justice to their presentation, but this worked well.

Whilst at Drama School Terry had wanted to teach drama. However, working for the BBC became her preferred option so she went from Drama School to Secretarial School. She worked for the BBC for 25 years and she mentioned The World Service, Z cars, Land Girls, Scarlet Pimpernel, Pebble Mill and Radio 3. However, for the bulk of her career she edited the script for 'Doctors', a popular day-time programme set in the West Midlands.

We learnt that a script editor has to hone the script to fit the time slot, prepare suitable exits for characters and suitable entrances for new ones. Only once did Terry have to extend a script. She said her claim to fame was to write a two minute scene set in the ladies loos! Often Terry and the cast would be working with six weeks of script and six writers. Terry received a round of applause and was of course thanked by Kath.

The next meeting will be the AGM on 4 November at 7 o'clock or possibly 2.30 pm. Jane will notify all members. Those of us who enjoyed Terry's presentation hope that a few more will join us on that day. Thereafter members will be informed of forthcoming zoom meetings. Roll on the day when we can meet again. Tempted to say 'we three' as Halloween is nearly upon us! HD

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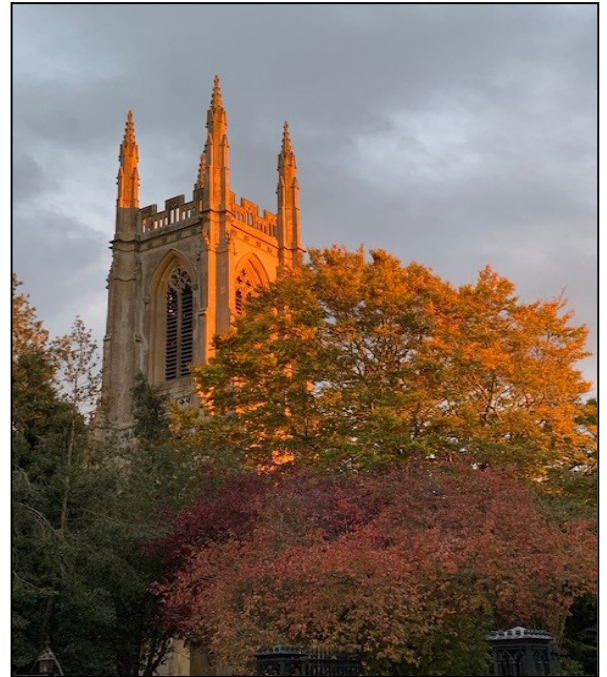
Mr Alister T. Speller – Verger at St Peter Ad Vincula for Fifty Years

A personal reflection by Anne Corke

The strict meaning of the title of verger is the official who carries a 'verge' or mace before a dignitary. He takes care of the interior of the fabric in the church and keeps the congregation in order! How much more has Ali – as he is better known - accomplished?

His knowledge of the church building, the fabric, the tower, the boiler etc, is second to none. He also knows every patch of grass in the church yard, and remembers many souls who rest there. This knowledge is extremely beneficial to all new incumbents, and John was especially grateful for Ali's help and guidance when he was appointed as rector in 1980.

Ten years ago Ali acknowledged that he could not have carried out his work without the help of his wife Chris. During their fifty years they have raised a large amount of money for the church. This has been made by their very successful auctions, stalls at fêtes and fairs, his "hurdy-gurdy", and the treasures stored in his garden shed – "always good stuff stored in there"!



In the 1980's the church was generously given a very large Christmas tree. Every year this was always beautifully decorated by Ali and Chris with more and more lights and baubles appearing every year! The tree was much admired at the carol services and in particular at the Christmas Eve midnight mass. This attracted a full church with over 90 communicants on some occasions. Ali's fine figure ensures that he is a perfect Father Christmas and is in much demand in schools and parties during the festive season.

Several years ago a very valuable antique was stolen from the church. After touring all the local antique shops, he eventually recovered the church property himself – No need for Scotland Yard!

The cleaning of the church is a marathon task especially after a concert or a festival.

It has largely gone unknown that Ali and Chris have themselves donated many items for the benefit of the church.

Twenty years ago a small 'Pictorial History of Hampton Lucy' was compiled by the verger. This is a 'pictorial gem' with a selection of historical photographs, and it is well worth trying to locate a copy.

Finally, a wedding to remember. In the early 1980's St Peter's was the venue for a celebrity wedding. The service proceeded in the usual traditional way, until the bride emerged from the vestry after signing the register, with her baby on one arm and her bouquet on the other. A gentleman in the large congregation immediately stood up and shouted 'Cor that was quick!'. This led to a great deal of cheering, clapping and mass movement in the church. The verger, remembering his duty, was soon on his feet politely ushering the congregation back into their pews, and so allow the bridal procession to continue down the aisle. After the service an elderly gentleman came up to John and Ali and said "Thank you both very much, that was the best wedding that I have ever attended and at my age I have been to quite a few". They both agreed "It's all in a day's work".

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The Loxley website:
www.loxleyvillage.com

The Hampton Lucy website:
www.hamptonlucy.wordpress.com

Church Services – November 2020

Sunday 1		All Saints' Day	
	6.00pm	Charlecote	No Service
		Hampton Lucy	Harvest Festival
		Loxley	No Service
Sunday 8		Remembrance Sunday	
	10.50am	Charlecote	Remembrance
	10.50am	Loxley	Remembrance
	6.00pm	Hampton Lucy	Remembrance
Sunday 15		2nd before Advent	
	11.00am	Charlecote	No Service
		Hampton Lucy	No Service
		Loxley	Holy Communion
Sunday 22		Christ the King	
	6.00pm	Charlecote	No Service
		Loxley	No Service
		Hampton Lucy	Holy Communion
Sunday 29		1st Day of Advent	
		Charlecote	No Service
		Hampton Lucy	No Service
		Loxley	No Service

This information is correct at the time of going to print but please refer to the Barford Burble nearer the time for any changes or have a word with your Church Wardens.

Carers4Carers

Carers4Carers is a self-help support group for carers living in Kineton and the surrounding villages and rural area. Our next virtual coffee morning will take place on Friday 27th November at 10:00 am. Look out for joining instructions in our monthly email or contact the number below. New and existing members are welcome.

To find out more about our work, take a look at our website www.carers4carersonthefosse.org.uk, email us at kcarers4carers@gmail.com or call 07947 893504. LB



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Our correspondents this month

AJW- Jeremy Whyman; **BT**- Brian Thomas; **CE**- Carol Evered **HD** - Hilary Dunkerton; **MG** - Mary Gleaves; **EM**- Elizabeth McKenna; **LB**- Lisa Barnett

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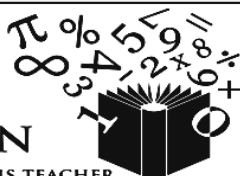
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