

# Bellingdon & Asheridge Community Newsletter



*Image courtesy of Emma Eckersley*

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As we head into Tier 2 this week continued restrictions mean that things are still very much not back to normal.

To ease the boredom we held a virtual quiz on 20th November, with questions kindly provided by Gary Woodley and Hugh Griffiths. The "local knowledge" round was extremely interesting (none of us had a clue about the answers) and you can read more about that in Helen Harding's "Do you know..." article.

The quiz was extremely popular and we're going to hold another one on 18th December. Please let us know if you'd like to join in ([contact@bellingdon.com](mailto:contact@bellingdon.com)).

If you can't wait until then St Leonard's Parish Hall is running a musical bingo event via Zoom on 11th December, all profits to Chesham Food Bank. It's £5 to enter (for 3 bingo cards), prizes include chocolates, wine and a Christmas hamper. Multiple entries allowed per household, so you can get competitive! Email [slphsocial@gmail.com](mailto:slphsocial@gmail.com) asap to register.

Back in Bellingdon & Asheridge, plans for a Christmas Carol Service of sorts have been drawn up. St John's has been delivering services very successfully through lockdown and plans to "premiere" a pre-recorded service on Christmas Eve at 4pm.

They're looking for volunteers to pre-record readings that can be included in the main celebration. If you're interested (kids welcome to read!) then please email [ankataylor@hotmail.com](mailto:ankataylor@hotmail.com)

And finally, we all need a little light in our lives at the moment, so get those Christmas lights up and we'll all have something to smile about.

### Key dates (all online)

11 Dec - Musical Bingo  
18 Dec - Family Christmas Craft  
18 Dec - Christmas Quiz  
20 Dec - Carol service  
24 Dec - "Huge Farm" carols  
25 Dec - Christmas Day service

## Community News

### Audrey and Ken Baxter

It is with great sadness that we announce the passing of both Ken (1933-2020) and Audrey (1936-2020) Baxter, former long-term residents of Bellingdon and established members of the Bellingdon, Asheridge and Chartridge communities.

For 35 years they lived at Blue Pines, Bellingdon, where they were well-known for the wonderful Blue Pines Light Railway. From its humble beginnings of simply a length of track and a trolley for Ken's young son Iain to enjoy, it was lovingly and extensively developed over the years by Ken and Iain, resulting in a miniature railway that ran all the way around the garden and was capable of carrying up to 25 passengers! Ken and Audrey frequently opened up the railway and gardens for charity events, including the Bellingdon Village Fete when Ken extended the railway track through the hedge and into the village hall grounds next door!



Audrey's love of the gardens at Blue Pines was the perfect complement to these charity days, as those enjoying the railway rides were treated to her beautiful floral displays which she spent many happy hours tending to.

Some may also recall the ever-present Sheltie dogs, a

special love of Audrey's, and not forgetting the two donkeys who were often a source of entertainment to passers-by!

Ken was also known for his long-term service to the Bellingdon & Asheridge Village Hall committee and for Chartridge Parish Council, which he chaired from 1986-1990 and again from 1991-1992. A highly qualified engineer, he was well loved for his practical abilities and was the go-to man for anything that needed fixing!



Ken and Audrey moved away from the area in 2005. Ken passed away on 21 May this year, following several months of declining health. He died peacefully at home, with Audrey, Iain and his two daughters, Carolyn and Wendy, by his side. Then, despite overcoming some recent serious health challenges, Audrey also passed away suddenly on 8 August. A small ceremony was held for each of them at a natural burial ground near their home in the Cotswolds, with just immediate family. It is hoped that wider family and friends can be invited to a gathering next year, to remember and celebrate them both.

## Horticultural Society

- Saturdays 13th, 20th & 27th February for Sale of **Seed Potatoes** and **Onion Sets** at the new Trading Hut, Cameron Road Allotments, Chesham
- **AGM & Spring Flower Show** — 9th OR 16th April Bellingdon Village Hall (to be confirmed)
- **Plant Sale** — 15th May Bellingdon Village Hall AND 22nd May Chesham Town Centre

All of course subject to government Covid rules at the time.

## St John's Church

Following the temporary closure of the church because of the Covid restrictions we have been having our services online. Our annual Christmas Carols, which are usually held at Huge Farm, will also be going online - "premiering" on YouTube on Christmas Eve! Anyone who would like to prerecord



a reading to be included in the service should please contact [ankataylor@hotmail.com](mailto:ankataylor@hotmail.com) asap. We're also planning for our "Welcome to Bethlehem" family craft event to be online as well on Friday 18th December. We're then hoping people will email pictures ([bellingtonchurch@btinternet.com](mailto:bellingtonchurch@btinternet.com)) of what they've made to us for inclusion in the Huge Farm Carols And we'll have a recorded carol service (20th) and a recorded Christmas Day service as well We are here for the community - do let us know if we can support you in any way.

*Tim Yates, Minister for St John's Bellingdon*

## Do you know...

...How many brickworks there were originally in Bellingdon and where they were located? Neither did any of us at the virtual quiz held on Friday 20<sup>th</sup> November!

Ten questions later we realised how little we knew about the villages we call home, however, courtesy

of quiz master Gary Woodley, who has lived here for 55 years, we are slightly wiser and hooked!

Back to the brickworks; there were three – Bellingdon brickworks (now HG Matthews), Dunton's originally opposite HG Matthews, and Bakers brickyard, known as Lower Kiln, situated opposite Huge Farm, owned by the Baker family for three generations since 1899.

The original village store was Sandy's Stores owned and run by Peggy and Reg Bates and named after one of their daughters. It was situated opposite the "Chalet" at the south end of the village.

Intriguingly there was a tunnel that ran from Mount Nugent Farm all the way under the fields to Hawridge Church for use by priests during the reformation in the 1600's – apparently extremely narrow, small for even a child today.

Other gems we discovered:

- Les Cowell of David Nail & Co made bagpipes in his workshop in Bellingdon.
- The village football club played on land between the Bull and Hawridge Lane until the land adjoining the Hall was first rented then purchased for the village in 1965.
- The village hall is situated at just over 587ft above sea level - near to the highest point of the Chilterns which is Haddington Hill in Wendover Woods (867ft).
- The distance between the signs at either end of the village is 1.7 miles – measured by Gary driving in his car – forget Google maps!!!
- Nye Bevan MP and "father of the National Health Service" lived later life at Asheridge Farm where he died in 1960, at the age of 62.

Most poignant are the WWII plane crashes.

Many people know about the Lancaster B.Mk.1 which crashed in the fields at the bottom of Two Gates Lane. It was returning from a raid on Chemnitz, Saxony, on the night of 5/6 March 1945 coming down at 01:00 hours; sadly six of the crew were killed. Only the rear gunner survived by bailing out. The location is marked with memorial



stone along the field boundary and a memorial service was held earlier this year (see photo).

Lesser known is the Mustang Mk 1 which crashed on 22nd February 1944 at Peppetts Green. It was on route from Debden in Essex to Bovingdon. The American pilot was killed instantly.

There must be so much more to be shared... especially from residents who have lived here all their lives. Please do send your memories and interesting local information to me on [helen.harding2018@outlook.com](mailto:helen.harding2018@outlook.com) and maybe our quiz our scores will improve. We might even find a question that Gary doesn't know the answer to!

*Helen Harding*

[Join us at the next fun online quiz, scheduled for 18th December - email [contact@bellingdon.com](mailto:contact@bellingdon.com) for the zoom link and password — Ed]

## Keep in touch

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(also to sign up for monthly e-news)

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[www.twitter.com/bellandash](https://www.twitter.com/bellandash)

[newsletter@bellingdon.com](mailto:newsletter@bellingdon.com) if you have an idea for an article or have something you'd like to see in the next newsletter.

## Curvaceous Cook

### Gingerbread Stuffing

I found this recipe a few years ago in a magazine, sorry I can't reference it, as no idea where, but it has become a firm favourite in our family, and is just a bit different on Christmas Day. I have used it for turkey, chicken and pork roasts. It keeps well, so I make it ahead, one less thing to do on the day.

In these strange Covid times I think many of us are anticipating a much smaller Christmas celebration than normal...whatever normal was...and are looking for something a bit different.

- In a processor, zap: 250g onions and 1 peeled and cored eating apple
- Gently fry in 25g butter and a glug of olive oil till soft, about 10 minutes.
- Meanwhile, zap 375 g streaky bacon and add to the pan. Cook another 5 minutes.
- Add zest of a clementine or half an orange.
- Cool a bit, then add 400g Mcvities Jamaican Ginger Cake (other makes are available!). It can now sit till you are ready to cook.
- Just before cooking, add 1 large beaten egg, and some black pepper.
- Either stuff into the rear end of the bird, or bake in a greased dish to be sliced at the table.
- Bake on 180 for 20-45 minutes

Wishing you all the best possible Christmas, and an easier 2021.

Details of clubs, events and village news, including hall bookings: [www.bellingdon.com](http://www.bellingdon.com)  
Please send comments, questions and ideas for future articles to the Editor at [newsletter@bellingdon.com](mailto:newsletter@bellingdon.com)

The Editor reserves the right to edit submissions for clarity or length.

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