

"Keeping
the Community
informed"

FREE ISSUE

WANGFORD UGGESHALL SOTHERTON

Messenger

PARISH MAGAZINE

EDITOR: SUE TAYLOR

VOLUME 19 NO. 3 DECEMBER 2023

SEASON'S GREETINGS TO YOU ALL

Wangford Carols 2023

Round the Village
leaving the Village Store
at 6.00 pm



Calling at the Angel, and
ending with Beer and
Carols (and mulled wine) in
the churchyard at 7.15 pm.

Wednesday 13th December

Join us to sing, play
or collect for The
Children's Society



Please wear reflective clothing if you have it.

Wrentham Chapel

Why not begin the Christmas weekend by coming to our festive Caedmon evening? Folk will be gathering for a 7.00pm start on Friday 22nd December for a seasonal celebration in music, word and song. The evening's programme is arranged on the night from items contributed by some of the audience on a 'bring and share' basis. In the interval, there's time to have a chat and enjoy a light buffet with wine and fruit juice. This is a free event, but donations for the work of Christian Aid will be gratefully received. For further details call Sue Hardy on 07771 882738.

Wangford Community Council



CAROL CONCERT



Wangford Community Centre

Thursday 14th December 7.00 pm

Free admission and refreshments
Retiring collection for charity



CHRISTMAS SERVICES

St. Peter and St. Paul, Wangford

Sunday 17th December 11.15 am

Carol Service

Christmas Day 11.15 am

Family Communion

St. Andrew, Sotherton

Sunday 17th December 3.00pm

Candlelight Carol Service

St. Mary, Uggeshall

Christmas Eve 6.00pm

Festival of Lessons and Carols.

Christmas Eve Midnight Eucharists

11.00 pm St Margaret, Reydon

11.30 pm Blythburgh and Southwold.

Wangford Christmas Raffle

Raising funds for the maintenance and ministry
of St. Peter and St. Paul Church, Wangford

**WIN ONE OF THREE
SUMPTUOUS FESTIVE HAMPERS**

Tickets £1 from the Village Store and Wangford Farm Shop.
(Draw will be made in church at the Carol Service
on Sunday 17th December)





Wangford Post Office

Tuesdays
from 10.00am - 12 noon
Thursdays
from 1.00 - 3.00pm
Community Centre

Food Bank

Please leave Items for the Food Bank in the basket at the font in Wangford Church to be collected on Friday morning.

Most needed food items are UHT milk, tinned fish or meat, tinned fruit, tinned tomatoes or vegetables, baked beans, biscuits, rice pudding, and pasta.

Anything else is always welcome e.g. tea, coffee, chocolate, custard, toiletries, female sanitary items, baby food and nappies.

Lowestoft Foodbank can be contacted on 07307 866146 or email: info@lowestoft.foodbank.org.uk

Congratulations

to Beryl and Bernard Meldrum, who celebrated their Diamond wedding anniversary on 12th October.



WHAT'S ON IN DECEMBER

Wangford Parent and Toddler Group

Mondays 9.30 - 11.30am Community Centre

Body Conditioning

Tuesdays from 9.30 - 10.30am Community Centre

Salsa

Wednesdays from 7.30 to 8.30pm Community Centre

Wangford Art Group

Thursdays from 9.30am to 12.30pm Community Centre

Wangford Ladies' Breakfast

Saturday 2nd December 8.45am The Angel Inn

Blyth Valley Labour

Monday 4th December 7.30pm Community Centre

Wangford Community Council

Tuesday 5th December 7.45pm Community Centre

The Arts Society

Tuesday 12th December 2.00pm Southwold Arts Centre

Wangford with Henham Parish Council

Tuesday 12th December 7.30pm Community Centre

Wangford Carols

Wednesday 13th December leaving Village Store at 6.00pm

Uggeshall Cinema

Thursday 14th December 7.00pm Old School Hall

Community Council Carol Concert

Thursday 14th December 7.00pm Community Centre

Wangford Men's Breakfast

Saturday 16th December 8.45am The Angel Inn

Mobile Library at Wangford

Wednesday 20th December

1010 - 1030am Community Centre 1035 - 1045am Church

Wangford Church Christmas Coffee Morning

Wednesday 20th December 10.30am - noon

Christmas Buffet Lunch

Thursday 21st December 1.00pm Community Centre

Wangford 100 Club 2023

Winners in the November Draw were

1. Josephine Adams
2. Michaela Scarle
3. Carol Coram

Community Council Bazaar

The Community Council's Bazaar on the 11th November was a great success. The Hall was full of lovely stalls with all sorts of goods on sale, and the event was very well supported. The stallholders reported good trade and the Community Council raised £310.90 for funds, bringing the total for the three events this year to a very creditable £683.68. The 'Bus Stop' featuring a bottle of whisky kindly donated by Roy raised £20, and as it was Remembrance Day we donated the £20 proceeds from the book sales to the RBL Poppy Appeal. Thanks to all who came, donated, and helped. Carolyn as always booked the stalls in and raised funds for 'Santa Paws' with her cakes, the three Sues - Taylor, Elvin and Hosking - did a great job on Tombola, Bric-a-Brac and Refreshments, not forgetting the two Margarets on the Raffle. With best wishes for Christmas and 2024.

Malcolm Woolnough

Memorial Service for William and Alma Smith

Near left - Celia Burt and Louise Hartman (Great-granddaughters of William and Alma Smith), and Angela Lawrence, author of the historical novel 'Rumour' which brought their tragic story to light.

Far left - The restored and rededicated grave of William and Alma near the vestry door in Wangford churchyard.





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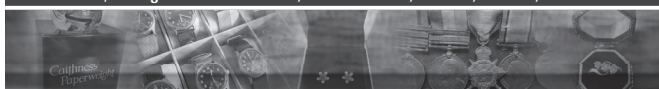
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DECEMBER'S TEAM LETTER

By the time you read this, I should have been instituted, inducted and installed as the new Team Rector for the Sole Bay Churches, all of which makes me sound more like a new central heating system than a parish priest! Jenny, Annabelle, Elizabeth and I have been delighted at the warm welcome we've received in the communities by the clergy team, neighbours, and those from the eight churches. We are very much looking forward to our ministry with you all.

Back in my early twenties, when I was first exploring faith, one of the first talks I ever heard was entitled "Christianity - Boring, Irrelevant and Untrue?" I remember thinking, "well at least this guy and I agree on three things!" Church (which I now know to be quite different from faith) seemed to me to be thoroughly boring, almost alien to everyday life and frankly I wasn't sure I believed a word of what was said. I wasn't alone. I know many people who struggle to see the significance of a narrative, the most recent parts of which were first written down some 2,000 years ago. And yet, if we take the Christmas story as an example, it is certainly not boring or irrelevant, in fact it contains intrigue at every turn and it bears many similarities to our own times. After all, the Christmas story contains the tale of an unexpected teenage pregnancy, political naïveté and power struggles, refugee families fleeing in terror and horrific violence in the Holy Land. Sadly, not so very different from the news headlines of 2023.

Perhaps many of us have at times been able to relate to the sense of deception from a loved one that Joseph must have felt when he finds out his bride-to-be is mysteriously pregnant. Maybe we have felt the loneliness and exclusion of the shepherds, exiled to the edges of communities or social groups. Perhaps, like the star-gazing, mystic wise men we have sought spiritual meaning and fulfillment along life's journey only to be misunderstood.

If the story of the birth of Jesus of Nazareth is anything but boring and appears to have considerable relevance even in the 21st Century, my own conclusion was and is that it is true. Jesus really is who he claimed to be - God in human form who came to show us a transformative way of living.

What I can say of my own personal experience and of the experiences of so many people I have met all around the world who have chosen to invite Jesus Christ to be their teacher and their guide, is that I and they have found radical new meaning to life. We have found acceptance, purpose and hope that can be found nowhere else.

The gospel of Jesus Christ certainly seems to have more meaning than the short-lived hype of trees, tinsel, and turkey, all of which are great, but leave us in January feeling like there must be more to life. Newsflash...there is!

I look forward to meeting you all as we explore the excitement, the relevance, but most of all the truth of the Christmas story together this Advent and Christmastime.

With all blessings,

Revd Russ Gant, Team Rector

News from Wangford Church

So another busy year for our church and the wider Sole Bay team is nearing its end, and we have a lot to be thankful for and much to look forward to. The period of interregnum following Rev Simon Pitcher leaving Sole Bay for a new life in Lavenham early in the year made things busier than normal, and we give enormous thanks to Rev Alan for his amazing effort in overseeing this period of change and keeping all services running as usual. We also thank all the other clergy and volunteers who assisted Alan with this. Rev Russell Gant was installed as the new team rector for the Sole Bay team on 21st November and we look forward to working with Russ in 2024.

In church this month we are very much looking forward to celebrating the joy of Christmas, and when we look at the terrible events occurring in other parts of the world, we feel more fortunate than ever that we can enjoy the festivities in safety. Our thoughts and prayers are with those caught up in war or suffering from problems caused by extreme climate issues.

On Wednesday 13th December, we will be carol singing around the village in the evening and raising money for The Children's Society. We will be stopping off at various locations in the village; please do come along and join in the fun. The carolling will also include singing at The Angel Inn this year before finishing with beer and carols (and mulled wine) in the churchyard. If you see (or hear us) as we make our way between 6.00 and 7.00pm, please do come out and give generously.

Sunday December 17th is the date for our Carol Service in church at 11.15 and this is also when the draw for the Christmas raffle will be made. The prizes are hampers and if you wish to buy some tickets (£1), please contact Jeff Bridges or myself.

Wednesday 20th December at 10.30 will be the Christmas coffee morning and everybody is welcome. The coffee mornings have been very successful this year and if you like tea, coffee, cakes and good company then please come along. The 100 club special Christmas draw will also be made.

There will be no service in church on Sunday December 24th as we hope to see as many people as possible in church at 11.15 the following day for our Christmas Day service.

Finally, on behalf of Rev Alan, Jeff Bridges, myself and the members of the PCC, may we wish everybody a very merry Christmas and a very happy New Year.

Mark Notton, Churchwarden (578691)

News from Uggheshall

Uggheshall Coffee Morning

There is no Coffee Morning in December as we have a Christmas lunch at a local pub but we will return to normal activities on 11th January 2024.

Merry Christmas.

The Coffee Morning Ladies.

Uggheshall Cinema

The film for 14th December will be the comedy 'Book Club'. The film stars Diane Keaton, Jane Fonda, Candice Bergen, and Mary Steenburgen as four friends who read Fifty Shades of Grey as part of their monthly book club. Doors open at 7.00 for 7.15pm. As it is our Christmas screening, Christmas jumpers are optional!

Matt Grady

Festival of Lessons and Carols

Do come along to St Mary's on Christmas Eve at 6.00pm for our traditional service of Lessons and Carols.



Let's get into the Christmas Spirit and come together for

Mulled Wine



and Mince Pies 

on

Friday 8th December, 7.30pm

The Old School Hall

Uggheshall

A limited number of alternative refreshments will be provided, but please feel free to bring your own!

The evening is free and is generously funded by Uggheshall Parish Council.
Non-residents £5.

Christmas jumpers optional!



For catering purposes, please RSVP to Jane at skip177@btinternet.com or 07896315052.



Wangford Ladies' Breakfast

On the 4th November Jo Flunder, the curator at Southwold Museum, joined us to give an interesting and informative talk on our local history. We discussed various artifacts that kept us guessing too - all quite entertaining!

Our next meeting will be on December 2nd at The Angel Inn, at the usual time of 8.45 for 9.00am. We look forward to welcoming Charlotte Clark, library manager at Southwold. Charlotte will be speaking about the many different services available from Suffolk Libraries and forthcoming events.

Please email Jan on perrypoppy@aol.com if you are interested in joining us.

Book Club

At our November meeting we discussed "Where the Crawdads Sing" by Delia Owens. Quite a few people had already read the book and seen the recent film. The description of the natural world in the marshlands of North Carolina's Outer Bank was superb. It was obvious that the author had a huge knowledge about the subject. We liked the relationship of Kya to the land and animals who accepted her presence in their world, and we saw how the human world had no time or place for Kya. We were doubtful that a six-year-old child could survive with just a father who was only present occasionally and he left when she was around eight or nine years old. Some of the local people were incredibly kind to her and she found her way, and learned how to survive. Kya only went to school for one day and was ostracised because of her difference and known only as the 'marsh girl'. We were quite shocked at the lack of care from the small town, or any social service in 1950s - 1970s America. Jumpin and Mabel provided a constant kind presence in her life as she began to trade the things she caught on the Marsh for food and essentials. Tate taught her to read and as such gave her the ability to catalogue and draw what she saw. Perhaps the main focus of the story was the court case, when Kya was tried for the murder of Chase - the flawed town poster boy - who married someone else, but would not leave her alone. He was found at the foot of the tower, and although the evidence against Kya was damning she was found not guilty. She lived a long happy life, married Tate, published ground breaking works on the Marsh environment, and died naturally at 64. Tate found under floorboards poems which Kya had written to express what she felt and in doing so he saw that she was guilty of the murder all those years ago. There were so many themes in this book and so much to talk about.

We will not hold a December meeting, so our next meeting will be on Thursday, 4 January 2024 at 8 pm in the Community Centre to discuss Sally Rooney's "Beautiful World, Where Are You".

Gill Smith 578620

News from Sotherton

Carol Service

Everyone is welcome to join us for our candle-lit Carol Service on Sunday 17th December at 3.00pm.

The Arts Society, Southwold

The 2023 series continues on
Tuesday 12th December
when Susie Harries will speak on

'Pevsner in Suffolk'

Lectures commence at 2.00pm in Southwold Arts Centre.

Visitors and Members' guests are welcome.

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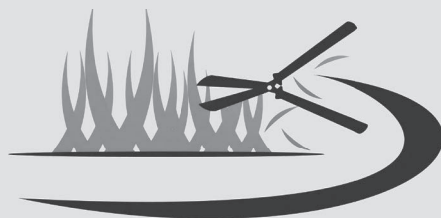
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ABRAHAM

Bully for David Hockney, that well-known champion of smoking. He tells us proudly that three doctors advised him to give up smoking and that they are all dead now. (I wonder if they were smokers, doctors being notoriously known for being heavy indulgers of both tobacco and alcohol?) I assume that Mr Hockney has been spared the experience of visiting a cancer hospital where he can witness the malignant results caused by this addiction, once considered to be a glamorous pursuit. Gasping, wheezing, breathless, in pain, cancerous growths, heart disease, lung disease, knackered organs etc. Perhaps then he might not feel so smug.

I read that the sudden death of a tomcat named Chicco in his Bavarian home town has been honoured with a sculpture. Although he had owners he would go walkabout regularly such that he became a well known celebrity as a man-about-town. Chicco was five when he died and had his own Facebook page where people could share their photographs and memories of their encounters with him. Similarly, the Auld Grey Toun of St Andrews had the legendary Hamish McHamish who roamed the streets for 17 years. Once he had grown out of kittenhood he decided that his owner's house and garden were too small for his adventurous nature and he began his wandering ways. His absences from home became longer and longer until he stopped visiting altogether. His owner eventually tired of the empty nest syndrome and acquired a resident dog which gave Hamish a genuine excuse for staying away. Once a year a search was undertaken so that the vet could undertake his annual health check. Thanks to the gentle folk of the town Hamish remained well-fed and healthy even into old age. With his fluffy white mane, shaggy ginger coat and green eyes, streetwise and extremely intelligent, he quickly became a celebrity. The unwritten rule in St Andrews was that if Hamish came calling you had to let him in. He too had a Facebook page and lived on the kindness and collective goodness of the human spirit. In April 2014 a beautiful bronze statue of him was unveiled in St Andrews town centre. Hamish joined in the celebrations but was singularly unimpressed with all the fuss. He passed away peacefully in September 2014 with his mum by his side. He was laid to rest in his owner's garden in a sunny spot by a cherry tree. Dearly missed, Hamish McHamish, the King of St Andrews.

I have recently been insulted. The Pension Service have informed me that, as I was approaching the age of 80, I am entitled to a higher amount of State Pension and that The 'Age addition of 25p per week' will be payable from my 80th Birthday. No, that is not a typo. 25p is what it is. Suggestions as to how to use this whopping windfall would be greatly appreciated. It seems that the use of technology in the classroom is increasing, to the detriment, according to some educationalists, of the learning process and the pupils' welfare. Here are some expressed views: 'I find the sight of 26 bright faces glued to 26 bright screens for lesson after lesson indefensible. The argument that these platforms are 'adaptive' is unpersuasive - a good teacher is adaptive'; 'Students would be in lessons but instead of listening to the teacher and processing the learning, they were staring at their iPad. It overstimulates the brain, is incredibly addictive to look at and the children become zombie-like.'; 'artificial intelligence simply didn't work. It provided our pupils with the wrong information'; 'Technology is too often seen as panacea: a quick, expensive solution to a number of issues, including being disengaged in class'; and the finest quote of all - 'The most powerful learning tool in the classroom is an

excellent teacher, and the most effective way of ensuring that children progress is to teach them to read and write effectively. But a screen is a distraction, an obstacle to learning, *in a way which a book, a page and a pen never are.*' Aside from screens in the classroom aren't children obsessed out of doors enough?. Look at any school bus queue. No social intercourse whatsoever between the children. All staring at these infernal machines. Depressing

Vicariously, I am aware that an allotment is a wonderful thing. Working with nature, experiencing the rhythms of the seasons, tilling the soil, breathing fresh air, growing fresh fruit and vegetables, are all good not only physically but also for the soul. The mental health benefits, I am told, should not be underestimated. So it is rather sobering to hear that in certain urban areas the waiting periods for the renting of allotments can amount to years, such that a great deal of patience is required. No such hardship, however, is needed in Wangford where, for a very low annual fee, sites are readily available. All of which goes to confirm, if we were not already aware of it, that this is yet one more reason why this village is such a desirable place in which to live.

Abraham

CHURCH SERVICES

| | |
|----------------------|----------------------|
| Sunday 3rd December | Advent Sunday |
| 11.15 am Wangford | Holy Communion (CW) |
| 6.00 pm Uggheshall | Evening Prayer (BCP) |
| Sunday 10th December | 2nd Sunday of Advent |
| 11.15 am Wangford | Holy Communion (CW) |
| 6.00 pm Uggheshall | Evening Prayer (BCP) |
| Sunday 17th December | 3rd Sunday of Advent |
| 11.15 am Wangford | Carol Service |
| 3.00pm Sotherton | Carol Service |
| Sunday 24th December | Christmas Eve |
| 6.00 pm Uggheshall | Lessons and Carols |
| Monday 25th December | Christmas Day |
| 11.15 am Wangford | Holy Communion (CW) |
| Sunday 31st December | New Year's Eve |
| 11.00 am Reydon | Team Communion (CW) |

Wangford Mens' Breakfast

On an awful wet morning 16 met in the warmth of the Angel Inn for a very enjoyable meeting. No guest this month but all contributed to an all-too-short introduction to each other. Modesty, enthusiasm and humour abounded all around the table. A repeat was requested for next year's season. A good set of clean plates was a sign of appreciation for an excellent breakfast. The next meeting is the 16th December, 8.45 for 9.00am.

Interested? Email johnscholes@hotmail.com.

DIRECTORY

| | | |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|----------------|
| Team Rector | Revd Russ Gant | |
| | russ.gant@solebayteamministry.co.uk | |
| Team Vicar | Revd Alan Perry | 453624 |
| Team Admin | Megan Buncombe | 07475 739367 |
| Parochial Church Council Secretaries | | |
| Wangford | Vacancy | |
| Uggeshall | Clare Bailey | 578679 |
| Sotherton | Karen Flaxman | 01986 873123 |
| Church Wardens | | |
| Wangford | Mark Notton | 578691 |
| | Jeff Bridges | 578208 |
| Uggeshall | Colin Hill (Churchwarden Emeritus) | |
| | Colonel Giles Crisp | 578251 |
| | Clare Palmer | 578679 |
| Sotherton | Gerard Walker | 01986 874248 |
| | Stephen Flaxman | 01986 873123 |
| Wangford Community Council | | |
| Vice-Chairman | Malcolm Woolnough | 578701 |
| Secretary | Sue Hosking | 578287 |
| Wangford Community Centre | | |
| Chairman | Malcolm Woolnough | 578701 |
| Bookings | Sue Taylor | |
| | suethemusic@gmail.com | 578408 |
| Caretaker | Sue Taylor | 578408 |
| Uggeshall Old School Hall | | |
| Bookings | Denise Baker | 578190 |
| Parish Council Clerks | | |
| Wangford | Adrian Smith | 07450 000118 |
| Uggeshall | Vacancy | |
| Sotherton | Ann Donnachie | 575338 |
| Henham Steam Rally | | |
| Chair | Helen Walker | 07557 784927 |
| Wangford Surgery | | 578257 |
| Sole Bay Health Centre | | 722326 |
| Wangford Veterinary Clinic | | 578999 |
| Police | Urgent 999 | Non Urgent 101 |
| Crimestoppers | | 0800 555111 |

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DECEMBER 2023 CENTRE DIARY

| | | | |
|----------|---------------------|------------|--------------|
| Dec 2nd | Private Hire | Hall | 11.00-4.00pm |
| Dec 4th | Toddlers | Hall | 9.30-11.30am |
| | Blyth Valley Labour | Cttee Room | 7.30-9.30pm |
| Dec 5th | Body Conditioning | Hall | 9.30-10.30am |
| | Post Office | Bar | 10.00-12noon |
| | Reydon Bowls | Hall | 11.00-1.00pm |
| | Community Council | Cttee Room | 7.45pm |
| Dec 6th | Salsa | Hall | 7.30-8.30pm |
| | GHSR | Cttee Room | 8.00pm |
| Dec 7th | Wangford Art Group | Hall | 9.30-12.30pm |
| | Post Office | Bar | 1.00- 3.00pm |
| Dec 11th | Toddlers | Hall | 9.30-11.30am |
| Dec 12th | Body Conditioning | Hall | 9.30-10.30am |
| | Post Office | Bar | 10.00-12noon |
| | Reydon Bowls | Hall | 11.00-1.00pm |
| | Parish Council | Cttee Room | 7.30pm |
| Dec 13th | Salsa | Hall | 7.30-8.30pm |
| | GHSR | Bar | 8.00-10.00pm |
| Dec 14th | Wangford Art Group | Hall | 9.30-12.30pm |
| | Post Office | Bar | 1.00-3.00pm |
| | Carol Concert | Hall | 7.00pm |
| Dec 16th | Private Hire | Hall | 9.00-3.00pm |
| Dec 19th | Body Conditioning | Hall | 9.30-10.30am |
| | Post Office | Bar | 10.00-12noon |
| | Reydon Bowls | Hall | 11.00-1.00pm |
| Dec 20th | Salsa | Hall | 6.00-10.00pm |
| Dec 21st | Wangford Art Group | Hall | 9.30-11.30am |
| | Post Office | Bar | 1.00- 3.00pm |
| | Xmas Buffet Lunch | Hall | 1.00pm |
| Dec 28th | Wangford Art Group | Hall | 9.30-12.30pm |



Wangford Vets Santa Paws Appeal

Our annual Santa Paws collection for local pet rescue homes continues through December. The items most needed are tinned and dry foods, warm bedding, toys to stimulate play, food and water bowls, and donations of money. Treats for cats and dogs are welcome, as well as collars and leads and warm coats. The latter items don't need to be new. Donations can be dropped off at Reception at any time from 8.30 - 6.00pm Monday to Friday or on Saturday morning before noon.

You can also enter the Santa Paws Christmas Draw for your chance to win a Luxury Hamper for your Dog and help local pet rescue centres at the same time. Tickets £1 each or 5 for £4 are available from our reception, or you can call us on 01502 578999 to pay over the phone and we will post your tickets out to you.