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QUARTERLY JOURNAL

The Winkleigh Society

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WINTER 2024



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Chain's Report

WINTER 2024



By far the most time and work this year, undertaken by the committee of The Winkleigh Society, has been the sorting out and bedding in of the several changes that we have undertaken for our quarterly journal *Distinctly Winkleigh*. With a new editor [Peter Hopkinson] and printing company and paying for a graphic designer to check the adverts this has involved detailed checking and cross referencing with our local businesses as we bed in a whole new system. Angela Findlay has picked up the baton of treasurer from Rachel Goldsworthy. Philip Griffiths has taken on advertising liaison and has put in a deal of work contacting and liaising with established and new enterprises.

Supporting business and village enterprises is a key part of what the Winkleigh Society does, hence the concentration on advertising. *Distinctly Winkleigh* is the flagship product of The Winkleigh Society [founded in 2001] and the range of stories we cover in our magazine reflect the founding principles of The Winkleigh Society; interest in local history, architecture, landscape and wildlife.

In Winkleigh and Hollocombe we have our local heroes, movers and shakers, young and old and we invite you to send in your stories so that *Distinctly Winkleigh* covers our evolving story, landscape and local heroes. We would also welcome you on the committee. It has been fascinating uncovering the story behind the recent archaeology investigations at Winkleigh; hence our prominent feature of the Anglo-Romano settlement in this edition brought to life by visualisations from the artist Mark Gidley.

Featuring stories about landscape, history, architecture, traditions and culture sums up what we do in the Society, perhaps best illustrated by the Remembrance ceremony we host annually on the airfield.

The poem 'High Flight' by John Gillespie Magee, which is always read out by an officiating Canadian (RCAF) officer at the airfield ceremony, is universally acknowledged as the aviator's poem. Magee's story is a remarkable one.

Penny Griffiths and Margaret Miller

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Welcome

TO OUR WINTER EDITION

As I write this, Christmas is fast approaching and the usual heated discussions are taking place as to when is the earliest date to put the tree up and turn the Christmas lights on. I think the Christmas Fair which takes place this year on Saturday December 7th in the Village Square from 6pm will mark the start of Christmas for me and Tania. I hope the weather is kinder to the Christmas Fair than it was to the Winkleigh Fair when it just rained and rained!

Thank you to all those who have generously given their time this year to the writing, liaising with our advertisers, proofreading and distributing the 4 issues of Distinctly Winkleigh into the homes and businesses of Winkleigh and Hollocombe. Many thanks also to those businesses that have supported us with the advertisements that have generated the money to pay our designer and printer. I hope that what we collectively have produced meets with our readers' approval.

Following on from the above like Oliver Twist can we please have some more? We are looking for volunteers who can spare a few hours to help the magazine with feature writing and advertising and The Winkleigh Society is looking for a Deputy Honorary Treasurer. If you are interested and want to know more please give either me (07770 821752) or our Chair, Penny Griffiths (01837 83407), a call.

We welcome contributed articles so please don't be shy and email them to me. Copy dates for 2025 are 28/2 for the spring issue, 30/5 for the summer issue, 29/8 for the autumn issue and 7/11 for the winter issue.

Have a wonderful, peaceful Christmas and I hope 2025 is a good one for all of us.

Peter Hopkinson

Editor - peter@hoppy.biz

The Distinctly Winkleigh Team

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PRESS SNIPPETS

NORTH DEVON JOURNAL. Aug 15

Torridge District Council is collaborating with the Northern Devon Railway Development Alliance which has replaced The Tarka Rail Association. The success of the Okehampton Line has prompted councillors to improve the connectivity of Torridge and establish a new rail link between Bideford and Barnstaple.

OKEHAMPTON TIMES: October 10

Devon and Cornwall's acting chief constable Jim Cornwell is unhappy with the number of calls from the public to the police that are abandoned. Nearly 2,000 people a day contact Devon and Cornwall. 18 months ago seven out of ten callers hung up. Now the waiting times has reduced from 40 minutes to five but Jim Cornwell has pledged continued improvements.

THE MOORLANDER: Sept 27

The lowest count ever of butterflies has been recorded by the Butterfly conservation charity. A reduction of 50% since last year. The charity is so alarmed it has declared a butterfly emergency. The charity has renewed its calls to ban neo-nicotinoid pesticides with no exceptions.

NORTH DEVON JOURNAL: Oct 10

Allison Homes has officially 'broken ground' on the second phase of their Development for 75 houses off Hatherleigh Road. Shaun Hicks operations director trumpets the introduction of advanced energy efficiency features such as air source heat pumps.

Penny Griffiths



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is seeking a keen volunteer to assist with

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WINKLEIGH

Parish Church News

By the time you read this, Christmas preparations will be in full swing. As I write this, the shops are already full of mince-pies (and have been since about August!), along with tempting goodies and gift ideas for everyone from Granny to the dog. Some people may be sitting at home munching through their mince pies, content in the knowledge that all gifts are purchased, wrapped and labelled. Others are still wondering what to get their nearest and dearest and hoping that something suitable will still be available on Christmas Eve!

Whatever your organisational approach to Christmas the giving and receiving of gifts plays an important part. In the run up to Christmas a child's wish list to Father Christmas gets ever longer, whilst grown-ups wonder if they are going to get another pair of hideous socks again. Gift giving is a stressful business – the right gift for the person, within budget and hoping that they will love it when they receive it.

But gift giving, whether that gift is large or small, is an opportunity to show those around us how much we love and care for them. A chance to show our appreciation for their role in our lives and how much they mean to us.

Gift giving is a long-held tradition, probably modelled on the gifts the Magi brought to the infant Jesus. These were precious and extravagant gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh. Not the normal gifts given to a baby but ones which highlighted his importance as God's most precious gift for the world – his Son. The most precious of gifts, the babe in the manger, would grow into the man who taught, healed and preached. Jesus would ultimately die on the cross and rise again to show people God's love for them no matter who they were or what their circumstances in life.

Jesus is the ultimate gift which gives the world the gifts of hope, peace and love. It is these gifts which the world needs now as much as it did that first Christmas. Gifts which we can all share and pass on to others regardless of our beliefs. Gifts which show people that they are important whether they are friend or stranger. The gifts of hope, peace and love light up the darkness of the world and create a better place for all. So, whatever you choose to give this Christmas, share that hope, peace and love with those around you.

All are welcome to join us at any of our services and especially over the Christmas period as we celebrate the birth of Jesus.

May the peace, love and hope of the Christ child be with you and all those you love this Christmas.

Revd Helen Blaine

01837 83710 or revhelenblaine@outlook.com

WHAT'S GOING ON at Winkleigh Methodist Church?

Christmas services

15th December 4pm

Nine Lessons and
Carols by Candlelight

24th December

5pm Crib Service
11:30pm Midnight Mass

25th December 9.30am

Christmas Day
Eucharist

Where has the year gone? Here we are in the season of Advent, approaching Christmas rapidly.

The season of Advent, a time of preparation. Most of us think of it as a time to be shopping, writing cards, making cakes and puddings, buying gifts, getting ready for the BIG day.

Within the Church it's a time to celebrate and anticipate the coming of Jesus into the world. At Winkleigh Methodist, along with many other churches, we have an Advent wreath kindly made up by one of our members, of four candles around the perimeter and one central candle. We light the candles, one each week, on the four Sundays leading up to Christmas day. Most of us are familiar with an advent calendar, a countdown to Christmas. An Advent wreath is the same idea, but it helps us take time to reflect on certain themes each week.

The first Sunday of Advent this year will be on **December 1st** and we will be lighting the candle of HOPE. Our service that day at 11am will be led by someone from our own church fellowship.

The second Sunday's service on **December 8th at 11am** will be led by our minister Chris Jackson and we will be lighting the candle of PEACE.

On the third Sunday, we will be lighting the candle of JOY. Mr Gary Yates will be our preacher and this will be on **December 15th at 11am**.

The fourth Sunday's service on 22nd Dec at 6:30pm will be our special "BIG SING". We will light the candle of LOVE and enjoy festive nibbles and drinks at the end.

The fifth candle which sits in the centre of the Advent wreath is known as the 'Christ candle'. It will be lit at our **Christmas morning service which is at 10.30am**, funnily enough on Christmas day.

So as you carry out your usual preparations for Christmas, why not take some time out of the busyness to consider God's hope, peace, joy and love and the present He gave the world by sending Jesus Christ.

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THUR - 5.30PM - 8.30PM
FRI - 5.30PM - 8.30PM
SAT - 5.30PM - 8.30PM
SUN - 5.30PM - 8.00PM

The Great Commotion

The Western Rising of 1549 or The Prayer Book rebellion [as it is more commonly known] was a determined attempt by West country people to resist the Protestant Reformation of the boy King Edward VI and the many changes it brought to their lives .

In October 1549 this tumultuous time severely rattled The King's Protector the Duke of Somerset. He sent reinforcements to free the city of Exeter which was under siege from the Cornish and to brutally suppress any leaders of rebellions throughout Devon and Cornwall.

This West Country uprising was brought to vivid life by Sarah Dickenson and community cast at The Northcott Theatre in October. Original music played and sung by a local choir and musicians added drama and menace as they recounted the story of the West Country rebels who defied royal orders. It was a triumph of an ensemble production that had the packed audience on its feet stamping and cheering its appreciation.

THE BACKGROUND. The Duke of Somerset had assumed the title of King's Protector as Henry VIII's heir, Edward, was only nine when he became King. The Duke was determined to push through the full blown Protestant Reformation and promptly set about zealously wiping out any vestiges of Catholicism. This included forcing priests to say prayers in English and use the newly translated Book of Common Prayer. This is what got the Cornish marching up to lay siege to Exeter. They did not speak 'Saxonage' and were very aggrieved that their language was being ignored.

When the new prayer book was introduced in **Sampford Courtenay the locals refused to accept it and the priest agreed. Somerset was unnerved at the number and spread of so many**



protests in Devon and Cornwall. He denounced them as rebels and sent up reinforcements led by Lord Russell who had many rebels publicly executed including the priest from Sampford Courtenay.

There were pitched battles throughout the West Country as locals banded together to prevent Somerset's armed men from entering their churches to smash the stained glass windows, whitewash the highly decorated walls and smash or steal the precious icons and statues.

This would have happened at Winkleigh and this iconoclastic scene was acted out in the Pageant of Winkleigh History that was performed on the school field in 1997. It involved Winkleigh Morris Dancers and musicians, Winkleigh Ballet Club, Winkleigh Primary school choir accompanied by the headmaster, village actors and the Parish group that produced The Winkleigh Book. Artist Mick Lye drew the illustrations for the book of Winkleigh's own community drama; **Painting Pictures with People.**

Penny Griffiths



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From your **District Councillor**

Sitting at home having just completed an online Speed Awareness Course I have been reminded of the disproportionate impact a very small increase in speed can cause. During the course there was much discussion of 30 vs 20mph in built-up areas and the confusion that differing speed limits within in the same area can cause. Having also driven recently in several villages in Somerset where a village-wide 20mph limit has been introduced I must admit that as a “quick” driver my view has now changed and I firmly believe the village should apply to adopt a 20mph speed limit throughout the built-up area apart from on the A3124. There will always be differing opinions - often strongly held - however the statistics in favour of the lower limit in built-up areas are overwhelming.

Our in-house company that now run Torridge’s leisure centres, Active Torridge, has had an impressive start following the failure of the previous private contractor two years ago. Memberships, usage and “reach” amongst the community have all increased and they are now also taking

over the old library in Bideford Town Hall to set up a gym and fitness centre there in addition to the three swimming pools that they currently run. TDC have recently agreed to extend Active Torridge’s contract for a further five years and future plans include “reach out” to population centres like Winkleigh to help local sports and fitness facilities.

Torridge have also announced the latest edition of the Household Support Fund – details of which can be found on the TDC website or on Facebook. The fund can assist with a broad range of household requirements for those in need so please pass the word to anyone you think may qualify.

As always, please get in touch if there is anything I can do to help concerning the village or District. Do also consider coming to Winkleigh Parish Council meetings (Community Centre, 7.30pm on the 4th Wednesday of the month) and take an interest in what’s happening in our village!

Councillor Simon Newton MBE

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Our **Devon County** **Councillor** writes...



It is a pleasure to be writing for Distinctly Winkleigh once again and it has been a busy time at DCC, both at County Hall and here in Winkleigh.

First, on local matters, as ever highways issues continue to form the main bulk of my work in the Parish. Since my last article, Eggesford Road and Bude Hill have now seen patching and resurfacing work carried out ahead of surface dressing in the summer of next year.

These roads have long been on my priority list and although we were able to get some extensive patching done on the Eggesford Road section in 2021, this was always something of a temporary measure ahead of a more permanent scheme which, having now been done,

should keep the road in good condition for the next decade.

We have also seen further serviceability patching done in the village along Castle Street, Barnstaple Street, Torrington Road and Townsend Hill, and alongside this Highways have also been trialling a new method called 'Elastomac'. This is a new material, made from recycled products, which welds itself to the road and seals, preventing water ingress. This product has been tried out on Church Hill and, while I have seen Elastomac tried out to good effect in other areas, the finishing does unfortunately look quite rough and visually unappealing to the naked eye. Nevertheless, given the limited budgets for resurfacing, I would rather us try a



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new treatment to see how it works than do nothing and leave a road just to deteriorate.

Turning to Townsend Hill, over the Autumn Highways have been conducting speed check surveys at the top of the road to collect data and see how the new traffic calming measures and 20 mph speed limit has been working. Two surveys were done in September (from 3pm-3.45pm) and October (from 10am-10.50am), with readings taken from 100 vehicles on both occasions to ensure a reasonable sample size.

The average mean speed recorded was 18mph in September and 19mph in October. On both occasions, the highest maximum speed recorded was 28mph, and the lowest 12mph. The officers carrying out the survey were also not wearing 'bright' clothing and the readings were taken covertly. I know I have had some representations from residents concerned about speed on Townsend Hill, even after the recent changes. We will continue to monitor speed and traffic here, but I hope readers are reassured by these figures.

Turning to pan-DCC matters, the main development since my last article is that I can now confirm that the Government has given the green light to Devon's Devolution Deal and will implement the Deal negotiated with the previous Government.

The Deal which had been negotiated will see a whole raft of powers, responsibilities and funding devolved to Devon and Torbay from Whitehall – and will allow us to make important decisions about the future of Devon on how we improve jobs, skills, housing, and the environment, at a much more local level than from a desk in London.

As I have previously reported, this Deal will see the transfer of Adult Education to Devon and Torbay, with the aim of creating up to 50,000 new

training and retraining opportunities by 2030. We know that improving skills and training for our young people in Winkleigh and Torrington Rural is a key priority for us locally, and this new Devolution settlement should help us with that.

The Government has re-confirmed the transfer of £16 million capital funding to invest in new 'green' jobs, homes, skills, and business growth. There will also be a focus on the environment and how we can capitalise on Devon's science and technology sectors as we continue to reduce carbon emissions and move towards net-zero.

In order to implement the Devolution Settlement, a new Devon and Torbay 'County Combined Authority' (CCA) is legally required to be created to assume responsibility for new funds and powers transferred by Government from Whitehall. The CCA will be run by a committee of Council Leaders and representatives from Devon and Torbay, and while there will be some administrative costs, these are funded by the Government. I do want to stress this is not about creating some vast new bureaucracy. So, it is interesting if not even exciting times ahead for Devon. I have always thought that the Devolution Deal would be the start of a journey for us and that over time we will see more Government powers devolved down to us and that is and should be a good thing for Devon and for us here in Winkleigh and Torrington Rural.

As we approach the festive season, I would like to wish all readers and everyone in Winkleigh a Happy Christmas and a peaceful and prosperous New Year. As ever, if there are any DCC issues you'd like to raise with me you can contact me on Facebook on  cllrsaywell, ring 07886 446560 or email andrew.saywell@devon.gov.uk.

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Winkleigh Parish Council

Dear Parishioners,

Greetings and good wishes to you all! I hope you are all well and enjoying the season of warm hearths. Much has been happening on the Parish Council these past few months as usual, which we hope represents a balance of inward reflection and outreach. We have been working on our policies and trying to make the structure of the PC more accessible and comprehensible (for us **and** you!). To which end we will shortly be releasing a full schematic of our working groups and hopes for the future; how we want to get things done going forward, so to speak. It is not some kind of grand unveiling, just something that has been needed for a while and which we think we have made progress on. We are aware that without getting the basics right, we cannot hope to reach the targets we have set ourselves with projects that are already underway, such as our tentative hopes to get a shuttle bus service running from Winkleigh to Eggesford station. Which would be a great help to us all I think!

We are also hoping to put together a 'Village Trail', if there is the interest, which will involve a digitally guided walk around the Village with historical information offered online. Furthermore, our project on setting up Parish Awards is continuing quite well, and the process of overhauling our working groups has been in part informed by this. Please do look to our website – or talk to a Councillor – for more information on this.

Christmas is not far away, and with it comes the Council's holiday month of December, but this does not mean we will be inactive. Look out for us at the Christmas Fair, where we will have a stall run by Councillors. We hope we may even be able to convince some of you to think about joining us. We have a few spaces on the PC now and could do with help on ensuring this Parish remains as community minded as possible with all the rapid changes that are happening in our little slice of Eden. I may even be able to tempt Cllr Goldsworthy into the cold to run the stall, but given he's coalfired himself the wintry months do prove troublesome for his bones.

As I have said before, we are here, and we are doing our best with the limited resources at our disposal. Do please come along to our meetings in the new year, it makes it so much more interactive.

Best wishes and Merry Christmas in advance!

That's all for now from your Vice-Chair,

Benjamin M. Roth

Ron Peachey

This is the third and final instalment of the memoir of Ron Peachey who was evacuated to Winkleigh from London during WW2 where he lived with Mrs Mary Reynolds in a cottage on Church Hill. It was first published in "It's Living History isn't it?"

Living in Winkleigh there was no sign of a war going on, except that the local Home Guard climbed to the top of the Church tower every month or so to make sure there were no Germans sneaking in across the fields! Also, one night a bomb dropped in a field some way out of the village and everyone trooped out to look at the hole in the ground. That was the closest the war came.

The vicar, Jack Way, was a really nice chap. We had to go to church twice on Sundays, the morning service, then Sunday school in the afternoon and chapel in the evening with Mary. One of my jobs was pumping the church organ at the morning service. I worked out a deal with the vicar so that I could do the pumping for any weddings and funerals. It was a good excuse to miss school some afternoons. He soon got me ringing the single bell for matins, then for a time I was an altar boy. The church fete was held every year at the vicarage, almost opposite the school, with big gardens. A local farmer put his sheep in

there before the fete to cut the grass.

When I had been there about a year it was decided (not by me) that it was time I started to earn my keep. I had grown out of all recognition from the weedy little lad of only a year ago. I was big and tough for my age. Most of this was due to Mary's good food, fresh air and many fights in the playground with the locals who thought we were a bunch of London weaklings. Once we had sorted that out some real friendships developed.

My first job of the day was delivering milk, Mr Thomas had a dairy right at the bottom of the village. Every morning after he had milked the cows I loaded up two churns. One on each handlebar of an old fashioned bike, and pushed it all over the place delivering the milk. The customers would leave a jug on the doorstep and I filled them up with dippers from the churns. One winter morning I got stuck on a patch of ice going up the hill. I had to wait there until someone came up to help me, the

The advertisement banner for Gilbert Stephens Solicitors features a green and white color scheme. At the top right, the logo consists of a green 'gs' monogram followed by the text 'gilbertstephens' in a green sans-serif font, with 'SOLICITORS' in a smaller, black, all-caps font underneath. Below the logo, the word 'Solicitors' is written in a large, bold, white sans-serif font. Underneath that, the phrase 'Legal advice for every chapter in life' is written in a smaller, white sans-serif font. At the bottom of the banner, the contact information '01363 775 566 / law@gilbertstephens.co.uk' is displayed in white, followed by the website 'gilbertstephens.co.uk' in a green sans-serif font. The background of the banner shows a green silhouette of three people and a dog walking on a path against a white sky.

bike and milk were so heavy I could not move. My other main job was working for the butcher, Mr London. My job was to keep the shop clean and deliver the orders round the village. One day one of his daughters said she would teach me to ride the bicycle I had found in the shed at the back of the shop. We had lessons in the lane by the shop that leads to the church. I mastered it after a few falls and the first ride around to the pub. I thought it was wonderful! I was told to consider the bike mine and I was so proud of it, even if it was years old, rusty and had a big delivery basket on the front. Mr London was pleased as this extended my delivery range. I rode for miles on that old bike and loved every minute of it.

When Mr London retired, a Mr Adams took over the shop with this wife. He was quite young, tall with a big mop of curly black hair. By this time I must have been about eleven and my work in the shop increased. I started to help serve customers, do the display in the window and mix all the stuff for sausages. We had a big tin bath out in the back and we used to mix the sausage meat with a big wooden paddle. I worked in the shop most nights after school and all day Saturdays. I don't know how much I got paid as the wages from all my jobs went direct to Mary to help look after us. Greg's parents helped out with money and sent food parcels when they could.

We had a good life, everybody knew

everyone else, and the village was much smaller than it is now. The summers were hot and there was a general air of well being about the whole place. There were a great many tears when we were due to leave Winkleigh. I even asked Jack Way, the vicar, if I could be adopted by someone in the village, but we all had to leave. I returned home with much regret but have always thought of myself as a Winkleigh boy.

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Countryfile

From bristly foliage you fell complete, polished wood, gleaming mahogany, as perfect as a violin newly born of the treetops...

from 'Ode to a Chestnut' by Pablo Neruda

Castanea sativa - the sweet chestnut is not directly related to the familiar horse chestnut (*Aesculus hippocastanum*).

Sweet Chestnut is instead in the Beech family (family *Fagacea* - beech are *Fagus sylvatica*). Looking at the seeds of all three will show the differences. The spikier casings of the edible *Fagacea* seeds usually contain multiple seeds, where the rounded conker case usually has a single round inedible soapy nut. The leaves differ too with the horse chestnuts having palmate (like a hand) divided leaves, and sweet chestnuts having toothed edged large single leaves.

None of the three trees are native in Devon, the nearest is the Beech which is native in South East Wales and South East England. Sweet chestnuts though are supposedly a Roman introduction (there is little scientific evidence to confirm this) and are originally native to southern Europe. The oldest known sweet chestnut is in Sicily, with a circumference of 190 foot it is estimated to be between 2,000 and 4,000 years old. In the UK they are expected to reach up to 700 years which reach seed/nut bearing maturity at about 25 years.

The idea of it being introduced by the Romans is likely based in the fact the Romans used sweet chestnuts to make a rich flour. The starchy nuts are a good source of vitamin C (unusual for a nut) and vitamin B and various minerals (including iron, potassium and magnesium).

The '*sativum*' part of the name means cultivated, sown or planted, (as distinct from wild growing) in practice it usually is attached to plants with health benefits.

A good tree guide will make it easy to identify the shiny long tooth edged leaves, and the spiky seed cases which turn from green to light brown when they are ripe. Realistically by this time of year most nuts are probably already harvested by people or squirrels, but fortunately they are usually available in shops in winter so we can enjoy the benefits whether raw, or cooked, whole or as flour or puree, in savoury or sweet meals. Surely the favorite though is fire roasted, in their shells, outdoors making a toasty hand warmer as well as a tasty snack at a winter fayre or party.

To Coffey

GARDEN NOTES

Seed saving with the right plants

To Coffey



Seed saving is the root of intentional cultivation: Choosing the best producing and tastiest versions of plants from this year to supply your seeds for next year. This can still be worth doing, sometimes this will give versions of plants which are just that bit better to adapting to local conditions, and with the most desirable qualities. Often the transport resilience and shelf life is a priority feature of supermarket varieties so home grown can focus on good flavour, generous size or other personal preferences. It also helps keep gardening accessible and a sociable and community connected activity when people save seeds not only for their own use but to exchange with neighbours and other locals at organised seed swaps.

Because seed production is generally a form of sexual reproduction, genes of both parents mix, creating a new individual (compared to cuttings which are genetically identical clones). Species examples of plants (where the name is just Genus and Species eg: *Phaseolus lunatus* - the butter bean) will likely produce very similar offspring when open pollinated, when a number of plants are planted together reducing the chance of other species cross pollinating with them. However, named cultivars are very distinct individuals which are

produced by two specific different plants hybridising, when that plant reproduces again it makes an F2 hybrid which will potentially lose any special features.

Plants protected by PBR (plant breeders rights) are protected by law from having seeds saved, though so long as you don't pass them to anyone else you could be seen to be following the "farm saved seed exemption" (following the principles of seed sovereignty).

With potatoes it is always better to grow certified seed potatoes as the risks of disease with using seed saved or supermarket potatoes could fill your soil with potato pathogens for years to come just from one bad idea. This is why "volunteer" potatoes, left overs from last years crop, are carefully removed on farms. If you do grow from local potatoes it is best to keep them in a container so the soil they are in can be isolated if they show signs of disease.

Whilst different plants require different seed treatment to make them fertile, or some such as trees may not reach maturity for a few decades, which is all a matter of choice whether to save seeds or not, there is one family of plants which it is not advisable to save seed from: Cucurbit family. Cucurbita are the squashes and courgettes can cross pollinate very freely with others in their wide family and when they do can show

reversion to the wild plant. Whether it is your ornamental gourd fertilising the acorn squash, or the Melons hybridising with the courgettes, it is less about them being less excellent plants, more that they risk producing higher levels of the bitter toxic cucurbitacins which the wild plants defend themselves with. Whilst they do have a more bitter flavour you can try to avoid, people have been killed by eating these in curries which mask the poison.

However if what you want is locally adapted, generic seed for different species of flowers or vegetables, herbs or salad, you really could do far worse than to attend a seed swap, either with or without your own contribution.

DECEMBER

- Check your winter protection structures are still securely in place
- Check that greenhouse heaters are working
- Insulate outdoor taps and prevent ponds from freezing
- Prune open-grown apples and pears (but not those trained against walls)
- Prune acers, birches and vines before Christmas to avoid bleeding
- Harvest leeks, parsnips, winter cabbage, sprouts and remaining root crops
- Deciduous trees and shrubs can still be planted and transplanted
- Take hardwood cuttings
- Keep mice away from stored produce
- Reduce watering of houseplants
- Check all xmas plants are safe for any animal companions you have (no lilies around cats, careful to avoid your dog eating mistletoe)
- Save clean and safely store seeds for spring swaps.

JANUARY

- Recycle your Christmas tree by shredding it for mulch
- Clean pots and greenhouses ready for spring
- Dig over any vacant plots that have not been dug already
- Disperse worm casts in lawns
- Inspect stored tubers of Dahlia, Begonia and Canna for rots or drying out
- Prune apple and pear trees (ideal time for restorative pruning of overgrown orchards)
- Start forcing rhubarb
- Plan your vegetable crop rotations for the coming season
- Keep putting out food and water for hungry birds

FEBRUARY

- Find your local seed swaps and bring along your own saved seeds to share and discover new plants
- (Do not harvest cucurbit seeds for second generation plants, they can revert to toxic strains)
- Prepare vegetable seed beds, and sow some vegetables under cover
- Chit potato tubers (best bought from registered suppliers to avoid serious risks of disease)
- Protect blossom on apricots, nectarines and peaches
- Net fruit and vegetable crops to keep the birds off
- Prune winter-flowering shrubs that have finished flowering
- Divide bulbs such as snowdrops, and plant those that need planting 'in the green'
- Prune Wisteria / hardy evergreen hedges and renovate overgrown deciduous hedges
- Prune conservatory climbers such as bougainvillea
- Cut back deciduous grasses left uncut over the winter, remove dead grass from evergreen grasses

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Airfield Remembrance 2024

The annual Remembrance service took place at the Airfield Memorial site on Saturday 9th November. There was a chill breeze but at least it was dry for the occasion. The memorial looked resplendent with flags representing the five nations that flew from the airfield.

Fifty people of all ages attended. Many veterans judging from the plethora of medals being displayed were in attendance. The service was jointly led by Reverend Helen Blaine and her husband Alastair, a Royal Navy chaplain.

Alastair Blaine gave a moving address relating to his recent posting involving the training of Ukrainian Armed Forces in the U.K. He spoke of his role working with Ukrainian Chaplains that would move on to become Chaplains on the battlefields. He emphasised the Ukrainian passion to remain independent and their fierce determination to be free.

Major Justin Lystiuk of the Royal Canadian Air Force (serving at R.N.A.S. Culdrose) attended this year's service. He recited the poem 'High Flight' by Pilot/officer John G Magee Jn. R.C.A.F., read the Roll of Honour of fallen and laid a wreath on behalf of the people of Canada. SAC Cpl. Simon Read represented the R.A.F. Other wreaths were laid on behalf of Royal British Legion by Ron Fletcher, Torrridge District Council by District Councillor Simon Newton MBE, Winkleigh Parish Council and The Winkleigh Society.

Carl Woodison accompanied the hymns and beautifully sounded the Last Post & Reveille on trumpet. Katrina Beer was stand-by trumpeter.



The memorial stone flanked by Major Justin Lystiuk (RCAF) on the left and SAC cpl. Simon Read (R.A.F.) on the right.

Royal British Legion standard bearer Des Hill from Okehampton added to the occasion gracing the scene with the RBL Standard.

This memorial site is a tribute to Ron & Ruth Cotty and Steve Leahy who campaigned for and created the space for the Memorial.

The Winkleigh Society would like to acknowledge the help and assistance of all who have made this year's Remembrance commemoration possible. Plus; Public address supplied by Lorne & Alex Hamilton; after service cake Fiona's Farm Kitchen; Bio degradable poppy wreath, Hazel Towell.

Phil Griffiths



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Insects & Farmers

Most of us are aware of the decrease in the number of insects, butterflies & bees.

Because of this, problems are surfacing about trees and plants not being pollinated.

Most councils now have some sort of plan about introducing native flowers on road verges.

What is surprising is that some farmers have fields lying fallow & collecting a government subsidy, whilst also spraying with weed killer. Therefore, no insects.

If farmers continue on this route, pretty soon insects will be a rarity.

There are other farmers who have an arrangement with the Government for 3 years & collect a subsidy by planting flowers in their fields. Having walked some of these fields, there are plenty of bees, insects & butterflies. There are also flocks of birds flying in & out for their food.

Because of pesticides, particularly neonicotinoids (which are banned in most European countries) honey bees & wild bees are dying out, half the butterflies are at risk of extinction. This year's count is down almost 50% on last year's. Butterflies are a key indicator species; when they are in trouble we know that the wider environment is in trouble too. Nature is sounding the alarm call. We must act now if we are to turn the tide on these rapid declines and protect species for future generations.

The soil association say "We need to



urgently support farmers to fundamentally change how they farm. This is entirely possible **without a reliance on pesticides, as organic farmers worldwide demonstrate.** Using these greener farming approaches, known as **agroecology**, farmers aim to work with nature to create a more balanced system that doesn't rely on pesticides."

The general public can make their small efforts in their gardens, verges can be seeded with wild flowers but the biggest effect can be made by farmers.

For too long we have been taking from nature, slowly destroying the fertility of the soil. **It's about time we started consciously thinking about giving back to nature.**

Alan Jacobs
Councillor

Lundy



“Trafalgar. Fitzroy. Sole. Lundy”. Hearing the shipping forecast reminds me of my favourite place.

I first came across the island of Lundy in the Bristol Channel, as with many things in my life through climbers and climbing. I made my first visit in 1979, little realising then that the island would become as important to me and my well-being as my friends and family. Since then, I have visited Lundy 29 times; spending a total of 35 weeks on the island. What then is so fascinating about the place? What is its allure, what brings me back to the island year after year? Indeed, brought me to Devon? After all it is only a lump of rock three miles long, 400 feet high; stoically braving the battering winds and rain of Atlantic gales?

Today, even though health and safety requirements and the need to make the island accessible to all, have reduced the sense of adventure and the slight

frisson of danger; the feeling of being in another world, free of care and tension remains with you throughout your stay whether it be just a day or longer.

The first time I went to Lundy we sailed on the Polar Bear from Ilfracombe and after a rough sea crossing arrived green and excited at the Landing Bay. Your first view of the island is breathtaking. A magnificent lump of granite rising majestically from the sea. As the island grows larger in the lens of your camera, the mood change on the ship is palpable; nausea forgotten as the excitement grows. Even landing on the island was an adventure. In those days you had to climb down a fixed ladder from the heaving boat on to a dinghy also bouncing wildly in the waves. You must ensure that your timing is just right as you step from one to the other. The dinghy gallantly held in place by salty old seadogs with rough words

of encouragement and a twinkle in their eyes, ready to laugh at you if you mistimed your steps and ended up with wet feet, but equally ready to catch you in their laps if the need arose! These same men then rowed half a dozen or so holiday makers to the shore where you stepped on the mobile quay, no more than a trailer on wheels, just proud of the waves, again seeking to ensure that you did not start your holiday with wet feet or clothes or lost dignity. This disembarkation seemed exciting and adventurous and became even more so a few years later when scrambling down from the Oldenburg with a three-month old baby in a sling and a toddler to hand down to the sailors. Sadly, but rightly, you now step onto a gangway which is tied to the Oldenburg and acts as a temporary bridge to the ugly concrete, but solid, safe, fixed jetty. Even so in rough weather the short walk can seem a little hairy to those of a more timid disposition.

Lundy is a mystical place steeped in history; slavers, smugglers and sedition. If you are lucky the journey over will be exciting and magical, on some sailings I have seen basking sharks and often dolphins swimming alongside the Oldenburg, teasing the boat and the waves. One year a brave seagull was hitching a ride and begging for food. I have a wonderful picture of my son aged four holding out a hob nob as the bird swooped down and took the biscuit from his hand. On other occasions you are not so lucky. You may have to brave storms, get soaking wet and cold as the boat tosses on the waves. A horrendous choice has to be made in bad weather, do I go into the bowels of boat where sickness is always worse as the endless bouncing of the ship with no horizon to fix on, inevitably turns nausea into full blown vomiting. Or freeze up top getting soaking wet, eyes fixed on the horizon and not on any part of the heaving boat. My choice is always the latter, but

one year my poor son was down wind of a passenger vomiting over the side and inherited another hapless holiday maker's breakfast.

So why a holiday destination where the travel arrangements are at best uncomfortable and at worse hazardous? Especially when for some holiday makers there is apparently nothing to do. There is one shop and one pub, the Marisco Tavern and that is it. Many a time, a day tripper who has bemoaned the long queue in the bar has been advised that there is another pub at the North West Point called the *Hen and Chickens*, how many disgruntled 'grockles' have made their way north only to discover that the *Hen and Chickens* are sea stacks I know not.

When the children were little a favorite past time was to go to the green outside the Marisco and lie in the sunshine with a picnic and laugh at the clothes and footwear worn by the hapless day trippers. Often, they would leave the mainland in shorts and a t-shirt because the sun was so hot and then freeze on the two-hour journey in fog and mist, spewing into paper bags not realizing how cold and rough the sea can get even on the sunniest days in summer. Arriving green and fed up they would ask us what there was to do on the island. "Nothing and everything" would be our reply. "Where's the shops?" the children would yell.

"Can I have an ice cream?"

"Where can we sit?"

"Where shall we go?"

"What shall we do?"

"You've been here a week!"

Astonishment making even the adults forget their manners. Incredulity blazed on their faces. "How have you entertained your children?"

The truth is the island doesn't entertain you, it absorbs you like the clinging mists and swirling sea frets. Each day you slow down more, look

LUNDY

more closely, breathe more deeply, think less, stress less and become at one with island. Watching seals sunning themselves on the rocks, calling to them from the North Quay, your seal whispering arousing their curiosity, their dog faces staring at you intently, whilst you wonder who is watching whom. Or following the flight of the peregrines over Gannet's Rocks, watching highland cattle on Ackland Moor, spotting the shy sika in the bracken before going down to the Battery for lunch and sea gazing, sunbathing, and see amazing wildflowers, sea birds, sika deer, untamed ponies, highland cattle, lambs in spring and grumpy goats all compete for your attention. The island is a feast to the senses, the sun warming your soul, scudding clouds, fresh sea air, wind and rain on your face, mist nestling in your hair, salt blown winds, odours of the farm yard, the bleat of sheep, the rustling of the wind in the gorse, the plip plop of a carp in Rocket Pond, gulls crying like lost babies, the crashing of waves in The Devil's Limekiln all vie for your attention. Children become both wild and tame as they free themselves from the shackles of normal life, running unrestricted across the island, swimming in the sea, grubbing amongst the rock pools and climbing and swimming their time away. Childhood, risk taking, kept in check by the awesome majesty of the island, the largess of the sky, the openness of the plateau. Time checked only by hunger and twilight. The island both a sanctuary and an

adventure. A place of natural beauty and splendid isolation. Devon's best kept secret.

For the record there is an awful lot to do on Lundy aside from using your senses; I have rock climbed, ran, walked, swam, snorkeled, sailed, kayaked, fished, practiced photography, nature and people watched and conceived a child. Others have rung St Helens church bells, painted pictures, sketched, filmed and dived in clean clear waters around the island. I spent six weeks on the island doing conservation work, rhododendron bashing, rag wort removal, beach cleaning and even mowed a meadow a la Poldark style with a scythe. Only those with no imagination or sense of adventure can find Lundy boring with nothing to do; the key is to just relax, free your mind and let the island weave its magical peace into your soul.

Angela Findlay





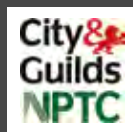
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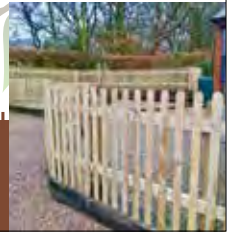


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WINKLEIGH *Friendship Club*



The last talk of 2024 organised by the Winkleigh Friendship Club took place on October 31st in The Community Centre. It was an enjoyable afternoon as always.

The speaker David Weeks spoke about working for the Post Office and Royal Mail over the years. It started helping his parents in the running of Exbourne post office then running that same office with his wife Margaret. From then on he was a part time postman and went full time, in the end went on the counter in Okehampton.

He made the audience laugh with stories of his trips delivering in the countryside and also how back then all postmen played a large part in the community as well as delivering the post.

In 2025 our first talk will take place on March 6th more details here in the future and on posters around the village. Meanwhile we meet every other Thursday in the Community Centre 2.30-4.30

Marcia Butt

Winkleigh Volunteer Service

Volunteers take patients to hospital and other medical appointments, collect shopping, take people to the shops, care homes and other essential journeys.

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Please give as much notice as you can as our volunteers can't be expected to help at a moment's notice, we are not an emergency service

THANK YOU

**May I take this opportunity to thank all my volunteers for their support and help with this service, especially during the closure of the Winkleigh surgery which also coincided with the annual flu and COVID inoculations which meant volunteers were very busy. Your hard work is much appreciated
Have a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.**

We desperately need more volunteers especially as the annual flu jab and Covid booster programme gets under way and the village increases in size.

If you are interested in helping out, please give me a ring to find out more!

Angela Findlay



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WINKLEIGH COMMUNITY

Coffee Mornings

Since breaking our ties with Cancer Research UK in June last year (by mutual agreement) the Coffee Mornings have continued to run much as before: each Wednesday in the Community Centre between 9.30 and 10.30 alongside the Mini-Market. So far we have made donations of £250 each to the following local charities:

- Devon Air Ambulance
- Okehampton District Community Transport Group
- South West Blood Bikes
- Farms For City Children

A team of volunteers serves coffee, tea or hot chocolate as well as biscuits and collects donations (usually £1 per person); their help is invaluable.

Currently we occupy six very sociable tables in the large hall. A member of the Parish Council is usually in attendance and our local Police Community Support Officer often calls in as well. You are very welcome to come along.

Godfrey Rhodes (Hon. Treasurer)

MINI-MARKET & COFFEE MORNING

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WINKLEIGH BRANCH SURGERY:

Extension & Refurbishment



Winkleigh Branch Surgery re-opened, after a 4 week closure, on 14 October 2024. The new surgery has been extended, alongside a refurbishment of the existing premises.

2 additional consulting rooms have been created, along with a new spacious waiting room, a new reception area which provides additional dispensing collection space and a staff room and kitchen for the team.


The work has transformed the branch surgery into a new modern centre which will benefit the community for many years to come.

This wouldn't have been possible without the generosity of Winkleigh resident, Hazel Pike, who left a substantial gift to the practice in her will. Wallingbrook Partnership in consultation with Hazel's daughter-in-law, Queenie Pidgeon, decided to use the donation to totally transform the services at Winkleigh Surgery, where Hazel was a patient.

The practice also successfully applied for an improvement grant through NHS England. The stipulations of the grant provided a very short window to undertake the project, which would not have been completed without the dedication and professionalism from Dale Chadwick Carpentry & Construction and Dale's team.

We endeavour to provide GP services at Winkleigh daily as staffing allows, we are also scheduling sessions with our practice nurses, health care assistants, GP registrars, pharmacist, mental health practitioner, first contact physiotherapist, paramedic, occupational therapist, and social prescribing team.

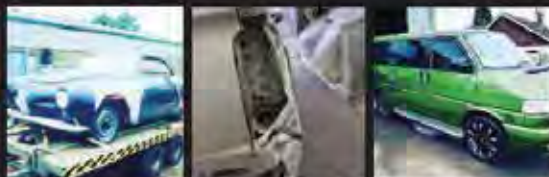
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WINKLEIGH *Village Hall*

By the time you are reading this, Christmas will be on the horizon although it doesn't seem very long since the last one! It seems an opportune time, however, to review the last year.

After the unprecedented and widespread global disruptions of 2021 and 2022, followed by a partial recovery last year, 2024 has seen the Village Hall not only returning to its pre-Covid levels of success and popularity but to surpassing both. Existing classes such as Badminton, Tai Chi, Family History Club, Church Wives Group and Tap Dancing have continued to attract residents, whilst newer classes, Therapeutic Pilates, Yoga and the Book Club have established themselves and continue to grow.

By way of one-off events, the popularity of private birthday parties, wedding receptions, quizzes and special events such as the Curiosity Café have significantly increased as we are now reaping the benefits of the major refurbishments that were carried out over the last three years.

The hall is also becoming popular with organisations and businesses requiring space for private meetings including the National Health Service, Devon Pathways, Acorn School, Wallingbrook Surgery, Social Workers, and the Winkleigh Gardening Club.

So, as far as getting custom through our doors, The Village Hall is in a good place. As always, massive thanks to all residents, visitors and helpers who continue to support hall activities. We couldn't do it without you!

Effective and efficient governance is key to the success of any organisation

and the hall is no exception. Although there have been a number of changes on the committee this year, we have a very hard-working group of people in place to ensure a great service for you, the users. *We can always do with more people to help with running the hall though – Contact details below!*

Once again, a big thank you to Paul Beer for all the landscaping work he carries out each month, making the hall exterior look as attractive as possible, and to Linda Millership who carries out sterling work in keeping the hall clean.

On the topic of formality, I am very pleased to say that, following 12 months of writing, reviewing, re-reviewing then eventually agreeing, the hall now has a complete set of working policies covering the following areas:

- Governance
- Finance
- Risk Assessment
- Letting – Hiring of Hall
- Equal Opportunities
- Health & Safety
- Safeguarding
- Data Protection
- Environment

One of the drivers for creating these policies was an increasing requirement for sight of such by bodies to whom the hall can apply for grants. Additionally, things can sometimes go wrong, accidents and incidents can happen. As and when these occur, it is crucial to investigating bodies, whether that be police, Health & Safety Executive, or others, that we are seen to have policies in place and that we can demonstrate conformance to those policies. I am

going to be creating a new website for the hall, a section of which will give open and transparent access to those policies. The policies themselves will be subject to regular review every three years, or sooner if a requirement is identified.

I mentioned in the Spring that it had been my intention to step down from both the office of Chair, and from the committee, at the Annual General Meeting. However, I recognise that now is perhaps not the best time to do that and so I have agreed to remain in post for a further twelve months, until the AGM in 2025. This will allow time to identify/recruit someone who will be willing to take on the role at that time.

I was delighted that, within 9 months of commencement, the hall was able to raise sufficient funds, circa £2000, which has allowed us to purchase and install insulation for the roof space in the main hall. These funds, in the main, came from donations – small and large - made by you, the residents of Winkleigh. Again, thank you all so much for your support.

Monthly markets have once again proved popular this year with several new stalls joining in addition to the regulars. Organisations providing ever-popular refreshments at our markets through the year have also benefitted although I must mention the generosity of the Tai Chi club at the November market, which donated all of their refreshments takings to village hall funds.

Our Christmas market, which is full to bursting point with stalls, will be held in the hall on **Saturday 7th December**. There will once again be live seasonal

music played on keyboard by Jennie Ashton. Come along, enjoy the festivities and finish off (or start!) your Christmas gift shopping.

Our classic Christmas movie this year, being



screened on **13th December**, will be the ever popular **“It’s A Wonderful Life”**, starring James Stewart. However, we will be screening a **full colour version** which I doubt many of you have seen before. So come along and spend a lovely evening watching such an iconic movie. We shall kick off the 2025 movie season on **January 17th** with the screening of **“Charlotte Gray”**, starring Cate Blanchett and Michael Gambon, the story of a World War II SOE agent sent on assignment to France.

Finally, on behalf of the hall committee, I would like to wish all of you good people a very Happy Christmas and Peaceful New Year.

Tony Aston
Chair



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OUR ANCESTORS



The recent archaeology dig off Townsend Hill has confirmed, as many who live here have long suspected, that Winkleigh people go back a very long way.

The first stage of work was an archaeological geophysical survey which identified the ditch of a circular enclosure and other linear ditch features.

Romano British pottery was found in the enclosure ditch which identified it as an enclosed farmstead of **Romano-British period [AD43 - AD410]**.

Other linear ditches were found to be field boundary ditches from the medieval period.

THE DIG: Carried out by AC archaeology (a South West independent commercial archaeology consultancy) recorded the whole of the enclosure in plan form, fully excavating features such as pits, post holes and gullies on the interior of the farmstead and sections of the enclosure.

At the time of the archaeology open day the northern part of the enclosure was under excavation, up to where a modern power cable has bisected the site. The southern part was excavated after the open day.

THE FINDS: Worked prehistoric flint [Neolithic or bronze age]. Not unusual as evidence of early hunter gatherers and first farming communities is found throughout Devon. More significant was a single body sherd of **iron-age pottery**... This may suggest that the farmstead had its origins in pre Roman Iron Age 700BC to AD43. Majority of finds were of Romano –British pottery. South Devon Ware 2nd to 4th centuries AD. Also, one piece of pottery from the Blackdown Hills, some pieces of medieval pottery [AD1250 1450] and North Devon courseware jug fragments.

THE FARMSTEAD: The enclosure at Winkleigh was single ditched but the

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All this greatly facilitated trade and advances in technology. There would have been a slave population working in the mines and quarries on Dartmoor and on the large Roman estates. Native landowners and their tenants would have paid taxes to the Roman rulers to pay for the Roman military machine, engineering

location of the entrance way was not clear, [could have been destroyed by the modern cable trench] It would have functioned much like farms in our more recent history with accommodation for the extended family and some for the retainers/servants in Roman times. There would have been structures for livestock, agricultural produce and workshops for tools [iron working] and processing raw materials [textiles and dairying].

There was a terrace on the interior, with circular foundation gullies or thatched roof eaves-drip gullies, and the post-holes for the structural timbers of a sequence of roundhouses. Other pits and postholes on the interior are likely to have been for ancillary buildings, timber storage and waste disposal.

Excavated Romano-British farmsteads across Devon exhibit various degrees of Romanisation.

Following the Roman invasion in AD 43 the army gradually pushed West and a road network was established. There was a large campaign base at North Tawton [Nemetostatio] possibly from the period before Exeter was chosen as a permanent fortress. There were also garrison forts at Lapford, Exbourne and Okehampton.

and administration. The rural British population would have been largely free but still tied to the native landed nobility owing labour and goods.

CONCLUSION: The enclosure was the most important find but not enough to warrant being preserved. Therefore the third and final stage of work is 'preservation by record' the full excavation of the enclosure to provide as much information about its structure/plan, date and function. Once we heard from Bill Horner and the Devon Historic Environment Team that there had been a significant find the Winkleigh Society lobbied hard for public engagement with the dig i.e. an open day and a school visit. An interpretation board would be nice.

Penny Griffiths

[many thanks to Bill Horner]

The first visualisation of the enclosed settlement is by **Mark Gidley** reproduced with kind permission of **Cotswold Archaeology**.

The second farmstead image is courtesy of the East Devon AONB Guide Leaflet.

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Winkledown

Dearest Gentle Reader,

This author has been entertained by various observations over the autumn period in "The Vill". Now the Festive Season fast approaches to brighten the short days and long nights.

But to make matters interesting let us boldly begin a search for the hidden poet.

You have chosen to dwell in a **Rural** area, mainly a farming community (with all that entails in terms of surroundings) **Of** which there are many internally in Devon.

Newcomers to 'the Vill' are very much appreciated and welcomed, particularly those who have kindly offered their assistance and support within this unique community.

Following a late and difficult harvest hampered by the vagaries of Mother Nature, our farmers now have a very small window of opportunity to plough and sow. With the heavy rains the toll on the soil is such that they must take every possible opportunity (as urged by the latest press release of the Environment Agency for Devon and Cornwall - although I'm quite sure that our generations of Farmers do know very well what they are doing!) to plan for excessive rainfall. Heavy machinery cannot operate on very wet ground without problems, hence once again, our farmers may need to work nights to fulfil their winter tasks in a race against time and weather.

Ladies and gentlemen 'taking tea' at any of the village catering venues, halls or events, will doubtless have formed their own opinions with regard to preference of Devonshire Cream Tea as opposed to Cornish Cream Tea ... A terrible faux pas if one should put jam before cream in Devon!

In 'the Ton', one would perambulate in order to be seen in Society, however, here in 'the Vill' we are all too busy getting on with our lives. It is, however, entirely interesting to 'walk the village' noting and exploring the historical features and seeing where we ourselves can help to keep our community active and thriving.

Mark, Gentle Reader, that the Parish of Winkleigh and Hollocombe holds very dear to those whose families have lived and worked here for generations. Secondly, those who have come to live here and have embraced the ethos and traditions of 'the Vill' contribute greatly to the spirit and goodwill of continuing the voluntary efforts which keep the active community buoyant. Long may this continue!

Living in a village community, everyone has a part to play, the more you put into something, the more you will get out of it, whatever your age or circumstance. Many of our day to day community activities are run by volunteers. It cannot be left to the few, or it will stagnate and the community ethos will be lost.

Those who offer their time and energy should be applauded by the community, not criticised or belittled for their efforts, or taken for granted.

"Use it or Lose it" with regards to the local businesses, arts, poetry, crafts, traditions, landscape and specialities in our area. Please support your community!

Yours affectionately,

Winkledown

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Letters...



Dear Editor,

I am writing as Chair of the Beaford Archive Steering Group, in response to an article by Barbara Jenkins in the Spring issue of Distinctly Winkleigh. It states that last year “the Beaford archive were ... going through their documents but were destroying anything that was not relevant to them. Due to the quick thinking of Margaret Ferguson a large amount of photos that are on hard card were saved as they depicted life in the early 1900s [in Winkleigh].”

Whilst I am delighted that these artefacts have found a good home, and will be displayed in the village, I do wish to challenge the impression that the Beaford Archive is casual in its stewardship of the items in its care. Nothing could be further from the truth, and we have a multiplicity of checks and balances to make sure that we conform to the highest professional standards in looking after these precious objects. The pictures described were not archived photographs but reproductions, produced from Archive originals in the 1970s for use in our educational programmes, mounted on card to enable them to be pinned up in village halls and/or passed from hand to hand. Their condition reflected their age and heavy use, and while we held on to some of the less-worn examples, we were happy to offer the rest to our various village contacts in case they could still be of value to local communities.

People of North Devon need to be sure that this unique collection, so important in both historic and artistic terms, is judiciously curated and jealously guarded on their behalf. I am happy to give that assurance.

MARTYN WARREN

07952 638672

Dear Editor,

Philippa and I are pleased to still receive DW although it is over nine years since we moved to Taunton.

I like the new look DW, and I particularly enjoyed the pieces / news on Keir, Alan’s bee keeping and Stephen’s talk on Winkleigh Airfield. It is sad to read about Derek Miller, such a kind man.

Best wishes,
David Lausen

PEOPLE AND PLANET - community questionnaire

In my last article, I shared how many remarkable people in Winkleigh and Hollocombe are taking steps to care for our environment, as volunteers or in running a business.

Now, I’m curious to see if there are others out there who would like to join with like-minded individuals to take action and enjoy the journey together.

To help us understand what matters most

to our community, we have put together a questionnaire.

You can find it online here:
<https://bit.ly/WinkleighSurvey>

Don’t worry if you’re busy with the Christmas season - this will be open until the end of January 2025, so you can share your thoughts when the rush is over and you have a moment.

We’d really love to hear your ideas about how we can enhance our Parish for both people and the many species that call this place home. Thank you for your input!

KIM J MELHUIH

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FOOTBALL ROUND UP

Winkleigh Football Club Update by Jodie Johns

It's never a dull time at Winkleigh FC!

Lee Green, who was announced as the new manager entering the 24/25 season, has moved onto pastures new and the club wish him all the luck for the future.

Our goalkeeper, Steve Johns, has now taken on the role as manager. Steve has played for Winkleigh since 20/21 and has been an integral part of the team since. He has played for teams all over Devon and knows the game inside and out - we're looking forward to seeing Steve manage the team he has known and been part of for years.

Results to date are as follows:

Winkleigh 5 - 2 Sidmouth

Winkleigh 1 - 2 Feniton

Winkleigh 4 - 1 St Martins

Wellington 1 - 0 Winkleigh

Winkleigh 3 - 0 Lyme Regis

Feniton 4 - 1 Winkleigh

AFC Dumnonii 5 - 3 Winkleigh
(Devon Premier Cup)

Winkleigh 0 - 6 Lapford

Winkleigh 1 - 2 Crediton

Our quiz night, hosted on 27th September at the Village Hall, was a great success seeing many familiar faces back to compete for the win. The new half time game of heads or tails went down a treat too!

The club also hosted a rounders tournament, in conjunction with Ed

Knight, on 13th October which saw members of the village come together to raise funds for local causes. Many laughs, fails and hilarious moments (that should have been caught on camera... maybe an idea for next time!), and we're looking forward to hosting and expanding next year.

Members of the committee have been busy creating a driveway accessed by the top of the pitch that will enable disabled spectators to watch games pitch side with no obstructions. This work has been partly funded by Torridge District Council's Councillor Grant in which we received £1200. Thank you very much to TDC - this is going to make such a difference!

Upcoming events include our huge Christmas Draw which will be held at The Kings Arms on Friday 20th December at 18:00 - tickets can be purchased from the Post Office or any committee member. Keep your eyes peeled for updates on our comedy night in March! We've also got a couple of provisional dates set for 2025's 6-a-side tournament.

As the wet weather approaches, home support is greatly appreciated and means a massive amount to the players on the pitch. If you've never been to watch a game before, pop down and see what we have on offer - free entry, on site canteen, children's park (other side of car park), half time 50/50 draw and entertainment in the form of football! Follow our Facebook page 'Winkleigh Football Club' to stay up to date with fixtures and events."

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ACE Archaeology Club



One minute it is August and then it is November and the Christmas Edition!

ACE has been busy in the intervening time.

ACE and ACE members have been involved in a few things organised by other people in the last few months. Including some test pitting at Wrangworthy Barrows as support to the Monument Management Scheme (MMS). The MMS looks after sites that are scheduled monuments and tries to keep them in good condition. They have been doing some work in the ACE "area" and some ACE members went to help with the test pitting at Wrangworthy Barrows.

On our own ACE Day in October, we repeated a visit to Winkleigh for a tour of the village focusing on its long and varied history. Although it hasn't been long since we did this it was decided that we should do it again as we have had so many new members this year. Included in the tour was a visit to Heywood Castle, a Motte and Bailey castle overlooking Eggesford. There

is a surprising number of such castles in the area, not far from Haywood is Eggesford Castle, not accessible as on private property, and Winkleigh has two such mounds; one on private property and one under the village hall!! There must have been a lot of trouble from the inhabitants of the area.

Winkleigh Village Hall on its Motte and Bailey.

If you would like to find out more about any of these sites, or indeed any sites at all, I suggest -

Devon County Council Environment Viewer <https://map.devon.gov.uk/dccviewer/>

As mentioned in the last edition we hope to be doing some work with MMS in Winkleigh in 2025.

Our next event is our AGM in November. Apart from the business of the AGM we will also have updates on various digs from Andy Crabb our Archaeology Adviser and Dartmoor archaeologist, amongst other roles.

December sees us sharpening our quills to do some writing, literally. Sharpening the quills and using homemade ink. May be messy but will be interesting. More about this next year.



Erica Williamson

October 2024

acearchaeologyclub.wordpress.com

WINKLEIGH CHRISTMAS FAIR



I suspect like me, most of you cannot quite believe that it's November already but it's that time again!

Our wonderful bunch of volunteers have been working extremely hard and this years **Winkleigh Christmas Fair** is going to be another cracker (pun absolutely intended)!

There will definitely be snow, don't ask me how we know.....we just do....and we're hoping for a dry evening, so please get your gloves and coats on and join us.

Up in the village square as normal, festivities kick-off at 6pm and continue until around 9pm and like last year, the Christmas spirit will be in plentiful supply.

The village lights will be switched on at 6.30pm which (if we are lucky) will mark the arrival of a certain white-bearded, red-suited gentleman – who usually rocks up in true Winkleigh style.

He'll be assisted by his ever-helpful troop of elves who can be found in the grotto (some say it also doubles as a pub) – keen to meet anyone who has been good this year!

You can also expect:

- Live Band in the Square – The Rocking J's
- Traditional Market Stalls
- Mulled Wine & Mince Pies
- BBQ (the Mad Butchers finest of course)
- Lots of Snow and festive tunes
- Christmas Raffle

.....and guaranteed laughs and festive spirit in bucket loads!

So please, good and great folk of Winkleigh and the surrounding villages, come and join us for what is always a fantastic night that never fails to warm the coldest of hearts.

Details can be found on posters and flyers but if you have any questions or would like to just get in touch with us, please do: gareth_cowan@hotmail.com / 07884 262 458

Have a wonderful Christmas and we look forward to seeing you on Saturday December 7th at 6pm in the village square.

From the Winkleigh Fair Organising Group – what a bunch of legends you are!



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Church Wives Group, Village Hall
2.30pm-4.30pm

TUESDAY

Free 'Sewcial Crafternoon' at Catkin
Blooms 1:00-3:00pm

Badminton 7:00pm-9:00pm Village Hall

WEDNESDAY

Mini market & charity coffee morning
9:30am-10:30am Community Centre

Tap Dancing 7:00pm-8:00pm Village Hall

Youth Club 7:00pm-9:00pm Sports Hall

Kung Fu 6:30pm-8:00pm &
8:00pm-9:00pm Community Centre

THURSDAY

Winkleigh Art Group 10:00-14:00
Community Centre

Tai Chi 10:30-12:00 Village Hall

Tiny Tots 9:30-11:15 Sports Hall

Therapeutic Pilates 19:15-20:45
Village Hall

Tai Chi 19:30-21:30pm Sports Centre

FRIDAY

Youth Club 7:00pm-9:00pm Sports
Centre

Therapeutic Pilates 9:30am-12.30pm
Village Hall

Short Mat Bowls 13:45-16:15 Sports Hall



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DECEMBER

7th Christmas market - 10am-12md
Village Hall

7th - 12th Winkleigh Friendship Club,
Community Centre 14.30 – 16.30

7th Christmas Fair, Village Square
18:00 – 21:00

9th Okehampton Choral Society
7.30pm St John the Baptist Church,
Hatherleigh

13th Movie Night - “It’s a Wonderful
Life” Colour version. 6.30pm for 7pm
Village Hall

16th Okehampton Choral Society
7:30pm - Fairplace Church, Okehampton

21st Children’s Disco Sports Centre 19.00
– 21.00 Children must be accompanied
by parent or guardian, younger children
of people attending as adult to the child
at disco can bring any younger siblings if
they cannot get babysitter.

JANUARY

17th Movie Night “Charlotte Gray”
Village Hall

JULY

13th-19th Winkleigh Summer Fair



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Insurance e.g. for house, contents and vehicles,

Energy e.g. House insulation, boiler upgrades, best energy offers for your level of use, home improvements, warm blankets and one room heaters

We are working with Wallingbrook Health and Welfare. You will find copies of our leaflet with contact details at both Winkleigh and Chulmleigh Surgeries, or at the Recreation and Sports Centre in Winkleigh. You will find copies of the leaflet in poster form on the board outside Londis and down by the school.

If you want to seek advice directly from the Health and Welfare team, who can assist with the difficulties of living alone, you can leave a message with us, with the receptionist at Winkleigh Surgery, or Chulmleigh Surgery for Paula Martin the team lead.

We can also assist those people without access to the internet to set up a private account which will be free to use at the Recreation and Sports Centre.

Sue Taylor

Treasurer, Winkleigh Recreation and Sports Centre

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oldsmithy1@btinternet.com

Monday **Fitsteps** 18.30 - 20.30
elainecoldman@btinternet.com

Thursday 19.00 - 21.00 **Tai Chi**
jason@taoyinarts.co.uk

Thursday **Tiny Tots** 9.30 - 11.15
tinytotswinkleigh@gmail.com

Friday **Youth Club** 19.00 - 21.00
Winkleighyouthclub@gmail.com

Seven days a week **snooker**
winkleighsnookerclub@gmail.com

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Rachel Goldsworthy tells the story of the

Tidy Bear Bin on Elms Meadow purchased and installed by Winkleigh Parish Council.



Following on from the article in the Autumn Edition of Distinctly Winkleigh regarding the Tidy Bear Bin in Elms Meadow, in general it has become a landmark of great success! The children playing in Elms Meadow use it and care for it and it is proving to be an encouragement for them to think about the environment and litter.

Unfortunately on one weekend recently, they were put off because despite it obviously being a children's bin, the mouth of the Bear was stuffed with a carrier bag full of grass and dog poo which made it smell and blocked any further use. This then had to be removed and taken to a dog poo bin of which there are apparently 8 in Winkleigh, and the Children's Bear bin disinfected so the children could then use it again.

The nearest dog poo bins were overflowing which is probably why someone had put it in the Bear Bin. Quite possibly it could have been a well-meaning gesture as the bag was so large

that they must have cleared quite an area of (maybe public) land because it hadn't been cleared by dog owners?

However, a children's Bin next to a playpark is not the right place for faeces.

Torridge District Council and Winkleigh Parish Council have been informed and more dog poo bins are apparently in progress for Winkleigh. Torridge is responsible for emptying both Dog Poo Bins and General waste and Playpark bins, a particular team from Bideford comes to Winkleigh every Tuesday.



Rachel Goldsworthy



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SCHOOL NEWS

Winkleigh Primary School Headteacher
Mrs Victoria Fenemore reports

Hello everyone

This first half-term of the year has been full of interesting and exciting experiences and events.

Our Year 6 children have been extremely busy writing to local businesses asking for raffle prize donations for our school Christmas Fair – if anyone would like to make a donation we would be extremely grateful. The funds raised will go to support families with our superb offer of extra-curricular activities.

Already this term: Year 1 children have walked around our historical village and been on an educational visit to Rosemoor Gardens; Year 3 children have taken the train from Eggesford Station and arrived at Exeter Central – they then walked to the Cathedral where they learned about the fascinating history of the site, the building and the signs of change in the church over a number of centuries - they then had lunch at Pizza Express before heading back to the train station and home; more recently we celebrated world History Day. Children were able to examine artefacts from Tiverton Museum and make predictions and inferences regarding the item and the related chronology.

Our PE profile is ever strong with events such as our intra-sport football for Key Stage 2 children which was enjoyed enormously this term and the children will have the opportunity to play netball in the next sessions. We have attended a fun-filled tag rugby tournament at Queen Elizabeth School in Crediton. We are extremely grateful to QE as the events they organise for our children are always fantastically organised. We were also visited by a Skateboarding coach who



has come to us before. The children were thrilled at the thought of testing and developing their skills. Their smiles said it all.

Our ongoing curriculum enrichment has been extremely varied and we thank each of our school staff who make this provision possible – the clubs offered so far have been Tag Rugby, Art Club, Gardening Club, Science Club and Running Club. Our wraparound care provision is also thriving where children are enjoying lovely food as well as a huge variety of fun-filled activities.

Our School Ambassadors have been selected from Year 6 and they have begun the year very pro-actively. They have arranged a Scarecrow competition to coincide with our Year 5 grandparents lunch in order to enlist help with voting. Welcoming in grandparents to share lunch with their grandchildren has been hugely enjoyable and the letters of thanks from our community members has meant so much to us all.

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Neil on 07775 568728 or e-mail
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NORTH POLE

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6.30pm**





Congratulations...

to Ashley Marshall and Lizzie Briggs who got married in September. Ashley has lived in Winkleigh all his life and Lizzie has come from Somerset. They will now continue their married life in Winkleigh.

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In memory of Derek Miller

8th September 1929 - 7th August 2024

Derek Leonard Miller was born at No 7 Eggesford Road to Chris and Ethel Miller. The family moved two years later down the road to No 11 where they lived until aged 19 Derek together with his younger sister Hazel and parents moved to Graysbridge. It was the family farm, his parents were the third generation to live there and Derek and Margaret became the fourth generation to do so after they married in 1964.

Derek attended the village school and when he left there worked for Charlie Bissett's bicycle repair shop. The mechanical skills he acquired there served him well during his lifetime as a farmer.

Always an enthusiastic Young Farmer [where he won many awards] he was the first Devon young farmer to be awarded the gold badge for seven proficiency tests in farm crafts.

He would go on to teach young farmers from all over Devon the finer points of shearing. Derek could often be found at local agricultural shows demonstrating the skill of reed rope making.

A nimble dancer, Derek and friends cycled miles to various village halls. Favourite dances, the waltz and quick step.

He met Margaret in 1961 at the Winkleigh Hunt Ball. Married in 1964 they made Graysbridge Farm their family home becoming the proud parents of Paul and Sarah. Tragically Paul died in 1976. It is testament to Derek that he stoically guided his family through their time of great sorrow.

Derek passed his farming skills on to their daughter Sarah, tending to their animals and taking care of the land. Later he loved teaching his grandsons and great grandsons about the country way of life and telling stories about the old days.

He retired from farming in 1995 when he and Margaret moved to Park Place, Eggesford Road.

Always a loyal and active supporter of his beloved Winkleigh A.F.C. Derek rarely missed a home match.

Derek was a staunch country-man rooted in his family and home village.



In memory of Claire Tricker

1941 - 2024

It is with great sadness that we report that Claire Tricker, known to very many of you in the Winkleigh area and someone who was involved in so much of Winkleigh life, passed away on 5th June 2024, at Castle House Care Home in Torrington, where she had been a resident for nearly 2 years.

Claire's life was nothing short of extraordinary. Born in London during the turmoil of WWII, she miraculously survived an incendiary bomb landing in her cot. From those early days, she went on to create homes in 18 different houses across 11 countries, traveling around the world twice to visit the places she hadn't lived, before coming to Winkleigh with her husband Ray when he retired from the military.

Her life was full of remarkable experiences: she met Princess Anne and Princess Margaret, visited 10 Downing Street, and even received a 60th wedding anniversary card from the King and Queen. Whether known as a wife, mother, grandma, friend, or "Claire the" Guider, Florist, or singer, Claire was a force of nature. She was always impeccably presented, never without her signature lipstick and eyeshadow, and was constantly involved in various activities.

Claire was always a key member of so many of the activities in Winkleigh; as a regular flower arranger at the church (where her displays were always very flamboyant); as a stalwart member of the Winkleigh WI where she was the President for many years; to singing in the Okehampton Choral Society, helping out at the Winkleigh Fayre and so much more over many years. She was also a talented gardener, with a special pride in her garden at Riddiford House, where two family weddings were beautifully celebrated along with numerous other gatherings and events.

As well as all of those activities, Claire's love for guiding was a central theme in her life, from her early days as a Sea Ranger in West Sussex to becoming the first-ever County Commissioner for Benelux and France to taking over the Brownies and Guides in the Winkleigh area when she arrived to make sure that it continued on for another generation her passion and enthusiasm never waned. Her campfire leadership and her badge-filled blanket were legendary in the guiding community.

Her zest for life, her ability to connect with people, to get involved and help others and her unwavering love for her family and friends made her truly unforgettable. Claire lived a life full of adventure, love, and laughter—a life that will be cherished and remembered by all who knew her.



DISTINCTLY WINKLEIGH

PUBLICATION INFORMATION

The Winkleigh Society publishes Distinctly Winkleigh quarterly at the end of **March, June, September** and early **December**. Copies are available free of charge to all homes and businesses in the Parish (many hand delivered, others available from village shops).

Please email Articles to **articles@distinctlywinkleigh.co.uk** and Adverts to **adverts@distinctlywinkleigh.co.uk** One-off posters for community 'not-for-profit' events are free of charge.

Please ensure that any images you submit are of the highest possible resolution and that all articles and images are copyright-free. All articles submitted for publication may be subject to editing, primarily for space or layout reasons.

Note also that it takes only 500 words to fill each (A5) page without any images.

Please be aware that the views expressed in submitted material are not necessarily shared or endorsed by the newsletter team or The Winkleigh Society. Furthermore the Society does not accept any responsibility for the accuracy of any information, goods or services advertised in adverts or articles.

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All residents of Winkleigh Parish are welcome to attend and vote at Winkleigh Society General Meetings. Further information about the Society can be accessed at:
www.winkleighonline.com

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