

MATFEN COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

No. 20 – March – April 2023



So, we've made it to **Newsletter number 20**. The first community newsletter was produced in March 2020, printed and sent round with the churches' *Spirit in the Community*. Who could have imagined what was in store, back in those anxious days three years ago, when we went into the first lockdown for the pandemic? But we're still here in 2023, the daffodils are blooming and you may have spotted your first lambs wobbling about in the fields. Now we're past the equinox, the clocks have just gone forward and the warmer weather beckons. I hope you have found the newsletters interesting to read over the past three years. There are several new things to read about in this letter, as well as some regular contributions. If you know of anyone who would like to be added to the circulation list, or who would like a paper copy, please get in touch via contehjean@gmail.com



There are many group and community activities in Matfen village hall, and a new one came on the scene last Saturday - **FILM NIGHT!** 'Living' was an excellent film choice for the first try-out of the idea, starring the ever-charming Bill Nighy, and tickets sold out fast. There was a great atmosphere on the night, enhanced by popcorn, G and Ts and prosecco. It was lovely to have many stay on afterwards to chat about the film, provide feedback and discuss future possibilities, including regular events and to form a Film Club. Special thanks to Charlie who initiated the idea.

Having a registered venue is a big asset for our community and opens up lots of possibilities. If you'd like to join the Film Club mailing list please click on the form below to receive further information:

<https://forms.office.com/r/SpDxcG2vra>



Regular activities in the hall include **Matfen Karate Club**, which is in its 10th year. The club meets every **Friday from 6-7pm**. Contact **Harry Waters 07775 726 240** or email Matfen.srka@gmail.com.

Fitness expert **Jo Stichbury** is also fast becoming a regular. She has been running classes in the hall for several months now, on Mondays. There's **Feel Good Pilates** at 8.45am, **Legs, Bums and Tums** at 9.30 and **Body Flow** at 10.15. It's lucky that the shop's next door, for reviving coffee and cake. Get in touch with Jo on jostichburyfitness@gmail.com or **07855 247063** for more details.

The hall can also be hired for private events. You can find out more and make a booking by email: matfenvillage@gmail.com or phone: **07817 375237** or via the website, at www.northumberlandvillagehalls.org.uk/matfen-village-hall



A group who won't be using Matfen hall for the next few months is **Great Whittington and Matfen WI**, who are heading over to Great Whittington, as usual, for their summer meetings. The first one, in April is the AGM, followed by a crafting session. That's on **Tuesday April 4th**, starting at **7.30pm**. After that, the May meeting features a talk on local history and then in June, there's a practical session on wellbeing. The WI also do regular walks and lunches, and there's a summer outing in July to Floors Castle in the Borders. Visitors and new members are always very welcome - to find out more, get in touch via contehjean@gmail.com.



And here's the latest news from Liz Bishop about the Jubilee Garden. The name seems to be moving to 'Community Garden' - there have certainly been plenty of members of the community involved, under Liz's expert eye:

Spring is with us, no matter what the weather throws our way. So pleased to see the kindly donated snow drops settle at the base of our Jubilee chestnut. There are patches of celandines and bunches of bulb greenery. Indoors, seedlings are germinating and will be ready to transplant as warmth increases.

There is also good news of other plants successfully lifted and propagated over winter ready to transfer to the garden. One large shrub, brought in February, was toppled by high winds so was heavily pruned to keep it stable. If during Spring tidying in your own gardens, you have unwanted plants, please bring them to the community (Jubilee) garden to give them a new home.

The present plan is for garden flowers in the top corner, opposite the bench; to sow patches of meadow flowers across the bark-covered area; and to fill and plant the sink which sits above a drain cover. A large cornflower has been found for it, recalling one previously in that area.

In Coronation year a display of sunflowers would be good to mark a golden occasion. They will only be young plants on the 8th May Bank holiday, but if you have grown some, please come and plant yours in the garden. A plan is also developing for a longer-lasting planting to mark the occasion.

Thank you again to everyone showing interest, donating to and helping in the community garden. We work around weather conditions and free-time opportunities. Larger planned tasks may be flagged on the Matfen Facebook page and all are welcome with ideas, plants and help. We are looking forward to pleasant summer weather and an increasingly colourful display in the garden.

Matfen Parish Council and County Council News:

The next PC meeting is on **Tuesday March 28th, beginning at 7pm** in the village hall, and is open to all residents of the parish. You can find the agenda and minutes of the last meeting on the PC website: <https://matfenparish.org/>

And if your home heating is by oil or LPG, there's an important statement from **UKIFDA** (the national association of liquid fuel distributors) about an online portal for Government fuel payments, if you haven't received payments through your electricity account. You can find information on this link, which is open until the end of May: <https://www.gov.uk/apply-alternative-fuel-bill-support-if-not-automatic?> If getting online is difficult for you, there's also a helpline: 0808 175 3287

Ingoe councillor, Sarah Greaves has good news about swift boxes:

The newly formed Matfen Swift Group are about to receive a consignment of swift nesting boxes. If you would like to create a nesting space for these incredible and listed birds who swoop in and out of Britain to breed, please get in touch with Sarah on sarah.a.greaves@gmail.com. Swifts need space and height to enter their boxes, so you will need a site high on the vertical wall of a building, ideally under the eaves, about 15 feet (5m) off the ground with an unobstructed flight path. It shouldn't be in direct sunlight, so an aspect north and east is usually best. You can't guarantee that swifts will find your box, but you can increase chances if you play recorded calls of other swifts during the breeding season of May-July.



Matfen resident, Anne Deif, is fundraising for a really good cause, and explains why:

Cancer, and especially breast cancer, affects the lives of thousands of people and everyone has been touched in some way or another. My best friend died from it and a very good friend is currently undergoing treatment. This is why my husband Mo and I decided to support the cause by joining the **MOONWALK on 20th May** which starts from Clapham Common in London. We will be pounding the streets of London, at night, wearing a decorated bra, walking 15.2 miles. Bonkers! We are both in our 70's and I have rheumatoid arthritis so this will be a challenge.

We are pledged to raise £100 each but would love to raise more, much more, so we are asking the village, our friends far and wide and family to support us by donating to the cause or coming to the various fund raisers we have planned.

Easter Sunday Tea in the Matfen Village Shop, 9th April at 3.30

Bingo Nite in Matfen Parish Hall, 22nd April starting at 6.30

Black Bull pub night – details coming soon

Please use the QR code, the link or phone 01 661 855807 to book your place on one of our events or to donate. <https://walkthewalk.enthuse.com/pf/30-years-together>. Thank you!

Church services over Easter

The local churches are joining to celebrate Easter week with services open to all that will lead you through the Easter story and its meanings (*see full details on the attached posters*):

Palm Sunday (April 2nd) - St. Mary's Stamfordham, 10.30am - 12.00, with refreshments, an 'Easter event' for the whole family.

Holy Trinity, Matfen - 9am, Holy Communion

Maunder Thursday (April 6th) - St. Mary's Stamfordham, 6pm - foot washing and stripping of the altar (for those wishing to take part)

Good Friday (April 7th) - Church on the Green, Stamfordham, 11.30am - Good Friday service

Saturday 8th, Matfen 7pm - Easter Vigil, New Light and Stations of the Resurrection. The service will begin in the village hall, then move to the bonfire and finally into the Church to begin the Easter celebrations.

Easter Sunday, (April 9th) - Holy Trinity, Matfen 9am and St. Mary's Stamfordham, 10.30am.



Andrew and Sarah Greaves of Ingoe are helping to organise an event that promises to be great fun - and it's supporting an excellent cause: The Blyth Beach Kite Afternoon is on April 30th from 1.30pm. It's in support of the MND, which raises funds to combat Motor Neurone Disease - you may know of a family who has been affected by this cruel disease. Kites will be available on the day, through a generous donation from the Tesco Community Fund, or you can bring and fly your own. To register, email: dominic.mcdonough@mdnassociation.org (*see full details on the attached poster*).



Our resident history expert, **Sally Urwin**, is a bit busy at the moment, helping out with the lambing at High House Farm. But she promises to be back in the next newsletter with more local stories of interesting goings-on in the past. Meanwhile, you may be interested in joining one of Sally's lambing tours of the farm over the Easter period - you can find details at: <https://bookwhen.com/sallyfarmtours>

And on the subject of history, following newsletter 18, I had an interesting email from **Betty Renwick**, who had read Geoff Urwin's reminiscences about his school days. She attended Matfen School a few years after Geoff and wondered if anyone else who was also a pupil at the school would be interested in a reunion. If so, please send Betty an email on b.renwick108@btinternet.com to see what can be arranged.

And, finally ... many thanks, as ever, to all the contributors to Newsletter 20, and huge thanks to Rev Rachel for distributing the newsletter by email. Any comments, suggestions and contributions for future newsletters are always very welcome: get in touch via contehjean@gmail.com




**All Age
Palm
Sunday Celebration
St. Mary's Church
Stamfordham 2nd
April 10.30am-12noon**

**There will be tea,
coffee, juice and cakes
plus stations around
the church where
children and adults
can experience the
Holy Week story**

ALL WELCOME

MAUNDY THURSDAY

6th April 2023
St. Andrew's Church, Heddon-on-the-Wall 4pm
St. Mary's Church, Stamfordham 6pm
Both services will be Holy Communion
with foot washing
(for those who want to take part)
and stripping of the altar.




GOOD FRIDAY

10am St. Andrew's Church, Heddon-on-the-Wall
11.30am Church on the Green, Stamfordham
Come and join us for Good Friday Services.
All Welcome



mnda
motor neurone disease
association

Blyth Beach Kite Afternoon



Sunday 30th of April - 1:30pm to 4pm -
Blyth Beach
Join us to fly a kite and have fun

Join us on Blyth Beach for an afternoon of kite flying and fun to raise money and awareness for the MND Association.
Kites will be provided by MND Association on the day - or bring and fly your own.

A fun afternoon for all the family and a great opportunity to try something new.

**To sign up email dominic.mcdonough@mndassociation.org
or scan the QR code.**

f mndassociation @mndassoc

www.mndassociation.org

Registered with Charity Commission




EASTER VIGIL, NEW LIGHT AND STATIONS OF THE RESURRECTION

8th April 7pm.
We will begin the service in
Matfen Village Hall before
moving to the bonfire
outside Holy Trinity church,
welcome the new Easter
light into church and begin
the Easter celebrations